

INSPECTION REPORT

POTTERS GATE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Farnham

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125161

Headteacher: Mrs Margaret Peters

Lead inspector: Mr Christopher Gray

Dates of inspection: 10–12 May 2004

Inspection number: 257219

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: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4–11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 235

School address: Potters Gate
Farnham
Surrey
Postcode: GU9 7BB

Telephone number: 01252 715619
Fax number: 01252 718165

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Ben Linscott

Date of previous inspection: March, 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the centre of Farnham and is much the same size as other primary schools, though smaller than it was at the time of the last inspection. This is because the standard admissions number has been reduced. It is now set at 30 pupils in Reception, but rises to 45 in Year 3, when the school accepts pupils from local infant schools. This leads to fluctuating numbers from year to year and makes the organisation of classes difficult. The school has a number of spare places, which it sometimes has to offer to pupils excluded from other schools. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is similar to that found in most schools.

Most pupils come from homes whose socio-economic circumstances are similar to national averages and less favourable than much of Farnham. The proportion of pupils entitled to receive a free school meal is average, as is the percentage of pupils on the special needs register. However, the percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs is above average at three per cent. Pupils' needs include specific, severe and moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural problems, visual, speech, hearing or communication impairment, physical disability and autism. The percentage of pupils from ethnic minorities (12 per cent) is higher than in most Surrey schools, as is the proportion of pupils at the early stages of learning English (4.7 per cent).

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21037	Christopher Gray	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History
9769	Margaret Morrissey	Lay inspector	
18370	Kevin Johnson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Music Religious education
8534	David Price	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Physical education English as an additional language
33134	Catherine Williams	Team inspector	Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Limited

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school does not give a satisfactory standard of education to its pupils nor is it providing satisfactory value for money. It requires special measures, because of the ineffectiveness of leadership and management, which has led to a decline in standards and pupils' under-achievement.

The circumstances in which this school is placed are unusual. In the current school year, serious behaviour problems emerged in the upper juniors, which staff found hard to overcome. The work of many pupils deteriorated, as is clear from their books, from parents' comments and from the school's own evidence. In March, the headteacher was taken ill and has been on long-term sick leave since. At Easter, two teachers resigned and an interim headteacher was moved from her own school to lead Potters Gate for half a term. She made two new staff appointments and completely reorganised the classes in Years 5 and 6. The result has been that discipline problems have been mastered and pupils' attitudes greatly improved and the overall quality of teaching is clearly very different from that demonstrated by the pupils' past work. However, the future is still uncertain. The headteacher has returned for two days a week to work alongside the interim headteacher, who will soon have to return to her own school. The deputy head was appointed to the school only in September, though her work as acting headteacher last term is valued by governors. In addition, there will be several staff vacancies at the end of the term – perhaps as many as six. Recruitment of staff, including a long spell without a deputy head, has been one of the school's greatest difficulties over the last three years, during which period results in the Year 6 national tests have steadily declined.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is a good school ethos, where most pupils have good attitudes to learning, good personal development and very good relationships with others.
- The school offers its pupils good care and welfare and parents know that their children enjoy school.
- Standards in art and design exceed expectations by Years 2 and 6 and in information and communication technology (ICT) by Year 2.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very ineffective and does not inspire confidence in parents and staff.
- Teachers do not make enough use of their knowledge of pupils' prior attainment, so that many pupils, especially higher attainers, do not make enough progress.
- Provision in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.

The key issues of the last report were well and speedily dealt with; the provision for ICT was improved, a new library was built, homework improved and schemes of work completed. However, since then, standards have declined, behaviour is less positive and there is less than half the amount of very good or better teaching. Overall, the improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.

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

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	B	D	E
Mathematics	B	C	D	E
Science	C	D	D	D

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' overall achievement is unsatisfactory because most of them begin school with average skills at the age of four but leave aged 11 with overall skills in English, mathematics and science that are below average. The findings of the inspection corroborate the Ds in the penultimate column of the table above. The last column compares the results with schools whose pupils had similar attainment when they were seven. The National Curriculum tests for 2004 have just been taken and the school expects similar results - though perhaps they may be a little better because of the amount of effort teachers and pupils have spent in recent weeks. In 2003, the school missed its targets by a wide margin. An analysis of the progress made by pupils now in Year 6, from their Year 2 tests to the end of Year 5, showed that a large proportion made unsatisfactory progress in mathematics and reading, and that higher attaining pupils were the biggest group among them. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics, similar to last year's national test results. The results for 2004 are expected to be of the same order. Standards in art and design are good throughout the school. In ICT, pupils exceed expectations by Year 2 and meet them by Year 6. Most children in the Foundation Stage are likely to meet the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception in all areas of learning, except in personal development, where many children will exceed the goals. However, children's achievement is unsatisfactory because they are not making as much progress as they could in learning how to use letter sounds and number skills, especially higher attaining pupils.

Pupils' personal qualities are good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their attitudes to learning are good. Behaviour is satisfactory overall; most pupils behave well for most of the time, but there are a small number who are capable of spoiling this picture if not handled carefully. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, though figures are not as good as the national average because of parents who take holidays in term-time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is unsatisfactory because of its instability in previous terms and uncertainties over the future. However, teaching in the current term is satisfactory overall.

Teaching is satisfactory overall in the school, though it is unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage, where, though there is good provision for children's personal development, children are not achieving as well as they should because the tasks they undertake do not build sufficiently on what they already know. Teaching in the infants and juniors is satisfactory overall, though some good teaching was seen in both phases. Teachers are now skilled in managing pupils' behaviour, thanks to consistently applied, new procedures. The effectiveness of teaching in English, mathematics and science has been marred by staffing difficulties in the present and previous years. Although no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection, it is clear from pupils' past work in these subjects that teaching has not been good enough, especially in Year 6. Recent staff appointments have improved the situation for this term.

The curriculum is satisfactorily enriched by visits and extra-curricular activities, but it is unsatisfactory as a whole because of its inadequate provision for higher-attaining pupils and children in the Foundation Stage. The links with parents are satisfactory, though the parents' side of the partnership is stronger than that of the school's. Parents explain that they enjoy good relationships with the teaching staff, the deputy head and the interim headteacher, but they are much less positive about their relationship with the headteacher.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are very ineffective because they have not succeeded in stemming the decline in standards. Difficulties in recruiting staff are partly to blame, but the school's work has not been effectively evaluated in order to strengthen shortcomings. The leadership of the headteacher is poor and hampers the effectiveness of other senior staff. Nonetheless, other senior staff work hard and well and parents rightly express great confidence in the deputy headteacher and the interim headteacher. The governance of the school is satisfactory because governors are increasing their ability to provide appropriate challenge to the work of management.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

More than 70 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and 42 per cent completed the questionnaire, many writing extensive additional comments. The level of this response is much higher than usually found in schools of this size. Parents' opinions about the work of the school are very much coloured by their lack of confidence in the headteacher. They are insistent on its strengths, and this inspection corroborates them; however, a great number of parents are disappointed that the school's potential is not being fulfilled. Inspectors agree.

