

INSPECTION REPORT

MIDDLEZOY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Middlezoy, Bridgwater

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123687

Headteacher: Dr John Hamlin

Lead inspector: Mr Roger Brown

Dates of inspection: 14 - 16 June 2004

Inspection number: 256910

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	60
School address:	Church Road Middlezoy Bridgwater Somerset
Postcode:	TA7 0NZ
Telephone number:	01823 698465
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Rosemary Harradine
Date of previous inspection:	17 - 18 June 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Middlezoy Primary School is situated at the centre of the village of Middlezoy, near Bridgwater. There are 60 pupils aged between four and eleven on roll. Most live in the village, but a few come from nearby communities. No pupils have English as an additional language, and no pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. From time to time, small numbers of pupils join the school from the nearby traveller site; this is a transit site so these pupils rarely stay more than a few weeks. At the time of the inspection, there were three pupils in the school from the site supported by the Somerset traveller support service. At the time they start school, children's overall attainment is broadly average. Eighteen per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which is in line with the national average. No pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The percentage of pupils moving in to the school after the normal starting point, or leaving before transfer to high school is higher than average, but this is partially as a result of the temporary admissions from the traveller site. Seven per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. In 2002 the school gained a School Achievement Award and Investors in People status.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22229	Roger Brown	Lead inspector	English Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school is not effective. Although the school serves an area that is relatively advantaged, and expenditure on the school is very high, standards are below expectations. It has received much support and guidance for the past two years. Teaching and learning are still unsatisfactory. They have improved, but this improvement has failed to overcome the legacy of underachievement that has persisted since the last inspection. The leadership has failed to drive forward improvements fast enough. The curriculum does not meet the needs of the pupils. Staff are caring, but the support systems lack rigour. The school provides poor value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are below expectations in English, mathematics and science for pupils in Years 2 to 6.
- Children starting at the school make good progress in the reception year and Year 1, and achieve well in these year groups.
- The leadership and management of the school have attempted to introduce changes and improvements, but the pace of change has been too slow and the impact too limited to bring about the improvements needed.
- The curriculum for pupils in Years 2 to 6 is not accurately matched to the needs of pupils; as a result, they are poorly motivated.
- Staff are positive and care about the well-being of the pupils, but the systems and procedures to deal with problems are inadequate.
- Assessment information is not used effectively by all staff, and pupils are not informed well enough about how to improve their work.

The school has failed to make significant improvements since the last inspection two years ago. Some issues have been addressed, teaching and learning are better, but are still uneven. The school now follows the guidance set out in national initiatives. However, these changes have failed to have a significant impact on raising standards in key subjects or to create a relevant curriculum. Some aspects of management lack rigour, so that systems and procedures are ineffective.

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

Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall. In the reception year, children have achieved the standards they are expected to achieve by the end of the year in all areas of learning. Their achievement is good. Similarly in Year 1, pupils attain standards that are above those expected and their achievement is good.

Year 2 pupils are attaining standards that are below those expected in writing, and in line with those expected in reading, mathematics and science. Year 2 pupils' performance in the end of year National Curriculum tests has been well below expectations in reading and writing for the previous two years; reading has improved and along with mathematics is now in line with expectations. Pupils' overall achievement remains unsatisfactory.

By Year 6, standards are below those expected in English, mathematics, science. They are in line in religious education and good in information and communication technology, but these are not enough to raise pupils' overall achievement from an unsatisfactory level. There was not enough evidence to make a judgement on standards in history, geography, art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	E*	D	E
mathematics	A*	E*	E	E
science	A	E*	D	E

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. They have good relationships with each other and older pupils enjoy caring for younger ones. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall**, but their cultural development is unsatisfactory, as they do not have enough opportunities to experience a range of cultures other than their own. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection was unsatisfactory. Good teaching was seen in all classrooms but, where weak teaching was seen, teachers failed to engage pupils during overlong sessions. These lessons had low levels of challenge or interest for pupils. The use of assessment information and pupils' knowledge of their own progress are unsatisfactory, and this results in unsatisfactory achievement.

Curricular provision is unsatisfactory overall. The curriculum does not adequately cater for the pupils' needs or ensure progression in their learning. The extra-curricular programme offered to pupils is good. The quality of resources is good, but the accommodation is unsatisfactory in several respects. One classroom is undersized even for the small number of pupils it contains and there is no hall or field. These factors limit pupils' achievements. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory, and although all staff are caring, the school's systems to manage the care of pupils are unsatisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory. Although the headteacher is hardworking and committed to the school, he has been unable to drive forward the improvements needed fast enough. Key management systems are ineffective. These weaknesses lead to pupils not achieving as well as they should. The governors are very supportive and fulfil all their statutory duties, but they have not challenged the school sufficiently to bring about the improvements needed. Therefore governance is judged to be unsatisfactory.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Many parents have proper concerns about the school, but they want it to succeed. Pupils are generally positive, but some recognise that they are underachieving.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards and improve pupils' achievements.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Ensure the curriculum meets pupils' needs.
- Strengthen the systems and procedures that guarantee the care and welfare of pupils.
- Ensure the leadership and management drive forward the improvements needed.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall. It is good in the reception Year and Year 1, but it is unsatisfactory in all other year groups. Girls do better than boys in Years 2 to 6. Girls' achievement is satisfactory in Year 2, but is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Standards are good in the reception Year and again in Year 1, but these levels are not maintained in Year 2. For the past two years, Year 2 pupils' results in the National Curriculum end of year assessments have been well below average in reading and writing. Results are better in mathematics and they have improved in reading this year, but are still only around average. Standards in all subjects dip further in the following years and, although they start to rise again by Year 5, the outcomes of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 are still well below expectations.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make a good start to their education in the reception year and Year 1. They enter school with average levels of attainment and, by the end of Year 1, their level of achievement is above expectations.
- For the past two years the school has failed to meet the targets it has agreed for the end of Year 6 assessments by a significant margin. It appears unlikely to meet the targets this year.
- Pupils in Year 6 fail to progress as well as pupils in schools that shared similar standards at the end of Year 2.
- Standards in English in Years 2 to 6 are below expectations and this depresses the standards pupils attain in most other subjects.
- More able pupils are given good opportunities to experience challenging work outside their normal classroom activities.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved since the last inspection and the use of ICT now supports pupils' learning well.

