

INSPECTION REPORT

CLACKCLOSE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Downham Market

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121012

Substantive headteacher: John Ward

Acting headteacher: Geoff Horne

Lead inspector: R Peter J McGregor

Dates of inspection: 23rd – 26th May 2005

Inspection number: 266627

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 400

School address: Nursery Road
Downham Market
Norfolk
Postcode: PE38 9PF

Telephone number: 01366 383824
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Dr Ian Mack

Date of previous inspection: January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Clackclose Community Primary School is in the centre of Downham Market town. It is much bigger than the average English primary school, with 400 pupils on roll. Ninety-three percent of pupils come from white British backgrounds; others are from a range of other backgrounds. Very few pupils are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is similar to the national average, although the number with statements is above average. The needs of these pupils range across moderate learning difficulties, autism, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, profound and multiple learning, speech and communication, hearing, visual and physical disability. The school has a learning support unit, which, although only designated as having one autistic pupil with a formal statement of special need, does deal with fifteen other statemented pupils with autism, global delay and other needs. The socio-economic circumstances of pupils' families are broadly average. When they enter school, pupils have skills and knowledge that are below expectation overall. In the year 2003/4, twenty-three percent of pupils either joined the school or left other than at the usual time of admission or transfer. This was a high figure of pupil mobility. The turnover of staff has been very high over the past two years.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9708	Sylvia Daintrey	Lay inspector	
32556	Stephen Greenall	Team inspector	Mathematics; Information and communication technology (ICT); Art; Music
32385	Lesley Hastings	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; Geography; History; Religious education
18835	Jackie Mullan	Team inspector	Special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is not providing pupils with a satisfactory standard of education; **its effectiveness is poor** as is the value for money. Pupils' achievements are poor. Behaviour around the school is satisfactory but a few pupils misbehave in some lessons. The quality of teaching is poor overall, although some pupils are taught well at times. The curriculum is not well balanced and staffing and accommodation are poor. Resources are poor, particularly for ICT and the libraries. Pupils are cared for but overall support and guidance are unsatisfactory. Leadership and management of many aspects of school life have been unsuccessful over a number of years.

The schools main strengths and weaknesses are

- The acting headteacher, supported by the deputy head and governors, has held the school together this year, working to make improvements in many areas of school life; inconsistencies remain in the leadership and management of subjects, teaching and learning and assessment
- Pupils' achievements are good in Nursery and Reception, but unacceptable in some subjects and year groups
- The numbers of teachers leaving the school, teachers' high absence rate, and low expectations of pupils' work and achievement, restrict what is achieved
- Teachers do not work together as an effective team; the impact of in-service training is poor
- Poorly structured timetables and wasted time result in a shortfall in time available for several subjects, including science; extra-curricular activities are good
- The school's split site causes difficulties over managing the pupils, staff and resources available
- Many pupils are happy, confident, and show concern for others; the poor behaviour of a small minority disrupts the learning of others

Progress since the last inspection has been very poor, with deterioration over time in several key areas, notably leadership, management and teaching. Pupils' achievements have dropped from satisfactory to poor and behaviour and attitudes are not as good. The curriculum had weaknesses in 1999, and this is true today although the problems are now different. Parents are not as happy with the school. In the key recommendations of six years ago, insufficient progress has been made in improving maths standards and, although effective assessment systems are being introduced, the approach is inconsistent across the school. Provision for the youngest children remains a strength.

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

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E	D	E	E
mathematics	E	E	E	E
science	E	E	E	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' achievements are poor overall. They are good for children in the Foundation Stage and standards at the end of the Reception year are only a little below the expected level. Standards are well below average in Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievements are poor overall. In the Year 2 and Year 6 national assessments taken in 2004, attainment was well below average and pupils' achievements were poor or very poor. Boys and high

attainers, in particular, underachieved. Currently, pupils' achievements are poor in English, unsatisfactory in maths and very poor in science. Pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT are weak because they have too few opportunities to develop them. Although pupils with special educational needs achieve well when receiving additional support, their general level of achievement is unsatisfactory.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are satisfactory overall. Attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. The positive attitudes of most children in Nursery and Reception classes contribute well to their achievement. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 retain some enthusiasm for learning, though a few are disruptive at times. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality good. Pupils' social development is good and promoted well; their moral and cultural development is satisfactory. Spiritual development is unsatisfactory as opportunities to encourage reflection and develop spiritual awareness are missed. Most pupils show good concern for others.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education provided is poor. Teaching is poor, as is pupils' learning and the assessment of their work. In the Nursery and Reception classes teaching is effective, resulting in good learning. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 experience teaching ranging from very good to poor; the quality is poor overall. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Extra-curricular activities are good. The curriculum is poor, as it is not well balanced, with some weak class timetables. The split site causes difficulties. Problems with staffing and resources, including high staff absence, have disrupted learning. The overall care, health and safety, guidance, and support of pupils are unsatisfactory, but with some strengths. The school council is good. Good tracking systems are not consistently implemented. Pupils with statements of complex need are supported well but most are not designated to the specialist unit, which is unhelpful. Links with parents are inconsistent and unsatisfactory; links with the community and other schools are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school over time has been very poor and the management poor. School governance is satisfactory, as governors have tried for some years to instigate procedures that would lead to improvement. It is inappropriate to make an overall judgement about the leadership of the acting headteacher in the complex situation in which he works, although much has been achieved during his short period of tenure, with the support of current senior management. Leadership over a period of years has not responded appropriately to pupils' poor achievement and the high proportion of ineffective teaching. The outcome is inconsistent practice and low morale amongst staff. Subject co-ordinators are not effective enough. Monitoring and support systems and practice have been poor for some time but are improving. Governors have ensured that statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have some positive views about the school, but also concerns. They appreciate strengths in the work of the acting headteacher, Nursery and Reception, and the way children develop positive attitudes to school. Their particular concerns were: aspects of leadership; bullying and poor behaviour; inconsistent teaching; high staff turnover; poor homework and lack of challenge for pupils, and lack of involvement for parents. Inspectors generally agree with these views, except that they find most pupils' behaviour now satisfactory or better. Pupils also had concerns over the misbehaviour of a minority but appreciated recent improvement and being able to make their views known through the revived school council. Many commented on their dislike of the split site.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are

- Improve teaching, learning and achievement, above all in English, maths, science and ICT

- Make subject management more effective, particularly in consistent use of assessment systems
- Clarify the relationship between senior managers and staff so that all school policies are effectively and consistently implemented
- Ensure that timetables provide a balanced curriculum for all classes, utilising at least the recommended minimum of curriculum time
- Resolve the few remaining pupil behaviour difficulties which disrupt others' learning
- Work with the relevant authorities to minimise the impact of the split site and to plan for the long-term solution of the problem

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their learning and attain standards close to national expectations by the end of the Reception year. Standards are well below average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievements are poor overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement was poor overall in national assessments taken at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2004
- Currently pupils' achievements are poor in English, unsatisfactory in maths and very poor in science; higher attainers underachieve
- Good provision is made for learning the Early Learning Goals in Nursery and Reception classes and children achieve well
- Pupils' competence in literacy, numeracy and ICT is weak because pupils have too few opportunities to develop skills in these areas
- Those pupils with special educational needs who receive additional support make good progress and achieve well

Commentary

1. The standards pupils attained in assessments taken at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were much lower than national standards. In reading and writing, standards were well below average. In maths, they were very low, in the lowest five percent of all schools nationally. Teacher assessments in science indicated well below average standards. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level, level 3, was very low in all aspects of these subjects. Girls' results were better than those of the boys. The overall trend in results over three years was below the national trend of improvement. A comparison with schools with a like number of pupils taking free school meals, which is an indication of a similar background and entry, shows results to be very low overall, in the lowest five per cent of this group of schools nationally. Results in reading were marginally higher than in writing and maths.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.8 (12.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	11.5 (11.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	13.5 (14.1)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 47 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Results in national tests taken at the end of Year 6 in 2004, were well below average in English, maths and science. As in the assessments for younger pupils, few attained the higher level, a level 5 for eleven-year-olds. Girls' results were much higher than those of boys in 2004, although in 2003 they had been similar. The trend graph of results over recent years shows a well below average picture and a below average trend of improvement. When compared with schools where pupils attained similar results at the end of Year 2 in 2000, the school's results were well below average. This comparison with similar schools shows that the results fell dramatically from 2002 to 2003 and the 2004 results were similar to those of 2003.
3. The school's targets for English and maths results in the end of Year 6 tests were set at low levels. The English targets were exceeded at level 4 but not attained at level 5. In maths, the level 4 target was not achieved but the level 5 target was reached.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.7 (25.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	24.7 (24.8)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.5 (25.9)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. National assessment data indicates that standards are too low and have been for some time at the end of Years 2 and 6, and this represents poor achievement, particularly for boys, in English, maths and science.
5. Current standards at the end of the Reception year are a little below average, the children having made good progress since their entry into the Nursery. Although many children attain the expected Early Learning Goals, with a few exceeding them, the proportion is slightly lower than that found nationally. A few pupils with language, communication and behaviour difficulties, although making good progress, are unlikely to attain the Early Learning Goals. Achievement in personal development and communication, language and literacy development is good; it is satisfactory in maths. Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is good, but the lack of ICT development restricts overall standards, which are below expectations. Children make good progress in creative and physical development. In both cases, standards are below expectations for the end of the Foundation Stage, although higher in creative than physical.
6. Standards in English at the end of Years 2 and 6 are well below average and pupils' achievements are poor. Speaking and listening skills are close to national expectations but standards in reading and writing are well below average. Maths standards are below average, although higher than in the other two core subjects because of a recent focus on raising standards and some more effective teaching and learning. Achievement overall, however, is unsatisfactory. Pupils have had insufficient opportunity to study science, have few records of what they have done and attain very low standards. Their achievement is very poor. The most capable pupils underachieve most in all three subjects.
7. In other subjects the picture is mixed, but unsatisfactory overall. High proportions of weak teaching, low expectations and insufficient assessment, result in standards that are too low and pupils' unsatisfactory achievement. Religious education standards are well below average and achievement poor because pupils have too few opportunities to record what they discuss and learn, and because of inconsistencies between classes. ICT standards are too low and achievement is unsatisfactory because pupils have insufficient opportunities to use computers. Standards and achievements in other subjects are dependent upon the class the pupils are in. Better work was seen in art, music and physical education than in other areas.
8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in Nursery and Reception classes. Their achievement overall is unsatisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Pupils with statements of special educational needs, who have very complex needs, make good progress against their prior knowledge and individual education plan targets. Pupils with less complex special needs, those at school action and school action plus, make similar progress to other pupils in the school. That is, when teaching is satisfactory or better their achievement reflects this. However, when teaching is poor or unsatisfactory then pupils with special educational needs do not make the progress they should.