Pupils speak well of their school and what it offers them. They trust their teachers and inspectors agree that they are right to do so. They enjoy school, but wish that all pupils behaved well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- The school needs, as soon as possible, to settle the uncertainty about its headteacher, so as to improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, with senior staff more involved in its direction and evaluation, and to ensure that all staff and parents can be confident in it.
- The curriculum needs to contain greater challenge for higher-attaining pupils.
- Teachers need to make more use of their assessment of pupils' attainment in planning for their future learning, including more consistent use of target setting and marking of work.
- Planning for the Foundation Stage needs to give more detail of how support staff will be involved in children's learning and to be more firmly based on the assessment of what children already know.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards by Year 6 are below average in English, mathematics and science. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 have been falling for several years. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory because most of them began from an average starting point at age four.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage do not make as much progress as they should.
- Higher-attaining pupils have achieved less well than other pupils from Year 2 to Year 6.
- Standards in art and design exceed expectations by Years 2 and 6; those in ICT exceed expected levels by Year 2.

Commentary

1. Pupils' results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests were below average in reading and writing at the expected standard (Level 2 and above) and well below average at this level in mathematics. Results at the higher level (Level 3) were well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. The average points scores (which take into account attainment at all levels - see table below) were average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools (those with similar proportions of free school meals), results at Potters Gate were average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.8 (15.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.6 (14.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.5 (15.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The trend in reading and mathematics results has followed a similar pattern of ups and downs since 1999, though with mathematics consistently weaker than reading. Writing has hovered around the average level for four years. The overall trend is above the national trend, but that is not the whole picture. Results in 1999 were at their lowest for some time; when that year is removed from the data (as it will be this year), the overall trend is likely to be reversed. Fluctuating results are mainly explained by inconsistencies in teaching in the past, caused by difficulties in recruitment and retention. The present Year 1 shares two teachers, since the class teacher is deputy head and has been obliged to undertake managerial duties during the absence of the headteacher. The pupils currently in Year 2 also experienced a difficult time in Year 1, a fact regretted by several parents at the pre-inspection meeting.
3. Provisional results from the 2004 national tests in Year 2 suggest a similar overall picture of average attainment in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. The year group contains fewer higher-attaining pupils than that of last year. In mathematics, though most pupils are likely to have reached Level 2 and above, few will have attained Level 3. Inspection findings concur with this view.

4. In the Year 6 national tests in 2003, pupils' results at the expected standard (Level 4 and above) were below average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. At the higher level (Level 5), results in English were below average and in those in mathematics and science were average. The table below shows the average point scores; in all three subjects, these results were below the average for all schools. Compared with the results of similar schools (both those with similar proportions of free school meals and those with similar prior attainment), these results were well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.6 (28.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.8 (26.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.2 (29.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. The trend in all three subjects has been downward since the last inspection; as at Key Stage 1, mathematics is the weakest subject. The school did not meet its targets in any area and does not expect to do so in 2004, though last-minute, big efforts on the part of teachers and pupils may well lead to results which are a little better than the most recent predictions had suggested. The inspection finds that current standards are below average in English, mathematics and science by Year 6.
6. An analysis of the progress made by the pupils now in Year 6 was undertaken during the inspection. The results of individual pupils' Year 2 national tests were compared with the equivalent tests taken at the end of Year 5, in reading, writing and mathematics. (This took a considerable time, as the school does not record this data in a readily accessible form.) This showed that 63 per cent of pupils made less than the expected progress from Year 2 to Year 5 in mathematics and 32 per cent in reading. Further analysis showed that higher attaining pupils represented the biggest group in these proportions. Progress was better in writing - the subject of a recent school focus - with only 15 per cent making unsatisfactory progress. This indicates that, though staffing problems have had an undoubted effect on standards, the provision for pupils of differing abilities is also to blame.
7. Children in the Foundation Stage are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development and to meet them in all other areas of learning. However, a good number began school with above average skills - more so than is usually the case - and these pupils are not making enough progress in reading, writing or mathematics. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is therefore unsatisfactory overall.
8. Standards in art and design exceed expectations by Years 2 and 6. Work is of a good and attractive quality and interesting displays enhance the many corridors and spaces in the school. Attainment in ICT exceeds expectations by Year 2; by Year 6, pupils show good cross-curricular use of word processing, communication and research skills, but have limited experience of control technology and databases. Overall standards by Year 6 meet expectations. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the requirements of the agreed syllabus by Year 2; by Year 6, it falls just short because of inconsistencies in learning in the past, a situation now rectified.
9. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs or pupils who are identified by the school as needing extra help with their learning are appropriately catered for. They receive well targeted support, matched to clear objectives in their Individual Educational Plans, and,

as a result, make satisfactory progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve satisfactorily in terms of their English language development; in terms of their academic abilities, their achievement is on a par with other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to learning; behaviour is satisfactory overall and often good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good. Pupils' personal development and values are good, including their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils like their school and are keen to take responsibility.
- Relationships in the school are good.
- There has been a good response to the new management of behaviour policy.

Commentary

- Behaviour policies recently introduced have enabled teachers to achieve a greater consistency in good behaviour and pupils have responded well. Pupils understand the school's new strategies and behaviour is now good both in lessons and around the school; this is a significant improvement since last term. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents confirmed the considerable improvement but were concerned that the changes might be temporary and the school revert to previous standards, which were unacceptable, particularly for those pupils who are well behaved and wish to learn.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They are confident and happy in their school; all feel secure and have good relationships with their teacher and with other children. Children in the Foundation Stage are happy in their class and many are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals for personal development. Most parents say that their children enjoy coming to school and pupils speak enthusiastically about their work. Through the School Council, pupils are developing a good sense of care and responsibility. The council is well used to ensure that pupils' views are listened to and mostly acted on.
- Pupils' spiritual awareness is evident in lessons and in assemblies. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop self-knowledge and understanding. In one assembly, pupils were enthralled by the telling of the work of Ghandi; one child led the prayers and in her own words asked God to give everyone what they wanted, but to be fair to all. Pupils followed this with soft, sweet singing in a very spiritual, moving moment, their tone and volume capturing the atmosphere. Moral development is good; most understand right from wrong and show evidence of this in their daily actions. Pupils are keen to take responsibility for themselves and others. The school council is democratically run and includes every pupil in decisions and in the development of ideas. Pupils have an awareness of their own culture and traditions; a range of activities ensures that pupils' multi-cultural understanding is developing, particularly through art and religious education.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	0.8
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.

