

INSPECTION REPORT

HAZELBURY BRYAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sturminster Newton

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113669

Headteacher: Mr R Gower

Lead inspector: Mr L Lewin

Dates of inspection: 10 – 12 January 2005

Inspection number: 266980

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 – 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 91

School address: Droop
Sturminster Newton
Dorset
Postcode: DT10 2ED

Telephone number: 01258 817492
Fax number: 01258 817175

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs V Jackson

Date of previous inspection: January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hazelbury Bryan Primary School is situated in a rural setting on the outskirts of the village of Hazelbury Bryan, near Sturminster Newton. It caters for children between the ages of 4 and 11 years and is smaller than most other primary schools nationally, having 91 pupils currently on roll, all of whom come from White British backgrounds. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times of admission or transfer has been higher than in most other schools nationally over the last few years. In recent times the accommodation has improved with the building of a new hall and classrooms. Most pupils live in the village and the surrounding area in private housing. Children join the Foundation Stage class showing broadly average attainment, although this varies from year to year. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is slightly above the national average and the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is also slightly above the national average. The school has had a significant turnover in staffing in recent times, with a new headteacher appointed a year ago in January 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team		Subject responsibilities	
2233 0	Mr L Lewin	<i>Lead inspector</i>	English, science, art and design, design and technology, music and special educational needs.
9614	Mrs C Webb	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
1330 7	Mr I Hancock	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage, mathematics, information and communication technology, history, geography, religious education and physical education.

The inspection contractor was:

VT Education
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **satisfactory** but rapidly improving school with a very inclusive atmosphere. It is improving rapidly as a result of the very good leadership of the new headteacher, the hard work of all of the staff, and the establishment of good teaching. In particular, although standards are still too low they are improving at a good rate, and pupils' overall achievement is now satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are below average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6, and in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education across the school.
- Governors carry out their roles very effectively.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Very strong links are established between the school, the parents and the local community.
- Good promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness results in good attitudes and behaviour.
- Although lesson planning is much improved this year, sometimes it does not provide work that matches precisely enough the pupils' needs.
- Although much progress has been made, the school recognises rightly the need to develop and use its assessment systems fully.
- There is no fire exit from the upper floor of the old school house.

The overall rate of improvement since the last inspection in January 1999 is satisfactory, although particularly good improvements have been made to the accommodation. After the last inspection, standards and the quality of provision declined and subsequently there was a large turnover in the staffing at the school. Over the last year, the new headteacher has put the school securely back on track. He has established an atmosphere in which the staff and governors work enthusiastically and with a high level of commitment to improving the school in the future. The school's improvement over the last year has been very good, with significant improvements in standards, curriculum planning, assessment procedures and links with the parents and the community. Previous shortcomings in strategic planning and systems for monitoring have been fully resolved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	D	E	E
Mathematics	D	E	D	E
Science	E	E	E	E

Key: A – indicates pupils performing in the highest five per cent of schools nationally; 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.*

Note: Caution is needed in interpreting data for schools such as this that have low numbers of pupils in each year group.

Pupils' achievement overall is **satisfactory**. Children show average attainment on entry to school and are on course to attain the expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage. Pupils reach average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. The table above shows that standards were well below average overall by the end of Year 6, according to the results of national testing in 2004. As a result of good teaching, standards have improved, and although they still currently below average in English and mathematics they look set to improve in future years.

Standards in science by the end of Year 6 have already improved to a satisfactory level. Standards in ICT and religious education are below average across the school. Not enough evidence was collected to make it possible to judge standards in any other subjects.

As a result of the **good** attention given to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, pupils usually show good behaviour and attitudes. Pupils' attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching is **good** overall, with very good teaching in the Foundation Stage. Staff have good relationships with pupils and provide them with strong support and encouragement. Teachers show good subject knowledge and make learning interesting, so that all groups of pupils are keen to do their best. Teaching assistants provide strong support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and are good at ensuring that individuals play a full part in lessons. Teachers have worked hard to establish a clear system to support lesson planning across the school. However, lesson plans do not always make it clear how the activities will provide for the needs of different groups of pupils. Much work has also been done to develop assessment procedures, but the school now recognises rightly the need to develop systems further and, in particular, to ensure that assessment information is used to a greater extent to plan suitable work for pupils at different attainment levels. The pupils' learning is strongly enhanced by the very well enriched curriculum, good procedures for supporting and guiding pupils, and very effective links with the parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. Governors carry out their roles very well and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. They are aware of the need to provide a proper fire exit from the upper floor of the old school house. Staff and governors work together as a very effective team. The school has a clear view of its future direction and has established much enthusiasm and momentum for continued improvement at a good rate in the future.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a high regard for the school and feel it has improved a lot over the last year. Pupils like their school and show particular appreciation for the extra activities that staff provide for them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6, and in ICT and religious education throughout the school.
- Ensure that lesson planning always caters precisely for the needs of different groups of pupils.