Insufficient focus on the differing needs of pupils lowers the 'norm' of teacher expectation and leads to too low general expectation in the classroom.

9. Development of the key skills of language, maths and ICT within other subjects is not promoted sufficiently in lessons. Teachers make few efforts to correct incorrect literacy in pupils' work. The shortfall in reliable and accessible ICT resources is having an impact on the use made of computers and hence the pupils' levels of skill. Pupils' competence in literacy is well below that expected of pupils of their age and capability, and below expectation in maths and ICT.
10. Progress since the last inspection has been poor with lower standards and worse pupil achievement in the three core subjects and in pupils' competence in the key skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attitudes, behaviour and pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Pupils develop well socially. Their moral and cultural development is satisfactory, and their spiritual development unsatisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are happy at school and enjoy learning
- The poor behaviour of a small minority of pupils, mainly in Years 5 and 6, disrupts the learning of others in their classes
- Most pupils show good concern for others and their social development is promoted well, but opportunities to encourage reflection and develop spiritual awareness are missed
- Senior managers have worked effectively in recent months to improve pupils' attendance, punctuality and behaviour

Commentary

11. Children in the Nursery love coming to school and are very keen to take part in all the activities offered. They feel secure because routines are very well organised and their achievements are valued and celebrated. Most Reception children look forward to coming to school: they like being with their friends and learning new things from their teachers. Children's positive attitudes contribute well to their good progress and achievement in the Foundation Stage. Many pupils in Years 1 to 6 retain some enthusiasm for school and learning. For example, they like the range of after-school clubs offered and Year 6 pupils are enjoying the opportunity, after their national tests, to find out about Ancient Egypt. In lessons, pupils are usually willing to learn and complete the tasks set for them. However, the poor quality of teaching means that they sometimes lose interest and motivation.
12. Attitudes and behaviour have deteriorated since the last inspection when they were reported as good and a strength of the school. Parents have been particularly concerned about the decline in standards of behaviour. However, these are now improving and are satisfactory overall. During the inspection, pupils were generally polite and friendly and moved around the school in an orderly manner. Outside at breaks and lunchtimes they played happily together, benefiting from the large grassed areas, the range of activities provided and the good levels of supervision. In lessons, behaviour was usually at least satisfactory and often good, even when the teaching was uninspiring and the pace of learning slow. Behaviour is very good in the Nursery because teaching sets high expectations and reminds children of them very effectively; consequently, the children quickly learn to take turns and not to call out.
13. These expectations and strategies for managing behaviour in the classroom are not always consistently implemented from Reception onwards. As a result, pupils sometimes misbehave, by shouting out their answers in a literacy session for example, or being silly in

a physical education lesson. This hinders their learning and achievement. In Years 5 and 6, a few pupils disrupt lessons so that those who want to learn despair about the quality of education they are receiving. They do, however, recognise the improvements that have been made recently under the leadership of the acting headteacher. The new behaviour policy is now applied strictly and rewards and sanctions are clear and followed through. Senior managers are effective in sorting out the most severe problems, including those arising from bullying. Pupils are now reasonably confident that they can get help if they are bullied and that the bullies are punished.

14. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils with special educational needs are positive and they feel accepted into the school and fully included in all activities. Pupils in and around the school are keen to accept and include pupils with quite complex special needs. They usually work well in the classroom with such complex pupils, but sometimes patterns of behaviour distract and disturb them, thus reducing their learning and achievement. Pupils with challenging behaviour, some of whom arrive with a history of difficulties at previous schools, generally make good progress in developing self-discipline and integrating with others. Senior managers work effectively with other agencies to help these pupils, and their families, resolve the underlying problems but these do flare up from time to time. Those with a lesser degree of special educational need take advantage of working with teaching assistants in a calm, productive way. There is no sign of intolerance or bullying of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils were seen to praise and encourage these pupils in a non-patronising way.

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	373	3	
White – any other White background	12		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1		
Mixed – White and Asian	1		
Mixed – any other mixed background	4		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1		
Black or Black British – African	3		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1		
Chinese	4		

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

15. Since the last school year (2003/4) reported above, the number of fixed period exclusions increased as the acting headteacher took steps to deal with the unacceptable behaviour of a small number of older pupils, mainly boys. This good practice has had a very good impact on the overall quality of behaviour in the school. The incidence of exclusions is now falling, although it is not yet at the previous low levels.
16. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development generally is not as good as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' social development, however, remains good. Pupils develop a good awareness and acceptance of the differences in others through working and playing alongside pupils with complex needs. They express good care and understanding when one of their peers is upset. There is no tension between pupils of different ethnic groups and the number of reported racist incidents is low. Pupils often collaborate well with one another in lessons, for example when sharing books during quiet reading or working in twos and threes on the limited number of functioning computers.

Pupils' social skills are enhanced by the good range of after-school clubs, which are available to all from the Nursery onwards. Pupils show good willingness to take responsibility. For example, younger pupils are effective playground buddies and older pupils routinely clear away equipment at the end of lunchtime. A small number of Year 6 pupils are leading the revived school council successfully so that it is becoming an active forum for pupils from all years to express their views and contribute to school improvement.

17. The daily assemblies generally provide satisfactory occasions for pupils to gather together to share their work or listen to a moral message. However, little time or effort is spent on helping pupils to think more deeply on the issues raised. The school does not plan for a range of themes to be covered in assemblies throughout the year. Very occasionally, a teacher seizes an opportunity for pupils to experience the joy and wonder of learning, for example in a Year 1 maths lesson when pupils were exploring symmetrical shapes, but this is rare. Pupils learn satisfactorily about the range of cultures represented within Britain and the wider world. Music makes a good contribution by introducing pupils to different musical styles and instruments.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.8	School data	0.7
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

18. Rates of attendance fell significantly some years after the last inspection and were well below the national average in the last complete reporting year (2003/4). Rates continued to be low in the autumn term of 2004 but have improved very recently so that in the half term of the inspection they had risen to over 94 percent in each year group, except Reception where there had been a lot of illness. Most pupils now attend regularly and on time. This improvement is a result of successful efforts by senior managers and administrative staff, working alongside local education authority attendance officers, to raise awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Pupils want to come to school to help their class win a weekly attendance certificate and parents realise that they must, at the very least, send their children to school during the time of the national tests. Administration staff are vigilant and work effectively to monitor and follow up absences. Punctuality at the start of the day is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided is poor. Teaching, learning and assessment are poor. The quality of the curriculum is poor although extra-curricular activities are good. The quality of care, guidance and support is unsatisfactory overall. Links with parents are inconsistent and unsatisfactory; they are satisfactory with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is poor overall, though good in Nursery and Reception. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 experience teaching ranging from very good to poor, and the quality is poor overall both in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' learning is poor and so they underachieve significantly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Inconsistent and unacceptable teaching in Years 1 to 6 results in poor achievement across a range of subjects and classes

- Good teaching in both the Nursery and Reception classes enables pupils to make good progress
- Some teachers lack subject expertise in English and science
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and assessment is inconsistent and poor
- Very little homework is set or marked

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	4 (8%)	14 (28%)	20 (40%)	6 (12%)	6 (12%)	0 (0%)