13. Attendance overall is satisfactory, but below the national average. Parents receive satisfactory information on attendance procedures, and are left in no doubt of the school's expectations, and dislike of term time holidays, which nonetheless contribute to a good percentage of absence.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	205	10	0
White – any other White background	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Parent / pupil preferred not say	1	0	0
Information not obtained	1	0	0

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

14. There were no permanent exclusions in the last academic year, though there had to be ten fixed term exclusions. Most of these referred to pupils whom the school had admitted after permanent exclusions from other schools.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is unsatisfactory because of its instability in previous terms and uncertainties over the future. However, the teaching in the current term is satisfactory overall. The curriculum, though satisfactorily enriched, is unsatisfactory because of the ineffective provision for higher-attaining pupils and children in the Foundation Stage. Care and welfare are good and the links with parents and the community are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is satisfactory in the infants and juniors but unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Use of assessment is unsatisfactory because it is not enabling teachers to match activities to pupils' abilities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recruitment and retention difficulties have led to unsatisfactory teaching in Years 5 and 6 until the current term.
- Teachers' management of pupils' behaviour is now very good.
- Teachers' planning is not based firmly enough on pupils' past learning.
- Pupils of differing abilities are frequently not provided with appropriately different work.

- Assessment arrangements are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4 (11)	11 (31)	18 (51)	2 (6)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages.

- The unusual circumstances of this school were described in the first paragraph of the report. That teaching was unsatisfactory in parts of the school until Easter is clear, not only from the pupils' past work, but also from the school's own evidence. Parents are also of this opinion, but agreed that there have been big improvements since the start of this term. They speak highly of the current teaching staff. Inspectors agree that the behaviour of most pupils is good and teachers now handle very well those pupils who find good behaviour more of a challenge. This is a considerable achievement, given the circumstances which obtained previously.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory; this is where both the unsatisfactory lessons took place. Strengths of the teaching are in the support given to children's personal, emotional and social development and to their progress in speaking and listening skills. However, children's abilities and prior attainment are not given sufficient consideration in planning their next steps of learning, especially for higher-attaining children. This is most marked in their ability to use letter sounds in reading and writing, and in aspects of mathematics.
- In the infants and juniors, teachers' planning is not consistent in format or frequency. The school has long- and medium-term plans in all subjects, which teachers use to plan lessons for a half-term. Some teachers write weekly and even daily plans; others do it on a fortnightly basis. These latter generally contain less detail. All lessons have learning intentions, which are always made clear to the pupils, though occasionally not in the most easily-understood language. Some planning shows what different groups will do, especially in English and mathematics. However, teachers rarely plan different learning outcomes for different groups, so that it is not clear why a particular set of pupils has been given a task different from others.
- In organising grouping, teachers' perceptions of ability levels are not always accurate, as is indicated by pupils' past work throughout the juniors. This is not made easier by the setting arrangements in mathematics, which have not been consistent across the year, mainly as a result of staffing difficulties. For example, a temporary staff change in Years 3 and 4 in the autumn term led to inconsistencies in provision in the three sets; Year 5 now has sets only three days a week, whereas Year 6 has two small, mixed ability sets. Setting is not used for English or other subjects. Examples of the consequences of this mixed provision were seen in the books of pupils in Years 3 and 4. On days when pupils were in mixed ability classes, higher-attaining pupils may be seen to have performed at a lower level than in their sets; similarly, lower-attaining pupils had been set work of a higher level than usual - quite a bit of which they proved able to do. This shows that teachers have not been making enough use of information from assessment as a basis for short-term planning. Pupils of all abilities are frequently given the same activities throughout the curriculum.
- The effectiveness of teaching in English, mathematics and science has been marred by staffing difficulties in the present and previous years. Although no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection, it is clear from pupils' past work in these subjects that teaching has not been good enough, especially in Year 6.

20. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Learning support assistants give good, well-focused support, either to individuals or to small groups. Pupils with special educational needs have Individual Education Plans, which are well matched to their needs and identify the small steps needed for them to make progress. These plans are regularly reviewed and monitored. Teachers take account of the targets set, but sometimes do not provide a sufficient range of activities that are suited to all levels of ability. Appropriate support is provided for pupils for whom English is an additional language to develop their English language skills.
21. The headteacher has satisfactory systems in place for tracking pupils' achievement in literacy and numeracy. These have not been fully utilised, however, and shared with class teachers as a means of providing a constant check on progress; for example, teachers have a small focus group of about half-a-dozen children, but there are no procedures for ensuring that other pupils do not slip through the net. In other subjects, assessment systems are either under review or left to each teacher. There are some good models for assessment used by individual teachers but the overall picture is one of inconsistency. Revised arrangements, which are more compatible with other schools in the local authority, are being introduced and staff have been trained in the administration of relevant computer software. The quality of teachers' day-to-day marking is patchy. Again, there are some good practices - for example, in some science books - but generally, marking has little impact and does not contribute enough to improvement in pupils' work.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is unsatisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- Provision does not meet the needs of the significant proportion of potentially higher-attaining pupils – consequently they underachieve.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- The school works hard to provide a wide range of activities to enrich pupils' learning.
- There is uncertainty about the retention and replacement of teachers.

Commentary

22. The school's curriculum meets all statutory requirements, including the provision of religious education. The curriculum for ICT has improved since the last inspection, and is now satisfactory. French is no longer included in the curriculum, owing to changes in staffing. Provision for pupils to develop as individuals is good - this is described in paragraph 92.
23. Although the school has tackled issues identified in the last report by reviewing policies and schemes of work, some aspects still feature in the school improvement plan. Initiatives to raise standards in English and mathematics have not been effective enough. Planning does not take account of the significant proportion of higher-attaining pupils; consequently there is too little challenge, resulting in underachievement in numeracy and writing. This picture is similar in other subjects in that too few pupils achieve beyond average levels, with the exception of art and design, where there is better achievement throughout the school.
24. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. Planning lacks structure and does not sufficiently link opportunities for children to build on and extend their knowledge and experiences across the areas of learning. Assessments are not used effectively enough to build on children's individual needs. Consequently, children do not achieve as well as they should, particularly in the development of early phonics, writing skills and number work.