- Improve assessment systems across the school and ensure that assessment information is used fully to help teachers plan suitable work for pupils of different attainment levels.
- Provide a proper fire exit from the upper floor of the old school house.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, the achievement of pupils is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is working very effectively to improve standards and reverse past underachievement.
- Standards are below average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6, and in ICT and religious education throughout the school.
- Occasionally, work lacks challenge for the higher attaining pupils.

Commentary

1. After the last inspection, standards declined overall and national test results reflected underachievement by the pupils at the end of Year 6. The new headteacher and staff team have worked very hard over the last year and have successfully arrested this decline. They have worked to re-establish good teaching based on sound curricular provision and in this way have changed the picture of underachievement into one of satisfactory achievement. It was too early for the impact of this work to be seen in last year's national test results, but the current evidence from lesson observations, sampling of pupils' work and discussions with pupils shows that achievement is improving rapidly. Across the school all groups of pupils are now keen to produce their best results. The headteacher and staff recognise that there is still much to do to raise standards and pupils' achievement to where they should be, but the school's current improvement plan sets out a clear plan of action to address priorities in a clear and realistic manner. The enthusiastic and dynamic way in which the school is now working means there is much potential for pupils to begin reaching the expected levels and beyond in their work over future years.

2. Standards attained by children on entry to school are average overall. They achieve well in the Foundation Stage class and most are on course to reach the expected levels in all of the areas of learning, with a significant minority set to reach above average levels. This is as a direct result of the good provision and very good teaching newly featured in this part of the school.

3. In the recent past the school has had a high level of pupils joining or leaving other than at the usual times of admission or transfer. Moreover, the low numbers in each year group, and the variation in the proportion of pupils with SEN from year to year, mean that much caution is needed in interpreting the school's national test results. Nonetheless, the school's very good system to rigorously track pupils' attainment and progress, installed by the new headteacher, clearly shows a picture of previous underachievement as pupils moved through the school. The picture is especially stark when the results of pupils who have gone all the way through the school are analysed. However, the tracking also shows a much improved pattern of progress in recent times, with most pupils now reaching their predicted targets and a few exceeding them.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.7 (13.6)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.1 (10.8)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.6 (17.4)	16.2 (16.2)

There were 18 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Year 2 results in national tests have been the stronger area of the school's overall performance in the past few years. Standards have improved at a better rate than nationally and, in particular, standards in reading and writing have shown a healthy improvement. In 2004, the results showed above average standards in reading, below average standards in writing and average standards in mathematics, compared with those of all schools nationally. Compared with those of similar schools, results were average in reading, well below average in writing and below average in mathematics. Current observations show a strengthening of the position, with pupils reaching average standards overall in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.2 (26.3)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	25.8 (24.0)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	27.0 (27.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 10 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. Year 6 test results have been the school's main area of concern in recent times, with an overall lack of expected progress in pupils' performance since they were tested at Year 2. The trend in the school's test results has been below the national trend. Results in 2004 showed well below average standards in English and science and below average standards in mathematics, compared with those of all schools nationally. When compared to those of other similar schools, results in all these subjects were well below average. Although current evidence shows standards to be still below average in English and mathematics, this represents an improvement, especially given the fact that 50 per cent of pupils in Year 6 have SEN. Particular improvement is noted in science, where standards are now average.

6. Standards in ICT and religious education are below average across the school. Discussions with older pupils show significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding in these subjects and a perception that they did not cover these areas in much depth in previous years. Good efforts are now being made by staff throughout the school to help pupils catch up on the knowledge and skills they lack. In all other subjects, too little evidence was collected in this inspection to enable judgements to be made about standards.

7. As a result of the effective support they are given, pupils with SEN make sound progress and cover the same areas of work as all their classmates. Occasionally, in lessons where pupils are all given the same work to do, there is a lack of challenge, especially for the higher attaining pupils. Within the context of the need for pupils to catch up in terms of their knowledge and understanding, the teachers' approach of sometimes setting the same activities for the whole class is understandable. However, the school is aware of the need to target attainment groups more precisely in the next phase of improving standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, attendance and behaviour are all good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has effective behaviour management systems.
- Procedures for following up absence are good.

Commentary

8. As a result of the school's good procedures and parents' efforts, pupils' attendance is good and is above the national average. Pupils arrive promptly in the mornings except when the bus is delayed. The education welfare service is appropriately involved with families when necessary.

9. Children in Reception quickly learn the principles of right and wrong, and their behaviour and attitudes to school are very good. Staff have very high expectations and, as a result, pupils' behaviour in classrooms, assemblies and the playground is good. Pupils show interest in their work and the majority try hard to please their teachers. Occasional silly and immature behaviour in the Year 5 / 6 class limits progress, with the teachers sometimes needing to interrupt the flow of lessons to deal with it. Pupils say that bullying is not tolerated and that they feel confident to approach adults should they have any worries in this regard. Staff provide good role models for them and promote their moral and social development well, for example during assemblies and class discussions. Pupils like their rewards and the celebrations of their achievements in the Friday assemblies, and feel that these encourage them. Sanctions are regarded as fair and there have been no exclusions for many years.

