

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DOXEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Doxey, Stafford

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124200

Headteacher: Mr JE Solly

Lead inspector: Dr T Simpson

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> March 2004

Inspection number: 255993

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:	200
School address:	Marsland Road Doxey Stafford Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST16 1EG
Telephone number:	01785 356100
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Soutar
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Doxey is an average sized primary school serving part of a residential area on the outskirts of Stafford. The socio-economic background of the pupils and their attainment on entry are mixed – but overall are below average. There are few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds or for whom English is an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs – including those with Statements of Special Educational Needs – is above average. The needs of the pupils concerned are varied. There are broadly similar numbers of boys and girls on roll. The number of pupils who enter and leave the school other than at the normal time is above average. In the past few years the school has received an Achievement Award from the Department for Education and Skills and a Healthy Schools Award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10428	Dr T Simpson	Lead inspector	Science, religious education, art and design, geography, history, music.
19446	Mrs S Wood	Lay inspector	
27242	Mrs E Rice	Team inspector	Mathematics, physical education, the Foundation Stage, special educational needs.
31838	Mr M Williams	Team inspector	English, information and communication technology, design and technology.

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>11</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES ONE AND TWO</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>28</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an effective school** where pupils achieve well overall. Teaching is good and there are examples of very good teaching. The school is well led and managed. It has below average costs and provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement is good at all stages of education in the school.
- Staff have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour.
- Teaching is good and teaching assistants have a very well developed role.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and this is a very inclusive school.
- Standards in investigative science are not as high as in other aspects of the subject and pupils do not have enough say over the design of their investigations.
- The pupils are very well cared for.
- The headteacher and deputy head provide very good leadership and senior staff provide very good role models.
- The role of the co-ordinators of some subjects is still under developed.
- The school has a high regard for the views of parents and pupils.

The school's improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards are now higher at the end of Year 6. The behaviour of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is now better. Attendance has improved and pupils are even better cared for. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. Issues raised in the last report have been addressed well. In all other areas the standards previously reported have been maintained.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals. The usual method of using Year 2 prior attainment would not be valid for this school because not enough of the Year 6 pupils were at the school in Year 2.*

**Overall achievement at the school is good.** Current standards at the end of Year 2 are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. At the end of Year 6 – a group which contains a significant number of pupils with special educational needs - standards are average in all three subjects. By the time they leave the reception class children in the Foundation Stage reach the goals they are expected to reach in nearly all the areas of learning. (It was not possible to make a judgement on standards in knowledge and understanding). Achievement is good in all areas of education in the school. Writing has been a relative weakness within English – but the school is successfully addressing this. Reading in Years 1 and 2 is a relative strength, as are speaking and listening throughout the school. Investigative science is not as strong as knowledge and understanding in the subject – particularly at the higher levels. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make good progress. There is no significant difference between the

achievement of boys and girls. Standards in information and communication technology are average. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

**Pupils' personal qualities are good.** They relate well to one another and to the adults in the school. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good** overall and there are particular strengths in moral and cultural development. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. Most have positive attitudes to their work and enjoy coming to school. However, there is challenging behaviour by a small number of pupils in a minority of lessons. Attendance is average and the pupils are punctual.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good** overall and there are examples of very good teaching at all stages of education in the school. Strengths within the teaching at the school include the way that teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and deal with challenging behaviour in a positive but effective manner. All pupils – including those with special educational needs - are enabled to access the curriculum very well. Teaching assistants are very well deployed and contribute significantly to the quality of pupils' learning. In an occasional lesson, work set is not closely enough matched to the needs of pupils with different levels of attainment. This adversely affects the pace of their learning. However, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Assessment procedures in English and mathematics are good – and new procedures in other subjects are currently being piloted.

A good curriculum is provided for the pupils and there is a good range of enrichment activities. The pupils are very well cared for. Partnership with parents is good and the parents are supportive of the school. Partnerships with the community and other schools are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Overall leadership and management are good.** This is having a positive effect on the forward development of the school and on the quality of education received by the pupils. The governing body is supportive and fulfils its statutory responsibilities appropriately; they are fully met. The headteacher and deputy head provide very good leadership. They are committed, enthusiastic and innovative. Senior managers provide very positive role models and strongly promote inclusion. The school carries out systematic self-evaluation and puts the findings to good use. The headteacher, deputy, local authority staff and the co-ordinators of key subjects regularly monitor teaching in a focused way – but the role of some foundation subject co-ordinators in maintaining an overview of the quality of teaching in their subjects is under developed. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed. Systems for financial management are good and there is good regard for the principles of best value. Available resources are used well.

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

Parents have a good level of regard for the school and most support it well. They particularly like the progress that their children are making. Their main concerns relate to the behaviour of some pupils – although they correctly consider that the school deals with this well. Their children are also generally positive about the school but have the same concerns as their parents.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the provision for investigative science.
- Increase the monitoring role of the co-ordinators of foundation subjects.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Overall standards are average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is good at all stages of education in the school.