Commentary

1. Children in the reception Year achieve well because the provision is good. Overall standards are above the goals children are expected to achieve by the end of reception for the majority of children.
2. Standards in Year 1 are good. Pupils share a classroom with the reception children. The transition between the two year groups is effective. Reading, writing and mathematics are developed well. Pupils' achievements in these aspects are good, reflecting the challenging approach of their teacher, who sets clear expectations of what pupils have to do. Standards in reading and writing in Year 2 are below average; although recent assessments show some improvement. Standards in mathematics in Year 2 are in line with average expectations. Nevertheless, pupils' achievements in Year 2 are unsatisfactory as they fail to make even the expected progress from their good starting point in Year 1.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.1 (15.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.7 (11.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.1 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 8 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are well below expectations. The school has not met the targets it agreed for the end of Year 6 assessments in English and mathematics for the last two years. At the time of the last inspection, standards had declined to a level that was judged to be below average. They have since fallen further. Able pupils still manage to get results that reflect their abilities, but the progress all pupils make is very unsatisfactory. In some years, they make no progress at all, and for some pupils in Years 3 and 4 standards decline. There is evidence of improvement in Year 5 and further improvement in Year 6, but by this time it is too late. As a result of this erratic progress, pupils' achievements in Years 3 to 6 are unsatisfactory. Most do not attain the standards they are capable of.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.5 (23.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.8 (23.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.8 (24.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 9 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- In Years 2 to 6 boys fail to achieve as well as girls. There is a noticeable difference in the attitudes of boys and girls. Boys rarely answer teachers' questions unless asked directly, and are reluctant to raise their hands or volunteer in any activities. There are more girls than boys in the school and girls appear to dominate in many ways. The school does not have a policy in place to specifically promote boys' learning and on average boys do not attain as high standards as the girls. The small numbers of pupils from the nearby traveller site are included in all aspects of school's work. They rarely stay at the school more than a few weeks and are well supported by a specialist teacher and teaching assistant. Even so, they find it hard to fit in, although they attain similar standards to other pupils and their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by knowledgeable teaching assistants. As a result their achievements are satisfactory.
- At the time of the last inspection, standards in religious education were deemed to be unsatisfactory. Standards in this subject have now improved and are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 6, although they are still below expectations at the end of Year 2. The school now allocates sufficient time to the subject and pupils' achievements in Years 4 to 6 are satisfactory. They are unsatisfactory in Years 2 to 3. The significant improvement noted in the last inspection in standards in information and communication technology (ICT) has continued. At that time standards throughout the school were judged to be average. Standards are now above average, pupils' achievements in the subject give significant support to learning in other subjects.

6. The unsatisfactory standards in English depress the achievements of pupils in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are underdeveloped. In Years 2 to 6 pupils spend a considerable time in every lesson listening to the teacher. However, only a limited number of pupils respond readily to teachers' questions. Most are passive, only responding when asked directly. There are few opportunities for pupils to take part in discussions or voice an opinion. Teachers' planning now identifies opportunities for writing in most subjects, but these are insufficient to develop pupils' confidence and competence. As a result of the unsatisfactory achievements in English skills, pupils are rarely active learners. They are not excited by their work, and quickly forget or confuse facts that do not interest them. The unsatisfactory standards in mathematics cause similar problems. Pupils' attitude to learning is satisfactory overall; the youngest pupils have good attitudes. Pupils' lack of enthusiasm for the subject means that they are unconcerned when they spot irregularities in patterns of numbers, or make mistakes when recording data. The consequence is that they do not understand what they are meant to be learning. Because of this, they do not apply their skills to new situations and do not retain as much knowledge as they should.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Behaviour is satisfactory overall in lessons. Around the school and outside lessons behaviour is usually good. The school fosters pupils' personal development to a satisfactory degree. Attendance is in line with that found in primary schools nationally.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils form good relationships with others but, when problems do arise, the school's procedures are insufficiently rigorous to ensure they are addressed effectively.
- The youngest pupils have a good attitude to their learning. Older pupils' attitudes are satisfactory.
- Pupils behave well outside the classroom, but behaviour in lessons is variable.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn about their own and others' cultures, or about life as part of a multi-cultural society.
- Attendance is satisfactory, but has declined in recent years.

Commentary

7. Pupils generally develop good relationships with one another and with staff. The older pupils are expected to take care of the younger ones, which helps to foster good relationships throughout the school. However, the school's response to incidents of bullying and other unacceptable behaviour is unsatisfactory. Procedures are insufficiently rigorous and records are not detailed enough. Parents are rightly concerned that bullying is not dealt with quickly or effectively. Pupils are not systematically encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour so that they remain dependent on adults to sort out disagreements.
8. Children in the reception class and the youngest pupils have good attitudes to their learning and enjoy the lessons and activities planned for them. They concentrate well and almost always try hard to complete their work. Older pupils' attitudes to their work are satisfactory. Most participate in activities willingly, but are less enthusiastic about their lessons. Some comment that they find the work too easy or have done it before. This leads them to lose interest and concentration; they are easily distracted. Pupils of all ages appreciate the trips and extra-curricular activities provided for them.

9. Pupils behave well at breaks and lunchtimes. They particularly appreciate the wide range of toys and games provided for their use at lunchtime. They use these sensibly, sharing them well and not interfering with others' games. Older pupils play with younger ones and most activities include pupils of all ages playing happily together. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting expressed concern that the school has a policy that lunch should be eaten in silence. This is not the school's policy. The school does expect pupils to be polite and quiet whilst eating lunch, which pupils are. The school has invited some parents to observe lunchtimes, but it has not published its policy to all parents or clarified the situation sufficiently with pupils. This situation has contributed to the misunderstanding and fostered tensions between the school and some parents. Behaviour in lessons is more variable. When the lessons are well matched to the abilities of the pupils, behaviour is usually good and sometimes very good. However, when the work fails to interest the pupils or is too easy for them, their behaviour is satisfactory at best. There have been no exclusions in the last year. Attitudes to learning and pupils' behaviour are similar to those reported in 2002.
10. Pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory. In religious education lessons pupils are taught about their own traditions and faith as well as those of other cultures and beliefs, including the way other cultures celebrate events such as birth and marriage. However, in subjects such as art and music, opportunities to explore ideas from other cultures are limited. Pupils develop the ability to reflect on their own feelings and values, but are less able to empathise with others whose beliefs and values differ from their own. Pupils' preparation for life in a multi-cultural society is unsatisfactory. They have too few opportunities to experience cultural diversity.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

11. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. Although the level of attendance at the school has declined since the previous inspection, it is broadly average when compared with primary schools nationally. The school ensures that parents are aware of its expectations for reporting any absences and almost all parents comply. However, a very high proportion of families take holidays during term time. Pupils usually arrive promptly in the morning.

Exclusions

There have been no exclusions from the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is unsatisfactory. Although most teaching seen was at least satisfactory, and good lessons were seen in all classes, there are still important weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection that have not been fully addressed and teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. The curriculum is unsatisfactory in that it does not adequately meet the needs of all pupils, although there are good opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities. The systems and procedures to support the care, guidance and support of pupils are unsatisfactory. The partnership with parents and the community is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall, and the standard of teaching is inconsistent although it varies from good to unsatisfactory. This inconsistency depresses pupils' level of achievement and diminishes their rate of progress. Assessment is unsatisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in the reception and Year 1 class is consistently good and, as a result, pupils make good progress.
- ICT is taught well throughout the school, leading to above average standards.
- Classroom support assistants are generally deployed well and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- The pace of the lessons in Years 2 to 6 is often slow.
- Whilst some attempts have been made to match the work to the needs of pupils of different abilities, this is not consistent.
- Assessment lacks rigour and is not used well enough to plan work for different ages and abilities of pupils.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	0	8	7	3	0	0

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

12. Teaching in the reception and Year 1 class is consistently good and as a result all pupils achieve well and the standards these pupils attain are generally above average. Different tasks are planned for both year groups and the very able and knowledgeable classroom support assistants are deployed very well. Reception age children with special educational needs and the traveller children are always included well and appropriate help and support provided.
13. The inconsistent quality of teaching in Years 2 to 6, coupled with different expectations by the various adults working in each class, means that the achievement of pupils is unsatisfactory. This is especially true in Year 2 and 3, where different styles of teaching impact adversely on the pupils. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory, the effect is sometimes lessened by the presence of able classroom assistants who support groups of pupils well. The work of the teaching assistant employed to help pupils improve their computer skills is also effective and as a result pupils achieve above average standards in ICT throughout the school. However, the number of times pupils are withdrawn from the same lesson is not monitored sufficiently and, as a result, one pupil left an English lesson twice, once for ICT and once to practise reading. When these factors are coupled with slow pace and a failure to insist on high standards of behaviour from the class as a whole, it means that this pupil learnt very little concerning the writing skills being taught.
14. Whilst teaching and learning are judged as unsatisfactory overall, there were examples of good lessons seen in every classroom. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, weaknesses include slow pace, overlong introductions, overlong lessons, inadequate

class management skills and work not sufficiently well matched to the needs of different ages and abilities.