10. In many lessons, but especially in assemblies and personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons, pupils' spiritual awareness is encouraged and cultivated effectively. The school's very inclusive approach ensures that all groups of pupils are well integrated, whatever their difficulties, and they are generally well supported by their peers.

11. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory, and the fledgling school council is helping them to understand the ideas of a democratic society and their duties to the local and wider community. Pupils build their personal skills satisfactorily through the opportunities they are given to act as monitors, help with registers, organise the hall and assist adults in various activities. Pupils are aware of others less fortunate than themselves, and as well as individual fund-raising efforts the school has laid emphasis on raising funds for victims of the recent Tsunami disaster. Pupils are exposed to a sound range of stories, art, music and traditions from their own and other cultures. As a result, their cultural awareness is satisfactorily promoted.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is **good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Whilst assessment procedures are sound overall, not enough use is currently made of the information gathered to ensure that work planned always matches precisely the needs of pupils of different attainment levels.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a strong rapport with their pupils.
- Teachers have confident subject knowledge and make lessons interesting.
- Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage.
- Planning does not always cater sufficiently for the different ability groups in the classes.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with SEN.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 19 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6	7	6	0	0	0

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

12. Teachers have a good rapport with pupils, so that the working atmosphere in lessons centres upon strong encouragement for all individuals, based on a close up knowledge of their personal needs. For example, in discussions, teachers are careful to give all individuals a chance to participate, and give much praise to individuals who have made a significant effort. Support staff also play a key role here and often provide good levels of support for individuals to ensure they approach activities confidently. Occasionally, teaching assistants are not given sufficient direction. For example, in some whole-class teaching sessions, their role was one of purely observing and waiting to be deployed when the independent activities started.

13. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach. This is evident from their clear explanations of new concepts, ideas and activities. This often results in lessons flowing at a good pace, because all the pupils gain a clear idea of how to proceed and work in a confident and well organised way. For example, a lucid introduction and explanation of the learning objectives in a Year 3 / 4 session resulted in pupils gaining good skills in reading text at speed to gather information.

14. Teachers also use their good subject knowledge to ensure that lessons are made as interesting as possible. For example, in a Year 1 / 2 science lesson, pupils took part in an activity to make a 'feely snake' as part of an investigation of materials investigation. This produced a highly motivated response from the pupils, who were very keen to move ahead with the task, and the learning became very much a 'fun activity'. This sort of approach was used in many of the lessons seen and usually resulted in a purposeful and busy atmosphere where learning progressed at a good pace.

15. Although teaching is good across the school, it is particularly good in the Foundation Stage, where the teacher has a very good knowledge of how children learn and a skilful approach to matching activities precisely to their needs. As a result, all children are fully focused on activities and no time is wasted. A very good balance is maintained between direct teaching and giving children the chance to learn independently. For example, in one session observed at the start of the day, the teacher fully involved children in assembling facts for the 'date board' and allowed the discussion to flow naturally into a range of well organised activities. Some children worked independently on the computer and others were given precise support with reading activities.

16. In the best of the lessons, throughout the school, activities flowed at a good pace and were precisely matched to the needs of pupils of different attainment levels. However, in some lessons all pupils in the class were given exactly the same work to do. In these sessions the teachers were generally skilled in posing questions to challenge the higher attaining pupils, but the tasks did not always extend these pupils fully and give them the opportunity to work at a higher level. The main difficulty here lies in the lack of exact planning to cater for the pupils at different attainment levels. There is a clear linkage between the evolution of the school's assessment systems and the development of overall planning. The school has rightly placed much emphasis on developing a clear 'curriculum map' so that there is a firm basis on which teachers can plan their lessons across the year. Similarly, very good systems have been established to assess and track pupils' performance in English and mathematics. The school now identifies rightly the need for this assessment information to be used to the full to help teachers plan more precisely and to sharply define activities that will extend all groups of pupils at the right level. While much work has been done to move assessment procedures forward during the last year, many subjects still lack fully developed assessment systems. Also, the school is at the early stages of involving pupils in assessing their work.

17. In all lessons, teachers and teaching assistants cater well for pupils with SEN. Teaching assistants are fully briefed and provide good support for individuals and groups of pupils. They often prompt pupils with SEN during discussion work and give them clear guidance during written and practical activities. In particular, teaching assistants are good at knowing when to provide direct guidance and support and when to let pupils attempt tasks independently. In this way pupils do not become overly reliant on the support they receive.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are very good. The accommodation is good and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Some areas of ICT are not covered in sufficient depth.
- The provision for pupils with SEN is good.
- Very good opportunities for enrichment successfully enhance the learning.