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

19. About three-quarters of lessons seen were satisfactory or better, and about one-third were good. An unacceptably high proportion of lessons were unsatisfactory or poor, about a quarter. Teaching and learning in the Nursery and Reception classes were good, with nearly all lessons observed satisfactory or better; most were good or very good. In Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6, too many teachers have low expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons. Teachers do not match the work appropriately to high, middle and low attaining pupils and insufficient questions are asked to find out what pupils can or cannot do.
20. Good and very good teaching and learning in the Nursery and Reception classes are characterised by effective planning, praise from strong teachers, and well-structured learning opportunities. The children are encouraged to make choices and develop their curiosity. Teachers are knowledgeable and use this to good effect. Appropriate use is not always made of opportunities that would enhance children's mathematical skills, however, although some very effective teaching of mathematical competences takes place. Occasionally, children have to spend too long listening on the carpet before becoming involved in activities, which reduces their levels of motivation, co-operation and enjoyment.
21. Most, but not all, teachers in Years 1 to 6 have appropriate subject knowledge. Where teachers know well the area being taught, they tend to ask questions that clarify understanding, and challenge the pupils to think and work hard. A few teachers are insecure in their understanding, for example in English, where some lack familiarity with the basic structure of literacy sessions and the teaching of key skills in English. The work in pupils' science books is often poor, indicating that teachers do not fully understand the content and skills of the National Curriculum. In a science lesson, learning intentions were unclear because preparation lacked detail and the teacher did not have a secure knowledge of the work on forces. The lesson structure was sound and pupils' behaviour was satisfactory, considering their lack of understanding of what they were trying to do, but they learnt little as they played with the equipment available.
22. Teachers' knowledge of maths is generally better than in several other subjects. For example, in a class converting simple fractions and percentages into decimals, work was linked to that of the day before, the starter activity involved all the class and the main tasks had been adapted to meet the needs of pupils of different capabilities and those with special educational needs. Pupils made good progress in the lesson and achieved well because teaching used knowledge of maths confidently and effectively to help all pupils learn.
23. The school has focused on ensuring that learning intentions are shared with the pupils in lessons, and this usually takes place. The ability of teachers to capture pupils' interest using this technique, and others, is highly variable, however. Although pupils generally respond

satisfactorily in lessons, and their behaviour is managed effectively, a few pupils in Year 6 and one or two in some younger classes are particularly difficult at times. When they are naughty they cause disruption, interrupting the learning of others. In discussions with inspectors, pupils referred to a small minority of older pupils who were very difficult to contain and who had been affecting the quality of teaching and learning in several classes for a year or two. They added that the main culprits are now being dealt with and teachers are not often being prevented from teaching.

24. Expectations of children in the Nursery were often challenging and appropriate. When watching a television programme developing number skills, the children joined in counting and singing number songs and rhymes most enthusiastically. This session was reinforced in follow-up group work where the children were split into ability groups and different, interesting and demanding tasks were carried out. In contrast, a literacy session for older children lacked substance and did not challenge pupils appropriately. The pupils showed little interest in writing a paragraph of prose from notes they had taken. Resources were inadequate and the pace of work was much too slow for many in the class. The lowest attaining pupils made most progress because of assistance from support staff.
25. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory overall, with areas of strength, particularly that teachers have copies of individual education plans in each classroom, as well as other useful information about pupils' needs. This information, which is updated regularly, is helpful to staff in deciding teaching strategies that will be the most useful for these pupils. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs often reflects the overall quality of teaching and learning in the lesson. This is not always the case, however, with learning support assistants providing substantial and effective help to some individuals, lifting the quality of their learning whatever the quality of the class teaching. Many assistants were deployed well and used to good effect, but their briefs were sometimes too imprecise and they were not placed in the lessons where their skills were most needed. Occasionally teaching assistants were unable effectively to engage some pupils with very complex needs, such as those with severe autism, and prevent them disrupting the work of other pupils.
26. Teachers do not routinely set homework to classes. Homework that has been set is not always marked, which pupils find disheartening. Reading is not a regular homework for most of the pupils. Pupils are not being given the opportunity to reinforce at home the work they learn at school. This is very unhelpful to pupils whose standards in English, maths and science are not high enough.
27. Assessment is used inconsistently to inform pupils how to improve further their work. Few and unacceptable records are kept of pupils' achievements and standards. Previous years' national tests in English and maths are analysed by senior managers and this information is fed back to staff. This data is not used effectively by class teachers. Assessments in science have not been analysed, which is unhelpful. In the best lessons, teachers quiz the pupils to find out their rate of progress, and where greater or less challenge is needed, but where teaching is weak, little effort is made to respond to individual needs.
28. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and learning has fallen from good to poor, representing very poor progress. Assessment was a weakness in 1999 and remains so today.

The curriculum

Overall, the school provides a poor curriculum with poor accommodation and resources. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is not well balanced with poorly structured timetables
- Curriculum planning from year to year is unsatisfactory and does not meet the needs of pupils of differing capability

- Good provision is made for extra-curricular activities, which are popular with the pupils
- The school's split site is very unhelpful in managing the pupils and staff
- Poor staffing is having a negative impact on pupils' learning
- Resources for English and ICT are inadequate
- No specialist showering facility is provided for those pupils who continue to need help with toilet training

Commentary

29. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, but is mostly not well balanced or effective. It is well balanced in the Foundation Stage and effectively planned, based on the Early Learning Goals. It is generally not well planned, however, for Years 1 to 6 to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning and it does not provide for individual needs based on assessment of prior learning. Provision is dependent on the skills and knowledge of individual teachers rather than overall school curriculum planning. Planning for each subject is not scrutinised to see if work develops over time or is planned to meet the needs of the great range of abilities in each class. Some subjects, and some aspects of certain subjects receive less emphasis than they should, for example insufficient time for science, a lack of emphasis on design in design and technology and insufficient skill development in ICT.
30. Poorly structured class timetables and time wasted during lessons result in a shortfall of curriculum time available. Some lessons began several minutes late throughout the school, there were periods of significant time slippage and the slow pace in some lessons had a negative impact on teaching time.
31. Key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT are not used and developed sufficiently through planned work in other subjects. Pupils' writing skills are the weakest aspect of their English work, yet there are very few examples of tasks being planned for pupils to use and develop their writing through structured or extended work in subjects such as science, geography and history. Teachers are not looking for and planning such experiences across subjects. Poor use is made of the ICT facilities to support cross-curricular work because the computers are unreliable and some staff lack confidence in using them. Their placement in the Year 2 to 6 building is an added problem for pupils in the Foundation Stage and Year 1. In a Year 6 lesson seen, nine out of fifteen computers available did not function, resulting in time being wasted while the teacher sought valiantly to rectify the situation.
32. The school has an appropriate programme to promote personal, social and health education, including a policy for sex and drugs education. Most classes have a timetabled session for circle time, but not all, leaving some uncertainty about individual class provision.
33. The school enriches and extends learning in lessons with a good range of after-school clubs, including guitar, gardening, football, cheerleading, basketball, recorder, music and media. The staff involved give willingly of their time and the pupils and staff enjoy the events. These and other clubs are estimated to involve about a third of the pupils in the school at some point in the year. Outside visitors held a multicultural day in school and the pupils have investigated fenland culture with a visit to a wetland trust. Appropriate use is made of national initiatives such as booster groups to help pupils do as well as they can in Year 6 national tests.
34. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. These pupils are fully involved in the life of the school, including all aspects of the curriculum, and also have the benefits of specialist provision in some areas. Pupils take part in special extra gymnastics lessons at the local leisure centre, have horse-riding lessons and access to a special sensory room built within the school.

35. Staffing, accommodation and resources for pupils with special educational needs are unsatisfactory overall. Specialist teaching staff are sufficient in number with good expertise, although the part-time nature of one of the special educational needs co-ordinators and the sharing of the role causes some inefficiencies, where a significant number of pupils have complex and challenging special needs. Pupils have access to physiotherapy and speech therapy specialist staff. The split site causes inefficiencies over staffing and resources issues. There is good regular liaison with the local education authority specialist support team, who meet termly to discuss the progress of pupils with the most complex needs. The large team of teaching assistants are dedicated and work hard to meet the needs of the pupils, although deployment and expertise are not always appropriate or acceptable.
36. The two specialist resource rooms are bright and well equipped, providing a good facility from which the pupils benefit. However, no specialist showering facility is provided for those pupils who continue to need help with toilet training. This is unacceptable. Also, Year 1 pupils' education is disrupted as pupils and staff, accessing the lower school resource room, have to walk through their classroom.
37. The school has had a high staff absence rate, high staff and pupil mobility and currently has five temporary teachers, not all of whom are qualified. Teachers are supported by a large number of teaching assistants. Resources for several subjects are of poor quality and are insufficient, which restricts the range of teaching styles used, for example in English and religious education. The library facilities and books in the two school buildings are poor, with insufficient good quality books for the pupils to enjoy.
38. There are serious shortfalls in the accommodation. The Foundation Stage and Year 1 are taught in a Victorian building 250 metres from the newer school building; the walk between the two can take up to 20 minutes, more in bad weather. The split site makes liaison very difficult and results in unhelpful difficulties managing pupils and staff in relation to the curriculum.
39. The curriculum and resources were judged to be good six years ago, but are now poor overall. Very poor progress has been made since the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

The care, guidance, support and health and safety of pupils are unsatisfactory overall, but with some areas of strength. Pupils are cared for satisfactorily and systems for seeking their views and acting on them are good. The guidance and support they receive on their work is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good systems to track pupils' achievements over time are not used consistently by teachers to monitor progress and provide additional support
- Gifted and talented pupils and the highest attainers are not identified or given appropriate support
- The designation of the learning support centre as having only one pupil with complex and challenging special educational needs is unhelpful when other pupils have similar needs
- The school council is providing pupils with a good means of supporting school improvement
- Appropriate policies and procedures are in place for child protection and health and safety

Commentary

40. The school's health and safety and child protection policies are appropriate and meet statutory requirements. The acting head teacher is the health and safety officer and the

child protection officer. Both areas are well monitored. The school works effectively with other agencies including social services, looked-after children services, and speech and language services. The complex and on-going special educational needs provision is supported by regular communication between appropriate agencies. The school keeps and completes an up-to-date accident logbook, with appropriate returns to the local education authority.