15. In classes 2 and 3, pupils with special needs are generally met well because they are supported by able learning support assistants. Traveller pupils achieve well when members of staff from the traveller support service are present in class. Some good provision is made for the gifted and talented pupils in conjunction with the local secondary school. However, their needs are not always sufficiently well met in lessons and, as a result, the achievement of these pupils is at times below their potential. In almost every curriculum area, the Level 5 content of the curriculum is not taught to the older pupils. Sometimes less able Year 3 pupils do work planned for Year 2 pupils and more able Year 2 pupils do Year 3 work. A more able Year 3 pupil often works in the class containing the oldest pupils, but in most lessons across the curriculum work is not well enough matched to the different needs and abilities of pupils, and lessons are not exciting enough to provide adequate motivation for reluctant learners. As a result, the boys in class 2 and 3 rarely answer teachers' questions or even raise their hands.
16. The school has introduced a new method of assessing and tracking pupils' progress for English, mathematics and science, but as yet this has had little effect upon standards because the information collected is not used sufficiently well to adapt lessons to the needs of the pupils. Whilst pupils have been given targets for improvement in these areas, discussion with even the most able and articulate ones revealed that they were not clear what these targets are or what they need to do to improve their work. For other subjects of the curriculum the school has introduced a nationally recognised way of assessing the work of the class at the end of a unit of work, but again, this is very new and its impact has yet to be seen in planning and in teaching and learning.

The curriculum

Whilst all areas of learning and all subjects are taught, the curriculum provided is judged to be unsatisfactory overall because it fails to sufficiently address the needs of all pupils. The provision the school makes to enrich the learning of pupils is good. Resources are satisfactory, but the accommodation still has unsatisfactory elements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been an improvement in the accommodation for the reception and Year 1 class since the time of the previous inspection, but the curriculum and resources for reception age children are in need of improvement.
- Resources for ICT have improved and there are now sufficient computers to support learning across the curriculum. These are used effectively for teaching and learning when the part-time teaching assistant is working, but the computers in the classrooms stand idle for much of the time.
- There is a very high ratio of adults to pupils; however, this has not helped to raise standards sufficiently.
- Inadequate space inside the main building places difficult limitations on teaching and learning.
- The difficult site also restricts the curriculum for physical education, but the school makes good efforts to compensate for this.
- There are good opportunities for extra-curricular activities.

Commentary

17. Since the time of the previous inspection a new classroom has been provided for the youngest pupils. However, as yet the organisation of the accommodation and the curriculum do not adequately reflect the requirements laid down in the Foundation Stage document and there is an imbalance in adult-led, adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Resources are unsatisfactory, especially regarding the outdoor curriculum. However, appropriate plans are afoot to address this.
18. The provision for ICT is now good, especially when the teaching assistant employed to help with this is in school and all aspects of the curriculum are now taught systematically. At other times, however, there is little evidence of classroom computers being used across the curriculum and, for much of the time, they remain idle, diminishing the effectiveness of the provision. However, the newly installed interactive whiteboards are usually used effectively by teachers especially when introducing lessons.
19. The adult/pupil ratio is high at approximately one adult to every seven pupils, and teachers are generally appropriately qualified and knowledgeable and the support staff are able and effective. However, standards have not improved significantly in any area of the curriculum. This is because the curriculum does not facilitate either excellence or enjoyment. As at the time of the last inspection, the curriculum for English is narrow and does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to write creatively. Whilst more attention has been given to developing skills of mental calculations, these sessions often turn into overlong introductions to lessons and time is not used well in lessons. The staff make good provision for extra-curricular activities and these enrich the curriculum for older pupils.
20. Teachers are generally appropriately qualified and sufficiently knowledgeable to teach the required curriculum, but much of the curriculum lacks lustre and fails to provide either excellence or enjoyment, although all statutory requirements are met. Pupils are not well prepared for the next stage in their education. Too little has been done to ensure that there is proper progression in skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. The weaknesses identified in the two previous reports regarding the failure of schemes of work to ensure a progression of skills have not been adequately addressed for all subjects of the curriculum and this means that work is not planned well enough to meet the needs of all pupils. Whilst the time given to religious education has been increased, the curriculum still lacks coherence and, although the content of the school's planning could be interpreted as following the locally agreed syllabus, the philosophy outlined in the agreed syllabus is not adequately reflected. In addition, little has been done to develop personal, social and health education. The school does not operate a healthy eating policy, although it plans to introduce this, nor does it give the pupils sufficient opportunities to take responsibility or to learn about living as responsible citizens within a community. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is underdeveloped, and only appears on the timetable for the oldest class.

21. The classroom used by class 2 is very small and, when the whole class is present, the teacher has difficulty in moving from group to group. It is difficult for all pupils to see the board and, when the television is used, there is only a very cramped space for children to sit, even though there are only a small number of pupils in the class. The room used as a group room for children with special educational needs is upstairs and inaccessible for disabled pupils. It is small, the displays in this room are old and shabby, as are many of the resources that are kept there. There is no school hall so assemblies are held in the Methodist Chapel opposite the school. This helps to create a worshipful atmosphere.
22. The lack of a school hall means that it is difficult to teach the required curriculum for physical education. Good attempts are made to surmount these difficulties. Staff make appropriate use of the playground to teach games skills. The whole school goes swimming each week, dance and gymnastics are taught in the village hall and games are played on the adjoining field. Outdoor pursuits are taught to the oldest pupils during a residential visit. French is now taught to the older children once a week. A range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum well. These include an after school French club open to all pupils, lunchtime recorder and guitar groups, netball, football and rounders training and sporting fixtures with other schools.

Care, guidance and support

The school's provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of its pupils is unsatisfactory. The support, advice and guidance provided for pupils are unsatisfactory because they are not based on thorough monitoring procedures. Pupils are consulted and their views taken into consideration to a satisfactory degree when changes are planned but are not given responsibility for planning change.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is insufficiently rigorous in ensuring that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Personal and academic support and advice are insufficiently based on monitoring and are inconsistent.
- Pupils develop trusting relationships with staff but may lose trust when problems arise because the systems to deal with problems are inconsistently used and unsatisfactory.
- Pupils are consulted about changes, but not offered enough responsibility for effecting change.
- Arrangements for induction into the reception year are good.