Commentary

18. Most of the teaching staff, including the headteacher, have been appointed in the last year. Since that time, significant progress has been made to improve curricular provision throughout the school. Overall, the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. It is fully inclusive, and all pupils have equal access. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. It is well planned, so that effective links between the areas of learning make learning fun and purposeful. Although the school makes satisfactory use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, there are missed opportunities to extend pupils' writing skills across the curriculum, and not enough problem solving activities to support learning in mathematics. Provision in ICT has improved considerably during the last year due to the installation of the new computer suite. However, some areas of ICT are not given sufficient coverage. In its next stage of developing curriculum planning, the school has identified rightly the need to create more links between different subjects to make learning as

meaningful and interesting as possible for the pupils. The headteacher has currently instigated a plan to increase the amount of teaching time for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The amount of time is currently below that recommended nationally.

19. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' PSHE. The school has recently given this area of the curriculum a stronger emphasis by introducing a new system to help teachers plan lessons. All teachers now include a PSHE session on the timetable. Proper attention is paid to ensuring that pupils are taught about the dangers of drug abuse, and sex education is taught to older pupils by staff supported by the school nurse.

20. The school's good provision for pupils with SEN means that individuals in need of support are identified at an early stage. Good support is thereafter engaged to ensure that all make progress in a confident manner. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has worked hard to re-organise and streamline record-keeping systems and to ensure that all individual educational plans (IEPs) are kept up to date. Occasionally, the targets within these plans are not precise enough. Teaching assistants have a good understanding of the needs of individual pupils and provide good quality support to keep them focused and fully involved in all activities.

21. The school works hard to ensure that all groups of pupils have a full range of opportunities to take part in all curricular activities. There is a strong programme of visits to a number of different venues. These visits not only enrich learning and give first-hand experiences, but also develop and promote social and personal skills very effectively. The school has a very extensive programme of extra-curricular activities. The various activities are well attended and provide a very good range of opportunities for supporting and enriching pupils' learning. Visitors, such as local artists, musicians, specialists, and members of the historical society are regularly invited into school to enhance the curriculum and broaden pupils' cultural awareness. For example, one visiting organisation, which proved very popular with pupils, gave them first-hand opportunities to see creatures from the rainforest.

22. The accommodation is good, with significant improvements made in recent times to provide a spacious hall, fully equipped ICT suite and an outside play area for children in the Foundation Stage. The school has made it a priority over the last year to improve its level of resources, which are now at a satisfactory level overall. However, there remains much room for improvement still in resources for ICT, religious education, geography and history.

Care, guidance and support

The school's provision for pupils' health, welfare and safety is good. Pupils' knowledge of their targets is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships are evident throughout the school.
- There is no fire escape from the upper floor of the old school house.

Commentary

23. Regular security reviews and risk assessments are indicative of the school's determination to ensure the health, welfare and safety of pupils. Child protection procedures are good and the school is organising additional training in order to comply with recent legislation. Trained personnel are always on site to administer first aid. The school

has correctly identified the lack of a fire escape from the top floor of the old school house as being a safety risk. As pupils and staff use this area frequently, the inspection team agree with the school that there is a need to install a proper fire escape.

24. Very good relationships, and teachers' extensive knowledge of the pupils and their circumstances, ensure that all have an adult to turn to when problems arise. Suitable procedures are in place to take account of pupils' views in terms of informing school initiatives. These procedures are mainly informal at present.

25. Most pupils are aware of the targets they should achieve, currently set for their groups in English and mathematics. Pupils say that the way in which teachers mark their books helps them to improve their work in the future.

26. Good support and guidance are provided for pupils with SEN. The school makes full use of all outside agencies as and when required. Progress of pupils with SEN is carefully monitored. Staff maintain a clear knowledge of these pupils, and teaching assistants in particular give good support during lessons and on the occasions when individuals are withdrawn for extra 'booster' work.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's relationship with parents is very good. Links with the community and within the cluster of schools are very good and liaison with the secondary school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with parents are very good.
- Links with the church are excellent.
- The parent/teacher association provides strong support for the school.

Commentary

27. Parents are delighted with the improvements and changes made by the new headteacher and the effect his arrival has had on the whole school community. Parents report that 'the school feels really exciting and there is now 'a *buzz* in the atmosphere'. Parents show very strong support through their excellent attendance at meetings and the practical help they give to teachers and with extra-curricular activities. The parent/teacher association is very active and successfully organises fund-raising events and social occasions that are enjoyed by parents, relatives and the local community.

28. Parents are very pleased with the care their children receive, and are grateful for the breakfast club. Those with younger children appreciate the 'Toddler group', now held in the school hall. Parents receive very good information about events at school and about their children's progress. Regular newsletters, the prospectus, and the governors' annual report all contain useful and interesting data. The very knowledgeable and approachable secretary is always on hand to give assistance or information to those needing help. Parents like their children's annual reports, which contain targets for improvement. Parents whose children have SEN are kept well informed about their children's progress. Where appropriate, they are fully involved with the staff in reviewing their children's IEPs.