41. Pupils say they feel safe and know of an adult within school whom they could approach with confidence if a need arises. They are confident that any incidents of bullying are sorted out quickly. A small number of pupils still cause difficulties in some classes, but the new behaviour policy, this year, is having a very good effect on pupils appreciating the consequences of their actions and improving attitudes to learning and behaviour.
42. Induction arrangements for pupils entering school are effective, and involve the 'buddy' system. This enables younger pupils to approach confidently the designated older pupils if a need arises in the playground. The pupils are easily identified by wearing coloured bands. Older pupils transferring to secondary schools follow an appropriate programme of visits to their new schools, with much more detailed and thorough arrangements for the pupils with special educational needs.
43. The support, advice and guidance based on monitoring of achievement and personal development of pupils are unsatisfactory, although good in the Foundation Stage. Tracking systems are in place to monitor the effectiveness of pupils' achievements in English and maths but this information is not used effectively to set targets and inform planning for different ability groups. Following recommendations from the previous inspection report, this system was introduced by the deputy head, with support from the local education authority some years ago. The system has not been implemented effectively by teachers, however, and inconsistencies across the school exist which mean that the practices do not have the impact on pupils' attainment that they could. There are examples of good work, however. In one class, pupils' attainment has been significantly improved by the teacher making effective use of data on each pupil's performance, with checks made against targeted improvements. This system has helped identify pupils for extra English and maths lessons, from which pupils have benefited. There are no identified groups of gifted and talented pupils and provision for such pupils is poor.
44. Appropriate information about pupils with special educational needs is gathered from outside agencies such as the school support team. Links with other groups, such as the educational psychologist team, speech therapists and physiotherapists, enable programmes of support to be prepared. Although the school does well to implement some of the programmes designed for a very complex range of pupils, there remains confusion about the status of pupils within the learning support centre. At the time of the inspection, only one pupil was considered to be 'on roll' in the learning support centre. The remainder of pupils with complex and challenging special educational needs are considered by outside agencies to be part of the general school population with special educational needs. This causes confusion and difficulty in managing appropriate resources for the school as a whole.
45. Annual reviews are effective and support pupils and their parents as they move through the school. Tracking of progress against special educational needs 'P' levels and National Curriculum levels is good in the lower school, but this is less consistent in the upper school. There is no discrete gathering of data about the progress of these pupils, only the regular whole-school tracking system, which has yet to be embedded. Information about pupils' progress is, however, passed back to learning support staff at weekly reviews when the following week's differentiated activities are discussed and planned.
46. Teaching assistants play a valuable part in ensuring that pupils with special needs take a full part and are appropriately supported at all times during the school day. Pupils who need time out and away from the main classroom, to enable them to cope, are generally paired with effective teaching assistants. They talk calmly to pupils, helping them gain control and then bringing them back into

the lesson so that they are fully included in what is going on. At lunchtime, some mid-day supervisors also work with groups of pupils, organising and taking part in appropriate activities such as 'parachute' social games, which include all in the group.

47. The school council has recently been re-convened and is providing an effective means of including pupils, and in seeking their views on various aspects of school life, such as senior staff appointments. Pupils listen well to each other and show a high degree of concern and understanding. Their brief is to assist with the further improvement of the school, giving a pupil perspective.
48. The provision of pastoral care is good in several areas, but unsatisfactory overall because of the lack of academic support and guidance systems and the consequences for the school of the number of pupils specified to have placements in the learning support centre. Progress overall, since the time of the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are unsatisfactory. Links with the community and other schools are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has lost the confidence of a significant number of parents who do not feel well informed or consulted
- Parents of children in the Nursery and Reception classes are involved well in their children's education
- Governors and senior managers have maintained an effective flow of essential information to parents during a period of great uncertainty
- Good links with the main receiving secondary school ensure the smooth transition of pupils with special educational needs
- Some parents delivering and collecting their children from the lower school site flaunt traffic laws, which causes a difficult situation

Commentary

49. The school's partnership with parents has deteriorated significantly since the last inspection six years ago, when it was good and a strength of the school. Parents are now unhappy with several aspects of school life, especially leadership over recent years and inconsistencies in the way the school handles issues such as behaviour, bullying and homework. A few parents are actively hostile to the school, but most recognise that the acting headteacher, supported by the deputy head, is starting to help the school to improve. A large minority of parents do not feel their views are taken into account and do not feel well informed about their child's progress. A number of these concerns arise from the difficulties surrounding the leadership of the school and the large number of teachers who have taught some classes.
50. Despite these problems, the school's links with parents of children in the Nursery and Reception classes are good and have a positive effect on the children's progress and achievement. Nursery staff undertake home visits to help children transfer successfully to part-time education. Parents have easy access to Nursery staff and are kept well informed of their child's progress and achievements. Parents of children in the Reception classes are invited into school on Friday mornings to involve them in their children's education, particularly reading. This good partnership is not maintained in Years 1 to 6, with no structured arrangements for parents to be involved in their children's learning. Reading records are infrequently signed by staff. Homework is set sporadically and inconsistently. Parents are not enabled to make a sustained contribution to the academic progress of their children in mainstream classes. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are all invited to the annual review meeting for their children. Generally these parents have positive views about communication regarding their children's progress.

51. Over the last few months, parents have received a satisfactory range of information which has kept them in touch with matters such as the absence of key staff, the provision of visits and visitors, and the targets set for their children under the intensive support programme instigated by the local education authority. Most annual reports were issued in the spring term and contained good information about pupils' progress in English, maths and personal development, including a self-evaluation by each child. Governors wrote clearly in their annual report about the problems facing the school and ensured that a good number of parents came to their annual general meeting. Nevertheless, senior managers recognise that communication with parents needs to improve and have identified some practical methods of achieving this, to begin next term. They have been hampered in making improvements earlier because of the need to deal with the concerns and complaints of individual parents, some of which have taken up a very large amount of managers' time.
52. Delivery and collection of pupils at the lower school site is difficult in the restricted space available. Some parents and carers park on roads where it is illegal to do so, which makes car, adult and pupil movement immediately outside the school gate very difficult and dangerous.
53. Pupils with special educational needs are prepared well for their transition to the local high school. These pupils' needs and progress are discussed at meetings between transferring and receiving schools, and the pupils have the opportunity to attend link days before transfer, accompanied by a teaching assistant if necessary. Satisfactory arrangements are in place to ensure that other pupils make a smooth transfer. Pupils benefit from some of the joint initiatives organised by the local cluster of schools, for example in physical education. The expertise within other schools, including special schools, has not been used sufficiently, recently, to enhance the professional development of Clackclose staff.
54. Links with the community are not as strong as at the time of the last inspection but some have been maintained. Representatives of local churches continue to make a positive contribution to assemblies and to pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and its festivals. Pupils raise funds for local charities. Governors are making good use of expertise in the community to equip themselves to tackle the issues facing the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school over time has been very poor and the management of the school poor. Governance of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher, supported by the deputy head and governors, has held the school together this year, working to make improvements in many areas of school life, with successes apparent in pupils' behaviour and attendance
- Leadership of the school over a period of years has not responded appropriately to pupils' poor achievement and the high proportion of ineffective teaching
- Subject co-ordinators are insufficiently effective in leading and managing their areas, including assessment
- Staff have not been led or managed effectively, an outcome of which is inconsistent practices and low morale that are unhelpful to the pupils
- Monitoring and support systems and practice have been poor for some time, but are improving

Commentary

55. The substantive headteacher has been absent for some time due to ill health. No judgement has been made of the leadership of the acting headteacher, as he has only been in post for a few months in an uncertain position, unsure when the substantive head would

be returning. During the inspection period it became clear that a new substantive headteacher is to be appointed for the school. Prior to the arrival of the acting headteacher, provided by the county, the deputy was acting headteacher for times during the period of prolonged absence of the substantive head. The deputy head has initiated several improvements and the current acting headteacher, working in partnership with the deputy head, has instigated significant changes.

