

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ALLESLEY HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Allesley Park, Coventry

LEA area: Coventry

Unique reference number: 103656

Headteacher: Mrs P L Green

Lead inspector: Mr F Carruthers

Dates of inspection: 23 – 25 September 2003

Inspection number: 255333

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:	190
School address:	Winsford Avenue Allesley Park Coventry
Postcode:	CV5 9NG
Telephone number:	024 7667 4586
Fax number:	024 7667 2450
Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sonia Tranter
Date of previous inspection:	21 September 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has 190 pupils aged four to 11 on roll; there are 34 more boys than girls. Pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. A few pupils are from minority ethnic groups, mainly Indian or Caribbean. Very few of these are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Most of the children have had some pre-school experiences in one of the nearby playgroups before they start school in the reception class. There is the full range of attainment among the children starting in school. The attainment of the majority of children is below average overall, especially in key aspects such as communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. Their attainment in personal, social and emotional development is average. At the time of the inspection, 29 children had just begun to attend full time. There are 33 pupils on the school's list of pupils with special educational needs, four of whom have a statement of special educational need. This proportion is slightly below that found in most schools. The pupils' needs include specific learning difficulties, social or emotional difficulties, autism or physical difficulties. Pupil mobility<sup>1</sup> is below the average of most schools but in individual classes, the proportion is much higher, for instance in the current Year 6 class.

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<sup>1</sup> The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than starting in the reception class and leaving at the end of Year 6.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21285	Mr F Carruthers	Lead inspector	English Geography History English as an additional language Religious education
19343	Mrs M Howell	Lay inspector	
17736	Mr P Dennison	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology (ICT) Physical education Special educational needs
30205	Miss T Kenna	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Foundation Stage

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **good education for pupils** and **good value for money**. Pupils achieve well so that by the end of Year 6, standards in English and science are above the national average. Pupils achieve very well in mathematics, where standards are well above the national average. Standards have risen since the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very good leadership and are excellent role models in catering for the needs of pupils and looking after their welfare.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good in both infant and junior classes and as a result pupils achieve well.
- Pupils have very good relationships with one another and with staff, and their behaviour in class and around school is good.
- The school is well led and managed overall, and governors fulfil their strategic roles well.
- Children in the reception class make good progress because of very good teaching.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), however, are below average in Year 6.
- Opportunities are missed in subjects such as geography, history and religious education to promote the pupils' abilities in writing.
- Links with partnership centres help to enrich the curriculum for the pupils very well.

The school was last inspected in September 1998. Since then standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science have continued to improve and the school has maintained the good standards of behaviour noted then. The key issues arising from the inspection have been resolved well and there have been very good improvements to the school grounds, including a play area for the children in the reception class. The quality of the provision, for example teaching, is better than at the time of the last inspection. However, standards in ICT have not kept pace with the improvement since then that is found in most schools.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	A	B	B
mathematics	D	A*	A	A
science	C	B	B	B

*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.*

**By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well in English and science and very well in mathematics.** In other subjects inspected, pupils' achievement is at least satisfactory, except in some elements of ICT where it is unsatisfactory. Children get off to a good start in the reception class and the great majority achieve all the goals that children are expected to achieve by the end of the reception year. The pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2 continues to be good so that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above the national average by the end of Year 2.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Their attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good. Levels of attendance are satisfactory and are similar to those found in most schools.**

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is good.**

Teaching in the reception class is very good and the children get off to a good start. The strengths of the teaching in all classes are the teachers' planning and the contribution that teaching assistants make, helping pupils with special educational needs to make good progress, and other groups of pupils to do well in lessons of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Teachers' skills of questioning help pupils to reason things out and to look for explanations. As a result, pupils show a good level of understanding in lessons.

In addition to a good quality curriculum, there is a good range of activities outside lessons and links with partnership centres enhance the pupils' learning experiences. Levels of support and care are good, providing valuable assistance to all pupils, especially those with emotional or behavioural difficulties. The school has good links with parents.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school are good overall.** The headteacher and deputy headteacher constitute the senior management team and are very effective leaders, monitoring how the school is doing and inspiring both staff and pupils very well. The governing body fulfil their roles and responsibilities well and have a good understanding of the school's successes and priorities for improvement.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents have positive views of the school and are confident that their children are well looked after and make good progress. They feel comfortable approaching the staff with any concerns and feel they are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. Pupils enjoy school and find lessons interesting. They particularly appreciate the opportunities to make decisions about what is offered in school and, for example, have made a good contribution to planning the improvements to the school grounds.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the skills of pupils in ICT by the end of Year 6 and make better use of computers in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Improve the skills of writing in subjects such as geography, history and religious education.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Pupils achieve well and make good progress in English, mathematics and science. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average overall. Pupils with special educational needs and the very few pupils learning English as an additional language achieve well.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics at the end of Year 6. A good proportion of pupils do better than the nationally expected Level 4 in National Curriculum tests.
- Children in the reception class get off to a good start and achieve well.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2.
- However, attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is below average by the end of Year 6.