25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory throughout the school. Support staff are clear about their roles and work effectively with teachers to provide sensitive, well-focused support in lessons. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive appropriate support in the curriculum to meet their English language needs.
26. The enrichment of the curriculum is sound. There is a satisfactory range of activities which enable pupils to foster and develop their skill and interests outside school time. Athletics and orienteering currently supplement the usual range of sports activities. There are also music and craft clubs during lunch breaks and after school. Visitors to the school include the Rector, artists, authors and story tellers, and good use is made of local amenities such as museums and places of interest further afield.
27. The school is well resourced and accommodation, which includes a well-appointed library, music room and ICT suite, is good. The team of teaching assistants are well qualified and skilled in the support they provide.

Care, guidance and support

The care and welfare of pupils are good. Support, advice and guidance are satisfactory. Pupils are actively involved in running the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety of the environment are good.
- Involvement of pupils through seeking their views is strong.
- There are good induction arrangements for all pupils.
- A lack of clear assessment procedures in some areas reduces the overall effectiveness of the school's personal support.

Commentary

28. The procedures for pupils' safety and welfare are good. The day-to-day awareness of health and safety is good and well known to all staff and pupils; this is supported by the designated health and safety governor and the caretaker. Risk assessment procedures are well established and the school monitors and reviews safe working procedures.
29. Child protection procedures are good. The school has an agreed policy that is well known to the staff and there are good working relationships with all relevant support agencies; overall, this provides good protection for pupils. First aid provision is good and was seen to be administered safely and sensitively with care and kindness.
30. Pupils' personal health and safety and that of staff working in the school are good; through their everyday learning and through the personal and social health programme, pupils are learning to care for their own health and safety and that of others.
31. The procedures and practice for the induction into school of Reception and Year 1 children is praised by Reception parents. Parents with pupils who recently moved to the secondary school are very supportive of the school's preparation and say their children have found it easy to settle into their new school.
32. Pupils' personal welfare, support and guidance are good; they are well cared for and feel safe and secure in school. All are confident to ask for help and respond well to class teachers, learning assistants and other staff. When asked, pupils say they like school and enjoy lessons. The school's procedures for ensuring that all pupils develop a responsibility for their own learning is satisfactory. Pupils are aware of individual lesson targets but the lack of whole-school assessment and planning in some subjects does not lead to consistent practice across the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Overall links with parents are satisfactory. There are satisfactory links with other schools, colleges and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents make a good contribution to learning at home and in school.
- The majority of parents feel the school is not well led and managed and does not take their opinions into account - though they welcome the changes since Easter.

Commentary

33. The partnership between parents and the school is satisfactory overall but with some weaknesses. A large percentage of parents have lost confidence in the management and do not feel the school has been well led and managed, particularly in the last year. Parents are concerned that the high staff turnover and the difficulty in recruitment are having a detrimental effect on their children's progress. They find the headteacher unapproachable and that decisions taken and changes made are not followed up by explanation.
34. A small number of parents praised the headteacher for her hard work but, overall, parents are very unhappy about the relationship between the head and parents. Parents are confident that there is no issue of bullying in the school; however, the behaviour of a small number of pupils had deteriorated and parents feel the teachers had not received sufficient support from management to deal with this. They spoke with confidence, however, of the teaching staff currently in the school.
35. The management this term, by the interim headteacher and the deputy head, has inspired confidence in parents. They feel the interim head is very open and approachable and has given full details of all happenings. Behaviour has improved significantly but parents have real concerns lest this is a temporary measure and fear for the school's future.
36. Parents receive all the information necessary to meet statutory requirements and are pleased with the information provided by class teachers and the office, in particular from the school secretary. They feel she has always been warm and welcoming and is an important first contact when visiting the school.
37. Parents make a good contribution to the school overall and particularly through the Parent-Teacher Association, raising good amounts of money to resource the curriculum and other school events.
38. Links with other schools are satisfactory. There is some confusion regarding the Year 6 transition week (at the secondary school) and their residential visit; again, parents feel this is a failure of the management's organisational skills. Satisfactory links with the local Art College enabled the School Council to improve the playground environment.
39. There are satisfactory links with the local community, which are being developed by the work of the marketing governor. Members of the community visit the school to support the curriculum, broaden pupils' learning and extend their wider environmental awareness. Community links are further strengthened by liaison with local churches and this helps extend pupils' learning and develops their awareness of other beliefs and cultures.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are poor, because the school lacks direction from the headteacher. Senior staff have not been able to bring about a reverse in declining standards because they have not been adequately directed to evaluate provision or plan improvements. The use made of the budget has not been well planned, which has resulted in high levels of money being carried forward.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's leadership is poor.
- The effectiveness of management is poor.
- Evaluation of the school's work has not been undertaken with sufficient rigour to spot and rectify weaknesses.
- The governing body has not sufficiently challenged senior managers until recently.

Commentary

40. The strategic leadership and management of the school are poor. The overall leadership of the headteacher is poor and she has clearly lost the confidence of parents. The parents' questionnaires show that 37 per cent disagree and 31 per cent strongly disagree that the school is led and managed well. This is in marked contrast to the last report, where the school was said to be well managed and well led, and that the previous headteacher provided dynamic leadership. Parents have expressed their respect for and confidence in the relatively new deputy headteacher and the interim headteacher. There are no clear leadership and management in the Foundation Stage and this has led to unsatisfactory teaching, learning and achievement of the children. The lack of clear leadership from the headteacher has hampered the effectiveness of other senior staff. Some recently appointed co-ordinators understand what needs to be done to raise standards and wish to implement their plans as soon as possible.
41. The school has had and continues to have difficulties in the recruitment and retention of teaching staff. This has led to changes in leadership roles and a number of co-ordinators have only recently taken up leadership of particular subjects. The post of ICT co-ordinator remains unfilled. The school's involvement in the Leadership Project, looking at raising standards in literacy and mathematics, had to change over the year as there were staffing difficulties and the need arose to look at the behaviour policy. This meant that the whole efforts of senior management were transferred from raising standards to coping with behaviour problems. In turn, the initiatives set up to raise standards in mathematics were not evaluated, so that inconsistencies in provision - for example, the lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils - were not pursued.
42. Formal performance management is established, team leaders have been appointed and all staff have been allocated to these leaders. Again, owing to staff changes, some interviews and review meetings have had to be cancelled.
43. The school improvement plan is over-ambitious because too much is being asked of staff. There are too many targets, ranging in importance from simple repairs to the hinges of a door to raising standards in mathematics. The plan does not look far enough ahead and there is an absence of projected expenditure in some areas. There is also little evidence that any monitoring of provision has influenced the planning. Targets and tasks lack precision - for example, raising achievement in mathematics is to be done by 'identifying key areas for improvement'. The rigorous monitoring and evaluation of initiatives, essential to raise standards, have not taken place. There is not sufficient time for co-ordinators, some with more than one subject, to monitor teaching and learning effectively or assess standards of pupils' work. This, as much as the instability of staffing, explains why standards are not improving.