56. The governing body was aware of significant problems in the school over two years ago, alerted by assessment data and issues raised by the deputy head. Governors made the difficult decision to request help from the local education authority as they felt that the school needed support, finding that the school's leadership alone did not demonstrate the capacity to make essential improvements. A special 'project board' was set up in November 2003, involving local education authority staff, governors and school managers, to set targets and monitor developments. An action plan was formulated to improve the quality of leadership and management, the quality of teaching and learning, and to raise standards, to be led by the substantive headteacher. The illness of the substantive headteacher for periods of time from May 2004 led to delays, which resulted in insufficient improvement and a high degree of frustration by governors, who were aware that the school was not providing pupils with an acceptable education. Current governors have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. In partnership with the acting headteacher and deputy head, they have set the overall direction for the school, with a clear focus on raising standards and improving the quality of education provided. Governors understand their role, and have attended training from local authority staff. They are well organised and are working with the acting headteacher, deputy head and local education authority to bring about the necessary improvements for the pupils. Governors have ensured that the school meets its statutory responsibilities.
57. The school lacked a sense of direction and purpose in the past and senior staff were besieged with daily tasks and incidents – involving both pupils and their parents. Key improvements, such as those needed in pupils' achievements, their behaviour and in teaching and learning were given insufficient priority, as project board minutes show. There was, and still is, little evidence of teamwork except in isolated groups like the Foundation Stage, where leadership and management are good. Staff appear to 'do their own thing' a lot of the time. The focus on the well-being of staff in the current action plan is well intentioned, but is being misunderstood by some staff as a reason for not implementing essential, substantial improvements that bring with them associated challenges.
58. The deputy head has arranged a good assessment system to track pupils' progress through the school and set targets for improvement. The acting headteacher in his short period of tenure has led good progress in a number of very important areas, particularly the behaviour of pupils and their attendance. Needed improvements in other key areas, including pupils' achievements, the quality of teaching and learning, and subject leadership and management, have not yet been attained. Monitoring of teaching and learning and using 'assessment for learning' programmes are helping, but progress is inconsistent. Due to the low morale and frequent absence of the staff through previous turbulent times, absence is now being closely monitored and is much improved. Subject managers have received some training and support in their roles but this has not led to sufficient improvement in assessment, teaching and learning. The curriculum is not being managed effectively and so valuable teaching time is wasted. Performance management and other similar requirements are, however, being met.
59. Leadership and management of provision for special educational needs are satisfactory and fully committed to including all pupils in the life of the school. Responsibility is shared between two members of staff. This arrangement, alongside the split site of the school, causes some lack of cohesion and effectiveness, particularly with the many significant other key tasks that the senior

manager involved has to shoulder currently. With the best of intentions, communication and management are difficult with such a complex group of pupils across two sites, and managers working part time in their role. Current arrangements prevent the best use being made of the available resources to meet pupils' needs. Nevertheless, a large team of teaching assistants, several of whom are very effective, are well led and managed on a day-to-day basis and the pupils benefit from their expertise.

60. The uncertain nature of the status of the most complex pupils, that is which pupils are placed within the learning support centre and which pupils are considered to be a part of the general school population, causes significant management difficulties. Teachers and pupils fully accept pupils with very complex needs, because of the whole-school approach to their involvement. However, the balance of time individual pupils spend in the main classrooms is not always monitored effectively and some pupils disrupt the learning of their mainstream peers through their behaviour. The vision is not clear as to how to develop provision further, using good specialist accommodation as well as involvement in mainstream classes, enabling these pupils with complex and challenging needs to learn effectively without disrupting the work of others. Some training of mainstream staff has taken place on aspects of teaching pupils with complex special needs, but not as much as is needed.
61. Financial spending has not been well planned in the past and value for money was not sought. Recruitment, retention and deployment of staff have not been managed well and some key classes are taught by inexperienced or unqualified teachers. The school's current difficulties indicate that trainee teachers should not be placed at Clackclose. Resources have not been managed well, resulting in the unreliable ICT provision currently. Teachers do not yet make sufficient use of the assessment data that the school holds. The principles of best value have not been given the priority they should.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,191,098	Balance from previous year	22,284
Total expenditure	1,167,260	Balance carried forward to the next	46,122
Expenditure per pupil	2,799		

62. Since the time of the last inspection in 1999, there has been a significant deterioration in many aspects of provision at the school. Leadership and management have not taken sufficient account of the last report findings. Over the past six years, the progress made has been very poor.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good or better teaching in the Nursery results in good achievement
- Partnerships with parents are good
- Programmes for induction into the Nursery and transfer from Reception into Year 1 are good
- A small number of children have difficulty meeting expectations of their behaviour

Commentary

63. Children start in the Nursery the term before their fourth birthday. They enter with overall standards below average but with a wide range of attainments in language, mathematical and social skills. Children transfer into the Reception class at two points during the year, depending upon their age. The children achieve well overall and, by the end of the Reception year, the majority are on the way to attaining the expected Early Learning Goals. A number of children with communication, learning and behaviour difficulties are not as successful and attainment overall is just below average. A wide variety of interesting activities is planned that match the children's needs. The Foundation Stage team plan well together and meet to review the curriculum but there have been no opportunities for staff to evaluate teaching and learning in the other classes, which could help to promote continuity and the spreading of good practice. The teaching assistants and nursery nurse work well with teachers to support the children. Assessment systems are generally appropriate and helpful in supporting the children to make progress; assessment on entry to the Nursery is not sufficiently rigorous. A very good bank of evidence has been gathered to support the application for the county 'kitemark' for early years education; three modules of work have already been completed. Leadership and management are good.
64. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is a strength in the school. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in maintaining this area.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships between the staff and children help children to develop positive attitudes to learning
- Good questioning and explanation help children learn
- Some of the older children find it difficult to listen and take turns and this impacts upon the learning of others

Commentary

65. Children enter the Nursery with below average skills but the caring and supportive environment enables them to settle well and develop confidence. This area of learning has a high priority and the teachers plan activities successfully to promote personal and social skills. All the staff know the children well and encourage them to make choices and develop curiosity. Children learn the routines in the Reception class but some do not adjust to sitting and listening for longer times and have difficulty developing control. Most children work well in pairs and as a group, especially in the role-play and outdoor play areas. Occasionally the less mature children showed a lack of concern for others but where teachers are firm and

make expectations clear and then praise good behaviour, this is soon remedied. From discussions with Reception age children, they enjoy school a lot but do dislike sitting on the carpet for a long time. The majority of the support staff are very experienced and make a significant contribution to the children's learning and their positive attitudes to their activities. The overall quality of teaching of this area is good, resulting in good achievement.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned to prepare the children for Year 1
- Guided reading is developed well in Reception
- Several of the older children have difficulty expressing themselves clearly
- Children were not seen choosing to enjoy books or to write

Commentary

66. In the Nursery, there is good emphasis on children speaking in clear sentences and listening to each other and to the teaching staff. Children enjoy stories and joining in with linked rhymes and activities. They have opportunities to write and read although no children were seen choosing these during the inspection. The younger children develop their confidence with speaking because staff frequently question and hold conversations with them. Children initiated their own conversations and played happily together in the “Garden Centre” shop, deciding roles. The teacher extended this activity well by asking to buy a bunch of flowers and children then developed their roles in more depth. The Reception children enjoyed reading and talked about characters in books although they made little attempt to read words unless the teacher was guiding them. Writing skills are beginning to develop but are below average for their age group. Teaching is effective overall, with staff having good expectations and commitment to improving literacy standards. A lack of pace in the Reception year sometimes restricts what is achieved but children do well overall.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is satisfactory.

Main strength and weakness

- There is a good focus on numeracy in the Nursery
- Activities do not always provide enough challenge to extend older children’s learning

Commentary

67. Teachers plan clearly for mathematical development, with days where all activities centre on maths and staff focus their questioning around it. This is an enjoyable time, when children achieve well. Opportunities are found daily for maths experiences in the Nursery, focusing on number work. For example, all children counted to ten together, supported by staff, so children’s facility with numbers improved and with this their confidence. Many children in the Reception class count objects to ten and talk about shapes with some accuracy. Samples of work seen in the Reception class had few examples of higher attaining children being extended with more challenging work. Staff do not always use opportunities like baking to develop mathematical language and ideas. These wasted opportunities restrict children’s overall development in maths to a satisfactory level; the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a wide range of interesting activities
- Staff enhance children’s knowledge and understanding well
- ICT skills are not developed systematically

Commentary

68. In the Reception class children investigate the weather, building on the daily work they do in the Nursery. They have visited a wetlands centre to enhance their knowledge and understanding. Children took part in an Indian dance and music day following which they made chapattis and learned about life in India. Children developed a good understanding of life in India through these stimulating activities. Children also enjoyed designing a cupboard for the 'Queen's Knickers' linked to a story they had heard. They selected tools and materials well. Children use the computers in the classroom but this gives limited access, and resources in the computer suite are not sufficiently reliable to promote regular access for the Foundation Stage. The split site results in a significant waste of time for these young children, when they need to go to the ICT suite. Staff make good efforts to introduce children to scientific, geographical and historical ideas, as well as ICT, and the quality of teaching and learning overall is good, leading to good achievement.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is good.

Main strengths

- Outdoor play opportunities are used well to develop children's skills
- Children handle tools and equipment at an appropriate level

Commentary

69. Well-planned indoor and outdoor activities enable children to develop their co-ordination skills. For example in the Nursery, children have two sessions a week on big bikes in the large playground; all children can ride a bike confidently and many can ride a scooter. In physical education sessions in the hall, Reception children develop their awareness of space in relation to themselves and others. Children in the Reception classrooms use scissors efficiently and use tools and equipment to stick materials together. The curriculum is well planned and the overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The children enjoy the planned activities and achieve well. Teachers and support staff make good use of the available facilities.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is good.