#### **Commentary**

1. Since the time of the last inspection, standards in English, mathematics and science have been maintained at the good levels reported then and have risen in line with the national trend upward. Pupils make good progress over time, for instance between the end of Years 2 and 6. Both boys and girls regularly do better than is found in most primary schools. Standards of writing, though still satisfactory, have not been as high as speaking, listening and reading, and an action plan has been in place to address this discrepancy, which the most recent tests in 2003 show has begun to bear fruit. For instance, one pupil in five achieved above the level expected of pupils at the end of Year 2. This shows a good improvement on previous years.
2. The attainment of the children on entry to the reception class is below average in the following key areas of learning: communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. At the time of the last inspection, attainment on entry was judged to be average overall. However, assessments in recent years indicate that attainment is below that. Children in the reception year make good progress rapidly and assessments made at the end of the year show that the majority of children have achieved the Early Learning Goals for children, though about half of the children are still working towards the goals in communication, language and literacy.
3. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2, especially in reading and mathematics. The table below shows the results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 and 2002. The school's results compare favourably with schools that have similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals. Pupils achieve well in science and teachers' assessments indicate standards are above average. Standards in ICT are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory, despite ongoing problems with computer hardware. Attainment in geography, history, religious education and physical education is average. It was not possible to make clear judgements on standards in art and design, design and technology and music.

### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002**

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.7 (15.6)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.3 (15.1)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	17.2 (16.4)	16.5 (16.2)

*There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. Good progress is maintained in the junior years. Progress in mathematics is very good and is the result of consistently good teaching. Consequently, standards were above average overall in the National Curriculum results in 2002, the latest year for which there are national comparisons. This is evident from an analysis of results given in the table below. In the most recent test results, for 2003, the very good standards in mathematics have been maintained and standards in science have risen. Higher attaining pupils do well and the school is successful at achieving the targets set for pupils to attain in the tests. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains towards targets in their individual education plans, and this is the result of good teaching by both teachers and learning support assistants. The very few pupils at the early stages of learning English make good progress.

### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (29.0)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	28.5 (29.8)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	29.6 (29.4)	28.3 (28.3)

*There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. In ICT, pupils lag behind levels expected of them by the time they are in Year 6. This is because hardware and networking difficulties, mainly out of the control of the school, have impeded pupils' regular access to machines and delayed their progress. The pupils' competence in literacy and numeracy helps them to make satisfactory progress in foundation subjects<sup>2</sup>. However, their competence in some elements of ICT, for example handling data, is insufficient to promote progress in them. Attainment is average in geography, history and religious education. It was not possible to judge standards in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

The attitudes and behaviour of pupils throughout the school are **good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also **good**. Pupils' attendance is **satisfactory and is close to the average of all primary schools**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All members of the school community have very good relationships with one other.
- All have very high expectations of conduct.
- There is a very strong personal, social, health and citizenship education programme.
- In the Foundation Stage<sup>3</sup>, very good support is in place to further children's' personal, social and emotional development.

<sup>2</sup> Foundation subjects are: art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education.

<sup>3</sup> The Foundation Stage in this school is the reception year.

## Commentary

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.3	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

## Exclusions

### Ethnic background of pupils

### Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	145	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	3	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0

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

- 6 Very good relationships exist between teachers and pupils, who are polite and not afraid to ask pertinent questions. In lessons, in response to the teachers' high expectations and very good management, the pupils listen to their teachers carefully and concentrate on the tasks they are given. There is a small number of pupils identified with behavioural difficulties who find this difficult but other adults in the classrooms help them very well. The very good relationships between all members of the school community ensure that the behaviour of a minority does not adversely affect the learning of the majority. This was observed in a Year 6 science lesson, where the teacher's handling of potentially disruptive pupils and the reaction of the other pupils in the class prevented them from disturbing the lesson.
- 7 The teaching staff have a very quiet and engaging manner, which strongly affects pupils' behaviour in a very positive way. All staff and pupils are involved in having consideration for one another, and establishing high expectations of conduct throughout the school.
- 8 Provision for the pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The strong programme for personal, social and health education ensures that all pupils are given the opportunity to reflect upon themselves and the effects that their actions may have on others. The programme enables pupils to identify within themselves characteristics that are good.
- 9 Children in the Foundation Stage are encouraged to become independent very effectively. They learn that it is important to take turns and share and, though some find this hard, they generally manage very well. The children develop very good relationships with all the staff and demonstrate good levels of perseverance with their learning, even when they find their tasks hard. The approach taken to involve children in managing resources and equipment

for themselves is very good. Most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in the area of personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Foundation Stage.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching is good and the curriculum is planned well, though there are weaknesses in the provision for ICT. All elements of support and guidance for pupils are good and there are strong links with Partnership Centres to enhance the pupils' learning.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall. Teaching is founded upon good relationships and good classroom management skills. Lessons are well planned and organised and provide appropriate challenge through interesting and relevant activities. Pupils respond well. They are keen to learn and concentrate well, making good progress. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, with much more teaching that is good and none that is less than satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good in the reception class.
- Work throughout all classes is carefully planned to meet the needs and abilities of pupils. This is based on good procedures to check how well pupils are doing in key subjects such as English and mathematics.
- Support staff make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils respond well and work hard, showing good levels of concentration.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	19	5	0	0	0