44. Procedures for gathering information about the performance of pupils is unsatisfactory and this is especially so in the Foundation Stage. Such information as is gathered is not used as effectively as it could be in bringing about improvement in pupils' learning. In lesson observations there could be a sharper focus on what pupils are actually learning, rather than on what is taught. Information that is gathered on pupils' performance is not always logically stored, and there were difficulties during this inspection in easily finding relevant data.
45. The management of special educational needs by the co-ordinator is good. She gives good guidance to class teachers and support assistants, through training, regular meetings and by working alongside them. Liaison with outside agencies is good and enables specialist assessments to be made where appropriate. However, the limited time the co-ordinator has for her role has resulted in her working directly with fewer children, and working for extra time that is not paid for by the school. The time allocated to the special needs co-ordinator was an area of concern raised by parents in response to their questionnaire. She is also responsible for pupils for whom English is an additional language. This provision is also well managed through regular liaison with the specialist teacher, paid for out of the school's budget.
46. Governors have put their trust in the headteacher and recognise that they have not monitored closely enough what has been going on in the school. This has not been their fault entirely. The headteacher regularly produced reports, based on graphical presentation of data, purporting to show that the 'value added' to pupils' learning in each class was at least satisfactory. As the figures discussed in paragraph 6 show, this is clearly not the case. There is no suggestion here whatsoever that this cloaking of the truth was a matter of deceit; rather, the figures shown to governors are based on a muddled understanding of the statistical information.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	£642,052	Balance from previous year	£77,307
Total expenditure	£626,657	Balance carried forward to the next	£92,702
Expenditure per pupil	£2,448		

47. Over time, the school has built up a substantial financial balance without governors having a definite plan of how this money should be used for the benefit of the pupils presently in the school and for raising standards. This means that governors' use of the principles of best value has been unsatisfactory. The true extent of this balance has become evident only recently, following a thorough reappraisal which required the assistance of the local education authority. As a consequence, many, more searching questions have been asked. There is now a clearer picture emerging as to how this budget surplus can best be used to provide a better quality of education for all the pupils in the school. The day-to-day running of finance is in the hands of the administrative officer and school secretary and this is satisfactory. Regular budget reports are produced for the headteacher and governors.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision and teaching are **unsatisfactory** overall. There has been a decline in provision since the previous inspection. There are strengths in the way children's personal development and their speaking and listening skills are encouraged. However, the curriculum for other areas of learning is not sufficiently challenging and results in underachievement for a significant proportion of the children, especially in some aspects of literacy and mathematical development. When children enter the Reception class, standards are usually broadly average. However, a number of the current class demonstrate higher than average abilities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening and personal skills are promoted well.
- There is a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching.
- Assessment of children's progress and planning for the next steps are not closely linked.
- The learning environment is not stimulating for children.
- Children are well cared for, and there are positive links with parents.

Commentary

48. Because of the high emphasis placed on **personal, social and emotional development**, children achieve well and almost all are set to reach the expected standards by the end of Reception. A significant number are likely to exceed expectations. Almost all show good levels of confidence and maturity for their age. They form friendships with others and trusting relationships with adults. Children adapt their behaviour well to different situations - for example, by showing a proper respect during assemblies or when gathering on the carpet to listen. They increasingly show an ability to work with others, though there are still occasional disagreements over resources. Sometimes work is not as purposeful as it might be because there is too little adult focus, and some children find tasks too hard to sustain. Good links with parents help to make children feel secure. Parents make a good contribution when they come to help in the classroom.
49. In the area of **communication, language and literacy**, a significant number of children have better than average speaking skills. These are developed well during discussion times - for example, when they sit in a circle on the carpet to discuss 'feelings'. Children listen attentively and express ideas using extended sentences. When sharing their news with others, they demonstrate an extensive vocabulary for their age and express their thoughts confidently.
50. The teaching of letter sounds and blends does not have sufficient pace over time; consequently, many pupils underachieve because they are not learning at the levels of which they are capable. This has the greatest impact on higher-attaining pupils, because it inhibits the development of their independent writing. Assessments of what children know are not used well enough to plan the next steps. For example, after concentrating on the "ch" sound and linking it to different words such as "children" and "chicken", higher-attaining pupils moved on to a simple task involving single letter sounds, which average children had been working on. Children develop good levels of interest in books and stories. They occasionally browse in the book area and enjoy sharing stories with adults. They listen intently when stories are read to them. More could be done to promote language activities through better organisation and use of resources. Although books are plentiful, they are not attractively displayed and the general ambience of the book area is unexciting. Resources in the role play area have seen much service, and do not contribute well to opportunities for stimulating creative talk and play.