Commentary

23. Arrangements to ensure pupils' health, safety and well-being are unsatisfactory. Although health and safety checks are carried out, these are not adequately recorded nor are risk assessments fully in place. A range of health and safety issues was brought to the attention of the headteacher during the inspection. Not all staff are aware of the procedures for first aid. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place. The prospectus does not inform parents about the procedures regarding medicines in school and other pastoral matters. The school states that sweets should not be brought, but this policy is not adhered to and many pupils eat unhealthy snacks such as crisps and chocolate.
24. The support, advice and guidance offered to pupils are unsatisfactory because they are insufficiently based on the outcomes of monitoring. Although assessment procedures have improved since the previous inspection, they are not yet used to plan the next

stages of learning for all pupils. Marking does not always ensure pupils know how to improve their work and the targets set for pupils, whether by the teacher or by the child, are often too general to help to guide progress. Teachers and other staff know the pupils well, but the school's approach is not sufficiently systematic to guarantee that all pupils feel supported when personal problems arise.

25. Pupils generally feel safe and happy in school. They develop trusting relationships with one or more members of staff. However, because the systems to deal with bullying and other unacceptable behaviour, first aid and other pastoral matters are inconsistently used, pupils sometimes feel that their concerns have not been taken seriously enough. The procedures to deal with these issues are not sufficiently clear and detailed to ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate level of care.
26. The school consults pupils to gain their views about proposed changes, such as the planned improvements to the grounds. Pupils are involved in changes that affect them, but are able to not take full responsibility for them. There are no formal systems to allow pupils to put forward ideas and suggestions.
27. Pupils' induction to the reception year is good. The programme of visits includes a home visit from the teacher. Children are confident and happy when they start school, settle quickly into the routines and learn well. Pupils joining the school at other times are less well supported. In particular, pupils do not act as 'buddies' to help the travelling children to settle into school routines and make friends during their short time at the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnerships with parents, other schools and the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many parents have proper concerns about many aspects of the school's work.
- Parents support the school well through the PTFA and other activities.
- The school has established satisfactory links with the community and this provides the school with additional facilities which improve pupils' learning.
- The Huish Federation of schools provides good opportunities for staff training and organises a range of activities for the most able children.

Commentary

28. Those parents who completed the questionnaire, or attended the meeting for parents held before the inspection, raised significant concerns. There are significant weaknesses in the way the school responds to parents' concerns and questions. Over 40 per cent stated that homework arrangements were not effective. Parents do not understand the school's expectations. They feel that homework is often boring and does not contribute to their children's learning in a meaningful way. In particular, because the information parents receive about the curriculum is very limited, they do not feel able to support their children as well as they might like. Over a third of parents do not believe that the school is well led and managed. A quarter believes that their suggestions and concerns are not taken into account, and that they are not well informed by the school. A significant number are concerned that the teaching is not good, that their children are not expected to work hard and that progress is not good.

Parents are concerned about the way the school deals with bullying and some do not believe that their children are treated fairly by the school.

29. Inspection evidence bears out the parents' concerns. Parents are not sufficiently well informed about what their children are learning to be able to help at home, except with aspects of reading, spelling and some elements in mathematics. The recently introduced home-school link book and the homework diaries help to make parents aware of issues and what homework has been set, but they are not used consistently well. Reports are of a satisfactory quality overall, but the standard varies between teachers. The prospectus and newsletters ensure that parents are adequately informed about the school's daily life and routines. The way the school responds to parents' concerns and questions is unsatisfactory. The school does not respond quickly enough when parents raise concerns nor does it keep parents up to date with the actions taken to address these. The school places too much reliance on its open door policy. Not all parents feel comfortable to approach the school in this way. The onus for following up the issues raised is on parents, rather than on staff. The lack of response from the school about issues such as the lack of curriculum information or bullying, leads parents to question the value of approaching the school.
30. The PTFA supports the school well by organising a range of social and fund raising events. Parents are currently involved in the plans to improve the grounds and have made a pleasant garden area outside the new classroom.
31. The school has established a range of links with the local community that have a positive impact on pupils' learning; for example, some residents help in school and visits are arranged to local places in history such as Burrow Mump. As the school has no hall, the village hall is used for physical education and the chapel for assemblies
32. The local federation of schools offers opportunities for teachers to meet together to share their experiences and for in-service training. The school works with the high school to ensure that pupils move smoothly to the next stage of education. Pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to visit their new school and appropriate records are transferred.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is unsatisfactory. The effectiveness of management is poor. Governance is unsatisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has failed to drive forward improvements at a sufficient pace or set high enough expectations of what the school can achieve.
- Standards and achievement lag behind other schools because the actions taken to overcome the barriers to improvement have not been effective.
- The governors, although supportive, have been unable to influence the work of the school sufficiently to bring about effective improvements.
- When events or crises arise in school, action to deal with them is not effective as the systems, policies and responsibilities are unclear.

- The leadership and management of other staff lack focus and cohesion; they monitor teaching and learning in their subjects, but this is insufficiently rigorous to improve standards.

Commentary

33. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher are unsatisfactory. Not enough has been done since the last inspection to develop the school. There is no clear vision about what the school needs to do to improve and raise standards. Since the last inspection, two years ago, the school has created action plans to help to overcome the weaknesses the previous report identified. The plans are fine, but the actions taken to implement the changes that are needed have been executed in an indifferent manner. The goals set in the plans appear to address the issues, but there is little evidence to indicate that the staff understand them, or what impact they need to have. There has been a lack of urgency and ambition in tackling problems. Teaching and learning have improved, although there is some way to go.
34. With the support of the local education authority (LEA), a programme of support and guidance has been put in place in the school. This has brought about some changes; for instance, teachers now use the national guidance to plan their work. However, the ability to interpret this to match the wide-ranging needs of the different pupils varies between teachers. Some fail to amend the content to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. At times the interpretation of the plans leads to dull and uninspiring lessons which follow the guidance, but which fail to motivate the pupils. As part of the improvement programme, teachers have monitored each other's lessons, but the impact of this has been limited. The observations fail to evaluate the effect of the teaching on learning. Judgements, when given are limited, and the school has gained little by this process.
35. The headteacher has not been able to create an effective teaching team. Staff changes have slowed and disrupted the programme of improvement. There is little sense of drive or purpose in the school. Issues, such as the three month delay in the installation of a new classroom become an excuse for inactivity. Although only a small school, where every pupil is well known, it is not as equitable as many larger ones. Girls dominate in the older classes, not only in numbers, but in answering questions and providing ideas and information. The school is open to all whatever their background and clearly states that parents are welcome at any time. This open door policy is fine in theory, but relies on parents coming to the school and raising issues rather than the school actively dealing with problems that arise. The school lacks policies, procedures and systems to manage issues. For example, the nearby traveller site has been in place for some years, yet the school has no formal procedures set out to ensure how it will manage the occasional arrival of traveller children.
36. The governors have been supportive of the school and are very involved in the process of improvement. They are consulted on all essential matters and do question the school and the activities it is involved with. Nevertheless, they have not been able to promote sufficient change and improvement quickly enough. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have accepted the advice and guidance they have been given. However, they have not challenged the leadership sufficiently when planned actions have not happened, or more often, been delayed. More importantly, they have not challenged the school sufficiently when changes have failed to bring about

any impact. The results in National Curriculum assessments at both Year 2 and Year 6 have languished in the lowest two categories for two years now. The trend in attainment has been downwards. This school serves a moderately prosperous community, with few social problems. It is a school with very high teacher/pupil ratios and adult/pupil ratios. It is a school which has received substantial support in four key curriculum areas. Yet despite its advantages, it has failed to raise standards high enough, or to even bring them into line with the national average.