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

- 10 Teaching in the reception class is very good. The teacher's planning is thorough and stimulates activities which are enjoyable and promote learning well. Both teacher and support assistant spend much valuable time interacting with the children and encouraging them to learn well.
- 11 In Years 1 to 6, teaching is good overall. Good use is made of the resources available to provide interesting tasks which motivate pupils. Pupils are encouraged to be responsible about their work, and are given opportunities to work independently and in pairs or groups. Relationships are very positive and pupils respond well to teachers' expectations of good behaviour and show good levels of concentration. Lessons are planned carefully based on a good assessment of pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. Teachers are therefore able to check how well pupils are improving towards their group and class targets. Group work is organised skilfully to enable some groups to work independently, thus enabling the teacher to give more intensive support to others.
- 12 Teachers take great trouble to present learning in ways which challenge and motivate pupils, as when setting problems in mathematics, encouraging pupils to undertake scientific investigations or providing a wide range of experiences in English. At the beginning of each lesson they set clear objectives and also identify what they will be looking for in written work.

Lessons usually proceed at a lively pace and pupils work hard, showing good levels of concentration and developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result, they make good progress.

- 13 Teachers make effective use of questioning to develop and assess pupils' understanding and they give clear explanations. They build on pupils' earlier learning and use the opportunities of whole-class sessions to review and assess pupils' understanding of previous work. Teachers know their pupils well. They provide good verbal feedback during lessons and help pupils to improve their work. Pupils' work is assessed and marked constructively on a day-to-day basis.
- 14 On the few occasions where teaching is less than good, classroom management is not as effective as it could be and a minority of pupils become restless and their behaviour deteriorates. This results in a slower pace of work and more limited progress.
- 15 The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teaching is well focused on pupils' needs and the targets on individual education plans are clear and realistic. Pupils are helped well by knowledgeable teaching assistants. They explain to pupils in their group what they have to do and often support them through the small steps of learning that these pupils require. Consequently, their learning is good. The use of an individualised mathematics programme is particularly effective in building pupils' confidence. The impact of good teaching is evident in the interest that the pupils show in their work and in their behaviour. The class teachers and support staff also ensure that the very few pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress.

## **The curriculum**

There is a **good** range of learning opportunities, which are planned effectively. All pupils throughout the school have good access to all aspects of the curriculum.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- However, there are weaknesses in provision for ICT for junior-aged pupils.
- There are missed opportunities to promote pupils' skills of writing in the humanities.
- There is a good range of activities outside lessons.
- The school grounds enhance the pupils' experience of school very well.

## **Commentary**

- 16 The curriculum for the youngest children in the reception class is very good. The planning is designed to help the children to make good progress in the six areas of learning and there is a good balance between adult-led activities and those that encourage independence.
- 17 Effective use is made of national guidance as the basis for curriculum planning with the result that there is a coherent approach to both planning and time allocation. This has created a good balance and consistency in the time spent on subjects. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented very effectively throughout the school and have helped to raise standards. There are, however, too few opportunities to use subjects such as history and geography to support pupils' skills of writing. Resources for learning are good overall. Whilst there has been recent improvement in provision for ICT, the school has had a number of difficulties in this area and standards of attainment are below average by Year 6. The school now has a clear curriculum plan for ICT which covers the national curriculum programme of study. However, technical problems with computers and changes of staff have resulted in inadequate coverage of all aspects of the subject for

junior-aged pupils. Similarly, the difficulties have meant that ICT is not used sufficiently in other subjects.

- 18 Provision for personal, social and health education is good. It has a regular place on the timetable for all classes and is often developed through group activities and *Circle Time*<sup>4</sup>. Pupils effectively learn how to live together in a community showing consideration towards each other. Sex education is dealt with sensitively and drugs awareness receives appropriate attention.
- 19 The school ensures equality of opportunity, and all pupils, irrespective of ability, ethnicity or gender, are encouraged to play a full part in all activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school tries to ensure that pupils' special needs are identified as soon as possible so that lessons can be modified to provide for everyone's needs. The school makes good provision for the very few pupils who have English as their additional language, receiving advice and guidance from the local education authority's service for such pupils and employing a part-time teaching assistant to help them. They have the same opportunities as other pupils within the school and make good progress.
- 20 A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum and makes a significant contribution to the development of pupils' physical, social and intellectual skills. Activities such as sport, art and the environmental club are popular and well attended. The school has good links with the community and these make a significant contribution to learning. A good range of visits and visitors helps to link learning experiences to the real world. The very effective partnership programme with local industry involves all classes in visits which address a wide range of curriculum subjects.
- 21 The accommodation is good. The school stands in spacious grounds, which are well equipped and include a 'Trim Trail' adventure playground. The grounds are used very well to support physical development and environmental awareness.