51. Most children achieve satisfactorily in **mathematical development** and are likely to reach the expected standards. However, there is some underachievement where children's skills are not assessed accurately, so too little is expected of them. One child assessed as average, for example, showed above average ability in counting and the understanding of 'more' and 'less than'. Many count beyond ten and accurately combine sets such as $5 + 3$ to find the total. They know the names of some two-dimensional shapes and show awareness of other shapes such as oval and pyramid. Some purposeful work with construction pieces in one lesson enabled children to explore different shapes while the teacher focused on improving basic numeracy skills with a smaller group. In an outside activity, children were counting the number of bean bags they threw into a basket. Opportunities to develop mathematical language such as 'more' or 'further' were missed because the support assistant was too passive and did not fully engage the children's mathematical thinking.
52. No activities were observed in the area of **knowledge and understanding of the world**. Planning indicates that children are provided with adequate opportunities to develop skills. Pupils visit the ICT suite weekly and show their growing confidence when using the classroom computers to sort objects or put numbers into the correct sequence. They go for walks in the locality around the school to develop a sense of place and find out about the past by inviting grandparents to talk about how they used to live. The school pond provided a good starting point for scientific discovery when children observed how frogspawn develops. Most children are set to reach the Early Learning Goals in this area but many could achieve more if there were planned links with other areas to extend their curiosity, and their thinking and language skills. For example, there was no display of 'gardening' books in the 'garden centre' role play area or labels and instructions to encourage mathematical activities while children play.
53. In **physical development** children are well co-ordinated and show good control of their movements. They are aware of others moving around them and show appropriate stamina and co-ordination when steering wheeled toys around the outside play area. They use pencils and other small tools and implements safely.
54. There is satisfactory provision for **creative development**. There were some commendable pencil drawings of trees displayed and during the inspection children applied paint confidently, showing good understanding of how to mix colours to achieve different shades. Although music activities are planned, these were not observed during the inspection. Creative talk and role play are too often inhibited because there are not enough adults who interact with the children.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The quality of provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement by the end of Year 6 is unsatisfactory.
- Standards in writing by the end of Year 6 are unsatisfactory.
- Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 has been unsatisfactory.
- Present leadership of the subject is good.

Commentary

55. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with national averages in reading and writing. By the end of Year 6 standards in English are below national averages. At the last inspection, standards were average by Years 2 and 6, but have since shown a marked decline at the end

of Year 6. This is because of recent instability in staffing, and unsatisfactory teaching in Years 5 and 6 before Easter of this year. This has led to unsatisfactory achievement by the end of Year 6.

56. Standards in speaking and listening are, overall, average at Year 2 and Year 6. In Years 1 and 2, pupils demonstrate good knowledge of specialist vocabulary such as scientific and mathematical terms. In a Year 2 art lesson, one pupil described the sails on a boat as being 'like right-angled triangles'. Pupils with English as an additional language have received appropriate help from a specialist teacher, class teachers and teaching assistants. These pupils are fully and successfully involved in classroom discussions. At the start and end of most lessons, pupils have the chance to give their points of view and share their work with the rest of the class. Pupils who are reluctant to answer questions are often well supported by teaching assistants, as are pupils with special educational needs.
57. Pupils are interested in books from an early age and a specific, structured use of reading books helps them gain confidence in reading. Higher-attaining pupils are reading confidently and fluently and with a good understanding of the characters and plot in the stories they are reading. Average and lower-attaining pupils are not as secure in their reading. The Early Learning Support programme is supporting lower-attaining pupils well, as seen in one Year 1 English lesson, where a small group of pupils concentrated on the sound and spelling of simple words such as 'has' and 'this'.
58. The presentation of the majority of pupils' written work in Years 5 and 6 was unsatisfactory before Easter. Not all the work produced was sufficiently well marked to enable pupils to raise their achievement. There was not sufficient differentiation to challenge higher and average-attaining pupils. Since Easter, the majority write stories, letters and poems reasonably well and the marking of work has improved. There is a lack of extended writing, particularly among the average and lower-attaining pupils.
59. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 to 4, but unsatisfactory overall in Years 5 and 6. This unsatisfactory teaching has resulted in lack of achievement by the pupils. This has been recognised by the school and, with classes recently reorganised and new teachers, teaching as observed in lessons is satisfactory. Teaching assistants are well informed of their expectations and this is a significant factor in the successful input of these members of staff. Pupils respond well when listening to their teachers, persevere to complete tasks and are generally well behaved. Teachers intervene well in lessons to prompt pupils and encourage learning. Classrooms have been made attractive through display and are rich in the key vocabulary related to topics currently being studied.
60. The present leadership is good. The co-ordinator took on this role only in October of last year. She has worked very hard to produce a comprehensive strategic plan for the subject. She is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses in English. She has studied the latest test results and has already initiated several changes to enable standards to rise. Some of these initiatives have included a reorganisation of the reading scheme and buying in new books. A consultant has been involved to help raise standards in writing and new writing resources have been purchased. The co-ordinator is quite clear as to what future action is needed to continue to raise standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. Language and literacy skills are used satisfactorily through work in other subjects. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils research the Islamic faith through use of computer programs and write about their discoveries. Pupils accurately label diagrams in their science work. Some Year 6 pupils write interesting poems based on their work on ancient Egyptians. Oral discussion is a feature of the beginning of lessons and in plenary sessions at the end.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are lower than they should be by Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teachers do not make enough use of assessment as a basis for future planning.
- As a result, there is insufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and a good understanding of how to teach mental strategies.

Commentary

62. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall because the work that teachers provide is often not sufficiently matched to pupils' prior attainment. This picture is better in the infants than in the juniors, but pupils currently in Year 2 fell behind during their time in Year 1 because of several changes in teacher during the year.
63. Standards by Years 2 and 6 are below average. Throughout the school, the pupils who achieve the least well are higher-attaining pupils, though pupils of all abilities do not always receive appropriate challenge. This was observed in the scrutiny of pupils' past work, where pupils of lower and higher ability frequently undertake the same tasks. Frustration at its being too hard is evident in some books from the comments written by pupils and from the amount of incomplete work. The books of pupils identified by teachers as higher-attaining show little evidence of work at higher levels, whereas there is much work by these pupils (generally correct) at average levels. There were examples of pupils identified as lower-attaining whose work was on a par with that of average pupils. At the last inspection, standards were above average, and improvement since then has been unsatisfactory.
64. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall because it is too slow in raising standards. Nonetheless, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection, because the make-up of the teaching staff changed at Easter. Most of the unsatisfactory achievement took place before that.
65. The school has introduced a number of strategies to try to improve standards. One of these has been to improve the learning in the mental starter in each lesson. This has had a good effect, and teachers were observed giving useful tips and strategies to improve mental agility - though lower attaining pupils sometimes need many more examples before passing on to something new. Work has also been done to improve problem solving skills. Some of this has been effective, but a good deal of pupils' past work involved them in writing their own word problems. Often, pupils choose as the basis of their problem algorithms at too low a level, though only one example was seen of this being mentioned by the teacher in the marking. The latter is inconsistent and pointers for improvement are rare.
66. A good aid to the assessment and recording of progress has been introduced by the co-ordinator. Sheets fastened to the inside of pupils' books show which skills they need to acquire in order to progress to the next sub-level of an attainment target. It is well used in the co-ordinator's class, but in most other year groups, the sheets were either not completed or not in evidence.
67. The co-ordinator is conscientious and works hard. She is a suitable example to colleagues of good teaching. But the effect of her leadership and management has been unsatisfactory because the strategies introduced to raise standards are not working quickly enough. This is for several reasons. First, recruitment and retention difficulties mean that a number of teachers sent on training or to whom the co-ordinator had given support left the school, meaning that the training had to be repeated. Secondly, the headteacher has not given enough