29. Links with the local community, for whom the school is a focal point, are very good; residents come into school to help or talk to pupils as well as to attend events. Links with

the church are excellent. The rector's strong involvement with the school, and the school's regular use of the church, effectively enhance pupils' learning.

30. Liaison and links within the local cluster are good and are used well for mutual support. Arrangements made to aid pupils' transition to the secondary school are satisfactory, although staff feel rightly that there is much scope for improving systems in this area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. Governors fulfil their roles very effectively and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very good leadership.
- Governors have taken very effective action to help the school improve.
- The school has an excellent administrative officer.

Commentary

31. The school entered a difficult phase after its last inspection, during which time the quality of overall provision and standards declined. Led by their very astute chair, governors took effective action to resolve the situation. As a result, under the very good leadership of the headteacher and with the enthusiasm and strong commitment of the new staff team, the school is now moving forward rapidly.

32. The headteacher has successfully implemented a wide range of crucial changes over the last year, which include:

- establishing an atmosphere in which staff work very effectively together;
- creating a very clear vision for the school's future development;
- working with staff to devise a new system for planning the curriculum;
- putting in place a very good system to check pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics as they move through the school;
- ensuring that very good links are established with the parents and the community.

In addition, the headteacher ensures that communication between all members of the school community is maintained in a clear and consistent way. He also makes sure that all those who work in the school feel valued and are keen to play a full part in future developments.

33. Governors are now fully involved in the life of the school. They visit on a regular basis and have a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses. They carry out their role of critical friendship particularly well, so that all new initiatives are carefully examined before being put into practice. The governors have a full awareness of the school budget, and together with the headteacher and school's administrative officer they ensure that all funding is deployed in the most cost-effective manner to ensure the best possible provision is maintained.

34. The school's administrative officer provides outstanding support for the headteacher and staff, so that the day-to-day management of the school is run as efficiently as possible.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	286,252.00
Total expenditure	280,746.00
Expenditure per pupil	3,264.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	26,402.00
Balance carried forward to the next	31,908.00

35. Staff and governors and all of those connected with the school now work together very well. The rapid improvement enabled by the leadership and management place the school in a strong position to maintain its rapid improvement.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well as a result of high quality teaching.
- Good knowledge of children's progress is used to plan the next steps in learning.
- The co-ordinator has worked very hard to provide an attractive setting to enhance children's learning.
- Children are very keen to come to school, are very happy there, and are confident to join in with activities.
- Staff make learning interesting because good links are made between areas of learning.

Commentary

36. When children start school, their attainment is wide and varied but average overall. Evidence shows that the children make good progress and achieve well. By the time they start in Year 1, the majority will meet the expected goals for children of this age in all areas of learning, and a significant minority will exceed these goals.

37. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. Children are happy, very settled and eager to learn, because staff have developed very good relationships with them and established good classroom routines. Staff, with the support of voluntary parents, work very well together, and activities directed by adults are carefully planned to ensure that the children not only benefit from working alongside each other but also learn by carrying out interesting practical activities. The teacher uses a wide and varied range of teaching approaches and interesting resources to make learning relevant and enjoyable for the children. For example, she uses questioning very well to extend learning, and detailed assessment to carefully track children's progress. Through these means she ensures that activities are well matched to the children's abilities. The warm praise and encouragement the children are given encourage them to try hard and achieve well. Staff are adept at identifying children who may have SEN and are quick to ensure that they receive appropriate support.

38. Provision in the Foundation Stage class has significantly improved during the last year since the appointment of the new co-ordinator. She leads and manages provision well and is very knowledgeable about all aspects of this phase of education. She has used her knowledge and experience well over the last year to significantly improve resources and create an attractive Foundation Stage classroom full of interesting areas for the children to explore and enjoy. The good provision ensures that children are well cared for and that all activities are as interesting as possible for them. For example, the new outdoor area is well used and is a valuable resource and extension to the classroom. Staff make very creative use of classroom space and the new hall to support various activities.

39. Owing to the short time available during inspection, it was not possible to inspect all areas of learning in depth. In the areas of **communication, language and literacy** and

mathematical development the quality of teaching and learning is very good, with the result that children achieve very well. Many opportunities for developing mathematical skills and language are incorporated successfully into daily routines. No moment is lost to promote learning. A strength of teaching is the way in which staff effectively achieve this through the use of interesting activities and through taking part with children in their play activities. For example, children were absorbed in 'Dinosaur Land', where they used language well to recreate different roles, and they made very good use of the 'Fairytale Cottage' to re-enact a story about a knight and a princess.