### Care, guidance and support

The school makes **good** provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides **good** support; advice and guidance for pupils based on keeping a careful check on their achievements and personal development. The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The procedures in place to meet the personal and emotional needs of individual pupils are good.
- The procedures in place for monitoring pupils' behaviour during lunchtime are good.
- Trust and confidence are very well established between staff and pupils through pupil conferences and consultation.

### Commentary

- 22 Teachers, support assistants and lunchtime supervisors identify very well those pupils who may be in need of extra personal, social and emotional support. These may then be referred to the *Sparkle Group*, which is intended to promote their self-esteem and meets during personal and social education lessons, covering similar activities to the whole class. There are approximately six pupils in each group, and all are encouraged to discuss their worries and concerns. The support assistants who organise this group have received specialist training. During one session, pupils were asked to draw a self-portrait, and write something good about themselves. Initially most could not, but following very good guidance from the

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<sup>4</sup> Lessons when pupils have the opportunity to discuss social and moral matters in whole-class discussions.

teaching assistant, all managed to achieve the task. Many of the activities introduced in the *Sparkle Group* are reinforced in whole-class sessions of *Circle time*, thus ensuring that all pupils receive the maximum amount of help and support.

- 23 Lunchtime supervisors have all been trained to monitor pupils very carefully. Their observations ensure that early intervention takes place where problems may occur, and strategies are developed and discussed with any individual pupils in order to improve their behaviour. As a result of this, initial signs of bullying are swiftly dealt with.
- 24 The school has recently introduced *pupil conferencing*, giving each pupil the opportunity to discuss with their class teacher on a weekly basis any concerns they may have, especially concerning their school work, and any suggestions they may wish to put forward. This develops a trusting relationship between adults and pupils. The school regularly consults its pupils. A good example of this is the way in which pupils have contributed good ideas to the development of the school grounds.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The links with parents are **good**. Parents feel that their children are taught well, and that they receive good care and support from their teachers and the school. They also say their children are happy at the school. **Good** links with the community provide opportunities for pupils to experience a wider range of activities. Links with playgroups and other schools are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Contact with parents and the information supplied to them are good.
- The school has good links with partnership centres.

### **Commentary**

- 25 There is a good programme of meetings and events during each year, which help parents to keep up to date with their children's progress and what they are learning. The school provides good information to parents about the topics their children will be studying during each term and they are also given a leaflet setting out the targets in mathematics for their child's year group. These initiatives help parents to lend support to the work pupils do at home. The prospectus gives parents a clear insight into the school's ethos and values. Regular letters keep parents informed of events in the school, and the teachers are readily available to discuss individual problems or concerns. Parents have provided valuable assistance improving the environment of the school, for instance painting classrooms and building fences.
- 26 The school is a member of a partnership organised by the local education authority. Through this partnership, all pupils are given access to a wide range of learning experiences provided at nearby centres. The activities available cover many subjects of the curriculum, including ICT, design and technology, science and geography. The class teacher is involved in the planning of the lessons, which can be adapted to suit the needs of the particular class. Such opportunities enrich the curriculum and widen the pupils' horizons. For example, during the week of the inspection, pupils in Year 4 visited a centre and planned, designed and built bird boxes, which they intend to use in the school grounds to attract wild life. This project is closely linked to work in science, in which the pupils research the best sites for the boxes and monitor how they are used. Other good cross-curricular links were made with ICT, when the pupils used a computer programme to mark and identify trees in the school grounds, and with design and technology, when they planned the boxes and used tools to build them.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good** and she is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher. The governance of the school and its management are **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very clear vision and direction for the work of the school.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors evaluate the work of the school very well and plan for the school's development very effectively.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and compare how well it is doing to other schools.

### Commentary

#### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	495 000	Balance from previous year	£30365
Total expenditure	489 000	Balance carried forward to the next	35800
Expenditure per pupil	2573		