37. The school is now monitoring the data it generates and this is highlighting a number of issues, for instance, that some of the assessments that have taken place appear to be unreliable. Yet little remedial action has been taken to validate or deny this. Patterns and trends have been identified, but not actions to rectify them. The school's self-evaluation system, performance management system and continuous professional development are in place, but they lack rigour. This makes them ineffective. Curriculum leadership in all small schools is difficult. Every teacher has to take on multiple responsibilities, and this school is no different. New staff are identifying issues and beginning to offer possible solutions to these, but at present the curriculum is not meeting the needs of most pupils, therefore the leadership of curriculum co-ordinators is ineffective. Pupils with special educational needs get a better deal; their individual needs are catered for satisfactorily because they have good support from capable and effective teaching assistants.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	219,586	Balance from previous year	36,549
Total expenditure	236,397	Balance carried forward to the next	19,927
Expenditure per pupil	4,075		

38. Day-to-day financial control is managed effectively. Support staff exercise careful control of the budget, always seeking to apply the principles of best value to the acquisition and use of resources. The management of the school's budget is very cautious. In small schools such as this, it is difficult to accrue sufficient reserves to have much impact. Nevertheless, the current carry forward at over seven per cent of the school's income is higher than recommended. This is after money has been set aside to support the current level of staffing despite falling pupil numbers. No firm plans exist for the use of this money, but the school would like to improve aspects of the building which are inadequate for the needs of the pupils.
39. In the light of the favourable start pupils make in the school; the very high staffing ratios; the very high cost per pupil, (over 40 per cent higher than average costs) and setting these alongside the unsatisfactory standards and achievements of pupils in Years 2 and 6, it is judged that the school provides poor value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**. When the pupils start school their attainment varies from year-to-year, but is generally average in most areas of the curriculum. This is the case with the current reception age children. However, the high ratio of adults to children helps to ensure that they achieve well, make good progress and are in line to attain the levels expected in most areas of learning by the end of the reception year.

40. Teaching and learning are good overall. Children are taught in a mixed-age class with Year 1 pupils. The teacher and the classroom assistants work well together and children get a great deal of adult input. However, there is an imbalance between adult-led, adult-directed work and free choice for the children. This limits the development of children's independent learning. There is some inappropriate use of worksheets and an over-concentration on written work too early in the academic year which restricts children's creativity.
41. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Whilst the class teacher is an able and experienced practitioner she is not yet sufficiently knowledgeable about the requirements of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. She has had some training in using the new national assessment system for this age group, but as yet the information gained from these observations is not good enough to plan the kind of activities described in the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance. Nevertheless, children achieve well and make good progress towards the goals expected by the end of the reception year in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. The need for pupils to learn both indoors and out has been taken into account in the teacher's planning, and regular outside physical activities are provided for the children. There is no secure outdoor area for this class at present, although there are appropriate plans to develop such an area so that this aspect of teaching and learning can be fully implemented.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good partnership between the class teacher and the teaching assistants who provide good role models for the children.
- Induction arrangements for children are good and they are helped to settle well into school.
- The provision for children with special educational needs and for the traveller children is good.
- There are high expectations of behaviour, but children have too few opportunities to take on responsibilities, or for independent learning.
- Stimulating activities and the good use of questioning help children to improve their skills in speaking and listening, and reading and writing well, and to improve their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- The new, more spacious classroom accommodation is not yet used well enough to meet the needs of the children and the demands of the curriculum.

Commentary

42. In **personal social and emotional development** children achieve appropriately and make **satisfactory** progress because a good level of adult support is provided for them. The good induction procedures, coupled with the fact that the staff in the reception class already know most of the families prior to the children starting school ensure that they settle in well. The adults have high but appropriate expectations of children's behaviour. They encourage them to take turns and share, play and co-operate well together. Both the adults and the Year 1 pupils provide good role models in courtesy and behaviour in class and as a result the reception children are in line to reach the standard expected at the end of the year.
43. On entry to school the standards in all aspects of **communication language and literacy** are average. The staff provide a wide range of carefully planned activities which promote speaking, listening, reading and writing well and as a result children achieve well and make **good** progress. By the end of the year most achieve above the level expected in these aspects. The teacher and classroom assistants alike are skilled at questioning children to make them think hard and answer thoughtfully about things discussed in class. They introduce them to a new and ever widening range of vocabulary. Because this is usually set in contexts that children can readily understand, their speaking and listening skills improve. Children are provided with suitable opportunities to read and write formally in lessons, but too few opportunities are provided for these activities to take place in their free play, limiting their independence. The book corner is unappealing and again children are seldom encouraged to choose reading as an independent activity, which holds back their achievement in this aspect. However, reading scheme books are taken home regularly and parents come into class to help their children choose new books. In the morning, before lessons start, many parents stay and share books with their children. This helps to foster good relationships between staff and parents, and to present a positive message about the value of books and reading. By the end of the reception year, all children can write their own name, they know all the letters of the alphabet, and can spell simple two and three letter words and most can read all the reception class key words. Some children are writing in sentences, but too often they write under an adult's guidance and complete low level worksheets that do not enhance learning
44. Children enter school with average skills in **mathematical development**. They make **good** progress in all aspects of this area of learning and achieve above average standards by the end of the year because of the good teaching they receive in small groups and the practical tasks provided. However, again, these lessons are often followed by the completion of inappropriate worksheets which fail to stimulate their interest in the subject.
45. Children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** are average on entry. They make satisfactory progress and attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. However, children do not achieve as well as they could because this area of learning is taught through National Curriculum subjects. Children have too few opportunities to experiment with natural materials such as sand, water and clay, or to use large and small construction toys, play resources, or to experiment with magnets and magnifying glasses.
46. In **physical development** standards are in line with expectations and their achievement is satisfactory. Too few opportunities are provided for children to develop the fine motor skills through the use of small construction, jigsaws, cutting and sticking,

painting and using writing tools, staplers and hole-punches in their free play. One physical education lesson was seen outside and children's large muscle control was judged to be above average. Children also have a swimming lesson once a week and a formal lesson on Friday afternoons in the village hall which they enjoy. These give children a good opportunity to make progress in an area where the school has limited options. Opportunities to develop physical skills should improve once there is a secure outside play area.