40. In the areas of **knowledge and understanding of the world** and **creative development**, children make good progress and achieve well during their time in class, as a result of consistently good teaching. A wide range of experiences is planned, and children revel in learning about the world around them by handling and discussing a variety of objects. For example, in a topic on 'light and dark', they enjoyed planting their own bulbs and seeing them grow. Experiences are effectively linked so that children's learning is continuous. Children make good use of the computer. For instance they confidently use an interactive program that helps them to identify initial sounds in words. Such experiences have a positive influence on accelerating their progress and ensuring that they achieve well.

41. In their **physical** and **personal, social and emotional development**, children develop good levels of confidence as a result of high quality teaching and learning. Through skilful use of praise and guidance, staff provide strong encouragement for all individuals. The sensitive support children receive encourages them and helps them to develop confidently. This has a positive influence on the rate at which they make progress. For example, in a physical development session in the hall, children worked hard in following instructions and overcame their initial apprehension in controlling a small ball. This was because they were effectively encouraged and supported. As a result, all children showed good co-ordination and control in moving the ball in different directions. Snack times are pleasant, social occasions and encourage polite manners.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average, particularly in writing by the end of Year 6.
- Good teaching is enabling pupils' achievement to improve.
- Planning does not always cater sufficiently for the needs of pupils at different levels of attainment.
- Teachers do not yet make full use of assessment information to guide their planning.

Commentary

42. Pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 2 and below average standards by the end of Year 6. Standards attained by pupils in English have been mainly below or well below average in national tests in recent years, although at Year 2 they have been rising at a rate that is above the national trend. However, standards have been declining in Year 6

since 2001, and by 2004 were not as good as they were at the time of the last inspection. The hard work of staff led by the English co-ordinator has reversed this declining trend. Lesson observations and work samples now show that pupils reach average standards in reading and writing in Year 2. Although standards in English are still below average in Year 6, this is currently due to the fact that half of the pupils in this small year group have SEN. Achievement has improved to a satisfactory level, and work seen in classes across the school shows that future cohorts of pupils are well set to reach higher standards by the time they reach the end of Year 6 than has been the case.

43. Most pupils speak reasonably fluently and with a range of vocabulary appropriate for their age. Staff work hard during class discussion work, in particular to improve pupils' ability in this respect. However, a significant minority of pupils exhibit speech and language difficulties and receive effective support to help them with these. Reading is the strongest aspect of pupils' English work and this is as a direct result of the emphasis placed on it by all teachers. 'Reading workshop' sessions give the pupils a significant boost, and observations of some of these sessions showed pupils to be gaining much enthusiasm and confidence with reading. Writing remains the weaker area of pupils' work. In Year 6 a few of the pupils write fluently, with well developed sentences and good use of vocabulary, but too many still struggle with spelling and basic skills and use a fairly restricted range of vocabulary in their accounts. Across the school, teachers place a good emphasis on handwriting and, as a result, most pupils learn to write in clear legible joined-up writing and generally take a pride in the presentation of their work.

44. Teachers have a well organised approach to running literacy lessons so that activities flow at a good pace. There is a good balance between direct whole-class teaching and the time spent on follow-up group or independent work. Teachers show good subject knowledge, which is evident in the clear explanations they give and in their precise questioning. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of the work they have to do and generally apply their best efforts. Teaching assistants provide strong support, particularly for pupils with SEN so that these individuals usually manage to cover the same range of work as their classmates.

45. Teachers successfully extend all groups of pupils through their skilful approach to questioning individuals in discussions. In the best lessons, higher attaining pupils are also extended through the opportunities they are given to complete tasks in depth and detail. However, sometimes all groups of pupils are given exactly the same activity to do. This means that work is not tailored specifically to meet the needs of pupils of different attainment levels, and higher attaining pupils in particular are not sufficiently extended by the tasks. Very good systems have been established to assess pupils' performance and track their progress as they move through the school, but teachers do not yet make full use of the assessment information to help with lesson planning.

46. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and the co-ordinator has worked hard with her colleagues to upgrade planning. Through her monitoring of the subject, she has a clear view of standards across the school and has devised appropriate action to help the subject develop in the future.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. Teachers have a good awareness of the need to develop pupils' writing skills in other subjects and have made a good start with creating opportunities, for example in science, to get pupils writing clear written accounts of their investigations. However, such emphasis is

not yet fully applied on a consistent basis across the curriculum. Good discussion and reading opportunities are provided in different subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average at the end of Year 6.
- Insufficient emphasis is placed on mental arithmetic and investigation to support learning.
- The co-ordinator provides good leadership.
- Assessment information is not consistently well used to help teachers plan future work.
- Pupils do not use their mathematical skills sufficiently in other subjects.

Commentary

48. After the last inspection, standards overall declined and results have been mainly below average in Year 6 national tests. The new headteacher and new staff team have worked very effectively over the last year to halt the decline, improve provision and raise standards. As a result, pupils' achievement is now satisfactory. Although standards are still below average in Year 6, this is partly due to 50 per cent of the current year group having SEN. Pupils in Year 2 achieve satisfactorily and reach average standards.