opportunity to the co-ordinator to evaluate the success of the new strategies, so that inconsistencies have not been identified. A programme for monitoring was abandoned when discipline broke down in the upper juniors, and efforts of evaluation were turned to that - which, in effect, merely confirmed what senior management already knew.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. Pupils use their numeracy skills in ICT when they learn how to use spreadsheets to manipulate formulæ. Year 2 pupils used a graphics package to explore their understanding of symmetry and of repeated pattern, in connection with history work on the fabrics of William Morris. In science, pupils record data in a variety of ways and display results in appropriate graphs. Year 6 pupils are currently learning to apply their understanding of probability to games of chance.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have declined since the previous report.
- There has been some unsatisfactory learning and achievement over time.
- Teaching and standards have not been monitored rigorously enough.
- Assessment does not contribute well enough to improving standards.

Commentary

69. By the end of Year 2, most pupils will attain the standard expected for their age but the number set to achieve a higher level is below that found nationally. This means that standards are below average overall. By the end of Year 6, most pupils reach average standards in the knowledge of life processes, materials and forces. Understanding and appreciation of scientific skills is below average because pupils have not been given enough opportunities to develop them. Standards have fluctuated since the previous inspection when they were average by Years 2 and 6.
70. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory overall. Teaching is stronger in lower junior classes where evidence points to a more extensive coverage of the curriculum, including some investigative science and independent recording. The range and quality of the work in the Year 5 and 6 samples, however, are unsatisfactory, with no examples of how pupils have developed their knowledge and understanding through investigative work. It is evident that teaching and learning have been unsatisfactory over time, resulting in underachievement. Despite the more positive teaching picture currently found in the Year 5 and 6 classes, standards, most notably for the significant number of high-attaining pupils, have not improved enough because of the short time the teachers have been in post.
71. In the lessons seen, teachers focused strongly on promoting correct terminology. Pupils in Year 1, for example, learned a new word, 'properties', before beginning to examine rough and smooth objects. In a Year 2 lesson, learning was taken to more depth, and use of language was further developed. By the end of the lesson, pupils used terms such as 'manufactured', 'flexible' and 'opaque' in their right contexts. A pupil whose first language is not English had no difficulty in describing a marble as 'smooth, shiny and round'.
72. This was in contrast to Year 6 pupils' understanding of scientific language, where they did not understand the terms 'constant' and 'variable' in relation to scientific investigation. Teachers plan lessons satisfactorily with a clear focus on what pupils are to learn. Pupils are managed very well and respond positively to the praise and encouragement given. Skilful management of pupils was a strong feature of a lesson in Year 5. The teacher's recognition of different learning styles and the step-by-step approach to building up knowledge and skills suited the pupils well. Good questioning and the challenging pace of each task kept the pupils alert and

interested so they achieved well. Teaching assistants are skilled at providing support where it is most needed. They know pupils well and deal sensitively with their specific difficulties. However, in most lessons, there is little recognition by the teachers of the different abilities within the class. All tend to be given the same task. Higher-attaining pupils are not given the independence they need to carry out and record their own investigations. This stifles their progress and results in underachievement. The quality of marking is inconsistent throughout the school. On too few occasions are there challenging comments which help the pupils evaluate what they have done and show the way to improvement. A good model for marking is in Year 3 and 4 books where some probing comments are written to help pupils' scientific thinking. Assessment systems are too patchy, and, overall, do not provide a clear analysis of what each pupil can do or needs to do next.

73. Science is not effectively managed. Although the co-ordinator has good knowledge of the subject, the benefits of this are not shared throughout the school. Teaching and standards have not been monitored and evaluated thoroughly to plan improvements. Consequently, standards show a downward trend. Current assessment arrangements do not support target setting. The expectation of what different groups can do does not drive teachers' planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good by Year 2.
- The ICT suite is well equipped and well used.
- There are good cross-curricular links.

Commentary

74. Standards are above expectations by Year 2 and as expected by Year 6. Pupils' achievement is good in the infants because teachers give them good opportunities to use equipment in many subjects, as described below. In the juniors, achievement is not as high because pupils have had limited experience of control technology and of the use of databases. This shows good improvement since the last inspection, when standards by Year 2 met expectations, but fell below by Year 6.
75. The school's computers had contracted a virus in the week before the inspection and many machines had to be out of use at the start of the week. Teachers worked hard over the weekend to restore connections and recover work, and, by the end of the week, only the printing facility was out of action. Pupils' past work was analysed and a group of Year 6 pupils demonstrated their skills and understanding.
76. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the infants. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and use up-to-date technology, such as the interactive whiteboard, with ease. In a good lesson for Year 2 pupils, the teacher showed her class how to navigate through the pages of a geography book about the seaside, which could be reached via the Internet. She encouraged pupils to demonstrate to others, using the whiteboard, though the board is about a foot too high on the wall for it to be easily used by infants. In the juniors, pupils make good use of word processing skills and spreadsheets, but their experience of control is not as wide, according to the memories of Year 6 pupils. They also were unsure if they had used e-mail in school.

77. A key issue in the last inspection report concerned equipment, staff expertise and the provision of the full National Curriculum. This has been tackled well and the new ICT suite is a very good asset for the school. This is evidence that the subject has been well led in the past, though the post of co-ordinator has been vacant since Easter. Assessment is informal and left to the discretion of individual teachers.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. Pupils in Year 2 linked art, history and ICT in their work on Victorians. After studying fabrics and wallpapers by William Morris, they designed their own patterns for material, using a graphics package. The results show careful use of the software, good design skills and a clear understanding of Morris's work. In geography, pupils are researching the seaside and creatures that live there, and they have followed a virtual tour of a museum through the county's web links. Infant pupils studying houses selected images from 'WordArt' and sorted them by type. In religious education, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have looked at a virtual tour of a mosque, in connection with their visit to Woking Mosque. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 design covers for their history folders about the Tudors. They link to educational websites for mathematical activities and use a search engine to find information about armoured vehicles in the Second World War.

HUMANITIES

Three lessons in religious education were observed. Geography and history were not foci for inspection; no lessons were seen and the subjects were sampled.