- 27 The headteacher provides a very good role model for all staff in promoting a school that takes steps to include everyone in its success and to promote good achievement among the pupils. All pupils, including with special educational needs, those with emotional or behavioural difficulties and those who have special talents, are given the support they need to achieve well. For example, pupils with behavioural difficulties receive very good individual support from trained staff, and this is much appreciated by parents and by the pupils themselves. The headteacher leads by example, exuding a calm approach that pupils respond to very well; and she supports and guides younger members of staff, monitoring their work, offering advice and the opportunity for training.
- 28 The headteacher is very ably assisted by the deputy headteacher and administrative assistant, so that the school functions very smoothly. The headteacher reviews the work of the school regularly with the deputy headteacher. They analyse data about pupil performance rigorously and put in place action plans, for example to improve pupils' writing, that arise directly from their findings and that are well thought through and effective. There have been some barriers to making progress, however, which have at times stalled their work, for instance, turnover of subject leaders in foundation subjects and technical difficulties with ICT equipment. Nevertheless, their work, which is well supported by key members of the governing body specifically assisting with priority actions, has seen improvement in provision and standards since the time of the last inspection. A good action plan to address the key issues at the last inspection led to the elimination of unsatisfactory teaching and improvements to the management of English and provision for children in the reception class. As a result, the good standards in English, mathematics and science, found at the time of the last inspection, have continued to rise in line with the national trend upward, and the strengths evident in pupils' attitudes and behaviour have been maintained. Financial management has continued to be good.
- 29 The governing body has good structures in place to monitor and support the work of the school. The chairperson has regular contact with school and is well involved in scrutinising information from pupils' test results. There has been valuable guidance from the local education authority's advisory team, using their data about school performance, in addition to national data provided by OfSTED. As a result, governors are aware that the school is

performing well compared with similar schools and all schools nationally. There are regular formal and informal visits to school, and staff meet with governors both in and outside meetings to report on developments. The governors follow principles of best value well, both in making key purchases of resources and services, and in challenging the senior staff to account for how the school is doing.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision is **good** in all six areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. All children whose fifth birthday falls within the school year begin their reception year at the start of the autumn term. At the time of the inspection, close to the beginning of the school year, children had received two weeks of half time, and were just beginning their second week of full time education. As a result, it has not been possible to make judgements about standards in each area of learning. Judgements about the proportion likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals set for children of this age are based on the achievements of pupils in Year 1, and assessment of their work at the end of the reception year. Last year, in all areas of learning, the majority of children achieved the goals by the end of the reception year, though about half of the children were still working towards the goals in communication, language and literacy. Since the last inspection, the provision for the development of pupils' physical skills and teaching and learning in general has improved.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is consistently very good.
- The assessment of children is very thorough.
- Children become very independent.

#### **Commentary**

- 30 The quality of teaching is consistently very good. The teacher has a quiet and engaging manner, enabling her to form very good relationships with the children, which in turn ensures that they want to learn. She provides a rich variety of well-planned activities, which stimulate learning across all six areas of learning. Both the teacher and classroom assistant interact very effectively with the children, which contributes very positively to the good progress they are making.
- 31 As soon as the children begin their schooling, they are assessed against the nationally recommended *Stepping-stones* of development. This results in very effective planning by both the teacher and classroom assistant with work specifically aimed at the needs of individual children.
- 32 Children become independent very quickly. There are clear routines for children, selecting and working in the different areas of the room or with particular pieces of equipment. Children have already understood and act on these routines very well.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Regular routines are quickly established.
- Good classroom organisation develops social interaction.
- All staffs show a consistent approach when supporting children.

#### **Commentary**

- 33 Classroom routines have been quickly established and help the young children to work in various groups, to take turns and share. As a result, children grow in confidence and develop positive attitudes to their work. They already understand classroom rules and routines and their behaviour is very good. The classroom has been carefully organised so

that children can select what they do from a range of activities and they work independently using the available equipment, apparatus, computer, tools and materials. Children already make choices sensibly and most work confidently in the various areas of the classroom and outside. They concentrate satisfactorily, at times sitting quietly or working as part of the whole class. Most children willingly share the resources available and take responsibility for putting away what they have used. Staff give clear ideas of what is expected of the children including the difference between right and wrong. Patient supportive teaching, where children are encouraged to work together and collaborate in their tasks, results in happy and confident children who make good gains in their lessons.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Speaking and listening skills are developed well.
- Writing is made relevant.

### **Commentary**

- 34 Children grow in confidence in speaking to adults and to other children. Many can initiate conversation in their play. They enjoy listening to stories and sharing a book with an adult. A small number of children know some letter sounds and can draw them. The teacher models speaking and listening skills very well by listening carefully to what the children say, interacting with them as they work and at times, by joining in with their activities and play. This has a positive impact on the progress children make. Some children already enjoy conversation and are beginning to take turns in speaking and listening, particularly with adults. However, a significant number find difficulty in communicating and have a limited vocabulary.
- 35 Children understand well that writing is used to communicate and at times they enjoy working at the writing tables, making books and lists. They also have opportunities to write during their role-play. The staff work with small groups of children giving them very individually focused help. For example, the teacher supported a group writing shopping lists to buy food for *Kipper's Birthday Party*. This good organisational strategy has a beneficial effect upon the way the children learn.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main Strengths and weaknesses**

- Every opportunity is taken to develop children's counting skills.
- Mathematical concepts are made relevant to children's experiences.

### **Commentary**

- 36 Children make satisfactory progress in developing their awareness and understanding of mathematics. The teacher makes good use of number rhymes to reinforce their counting. Children count accurately as they sort objects as they play and great interest was taken in counting how many children had bananas for their snack. Some children can already tackle simple addition questions, adding the total number of candles on the birthday cake, for example, and they can use vocabulary like *more than* to express the answer.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good use is made of visitors and a wide range of materials to promote learning.
- Computers are well used.