49. Although teachers make sound use of the National Numeracy Strategy throughout the school, planning does not always cater precisely enough for the needs of different groups of pupils. Also, not enough emphasis is placed on improving pupils' mental computation. As part of the drive to improve standards, the school has identified rightly the need to provide more problem solving and investigative work and to identify more ways of extending the most capable mathematicians on a consistent basis. The school provides a good range of additional small-group support sessions to boost pupils' performance in mathematics. These are having a positive impact on pupils' confidence with mathematics.

50. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. However, in one very good Year 3/Year 4 lesson, pupils' learning progressed rapidly as a result of carefully prescribed tasks that matched their attainment levels, and of the wide range of strategies used by the teacher. In this lesson pupils' behaviour and attitudes were very good and they worked conscientiously to solve problems and complete the tasks. Teaching assistants offer good support in all classes to less confident pupils and those with SEN so that they make the same progress as others in the class. Where teaching and learning are less effective, not enough attention is given to the appropriateness of tasks for particular groups of pupils. At these times the pace of work is slow and some pupils lose their concentration. Although good procedures are in place to track pupils' progress as they move through the school, teachers do not currently make enough use of the information gained from these assessments to guide their lesson planning.

51. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The new co-ordinator has made a positive start in her role by improving resources, monitoring teaching and learning across the school and producing an action plan for further development. She has clear ideas and is very committed to improve provision in the future.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. Overall, mathematical skills are not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning in other subjects. Mathematics is applied to skills in measuring in science and the use of number lines in history, but the potential for using computers is restricted to a few mathematical games.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching has enabled the school to improve pupils' achievement.
- Pupils carry out a good range of interesting investigations.

- Lessons do not always cater sufficiently for the needs of pupils at different levels of attainment.
- Teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment information to guide their lesson planning.

Commentary

53. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils attain average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This marks a significant effort on the part of staff to improve standards over the last year. Since 2002, results in national tests for Year 6 pupils had been mainly well below average and have signified considerable underachievement. Lesson observations and work samples now show pupils to be achieving satisfactorily by the end of Year 6. Across the school, good teaching is enabling standards and achievement to improve at a good rate.

54. As a result of the staff's upgrade to the overall curriculum planning, pupils now have a wide range of scientific experiences and acquire their knowledge and understanding through well organised practical investigations. Pupils enjoy their science work and show a mainly confident approach in lessons. Teaching is good in all classes because teachers have good subject knowledge, explain concepts well and take much trouble to prepare interesting activities that motivate the pupils. For example, Year 2 pupils made 'feely snakes' in a project on materials, pupils in Year 3/4 investigated light shining into a sealed box, and Year 5/6 pupils studied what happens when a candle burns. These activities engaged pupils and made them think hard about the scientific concepts involved. All pupils are well supported during science lessons. Teaching assistants play a key role in this respect, ensuring that pupils with SEN remain focused and have a good understanding of what to do.

55. Lessons and work samples scrutinised show that teachers sometimes provide the same science activity for all pupils. This means that on occasions the work does not cater precisely enough for the needs of pupils of different attainment levels. Although teachers carefully evaluate pupils' work on a continuous basis, they do not make sufficient use of assessment information when planning future lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in ICT are below average throughout the school.
- Some aspects of the ICT programmes of study are not taught in sufficient depth.
- Curriculum plans for teaching this subject lack depth and detail.
- Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to assist teaching and learning across the curriculum.

Commentary

56. Standards in ICT are below average throughout the school. Discussions with pupils indicate that their experiences are very narrow, due to their having had too few opportunities to work with ICT in the past. As a result, there are gaps in their knowledge and understanding, so that achievement is unsatisfactory overall. Since the last inspection the subject has been neglected and until recently the school had poor resources and inadequate opportunities to develop pupils' skills. The new headteacher and staff have worked hard during the last year to considerably improve provision in the subject, but they recognise that there is still much to do to bring the provision up to a satisfactory level. A

new ICT suite has been installed and resources have significantly improved. However, the school does not have up-to-date resources to teach all the elements of the ICT programme of study in sufficient depth. In particular, there is not enough software or equipment currently available to help pupils gain a detailed understanding about modelling and control technology.

57. Teaching is satisfactory. The school is now fully committed to ensuring that pupils are given the full range of opportunities they need to develop their ICT skills. Pupils clearly enjoy using the new computer suite. Teachers have good subject knowledge and give clear explanations and demonstrations of new skills or methods of using programs. They make good use of the new interactive whiteboard in the computer suite. However, the lessons seen and the teachers' planning indicate that many pupils, particularly higher attaining pupils, are not challenged sufficiently by the work they are given to do.