Main strengths

- Role-play areas are used well to encourage imaginative language
- Children with special educational needs are supported well in creative activities

Commentary

70. Good quality resources are provided for creative activities. The quality of teaching varies between satisfactory and very good, and is good overall. Children's achievement is good and, towards the end of their Reception year, a majority are attaining the expected goals and others are working towards them. Interesting role-play areas have been set up in the Nursery and the Reception classes and are planned into the curriculum well. For example, children use the pet shop and vet area to develop co-operative play, making appointments and selling food for animals. Nursery paintings of flowers and gold fish bowls indicated good achievement. Reception children were seen playing musical instruments with great enthusiasm, following a picture story for the cue to use their instrument. Children with special educational needs were able to join in this activity successfully, with the support of a teaching assistant.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is poor.

Main weaknesses

- Standards in national tests for both boys and girls, and in daily class work generally, are well below average
- Teachers' expectations of pupils of all abilities are often too low; work is often insufficient and not matched to the abilities of individual pupils
- Leadership and management of the subject are poor
- Assessment of pupils' learning is not undertaken systematically nor is it recorded to inform planning for the next stage of learning
- Links with other subjects are not developed sufficiently to enhance key literacy skills effectively and consistently

Commentary

71. Results in the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2004 were well below average and indicated poor achievement. The trend over the years 2002 to 2004 demonstrates significant decline. In Year 2, in 2004, the proportion of pupils reaching level 3 in reading and writing was very low. In Year 6, in 2004, the proportion of pupils reaching level 5 was very low.
72. At the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are currently well below average, largely because of the low expectations of teachers, four of whom are very recent temporary appointments to the school. Some staff are unfamiliar with the structure of the literacy session, and the importance of teaching key skills in English. As the quality of teaching is inconsistent across classes, pupils do not have equality of opportunity of learning experiences. Pupils join the school with below average attainment overall, so their achievements are poor as a result of poor progress over time.
73. Speaking and listening skills are close to national expectations. Pupils talk confidently and respond appropriately, both in lessons and around the school in general. Where teaching is good, pupils are asked challenging questions that prompt extended answers, and detailed discussions with talk partners take place. In these lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. Where teaching is unsatisfactory or poor, teachers talk for too long and pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to speak, or to give extended answers to questions. Expectations are too low at times, with tasks not matched to the range of ability in the class. As a result, many pupils lose interest and stop listening. When this occurs their achievements are unsatisfactory or worse.
74. Achievement in reading is poor, and pupils' standards are well below average. The books pupils can choose are mainly old, unattractive and over-used. The inadequate libraries are not well used, indicating a wasted opportunity to promote reading and hence pupils' literacy skills. Pupils do enjoy reading. Many read with expression and can talk about the content of the story. They confidently express preference for certain types of books. An able Year 6 pupil read 'Jessica' with great feeling and expression, and a Year 2 pupil read confidently from the reading scheme. Where readers are less confident, they ignore clues from the pictures and sentences, which would help them with unfamiliar words. Many of the books read by the pupils lacked challenge and were too easy for them. Pupils in the younger classes have home/school diaries, which indicate that books are not changed often enough. Some parents and carers write comments for the teacher, but not all.
75. Pupils' standards in writing match those in reading and their achievement is equally poor. This is largely because pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop ideas through

extended writing and to practise drafting and proof-reading skills. Pupils too often undertake low-level writing tasks, reflecting low teacher expectations. Pupils are given little idea of what they must do to improve. Activities are often worksheets or loose pieces of paper and pupils are given insufficient guidance as how they should be used and stored. Exercise books contain little evidence of recorded work, particularly in Years 5 and 6. The range of writing opportunities is appropriate, if insufficient in number, and includes producing a travel guide to Mexico, writing alternative ends to stories and note-taking. Lesson objectives are not always reviewed at the end of sessions.

76. Within the overall poor quality of teaching, some good practice exists. Where teaching is good, teachers are secure in subject knowledge and use an appropriate range of questions to encourage pupils to be involved in learning and to focus on the tasks given. For example in Year 1, careful questioning of pupils, on what they had to do to get six ticks, enthused them to try their best. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory or poor, lessons lack pace and work is not matched well enough to extend pupils' existing skills. This often resulted in pupils being off task, and uninvolved. Far too little use is made of ICT in English. Teaching assistants support progress, often making significant contributions to what pupils with special educational needs can achieve. Marking is inconsistent and poor overall.
77. Leadership and management of the subject are poor. Subject management is split between two age ranges. Leadership is inexperienced and, although supported by external specialists, is insufficiently effective. Induction has not been appropriate, resulting in an unfocused approach, unsure of current practice in the school, and uncertain as to the development priorities for English. Liaison is weak and there is insufficient monitoring of the inconsistent teaching.
78. Systems for recording pupils' progress are not applied consistently nor used to inform planning or set individual targets. The subject has deteriorated very seriously since the last inspection. A key issue of the need for systematic assessment to inform planning for the next stage of learning has not been effectively implemented.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

79. Opportunities are planned for linking language and literacy skills with other subjects, but these are not effectively implemented. In Year 2, pupils were encouraged to produce a travel guide to Mexico, but this was unsatisfactory because pupils spent too long drawing pictures and colouring in rather than developing their written language. Teachers' planning for subjects other than English does not identify enough opportunities for pupils to develop their language and literacy skills. Pupils' oral skills are infrequently commented upon and so opportunities to develop their accurate speaking skills are wasted. Pupils' competence in literacy is well below that expected of pupils of their ages.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below national expectations and pupils are underachieving
- Generally, teachers' expectations are too low and so pupils are not sufficiently challenged, but some teaching is good
- Monitoring and assessment are inadequate
- Teaching assistants effectively support pupils with special educational needs

Commentary

80. The results in national assessments taken at the end of Year 2 in 2004 show that standards were very low compared with all schools and those with a similar proportion taking free school meals. Results were in the lowest five percent of schools nationally and achievement

was very poor. In the Year 6 tests for the same year, results were well below average both for all schools nationally and for those where a similar level of attainment had been recorded in Year 2 four years earlier. Achievement was poor. The trend of improvement in national assessment results over the last three years, for both Years 2 and 6, has been below the national trend. Standards of work seen for the current pupils in Years 2 and 6, are better than those indicated in the tests, but are below national expectations and pupils are not achieving as they could. Pupils are not making good enough progress from Year 1 to Year 6. Achievement is unsatisfactory overall. Girls' achievements are better than those of boys, with boys' behaviour in one or two classes being a contributory cause of their underachievement.

81. Older pupils plot co-ordinates in four quadrants, although higher attainers are not challenged by this work. Higher attaining pupils convert percentages to decimals and fractions, and apply this knowledge to finding quantities of different lengths and volumes. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have learnt the properties of shapes using large models of solid shapes. They can describe these using the correct mathematical vocabulary. Year 1 and 2 pupils develop an idea of symmetry, but high attainers' work on capacity and calculations was insufficiently challenging. Pupils in all years are developing a facility with number, but not as quickly or as accurately as they should, which hinders their progress in other areas of maths. The pupils' standards and achievements vary greatly from lesson to lesson and class to class.
82. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall, ranging from poor to very good. Much of it is just satisfactory. Teachers plan using a variety of schemes, building on the national numeracy strategy. Whilst some effort is made to cater for different abilities within each class, average and, in particular, above average pupils are not sufficiently planned for. Teachers' expectations are not high enough. Very little use is made of ICT in maths, which is unhelpful when standards need to improve in both subjects. There is little systematic tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress or use of data by class teachers, so work is not appropriately matched to pupils' needs. Boys' underachievement is apparent in lessons when they do not concentrate well or misbehave, and they are not dealt with effectively by class teachers. Homework is set very infrequently, and marked even less frequently, which means pupils do not have the opportunity to test or reinforce their knowledge learnt in school.
83. Maths lessons are usually characterised by teachers explaining the purpose of the lesson, providing a variety of activities, and encouraging pupils to reflect on their own learning at the end. This appropriate structure is helpful to pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are usually effective in supporting groups of pupils with special educational needs, which often enables them to make more effective progress than their peers. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent as is the standard of presentation: some is good whilst that in other books is poor. The time spent on a maths is sometimes too long which results in pupils losing interest. For example, a ninety-minute session with an older class started well but the pace fell away and pupils lost interest. Time-filling activities lacked challenge and a few pupils, mainly boys, were rather silly at times. The girls persevered with tasks even when they were repetitive and boring. The overall quality of teaching and learning in such a lengthy session was poor. Generally, most pupils show interest in their work, are keen to explain their methods and strive to complete each task they are given, irrespective of the quality of teaching provided.
84. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Although the vision is clear for the task that has to be done, to raise standards to an acceptable level, it is only just beginning to have an impact on the quality of education provided in this subject. It is understood that a more consistently effective quality of teaching, learning and assessment is essential if pupils are to achieve their potential. The importance of using data and

monitoring teaching and learning are also appreciated. Some time has been spent on training staff, and monitoring pupils' books.