### **Commentary**

37 Good use of a range of materials successfully promotes children's interest and learning. Children are able to join materials together using sticky tape or glue. At times they work with intense concentration on their tasks, paying attention to small details. Children use the computers with confidence, using the mouse to identify and move items on the computer screen and pointing to illustrations. Various programmes are used well to promote the children's understanding in this area of learning.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are very good facilities.

### **Commentary**

38 Children move around the classroom and outdoors on the play equipment with growing confidence. They show an increasing awareness of space for themselves and for others, and are confident, as they move on the climbing train and house for example, and manoeuvre their tricycles around the marker circuit. They use small equipment with increasing control, as they draw or write. Most manipulate construction materials well. They handle equipment with care, and most are aware of the need to do things safely.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A very wide range of experiences and materials are used to stimulate children's imagination.

### **Commentary**

39 Children enjoy a good range of well-planned art and craft activities and role-play experiences to stimulate their imagination. They concentrate well on these, making pictures and models with a variety of materials and paint. They relate well to each other and share in imaginative ideas to create stories and events.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and as a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs, the most talented pupils and the very few learning English as an additional language, make good progress from the beginning of Year 1 to the end of Year 6.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- There are good procedures in place to assess pupils' progress and set targets for them to achieve.
- However, foundation subjects do not make a sufficient contribution to the development of pupils' writing.

#### Commentary

- 40 Since the time of the last inspection, standards in English have been maintained at the good levels reported then and have risen in line with the national trend upward. Both boys and girls perform well in National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, and in most years, the proportion of pupils who attain above the levels expected (Level 3 at the end of Year 2 and Level 5 at the end of Year 6) is high. Pupils at the end of Year 6 achieve consistently well, when results are compared with their prior attainment at the end of Year 2, although in recent years, this has been more evident in reading than in writing. Pupils quickly become fluent readers in infant classes and confidently try to spell words using their knowledge of letter sounds. By the end of Year 2, most are writing simple sentences well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the assistance they receive in both infant and junior classes. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make rapid progress and over time are often some of the highest attaining pupils in their class. Older junior pupils are articulate and confident speaking to a group. By Year 6, pupils' skills of reading are above average and they write well, drafting and polishing their pieces of work in English lessons, which include narratives, descriptions, scripts and persuasive writing.
- 41 Teaching is good and thoughtfully planned. In addition to lessons of the National Literacy Strategy, there are longer, weekly lessons devoted to improving pupils' writing to provide pupils with enough time to complete written work. During the last school year, there has been an increased focus on all aspects of writing and this has included extra lessons on teaching handwriting, in order to raise standards. A joined script has been introduced earlier than before and the result is better quality handwriting in Year 2 and above. Spelling is taught weekly to junior-aged pupils in groups organised according to their ability. A good contribution is made by teaching assistants, who are included in leading these lessons. As a result of this provision, attainment in spelling is good and rising. Significant strengths of the teaching are the teachers' use of questioning to promote thoughtful responses from pupils, and the structure and pace of lessons, which lead to pupils achieving work of good quality and quantity in lessons.
- 42 Leadership and management of the subject, which were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection, are now very good. Two members of staff share the responsibility of subject leader and they have very good expertise for the role. In the past year, there has been a very effective plan to improve pupils' writing, where standards were recognised as lagging behind those of speaking, listening and reading. As a result, standards in infant classes show improvement. For example, one in five pupils attained above the nationally expected Level 2 in the most recent tests at the end of Year 2. This is a significant improvement on previous results. Good quality resources have been purchased to stimulate standards in

writing and extra time devoted to writing at length. There has been a programme of monitoring lessons which has led to improvements in teachers' practice.

- 43 Procedures to assess pupils' progress are good and are leading to improved standards. In addition to mid-year and end-of-year testing of pupils' writing in junior classes, there are regular assessments made of pupils' reading and spelling abilities. Staff then set targets, identifying pupils who are *on target*, *potentially underachieving* or *underachieving*, and track their progress carefully. The effectiveness of this system is being carefully monitored. This term, *pupil conferences* have been introduced in order that pupils are better aware of what their progress is like and what they need to do to improve. Information from national test papers are analysed and lead to school-wide priorities for improvement.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

- 44 Subjects such as geography, history and religious education provide good opportunities for pupils to develop skills of speaking, listening and reading. However, the use of these subjects to promote writing is inconsistent across classes. There are examples of pupils copying the work of teachers or completing simple exercises, when a more productive approach, encouraging pupils to compose their own versions of events, is called for. A start has been made to identify links between topics covered in foundation subjects and lessons of the National Literacy Strategy, and this is a more efficient use of time and resources.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards of attainment are above average. In National Curriculum tests in recent years, standards have been well above the national average.
- Teaching is good.
- Assessment is used well to match work to pupils' needs and abilities.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils who need additional help.