58. A new co-ordinator has been appointed and leads the subject satisfactorily. She has successfully identified all the main areas of improvement needed and is fully committed to improving provision and developing her role more effectively in the future. The school does not have any systematic procedures established to assess pupils' progress in ICT on a regular basis. Overall, the planning for ICT lacks depth and detail, and staff are aware of the need to develop this to a much greater extent.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. Teachers have begun to use computers to reinforce work in literacy and numeracy. Good use is made of the Internet to access information for geography and history topics, but, overall, insufficient use is made of ICT in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

60. During the inspection it was not possible to see any geography or history lessons. No overall judgements can therefore be made about standards or provision in these subjects. An analysis of work in pupils' books and on display around the school shows that in general pupils cover an appropriate range of topics to gain the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, in **history**, pupils in Years 3 and 4 gain a suitable understanding about life in the times of the Tudors, while Year 6 pupils learn about famous characters in Victorian times. The 'curriculum map' put into practice by the school this year also ensures that pupils cover the necessary range of areas in **geography**. For example, samples of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 show that they gain an appropriate knowledge and understanding of themes such as tropical rain forests, and of where such regions are located on a world map.

61. Discussions with the co-ordinator indicate that the school has identified rightly the need to adapt history and geography planning systems further. This is recognised as necessary to improve the opportunities for teachers to give pupils interesting and exciting tasks that challenge and motivate them to a greater extent. Currently, the level of resources in both subjects is insufficient to give full support teaching and learning.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average throughout the school.
- Provision has improved significantly over the last year.
- Excellent links with the church strongly enhance learning.

Commentary

62. Pupils attain below average standards throughout the school, and standards have declined since the last inspection. Discussions with Year 6 pupils indicate that prior to the beginning of the current academic year the subject was neglected, and very few religious education lessons took place. As a consequence, there are large gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, and overall underachievement in this subject. Provision has significantly improved during the last year. This has resulted from the introduction of a new scheme of work and appropriate time allocated on the timetable to the teaching of religious education throughout the school. As a result, pupils' knowledge and attainment have greatly improved in recent times.

63. Assemblies make a strong contribution to religious education and pupils' spiritual development by drawing on Bible stories linked to the religious education programmes of study. Excellent links have been established with the local church, where regular visits support pupils' learning and understanding. For example, pupils have been given the opportunity to re-enact a baptism in the church.

64. The new co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides sound leadership. She has introduced a new scheme of work to help teachers plan more effectively. She has identified rightly the need for more resources and artefacts and for further training to support pupils' learning in the future, including world religions and pupils' multicultural awareness.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

65. During the inspection, one games lesson was observed and no lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology or music. There is therefore not enough evidence to make judgements about standards or the quality of provision in these subjects.

66. Discussions with the **physical education** co-ordinator indicate that all aspects of this subject are well covered through the use of a good planning system. The subject is given a high profile across the school. All pupils have good opportunities to learn to swim in the summer months in the school learning pool. As a result, they achieve well and most are confident swimmers by Year 6.

67. The school provides an extensive range of extra-curricular sports clubs, which are well attended and effectively support pupils' learning and their development of skills. Specialist coaches and teachers are regularly invited, and the school encourages gifted and talented pupils to take part in further training and events outside school to reach their full potential. The co-ordinator has worked hard to improve resources and provision during the last two years and is justifiably proud of his achievements in this respect. The extensive grounds and new large hall make a significant contribution to supporting pupils' learning in physical education.

68. Pupils carry out an appropriate range of activities in **art and design** and **design and technology**. For example, Year 6 pupils produce detailed pencil sketches based on close observation, and they make good quality sketch designs for 'stormy weather' pictures and learn to use paint to make contrasting colour designs. They learn how a cam works and make detailed labelled designs of moving picture models, and go on to complete models based on these designs.

69. The art and design co-ordinator has gained a good overview of the quality of work across the school through her monitoring activities. Work in art is enhanced by local artists coming into school to work with pupils, and by the school's involvement in activities such as the National Gallery's 'Take One Picture' project.

70. All classes have appropriate scheduled **music** sessions and pupils enjoy the music activities they experience. The planning systems show that a suitable range of activities is covered across the year. Two musically orientated productions were recently staged at Christmas time and the school has established a choir and a recorder group, who rehearse regularly. All these activities serve to enhance pupils' learning in music.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

71. Only one PSHE lesson was observed, and insufficient evidence was collected to make possible an overall judgement about provision.

72. Development of pupils' PSHE and citizenship is a priority for the school. 'Rights and Responsibilities' underpin the behaviour code and pupils have responded individually very well to the recent Tsunami disaster in Asia. They have undertaken sponsored runs and other activities to raise money, thus showing their commitment to help others and their awareness of the wider world. The recently formed school council is run and led by the headteacher, who plans rightly to give pupils more responsibility as the systems develop.

73. The PSHE co-ordinator has introduced a good quality new system to help teachers plan their lessons.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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