85. At the time of the last inspection, maths was a key issue; pupils' numeracy was not good enough. The recommendation also referred to the need to improve progression in learning and raising attainment. Insufficient progress has been made, with current underachievement and standards that are still too low. Progress made over the past six years has been poor overall, but with more positive indications very recently.

Mathematics across the curriculum

86. There is little evidence of maths being planned for across the curriculum. Mathematical skills are used from time to time in science and design and technology, for measurement and tabulation of results. Pupils use basic number work in physical education, as they listen to instructions in lessons. In history and geography, some numerical work is carried out, for example as pupils learn to appreciate chronology. Opportunities in lessons when number work could be reinforced are not well used. Pupils' competence in maths across the curriculum is below average.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is very poor.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Far too little science is taught, resulting in very low standards
- Although the overall quality of teaching is very poor, a small minority is good
- Assessment is carried out inconsistently and minimal records of pupils' achievements are kept
- Leadership and management of the subject are very poor

Commentary

87. Standards shown by teacher assessments of seven-year-olds were well below average in 2004, with very low standards (at the level of the lowest five percent of all schools nationally) in experimental and investigative science. Results were similarly low in 2003. When comparisons are made with schools with a similar number of pupils taking free school meals, the results were well below average in 2004, indicating poor achievement. In national tests taken at the age of eleven in 2004, results were well below average, as they were in 2003. Boys' attainments are lower than those of girls. When the 2004 tests are compared with those of similar schools (those attaining similar results in Year 2, four years earlier), results are well below average and poor. Many fewer pupils attained level 5 than is the case nationally, with more attaining level 4. The trend in Year 6 science attainment over time is downwards, with a substantial fall in 2003, and little improvement in 2004.
88. Standards seen in the books of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are very low, indicating very poor achievement considering the abilities of the pupils. Very little evidence of scientific enquiry is apparent. For several year groups, pupils' exercise books and folders of recorded work are disorganised, and do not have recorded work in all the expected areas. Minimal amounts of work were available from most classes for the autumn term 2004. In a Year 5 class, all the work included had only recently been marked and provided very poor preparation for Year 6 science. The work in the books of a second Year 5 class, however, were of a higher standard indicating a better quality of teaching, although coverage of the National Curriculum was weak, with little work in the autumn term – just one section started in November on the topic of space. Discussions with pupils throughout the school confirmed their very poor knowledge and understanding of science, particularly of experimental and investigative work.
89. The quality of teaching overall is very poor, resulting in very poor learning and achievement. Too little emphasis is given to science. The quality of teaching in the few lessons observed ranged from good to poor and was poor overall. Teachers do not always understand the concepts being taught and hardly ever question pupils' understanding. Work in books and discussions with pupils show that scientific enquiry is not understood, and the same work is taught to high and low attaining pupils, with low attainers' work usually unfinished, very poorly presented and difficult to comprehend. Little work is marked constructively with guidance as to how pupils could improve their standards. Pupils are not learning scientific skills effectively and sometimes have to persevere in lessons when they have little understanding of what they are trying to do. Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are satisfactory. They can be silly and inattentive, but this is usually as a consequence of weaknesses in teaching.
90. Leadership and management of the subject are minimal. Teachers use the curriculum guidance provided by a central government agency to plan what they will do, but no checks are made of what is taught. Very little, if any, use is made of ICT in science. The quality of teaching of science or the extent to which pupils understand what they are taught are not monitored. Previous years' national test results have not been analysed and so the school

is not aware where gaps in knowledge and understanding are. There are no formal assessment procedures or records for science. Resources are currently disorganised, though in the process of being re-sorted. Subject development planning gives far too little emphasis to raising pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching. The situation is much worse than that stated in the previous inspection report six years ago. The deterioration apparent in all areas indicates that very poor progress has been made over time.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has insufficient working computers to enable pupils to make effective progress in their learning
- Development of pupils' ICT skills is not systematic, so attainment is below average and achievements unsatisfactory
- Some good teaching takes place using ICT, including use of web-based resources
- There is a clear vision of the use and role of ICT to support teaching and learning, although this is not yet being implemented consistently in class teaching

Commentary

91. Standards in pupils' ICT skills are below the national expectations for the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils make insufficient progress as they move through the school, with inconsistent use of computers across classes and, as a result, they underachieve. Skills are not systematically developed across the school. Many pupils are confident in using the computer skills they have learned at home and this enables several pupils to make satisfactory or better use of computers when the opportunity is provided.
92. Older pupils learn about how websites are constructed. They use search engines effectively on the Internet to find information about the Ancient Egyptians, as part of their humanities topic. Pupils appreciate the importance of entering key words in their searches and learn through first-hand experience. For example, pupils in groups of three successfully found information about mummification, and made good notes on their findings to inform their project work. Pupils have the opportunity to attend the media club, where they work on the school website, further developing their ICT skills.
93. The quality of teaching observed varied between good and poor and was unsatisfactory overall. In effective lessons, teachers showed good, confident subject knowledge, as in the Ancient Egyptian history lesson referred to. In another history lesson, the teacher used most effectively a multi-media slide show from the Internet to support the introduction. The available, working machines were used well because explanations and learning intentions were clear. Computers were seen as a very useful tool, which enabled better learning to take place. In less effective lessons, class introductions went on for too long, restricting the time available for pupils to use the computers. In one lesson, the network was assumed not to work and so a small number of class-based computers and available laptops were used. This led to too many pupils working on each machine with resultant 'passengers' who did little. Pupils in discussion referred to very different usages of ICT. In some classes, all pupils use computers each week, whereas in others, pupils observe other pupils using machines but do not use them themselves. This level of inconsistency is unsatisfactory and results in a very wide range of ICT skills amongst the pupils.
94. The computer suite has fifteen computers of which only twelve were working at the time of the inspection, and sometimes teachers could not make all twelve work effectively. Teachers are rightly nervous about using what is an unreliable facility. Each class is

timetabled to use the suite once a week, although pupils say this does not happen. Technical support is available for half a day per week but this is not sufficient and so broken machines go unrepaired, which restricts pupils' learning opportunities. Time is made for pupils to finish off work in the computer suite during some lunch times, an opportunity they appreciate. Most classrooms have two computers connected to the Internet. These are used for word-processing, but for much of the time they are not in use. The computer resources are insufficient, unreliable and not effectively deployed and, because of their poor quality, inhibit usage and restrict what pupils can achieve.

95. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. There is a clear vision as to the role of ICT in supporting teaching and learning, but insufficient time has been expended in resolving the resources problems and in training staff. No assessment records are kept and so pupils' progress in this important skill area is not tracked. No monitoring of pupils' progress, the quality or amount of ICT teaching, or of pupils' standards is carried out.
96. Standards have fallen since the past inspection and leadership and management are less effective. Resources are substantially worse. Overall improvement since the last inspection has been poor.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

97. Examples of ICT seen include use of word-processing and clip-art packages to present letters and stories. Younger pupils use paint packages to draw pictures as part of project work. Older pupils make good use of ICT in their topic work as well, but there is no systematic use of ICT in English, maths or science. A number of keyboards have been ordered recently which will support a music and ICT project, but no other initiatives are in hand to promote cross-curricular ICT skills. Pupils' competence in using ICT is below average.

HUMANITIES

Insufficient evidence was gained about history and geography to make overall judgements about the quality of provision in either subject. Lessons and part lessons were seen in both subjects and as aspects of ICT and literacy sessions. Discussions were held with the subject leaders and a sample of written work was inspected in both subjects. Discussions also took place with pupils about their knowledge and understanding.

98. In **history**, satisfactory teaching was observed, with some good work, particularly where ICT was involved. Pupils had enjoyed a recent walk around Downham Market and were making a guidebook. This was a well-planned activity, with a good range of sources such as sample guidebooks, maps, and plans of the school building. The task was explained clearly and most pupils enjoyed the task, appreciating its value. About half the class, however, because of weak literacy skills, needed support with the structure of their guidebooks. In a good lesson for Year 6, pupils used the Internet to research mummification use by the Ancient Egyptians. Pupils shared some of this history work enthusiastically with the school in an assembly.
99. In other classes, pupils have enjoyed finding out about the Ancient Greeks and Victorians with some good recording through writing, ICT and art, which shows a good use of primary and secondary sources. There was little work from some classes, however, and much less recorded work from Years 1 and 2 than would be expected. The inconsistent use of writing in history results in too great a range of outcomes for the pupils. No assessment records are kept to indicate progression in knowledge and understanding and very little monitoring or evaluation of what is being taught or learnt is carried out. A shortfall in resources, topic boxes, artefacts and multi-media software is known to be a weakness in promoting interest and higher standards in history. The evidence seen indicates some good work, but with wide variation between classes.