47. Too little evidence was seen of **creative development** to make a secure judgement about achievement and progress. However, the organisation of the room indicates that too few opportunities are provided to promote sufficient progress and development in this area of learning. There is one music lesson identified on the timetable for the last session on a Friday afternoon and no musical instruments on display. The small puppet theatre was observed to be in use briefly during the inspection and this was enjoyed by the children. There is no creative table or painting easels constantly set up for the children to use in a holistic way to support other areas of learning. At present, the space inside the classroom and the outside space are not used well enough to provide an attractive and exciting environment and the Foundation Stage curriculum is not yet fully implemented to provide the active type of curriculum that best meets the needs of young children.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are not high enough and many pupils are not achieving as well as they might, especially in spoken and written English.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to carry out discussions or debates, to write at length, or to practise and refine their writing to learn how to improve it.
- Systems to monitor and evaluate work in the subject are not used rigorously enough to bring improvements in the subject.
- English is not used effectively to support pupils' learning in the other subjects of the curriculum.
- There is too little enjoyment of the subject after a good start in reception and Year 1.

Commentary

48. Standards in Year 2 are below average in all respects. This is despite a good start in Year 1 where pupils start with standards above average. Some able pupils achieve the higher than average levels, but progress for most is poor. Standards in Year 6 are also below average. This has been reflected in the Year 6 assessments for the past two years. Nevertheless, standards at Year 6 are an improvement on those in Years 3 and 4. In these years some pupils are making no progress or their standards are declining. They only start to progress again in Year 5 and then again in Year 6. The uneven nature of the pupils' progress through the school diminishes pupils' achievements in the subject and few show any confidence or real enthusiasm for their work. Their overall achievement is unsatisfactory. This reflects the finding of the last inspection two years ago. There has been little improvement since then.
49. Standards in spoken English are below expectations in Years 2 to 6. Pupils are well practised at listening to their teachers, but there are few constructive opportunities to speak at length about what they know and understand. There are limited opportunities to discuss or debate, or to report back on their findings or the views and opinions of others. There is no evidence of pupils being encouraged to use drama to develop insights into characters, or situations in poetry or stories. Some pupils, mainly girls, pose questions, but they do not always receive answers to these and this does not encourage others to try to participate as actively as they should in lessons. There are no assessments in spoken English after the early years and progress is assumed to take place rather than planned and ensured. Some pupils with special educational needs have targets relating to communication in their individual action plans, but other pupils have none.
50. Standards in reading are below average in Years 2 and 6. Nevertheless, the provision is better in this aspect of the subject. More pupils attain higher than expected levels in the end of year assessments than do so in writing. Pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring the range of basic skills necessary to read increasingly demanding texts confidently, accurately and with increasing fluency. By Year 6, pupils are able to express clear opinions about different authors, why they prefer one to another, and what

it is about a particular style of writing that they like. Several pupils had completed online book reviews at a national website designed to promote pupils' interest in reading. They have limited understanding as to how to use an internet search engine, but clearly articulated the school's policy on safe use of the internet. Older pupils have a sound understanding of how to use a library.

51. Standards in writing are below average in Years 2 to 6. The school has identified this as a key area for development. The school is working hard to raise standards; in the last year individual pupils have been given their own 'progress books'. Their purpose is to carry out regular pieces of writing that are then carefully marked and assessed to determine individual pupil targets. These targets are written in their books by the pupils. The system is good, but in practice, not yet effective. Many pupils do not know how to use their targets or what they need to do about them. Some do not know what their targets are as teachers do not appear to make regular reference to them. In every year group, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length. They are often encouraged to make notes in lessons, but this is usually done on an individual whiteboard that is then quickly wiped clean before an adult can evaluate it. Because they usually only write fragments and because they get only limited feedback on the quality of their writing, they have limited knowledge about what they need to do to improve the quality of their work, or just how good they are. The teachers' marking rarely identifies the next steps they need to take. Some thought has been given to using opportunities in other subjects such as science and the humanities for developing different styles of writing, for example, a factual account or a chronological sequence. Even so, the oldest and most able pupils still do not have a good range of work, and teachers' expectations of pupils are too low. Pupils with special educational needs get good support in this aspect of their learning as they usually have constant access to classroom assistants who explain, guide and prompt them well.
52. Although some good teaching was seen, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. The quality is inconsistent through the school, and this is having a negative impact on achievement and standards. Some good work was also seen. In the best lesson, the teacher was well prepared and enthusiastic about the subject. The work was interesting and the pace of the lesson brisk. The teacher challenged, cajoled and encouraged the pupils to do their best. ICT was used very effectively to provide extra challenge for able pupils who produced work of greater sophistication and depth. All lessons, start with a reference to objectives; where this is done well and the objectives are clear this means that the pupils know what is expected of them. At other times they are unclear and the teacher does not explain them clearly so pupils are confused and uncertain about what they are doing.
53. The wide age range in each class and the very wide ability range are rarely catered for with distinct tasks. Teachers have difficulty pitching what they are saying so that it maintains the interest of all pupils. Lessons start to become less effective when too much time is spent with the teacher talking to the pupils. It is soon apparent when the pupils start to lose interest, yet at times the teachers just carry on with what they have planned. This dull teaching does not engage the pupils, and starts to lead into a spiral of decline. The pupils become restless and the teacher stops praising good responses and starts to harangue those who are fidgeting. More pupils become bored and as the lesson drags on there is less and less commitment from the pupils. In the best lessons, good use is made of the good quality teaching assistants. They support assessments by noting pupils' responses and give good guidance and help to individuals. The good

rapport between the teacher and the assistants allows the teacher to reinforce praise with requests for the assistants to take a special look at good work. In the less effective lessons the teaching assistants spend much time sitting and waiting for the teacher to finish talking. They are under-employed, under-used and therefore much less effective at supporting the pupils' needs.

54. Current leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator is a good role model for other staff and works hard to try and achieve the sort of improvements she knows are needed. She has been in post less than a year and has already been able to set up systems and structures that have the potential to bring about improvement. The management of these improvements is less effective. The monitoring and evaluation of what is happening are not yet rigorous enough. The inconsistencies in the use of the systems, the lack of pace in lessons and other crucial issues are not clearly identified. In a small school with a small staff it is hard to give critical messages, yet it is clear that the pace of change is too slow to bring about the radical improvement that is needed.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. Pupils still have too few opportunities to develop their skills in English despite the fact that school has identified the need to make use of the subject across the whole curriculum. There are examples in pupils' books where writing has been used effectively in other subjects, notably science and the humanities. There were a few good examples seen in lessons of teachers encouraging pupils to discuss their work with the teaching assistants who then skilfully developed these ideas and reported back the assessments they had made to the teacher. Unfortunately, this use of cross-curricular links and this good rapport appear to be unusual. The more usual result is that the pupils are uninterested in the tasks they are given, uncommitted to producing good quality work, and unenthusiastic about learning more. There is little zest for the intricacies of language, and little pride in the quality of their writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory** because standards remain too low.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at Year 6 remain below average.
- The quality of teaching is too variable to ensure that all pupils achieve well or to raise the standards attained to the levels expected throughout the school.
- The recently introduced marking, target setting and assessment procedures are too recent to have made any significant difference to the standards achieved.
- Pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of how good their work is and how it could be improved.
- Improvement since the previous inspection has been insufficient.

Commentary

56. The quality and impact of the teaching throughout the school varies from class-to-class and teacher-to-teacher. Teaching in Year 1 is consistently good and pupils achieve well because their needs are met well. The results of the recently administered tests show that standards in Year 2 are in line with national expectations and pupils'

achievement are satisfactory. Standards at Year 6 remain below average and the test result for this group of pupils is likely to be similar to last year's. These findings are the same as at the time of the last inspection and, as at the time of the last inspection, are too low. The rate of progress pupils make is not fast enough and the results represent a fall in levels of attainment between Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Findings during the inspection reflect the results of the tests.