### **Commentary**

- 45 Standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are currently above the national average. The good standards reported at the previous inspection have been maintained. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.
- 46 By Year 2, pupils are encouraged to use and develop their skills of mental arithmetic and make good progress in this area. Higher attaining pupils use their knowledge successfully to calculate simple problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication or division. Pupils develop skills of simple data handling and construct and interpret graphs well. Pupils have a secure understanding of common shapes and use non-standard units to measure length and mass. By Year 6, pupils use the four basic operations well, have a sound grasp of spatial concepts and can use a variety of methods to collate and represent data they have collected. The higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of percentages and probability, and can use fractions and decimals accurately. Pupils are confident when handling data. They interpret well graphs and charts to find particular information.
- 47 The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are characterised by the thorough preparation of resources, allowing teaching to proceed at a brisk pace. Teaching is imaginative and includes challenging activities which build well on what pupils already know. Teachers throughout the school make good use of the framework provided by the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Most teachers make

mathematics fun by using practical apparatus and varying their style. As a result, pupils are interested and enjoy the sessions. Teachers make good use of questioning to assess and develop pupils' understanding and provide support as necessary. Pupils receive good feedback on their work through verbal comments and written marking. There are regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress. These are used by teachers to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. The school also uses information about assessment effectively to identify pupils who need additional support. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Teaching assistants provide helpful support for those who need it and they make a valuable contribution to learning. This support takes place both in class and in small withdrawal groups which are effective in building pupils' confidence. These approaches mean that most pupils develop a secure understanding of mathematical concepts. However, teachers do not make sufficient use of ICT skills to develop pupils' mathematical skills.

- 48 Subject management is good. There is a good range of resources to support learning and these are used well. The National Numeracy Strategy is used as an effective framework for planning and is having a beneficial effect on standards, especially in mental work and the development of mathematical language. Pupils' work and assessment results are monitored regularly to ensure that standards of attainment are maintained or improved. Clear targets have been agreed for the National Curriculum tests. The target set for 2003 was surpassed.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

- 49 Mathematical skills are used well in handling information in science, making use of charts and graphs to record the findings of investigations. There was insufficient evidence to judge the use of skills in design and technology, and geography.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is good.
- Very good opportunities for pupils to carry out scientific enquiry.
- Very good use of the outside environment and links to the partnership centre.
- However, there is limited use of computers for scientific investigation.

#### **Commentary**

- 50 Teachers show good understanding of the subject, and so explain ideas clearly to their pupils. The work is very well planned, so that all activities build on previous work, and are suitable for the differing levels of understanding within the classes. Teachers generally have very high expectations. They expect their pupils to work hard, do their best and behave sensibly. Despite the fact that some pupils find it difficult to settle to their work or to concentrate for long, teachers use effective management strategies so as to minimise disruption and keep everyone focussed on their work. Procedures to assess pupils' progress are well developed, and enable teachers to modify the work in response to individual understanding.
- 51 Standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and match the national trend upward over the past few years. Good standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 have good investigational skills. They are beginning to investigate materials and compare and classify them well into groups: shiny, dull, cold, warm, waterproof and absorbent. By the end of Year 6, pupils' investigational skills are very well developed. They identify areas for investigation given set topics. They can devise experiments and investigations well, and they understand how to record their investigations

through the use of: aims, variables, predictions and tests. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.

- 52 The pupils have had a lot of input into the development of the school grounds, and now many opportunities are available in these areas for scientific studies. Links have been established with their local partnership centres, and when pupils visit they are able to identify areas for development which they can continue when they return to school. For example, a group of Year 4 pupils visited a centre during the inspection. They constructed bird boxes, and used a plan of their school on the centre's computers to identify trees within the grounds, and the best sites for the boxes. This work would then be continued back at school.
- 53 The school is aware of the need to develop the use of ICT in subjects such as science. At present, there are few opportunities to support scientific investigation through the use of appropriate software.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory overall**, because pupils in junior-aged classes have not had a wide enough experience of all aspects of the subjects to make sufficient progress.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Older pupils have had incomplete coverage of all aspects of the subject.
- There is insufficient detail in teachers' planning to indicate how ICT will be used to support learning in other subjects.
- New systems of planning and assessment are good but there are gaps in the range of software to promote pupils' learning.
- There are new computers in classrooms.