100. **Geography** teaching and learning were seen in a small number of lessons and in pupils' previously completed work. Younger pupils had produced some sound booklets, for example on the weather, and older pupils' work was on topics such as mountain environments and India. These showed a good range of recording methods, although there was very little, if any, evidence of marking of some pupils' work, so opportunities to improve literacy as well as geography skills were lost.
101. Some Year 4 booklets on India were well marked, with references made to the learning objectives and how well these had been achieved. These books showed good development of skills in describing similarities and differences between life in India and England and a good understanding of how land use affects jobs. In Year 1, pupils had made a passport for Barnaby Bear and sent him a postcard, which captured pupils' interest well and developed their understanding of locations.
102. Planning is based on government guidelines but, with little monitoring of teaching and learning, there is uncertainty over what is taught and to what level. Continuity in learning is not assured. A clear direction for the subject has been established but not how this relates to progress through the school. Resources are known to be insufficient. As in history, the evidence seen indicates some good work, but with variation between what is provided for, or expected from, different classes.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is poor.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lack of consistency in the teaching of religious education across classes results in poor achievement
- Although some good work takes place, too much is based on worksheets and too little is recorded in books
- Resources are inadequate, which restricts what is achieved
- Leadership and management are poor
- No formal assessment is made of pupils' achievements and standards in religious education; marking is poor

Commentary

103. The poor achievement apparent in written work was confirmed through discussions with pupils. Recorded work available was poorly presented and mostly on worksheets. There was little evidence of pupils' individual written work and minimal use was made of ICT. The topics that were recorded are appropriate for the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Older pupils had been finding out about the story of Muhammed and Islam, and had also looked at the Bible and what it contained. The work was of poor quality for the pupils' ages and abilities, however. The lack of written work is unhelpful in improving pupils' standards of literacy. Younger junior-age pupils had been making Divali cards linked to the Hindu celebration and carried out a little work about the Hindu story of Rama and Sita. They had also investigated roles in the church and the work of Mother Theresa. This work was not of the standard expected and very brief, although aspects of written work from a minority of higher attaining pupils were good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 had been learning about annual celebrations, religious buildings and roles in the church. They had also drawn scenes from the Rama and Sita story and some Rangoli patterns. In this year group, the higher attaining pupils had written work as well as drawn about Rama and Sita. The quality and quantity of work vary significantly between classes but are well below expected levels overall.
104. Work indicates that teaching is generally of a poor quality. An effective Year 4 lesson was observed, concerning Jewish family life and worship. The well-selected video tour of a synagogue and good explanations by the teacher enabled the pupils to use their knowledge and pictures to produce a poster and guides. The lesson was well planned and the teacher had appropriate expectations of the quality of the work the pupils would produce. The majority of pupils achieved satisfactorily, but expectations of the highest attainers were lower than they should have been.
105. Pupils have enjoyed visitors to the school who have enriched their religious education experience. For example, a local vicar has been into school to help pupils understand roles in the church and made a good contribution to an assembly on the theme "Love your enemies".
106. Leadership and management are poor. There is no overview of what religious education takes place in each class, nor of the standards achieved. The few resources and artefacts are organised but insufficient and the split site makes access difficult. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and of pupils' work are not carried out and marking is poor. No assessment of pupils' standards is carried out. Some in-service training in religious education has been provided, but this has had little impact on the pupils' achievements.
107. Since 1999, the time of the last inspection, standards have fallen and pupils are not achieving as well. Progress since that time has been poor, with insufficient work being carried out in the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

The subjects of art, design and technology, music and physical education were sampled. Insufficient evidence was gained to give an overall judgement on provision in any of the four subjects, although judgements about aspects of provision for each are made.

108. This report on **art** is based on discussions with staff and a detailed review of display work around the school. Planning for teaching and learning art is based on the recommended central government scheme of work and a commercial scheme. Overall, the standard of art work seen in Years 1 to 6 meets national expectations and pupils' achievements are at least satisfactory. Some examples noted of good quality were: Year 2 self-portraits using charcoal in the style of Rembrandt; Year 6 relief models of pupils' names in Egyptian hieroglyphics, using polystyrene; and a 3D landscape developed by pupils with special educational needs from plaster of paris. A broad range of subjects and media was noted.
109. Support is provided to colleagues teaching art, which is having a good effect on pupils' achievements. Common resource areas have been set up for each year group, which enables ease of access to materials. No assessment records are kept, however, and little monitoring of provision has taken place.
110. **Design and technology** displays, a sample of previous work and a small number of lessons were inspected. Records of pupils' earlier work indicate they have opportunities to use a range of materials, including wood, card, paper and food. Toys made with cams to give different movements, and with some attention to the quality of finish, indicated good achievement and at least average standards. Where work was evaluated and suggestions given about how improvements could be made, the work was of an above average standard and represented good achievement. For example, high attainers in Year 2 wrote about their 'smoothies' and how the addition of ice and strawberries could be helpful. Work is inconsistent, however, with great variation between classes. In a Year 4 lesson on 'pop-up' mechanisms, the work required little imagination or creativity and was undemanding. Pupils followed instructions and, although developing their understanding of mechanisms, the work did not stimulate or interest them, particularly the high attainers. Teaching was poor, standards were well below average – pupils' skill levels were very weak – and their learning and achievement were poor. Too little emphasis, generally, is placed on designing and evaluating, and standards of the older pupils are quite low.
111. Evidence for this **music** report is based on a small sample of lessons, discussions with staff, a review of documentation and the comments of the pupils. In a Year 2 lesson, where a circle game was used effectively as the setting, pupils explored how sounds, including their own voices and an instrument, could be changed, prompted by written cues. Pupils successfully applied the skills they had learnt to generate a range of sounds using several different musical instruments. Teaching and learning were effective. Class music lessons are based on the county guidelines and a commercial scheme. These schemes show a steady progression in skills and understanding. A project using newly acquired keyboards and linking them to computers is planned to develop further pupils' interest and skills in music.
112. Pupils benefit from a good range of musical activities, including instrumental lessons with recorders, guitar, violin and clarinet, delivered by visiting music tutors. Year 1 and 2 teachers teach their own classes the recorder. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 are learning the recorder and receive fifteen minutes tuition each week. This is followed up in class with class teachers giving more opportunities for playing. Pupils are enjoying the experience of learning an instrument and many are achieving a good standard. Achievement across classes is good. Two music clubs, one for Years 1 and 2, and one for Years 3 to 6, provide pupils with more opportunities to improve their skills and enjoy music-making, and the school takes a full and active part in local music and arts festivals.

113. In **physical education** sessions observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory, with some strengths. In a Year 2 session, where pupils were learning to co-ordinate and control their bodies as they threw and caught balls, teaching was good. The warm-up prepared the pupils well for the activity and pupils showed good control of their movements. The lesson was effectively monitored, with pupils working well; demanding additional tasks were added as the lesson progressed. Teacher and pupil demonstrations modelled good practice. Most pupils treated the lesson very seriously, wanting to do well. Pupils' achievement was good in the lesson and they attained standards similar to national expectations.
114. In a less effective Year 3 lesson of outdoor games, teaching maintained the pace and work rate of the pupils, but the inappropriate behaviour of a minority of pupils affected the learning of others. Learning intentions were carefully explained to the pupils and the lesson finished well. The quality of teaching in this session was satisfactory, but achievement was unsatisfactory. In another games lesson, a few pupils also behaved in such a way as to lessen the opportunities for learning of the majority of the class, but the teacher managed the behaviour well so that teaching and achievement were both satisfactory.
115. The school is part of a national initiative to improve sport in primary schools. This is being achieved through linking primary and secondary schools together and funding the release of subject leaders to work together to make improvements. The school has appropriate policies and schemes of work, which include provision for swimming and outdoor and adventurous activities, and these are under review as part of the development initiative. Little monitoring of teaching and learning takes place currently, but this is planned under the new initiative. As yet there are no assessment records for the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

No formal lessons of personal, social and health education and citizenship were observed during the inspection. Curriculum planning and attending the school council, as well as discussions with pupils and senior managers, provided inspectors with relevant information, but insufficient to give an overall judgement on provision in this area.

116. The school has a planned programme to promote personal, social and health education, with an appropriate policy for sex and drugs education. Most classes, but not all, have a session for circle time planned on their class timetables, where personal, social and health education takes place. Planning indicates that pupils will experience opportunities to discuss issues such as right and wrong, dealing with upsets and supporting one another.
117. The school has recently reintroduced a school council, which, amongst other issues, is considering how to get sponsorship for a healthy tuck shop. This initiative is at an early stage currently, but is progressing well. The acting headteacher, at a recent governors' meeting, discussing buildings maintenance, referred to the school council's wish to have the WCs repainted as a matter of urgency. The caretaker's programme of work, with his professional support, was adapted to enable this to be carried out because the costs of external contractors were prohibitive. This approach indicates the extent to which the pupils' views are now starting to be considered. Pupils' participation in the school council, electing their representatives, representing their colleagues, and reporting back to their classes, is providing pupils with insights into the importance of being a good citizen. The school council is an effective body, but meets during the taught day, which detracts from these pupils' learning on a regular basis.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	6
How inclusive the school is	6
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	7
Value for money provided by the school	6
Overall standards achieved	6
Pupils' achievement	6
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	6
The quality of teaching	6
How well pupils learn	6
The quality of assessment	6
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	6
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	6
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	5
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	5
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	0
The leadership of other key staff	6
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). The 0 included under leadership of the headteacher reflects the absence of the substantive headteacher and the short period of time the county acting headteacher has been in post refers