Religious education

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching was seen during the inspection.
- Purposeful leadership is promoting better standards.
- Standards slipped following the previous inspection because subject co-ordination was intermittent.
- Resources are good and are used effectively.

Commentary

79. Standards at the end of Year 2 meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. They have been maintained since the previous inspection. By the end of Year 6, standards are a little below expectation as a result of unsettled teaching and inconsistent co-ordination of the subject before September 2003.
80. The revised local authority guidelines for the subject are now an established basis for planning. Teaching of religious education is more secure and there is now an improving picture. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about Christianity and some aspects of Jewish celebrations, such as the Shabbat. In Years 3 and 4 pupils look more deeply into aspects of different faiths and learn about fundamental teachings, such as the Pillars of Islam, and important Christian celebrations. There is little recorded work to be seen in Years 5 and 6 but evidence shows that pupils consider how 'good and evil' are portrayed in religious teaching, for example, by reading Old Testament stories, and the story of Rama and Sita. In every class there is a strong focus on Christianity linked to every day experience. They learn the values of tolerance, consideration and kindness as well as Christian worship and how people's lives are guided by what they believe. Throughout the school, pupils' learning is enhanced through strong links with the local church and other Christian communities.

81. Good teaching was seen during the inspection but this has not been consistent over time. Current lessons are prepared well and the depth of teachers' subject knowledge has a good impact on pupils' learning. There was some well-focused discussion in Year 6 about the nature of the Holy Trinity and how this is fundamental to Christian faith. The teacher's skilful questions probed pupils' ideas, so that they gave some thoughtful responses about the nature of God. Challenging work and good learning were also seen when Year 3 and 4 pupils acted out their Old Testament stories. Year 2 pupils also acted out a mini drama to emphasise the need to be aware of others' difficulties and to be prepared to help. The school's good resources are used well to support learning. Bibles and stories about Jesus are characteristically main points of reference, while Year 3 and 4 pupils used computers to go on a 'virtual tour' of a Mosque. Teachers work hard to plan interesting and challenging activities. Consequently, pupils enjoy lessons and behave well. Teaching assistants are well qualified and skilled in the support they provide. However, the uncertainty over the retention and replacement of current teaching staff is a cause for some concern.
82. Subject leadership has improved during the course of the current year. The deputy headteacher works purposefully to raise standards and achievement and has done much to raise the profile of religious education in the school, with more links to other subjects. The restructured curriculum, better resources and appropriate support from the diocesan adviser are successful in bringing about improvement.
83. Teachers' planning and pupils' past and current work show that pupils cover the requirements of the National Curriculum in **history**. Year 1 pupils learn about examples of famous people and events. Pupils in Year 2 study the Victorians and use their ICT skills well when learning about William Morris. They have also followed a virtual museum tour over the Internet. In Years 3 and 4, pupils learn about ancient Greece; they use the Internet to assist their research and produce models of pots in art lessons. Year 5 and 6 pupils have studied the Tudors and Britain since 1930. Again, good use of ICT skills is evident in pupils' folders.
84. In **geography**, pupils follow a curriculum which meets requirements. Year 1 and 2 pupils learn about the seaside, its creatures and their habitat. This is linked with work in history in Year 2. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 look at rivers and compare life in Farnham with life in a city. Year 5 and 6 pupils are currently studying St Lucia. A priority for the current year is to achieve a more coherent progression of skills between lower and upper juniors.
85. In both subjects, the co-ordinators have been given little opportunity to monitor standards of teaching, though a sample of pupils' work was looked at last term. However, the school decided to give no individual feedback to teachers, so that any conclusions drawn from the exercise could be only general. Assessment is left to each teacher to arrange and co-ordinators have not been able to check its consistency.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Four lessons in art and design were observed. As design and technology, music and physical education were not foci for inspection, these subjects were sampled; no lessons were observed.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain standards above the level expected by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Teaching is good throughout the school.
- Leadership is good.

Commentary

86. The achievement of pupils throughout the school is good, resulting in some very pleasing displays of art work, in classrooms and around the school.
87. Overall good teaching, based on a secure subject knowledge, results in all pupils acquiring good observational skills and using a wide range of media to produce works of art of which they can be justly proud. In Years 1 and 2, pupils study the work of artists such as Dufy. They discuss colour and movement, as seen in Dufy's picture 'Regatta at Cowes'. Working successfully in groups, they then produce very acceptable pieces of work, involving wash and wax, card and paper and fabric collage. Pupils show good skills of drawing, painting and cutting in completing their work. Pupils are highly motivated, find art and design lessons very interesting and enjoyable, and, as they move through the school, become increasingly competent at using a wide range of skills and techniques in their work. Effective planning links art well to other subjects and successfully encourages pupils to use their artistic knowledge and skills to illustrate and make models - for example, in history, geography and religious education. In one Year 3 and 4 class, pupils showed their good design and painting skills as they decorated plates and pots in the style of the ancient Greeks.
88. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator is keen to see standards continue to rise and for pupils' work to be appreciated by a wider audience. Some pupils have been involved in Farnham Arts Week and the school has put on special displays of pupils' art for parents to view.
89. In **design and technology**, photographs seen show a variety of models being made, with indications of design sheets completed prior to construction. The school has invested in a new kitchen for use in home technology and there are photographs showing the pupils with the cakes they have made. National Curriculum requirements are met.
90. In **music**, the school follows national subject guidance to ensure pupils develop knowledge and skills at an appropriate level. There are opportunities for pupils to explore different kinds of music as well as compose and perform their own pieces. The school choir and instrumental tuition in piano, violin, and drums enable those with particular talents to develop them further. End of year performances, and performances for elderly residents as well as community and church services provide a meaningful focus for the development of pupils' music skills.
91. In **physical education**, there is satisfactory coverage of the main elements of the curriculum, including swimming and outdoor activities on residential visits. The school takes part in a variety of matches with other local schools. The facilities for physical education on the school site are good; there is a large hall and a very large and attractive playing field.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

92. Provision for pupils' personal development, health education and citizenship is good. Teaching about sex and relationships is dealt with at an appropriate level for each year group. Parents are informed when the programme of learning for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is to take place and are supportive of the sensitive way in which it is taught. Pupils are made aware of the possible hazards linked to drugs, tobacco and other substances. Personal development is reinforced through many aspects of the curriculum. Pupils are given the chance to take responsibility and, through the School Council, represent the views of others. They take part in community events such as local festivals, tournaments and church services.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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