### **Commentary**

- 54 Standards of attainment are average at the end of Year 2 but below average by the end of Year 6. The pupils have not had a wide enough experience of using the computers to achieve what is expected nationally. By the end of Year 2, most pupils log on to computers independently, open and close files and save or print their work. They learn to control programs using the mouse and keyboard well. Keyboard skills are developing and pupils are beginning to recognise and appreciate the function of the most used keys and icons. By Year 6, most pupils can word process competently. Some skills, however, are under-developed. These include presenting their work to others, using sensors to monitor events and controlling other resources, such as video links, robots or music, through the computers. Little use has been made of spreadsheets, multi media presentations and control.
- 55 Regular, whole-class use for basic skills teaching is hampered by because of the small numbers of computers in each classroom. The school plans to deal with this issue through the creation of a computer suite as part of the internal redevelopment of the building.
- 56 In the only lesson observed, the teaching was good. The teacher provided good support and made effective use of questioning to make pupils think for themselves, thus helping them to make good progress. The pupils enjoy ICT. They are keen to learn and most listen attentively during the teacher's instruction and show their understanding by their eagerness to answer questions or demonstrate their skills. This contributes to their progress when working on the computers. Working in pairs, most pupils show good cooperative skills and take turns to use the keyboard. Those pupils who use computers at home are more skilful and confident and work at a faster rate.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

- 57 Pupils make some use of ICT to support their work in subjects such as history, making effective use of the Internet to research information. Pupils use search engines to gain access to information but still need practice to refine their searches. They use a limited range of programmes to support their work in literacy and numeracy and ICT is not used effectively in other subjects. There is little mention of the use of ICT in teachers' planning for other subjects.

## HUMANITIES

There was insufficient evidence to form overall judgements in **geography** and **history**. One lesson was observed in geography and two in history. Teaching and learning were good in all three lessons. A sample of pupils' work indicates that classes are taught the requirements of the National Curriculum in both subjects and that pupils' attainment is average.

### Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of resources for teaching, including visits to places of worship.
- However, opportunities for developing the pupils' own writing are not taken consistently.

### Commentary

- 58 The school has taken good steps to supplement the topics taught by purchasing or borrowing artefacts, books and resources. For instance, in a Year 5 lesson on Judaism, the class teacher made effective use of a miniature scroll and cover to exemplify the Torah, and a copy of a Yad, the pointer used by readers of the sacred book. The school takes the opportunity to visit local places of worship for first-hand experiences and makes good use of pupils and parents who practise the various faiths studied, such as Buddhism and Sikhism, to recount customs and beliefs to pupils.
- 59 There are good opportunities for pupils to develop skills of speaking and listening in discussions, as well as skills of reading, when pupils use information books and the Internet to explore topics. However, there is inconsistent use of writing in the work of junior-aged pupils. Opportunities for pupils to write their own accounts and reflections, in the form of reports, poems and scripts, are sometimes missed. The school has begun to identify where links exist between this subject, as well as other foundation subjects, and the National Literacy Strategy.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

At this early time of the school year, evidence to support judgements about attainment and provision was limited. In the one lesson of art and design observed, pupils in Year 2 used good skills of cutting and pasting to design an abstract arrangement of letters and numbers in different sizes and fonts with many good design results. Work displayed in Year 6 shows attractive designs developed with the help of 6th form students. Pupils in Year 5 have created intricate designs in the style of William Morris, and produced tiles of good quality that they had designed and made at the partnership centre. All work displayed showed good use of colour, different materials and design techniques. During the one music lesson that was observed, pupils recognised patterns of pitch in sounds, and then replicate them using pitched percussion instruments. All pupils are given the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument and this is a strong feature of the provision. During assemblies, pupils listen to music, and join in tunefully with songs and hymns. No work in design

and technology was available. However, pupils talked confidently about making bird boxes using woodwork tools when they visited a partnership centre.

### **Physical education**

It was not possible to collect sufficient evidence to enable secure judgements to be made about standards of attainment by Year 6. Attainment of pupils in Year 2 is in line with that expected for the age group and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This is a similar position to that reported at the time of the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good use is made of external coaches to support physical education.
- Resources and accommodation are good.

### **Commentary**

- 60 Effective use is made of outside coaches to develop pupils' interest and skills in sports such as cricket, rugby and football. The local education authority provides good support through an advisory teacher who is working alongside teaching staff to develop their skills and understanding. A good range of extra curricular, physical and sporting activities is planned throughout the year and supports the physical education curriculum. These activities enhance physical education for those who take part.
- 61 The school has a good selection of apparatus and equipment to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The accommodation for physical education is good. Outdoor facilities consist of playground areas and a large playing field. These are used well to promote physical education. In addition to lessons, a good range of equipment is available for pupils to use at break times. There is a good range of large outdoor apparatus available for pupils to use.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**.

### **Commentary**

- 62 Personal, social and health education has a regular place on the timetable for all classes and is often developed through group activities and *Circle time*. Pupils effectively learn how to live together in a community and to show consideration towards each other. Sex education is dealt with sensitively and drugs awareness receives appropriate attention. All pupils are given the opportunity to reflect upon themselves and the effects that their actions may have on others. The programme enables pupils to identify within themselves characteristics that are good. For example, in a good lesson in Year 5, pupils were encouraged to identify something special about themselves, something they were good at, and something they would stand up for, and from these results to write their own *Lifestyle motto*. This enabled them to develop their self-esteem and confidence.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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