57. Relationships between staff and pupils, and among the pupils themselves, are generally good, but their response to lessons mirrors the quality of teaching. Teaching varies between good and unsatisfactory and overall is satisfactory. Where teaching is good pupils concentrate well in lessons and the work they produce is of a reasonable standard and neatly presented. In other lessons, the pace is slow, and there are overlong introductions leading to restless behaviour and scrappy and unfinished tasks.
58. As at the time of the last inspection, work is not always matched well enough to the needs of individuals. This means that pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teaching assistants, and during the inspection, the traveller children were supported well by adults from the Traveller Education Service. This extra support meant that these two groups of pupils remained on task, concentrated well and worked hard regardless of the quality of teaching taking place. These pupils' achievements are satisfactory.
59. Some pupils work with older or younger children in order meet their learning needs better, but the recently introduced procedures for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress are not yet used effectively to adjust lessons to the needs of different individuals or groups of pupils. For example, the teaching in the class containing the oldest pupils did not challenge the more able pupils sufficiently and they were not working at a level commensurate with their ability. Also, although targets are set for different groups of pupils, they are not tailored closely enough to meet the needs of individuals. When asked, children were unclear about what their targets are or what they needed to do to improve their work further. As yet, these initiatives have not helped to raise standards throughout the school.
60. Leadership and management are both unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator does not have a clear enough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Although she has taken advice from the local authority and introduced the recommended initiatives, these have yet to be used effectively. For example, the targets set are not challenging enough and, although she has looked at teachers' planning, there have been no observable improvements in teaching and learning. Resources are sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Evidence of the effective use of mathematics was seen in ICT, especially data handling. There is also some evidence of the use of mathematics in science and geography but the cross-curricular aspects of the subject are not yet sufficiently well developed.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are not planned effectively to match the range of pupils' needs in each class. Some find the work too easy, whilst others struggle to understand the concepts.
- Able pupils are not sufficiently stretched by the work they are expected to do.
- The allocation of a whole afternoon to one extended lesson for Years 2 to 6 leads to the pupils losing interest and becoming unenthusiastic about the subject.
- The curriculum planning ensures that all aspects of the subject are now taught. An improvement since the last inspection.
- Work is now co-ordinated effectively into exercise books and there has been a good attempt made to show pupils' progress in understanding and knowledge.

Commentary

62. The standards attained by most pupils in the current Year 2 are in line with those expected for their age. This is an improvement on the previous year when the overall picture was below average. In Year 6, the standards attained overall are below average. This reflects the results in the end of Year 6 assessments for the last two years. Pupils' achievements in Years 2 to 6 are unsatisfactory. Many are failing to reach their potential in this subject as they are not sufficiently challenged by the work that they are given. In both classes, pupils of all ages and abilities are taught the same aspects together. To ensure that the younger and less able pupils can participate, teachers pitch the work at a low level. When this happens, older and more able pupils quickly become bored. However, when teachers respond to questions, or introduce harder concepts, the younger and less able pupils quickly lose interest and are only kept on task by the presence of teaching assistants.
63. Pupils in Year 2 tried to devise a fair test to see how hard different types of rock were. The teacher gave them a lot of information and some good resources. At first they struggled to come up with solutions but, under the skilful direction of a teaching assistant they made sound progress in devising plans to test out their ideas. However, several had lost interest before the end of the session as they were unable to try out their ideas. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 worked on an experiment to examine changes in temperature. They took a series of readings of thermometers over the course of the afternoon and recorded their results on a spreadsheet. They were able to explain what was happening, but many of the Year 4 pupils did not understand the significance of the pattern of readings that was emerging. Both lessons were overlong. Pupils participated eagerly for a while, but there was too little interest and challenge to hold their attention for the whole time.
64. Teaching and learning at the end of Years 2 and 6 are unsatisfactory. In the two lessons seen during the inspection teaching and learning were judged to be satisfactory as there were some good elements that balanced out the weaknesses. Teachers' basic planning is satisfactory, pupils are directed to think about the objectives at the start of the lesson and the objectives are reviewed at the end. Resources are well prepared and well suited to the tasks. Teaching assistants have been effectively briefed and the pupils all understand the process of 'plan, do and review' well. However, the weaknesses concern the fact that lessons planned do not meet the needs of the wide spectrum of pupils in each class. In addition, the length of time taken to get the lessons underway and then the slow pace of the lessons leads to pupils starting to become bored and careless. The lack of challenge, especially for the

more able pupils, means that they are underachieving and they do not enjoy the subject as much as they might.

65. Much work has been put into the subject since the last inspection to rectify the failings it identified. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has worked with the LEA adviser to ensure that the planning now covers all elements of the curriculum. 'Progress books' have been introduced to help to monitor pupils' understanding and knowledge. Thought has been given to integrating literacy, numeracy and ICT into elements of the subject, and in the limited range of work where this has happened it has been successful. However, there are as yet no rigorous assessments in the subject to give teachers a clear picture how successful their teaching has been and the impact it has had on pupils' learning. Lessons have been observed, but the evaluations lack clear judgements and analysis of what is needed to reinforce the improvements that have been made. Despite the improvements, standards remain below those expected for most year groups and there is some way to go before the provision can be considered at least satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection when the standards were considered to be in line with the national average.
- All pupils have good opportunities to undertake a spectrum of work across all elements of the curriculum.
- Pupils are confident working with a range of equipment and the work they do is starting to support and extend their work in other subjects.
- Simple but effective assessment procedures allow staff to know how well pupils are doing and to plan what they need to do next to build their expertise.
- Teachers work effectively with the part-time teaching assistant responsible for work in this area and pupils of all ages are benefiting from this successful collaboration.

Commentary

66. Teaching and learning are good. All pupils get good opportunities to learn, practise and develop the full range of ICT skills and, as a result, their achievement is good. No whole-class lessons were seen during the course of the inspection as the school does not have sufficient computers to work in this way. However, a number of small groups were observed, and pupils were seen using the equipment in support of other subjects in the curriculum. In work seen with pupils from Years 2 and 3, pupils were confidently manipulating and managing a database program to construct an identification key for small creatures. They managed their own files successfully and selected appropriate pictures to illustrate the task. Pupils in Year 1 working with a programmable toy enjoyed meeting the challenges they were set. The teaching assistant allows pupils to make mistakes for themselves and then encourages them to learn from these. The tasks chosen are short, simple, but effective. There is a clear development of ideas and skills and more able pupils are given higher levels of challenge. Pupils in all classes have positive attitudes to the subject. Those with special educational needs and the traveller pupils make good progress in this subject as they benefit from one-to-one tuition with the teaching assistant.

67. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator is new to the post. She is enthusiastic about the subject and has a vision for further developments and improvements in the subject. The school has recently acquired interactive whiteboards for every class. Initial problems with them have led to teachers being cautious about the way they use them and at present their presentations are mundane and do not add significantly to the quality of the teaching. The co-ordinator and the teaching assistant believe that this will improve. The teaching assistant has a good technical understanding and manages the school's system well. As a result, pupils' learning benefits from regular planned tuition and extra time in other lessons when they can use their knowledge and skills creatively. The teaching assistant has adapted and developed a simple assessment system which allows him to track all pupils' progress and plan for the next steps they need to take. The teaching and learning in this subject are more successful because assessment is much more effective and work is better matched to individual pupils' needs. As a consequence progress is good, pupils are involved and enjoy what they are doing and they achieve well.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. The work pupils undertake in this subject gives good support to other subjects. Word processing is used to develop writing skills in English. Spreadsheets are used in science to record data and multimedia presentations are used in a range of subjects. Pupils are withdrawn from lessons to work on aspects of ICT and, because the teaching assistant is part-time, this does not always fit in with the main subject being taught and pupils sometimes miss out on important sections of their main lessons. When the teaching assistant is not in school opportunities for pupils to extend the work of their ordinary lessons are missed, and at times the computers are under-used. This factor contributes to pupils' underachievement in subjects such as English and mathematics where opportunities to extend their work are overlooked..

HUMANITIES

69. No overall judgement is made in either **history** or **geography** because no lessons were observed in geography and only one in history. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that standards in both subjects are below average at Year 2 and average at Year 6. In the history lesson observed in the reception and Year 1 class the teaching was good for the Year 1 pupils. Work in pupils' books in the Year 4, 5 and 6 class and the displays in both classes, show that pupils have studied the history of Britain since 1930. These attractive displays enhance and complement the work of pupils. All pupils from Year 2 – 6 study the same topic. They use different worksheets and those used in Year 2 and 3 are unsuitable for the age and ability of the pupils.
70. Neither subject is a current focus of the school improvement plan. The co-ordinator is new to the role. She has, however, given a great deal of thought to the subject, particularly regarding assessment, and has drawn up some appropriate formats. When the use of these is securely embedded into practice, improvements in these subjects are likely to occur.

Religious Education

Provision for religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 have improved since the last inspection.
- The time allocated to the subject has been increased appropriately.
- Pupils' work is carefully marked but does not always indicate how pupils can improve.
- There is an overall framework of topics to be covered throughout the school, but the locally agreed syllabus is still not used consistently as a guide to planning.
- Pupils are unenthusiastic about the subject.
- Visits to, and visitors from, both Christian and non-Christian places of worship, enhance the curriculum.

Commentary

71. Whilst standards at Year 2 remain below those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus, by Year 6 most pupils now attain the level expected. None attain above average standards because pupils of all ages and abilities in the class do the same work. Standards show a slight improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were found to be below average. The amount of time given to the subject has been increased and is now in accordance with national and local guidelines. Year 2 pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory, but by the end of Year 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
72. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In Year 1, much of the work pupils do is appropriately linked to their own life styles and understanding. These pupils talk with enthusiasm about special events in their lives and why they are important to them. They bring items such as photographs in from home to support their lessons and the teacher helps them to share these memories with the class. Much of the work in Year 2 and 3 does loosely follow a theme, but links from one lesson to the next are not made explicit and work appears as a series of apparently unrelated lessons that are based on a mixture of stories and teachings from both the Old and New Testament. Too many low level work sheets are still in evidence in this class and there is no work in pupils' books about other religions. However, at the time of the inspection, there was display outside the classroom that included Hinduism. Discussion with the co-ordinator revealed she was aware that too little had been taught about other religions in this class. A visit from a practising Hindu is planned who will talk to all classes.
73. The work produced by pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 shows that they have studied the beliefs, teachings and practices of various major religions, but there was little to show that they reflect on what religious experiences might mean to those who believe. Work is generally of the expected standard, but the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Neat, careful work is clearly valued by their teachers in their marking, but marking seldom explain how pupils can develop their knowledge and understanding further and there is no evidence of pupils finding things out for themselves. The lesson observed in this class was good because the teacher asked open ended questions that enabled pupils to discuss similarities and differences between Christianity and Hinduism. An attractive display in the classroom supports the topic being studied.
74. The school's scheme of work is based on the locally agreed syllabus. Within the agreed school framework of topics for the year, teachers plan their own lessons. This means that there is no real cohesion to the curriculum and, whilst pupils learn about

religions, learning from them is limited and the underlying philosophy of the guidance given in the locally agreed syllabus does not often shine through the work the children produce. Pupils' lack of enthusiasm for the subject detected in their work was reinforced in discussion with them. Many say that this is their least favourite subject.

75. The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory. However, the work seen indicates that teachers seldom use lessons to bring together English, history, geography and religion. Links with personal, social and health education are not made explicit, despite written guidance that supplements the locally agreed syllabus, and the subject makes little contribution to the development of pupils' spirituality.
76. The subject leader is knowledgeable about Christianity and keeps herself informed about developments in the religious education by regularly attending co-ordinators' meetings. However, although some progress has been made since the time of the last inspection, not enough has been done to ensure that the curriculum adequately addresses the spirit of the locally agreed syllabus, or to meet the needs of pupils of different ages and ability. Leadership and management of the subject, therefore, remain unsatisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. As no lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education, it was not possible to make a firm judgement about provision, standards, achievement or teaching and learning in these subjects.
78. In **art and design**, teachers' plans, the co-ordinator's file and pupils' work on the walls and in displays around the school, show that the school tries hard to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Work in pupils' sketch books shows the progressive development of their knowledge and understanding. Pupils practise techniques and build a range of skills using different media and materials. They have studied the work of a number of famous artists and have tried to copy their styles in some of their work.
79. In **design and technology**, a revised programme of work, which ensures coverage of the nationally recommended guidelines, ensures progression of learning throughout the school. There is evidence around the school and in pupils' books confirming that pupils get good opportunities to work across all aspects of this subject.
80. In **music**, the subject co-ordinator has a satisfactory understanding of the subject, but the part-time nature of her role and recent staffing changes have diminished the influence of the subject in the school. Music does not have a significant impact on the ethos of the school in aspects such as collective worship. However, the co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of the subject, and how she can support colleagues with planning and guidance.
81. Facilities for **physical education** are unsatisfactory, but teachers' plans show that the school works hard to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum despite the restriction of the building and grounds. The school uses the village hall for most lessons, and most of the equipment and resources are kept there. Lessons there entail a five minute walk. Each week, the whole school goes by bus for swimming lessons and, by Year 6, all pupils can swim the expected twenty-five metres. All can swim much further, and most have obtained a variety of awards at higher levels. The school playground is marked out for netball and the playground is often used to teach a range

of ball skills. Outdoor adventure activities are taught on residential visits for the oldest pupils and a range of extra-curricular games activities takes place. These include netball, cricket, rounders and football.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

82. No work was seen during the course of the inspection and therefore no judgement could be made about the standards attained or the quality of teaching and learning. Work in this aspect is only timetabled for the oldest class and it is not clear how this programme links with religious education or the collective worship across the school. Behaviour seen during the inspection was generally satisfactory, but parents' concerns about how matters such as bullying are dealt with in the school indicate that there is a need to improve pupils' awareness of personal and social development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	5
How inclusive the school is	5
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	6
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	4
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	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	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	5
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	5
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	6

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