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

- Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 and in speaking and listening throughout the school are above average.
- Although standards in science are average overall by the end of Year 6, standards in investigative science are not as high as those in the more knowledge based elements of the subject.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

#### **Commentary**

1. Results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 were above average in reading and writing but below average in mathematics. In the same year's tests of pupils at the end of Year 6 (SATs), results were at the national average in English and science – but again below average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools – a measure related to the percentage of pupils with free school meals – the Year 6 results were above average in mathematics and well above average in English and science.
2. Current standards broadly reflect these most recent test results. They are above average in English at the end of Year 2 and average in mathematics and science. They are average in all three subjects at the end of Year 6 – despite a high proportion of pupils in this year group having special educational needs. There are particular strengths in the standard of reading in Year 2 and the quality of speaking and listening throughout the school. However, there are relative weaknesses in investigative science – particularly at the higher levels. Standards in Year 6 are now higher than reported at the time of the last inspection. Children in the Foundation Stage reach most of the goals they are expected to reach by the time they reach Year 1. It was not possible to judge the standards being reached in knowledge and understanding.
3. Pupils enter the school with below average attainment and their overall achievement at all stages of education in the school is good. There are a number of reasons for the good achievement. After-school homework (booster) classes are held to support all pupils in Year 6. Assessment strategies are effective in matching work to pupils' needs in English and mathematics and extra teaching staff are employed to stretch higher attaining pupils. The main reason, however, relates to the consistently good quality of teaching throughout the school and the very good contribution to pupils' learning which is provided by a good number of talented and effective support staff. Pupils are generally provided with a good level of challenge and are enabled to work in a quiet and orderly manner. Methods are varied and the work provided is frequently stimulating. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by teachers and support staff and make good progress against their prior attainment. The school has worked hard to improve the performance of boys and there is now no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. The school's overall trend in improvement is below the national trend. This is mainly because there was a relatively weaker group of pupils in Year 6 in 2002. Nearly all the parents who replied to the questionnaire declared that their children are making good progress.
4. An example of the standards being reached in English included a good Year 4 lesson exploring figurative language through poetry. The teacher read poems with expression, which motivated the pupils. Questions were clear and behaviour management effective. As a result the pupils



interpreted the language of the poetry soundly and achieved well. A strong feature of mathematics lessons is the way that pupils are encouraged to explain the strategies they use. For example, in Year 2 pupils used whiteboards to explain how they worked out the answers to problems, while in Year 6 pupils successfully worked in pairs to explain their strategies for solving problems using a combination of operations. By the time they leave the school, most pupils have a sound grasp of scientific knowledge and understanding. Weaknesses in investigative science are mainly because pupils do not have enough opportunities to design their own investigations. Standards in information and communication technology are average throughout the school. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.6 (17.2)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.4 (15.7)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.9 (16.0)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.5 (23.4)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.8 (24.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.8 (28.6)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

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

- Pupils' good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in the classroom help them to achieve well.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. This is the result of the high expectations and the very good example of the staff. These underpin the very good moral and good social development of pupils.
- Pupils' cultural development is very good because the school takes positive steps to ensure that pupils experience the traditions of a wide range of cultures as well as their own.

#### **Commentary**

5. Pupils show good attitudes to learning in most lessons. Nearly all listen attentively, are keen to answer questions and undertake tasks with enthusiasm. This is the result of good teaching where teachers maintain a high level of interest and set appropriately challenging tasks. As a result pupils of all levels of attainment have the opportunity to achieve well.
6. Attendance has improved from below average to average thanks to effective monitoring and rapid response on pupils' first day of absence. Standards of behaviour are good in the classroom and in all areas of the school. All pupils are fully aware of the school rules and of the

high standards expected and insisted upon by all staff. The training and development of supervisors has contributed to improved relationships and better behaviour especially of younger pupils during lunchtimes. In an occasional lesson a small minority of pupils exhibit challenging behaviour – but this is generally dealt with effectively by staff.

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

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

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

- The caring ethos of the school results in pupils knowing right from wrong and showing consideration for others. Pupils work well together in groups and participate, for example, in discussions with confidence because they know their views are respected. Adults give a very positive lead in engendering good relationships by giving praise and encouragement at every opportunity as well as acting as good role models. No signs of aggressive behaviour were seen. Parents have some concerns about poor behaviour but consider that this is dealt with well by staff, and pupils confirmed that any suspicion of bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively. There have been very few exclusions with only three permanent exclusions in twenty years. There were seven fixed period exclusions during the last full school year but only three one-day exclusions during the past four terms, all fully agreed by the local authority and parents. The school listens to its pupils and values what they have to say, whether in class circle times or more formally at the school council. All pupils from the nursery upwards elect two representatives to the council. In consequence pupils learn to take on responsibility and work well together. They play harmoniously together, for example, partly because they were involved through the school council in designing playground markings for preferred games.

**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	177	7	1
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	4	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	22	0	0

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

- The school ensures that pupils experience the traditions of a wide range of cultures by inviting relevant visitors into the school. For example, a recent visit by members of the local Asian community involved pupils in Indian dance and gave them insights into Indian life, culture and beliefs. Pupils still talk eagerly about the visit a few months ago of a Caribbean musician and storyteller, their fascination and delight evident. They develop a good understanding of their own culture through music and art, the whole school being currently involved, for example, in studying the work of the artist Georgia O’Keefe.
- Pupils’ studies in religious education and personal, social and health education, and the opportunities they have for reflection and worship in assemblies help to promote spiritual development. Although the school has begun to identify subjects and areas where it might foster social, moral and cultural development it has not considered the same approach to the

spiritual dimension, which, whilst satisfactory, receives on balance relatively limited emphasis through the different subjects of the curriculum.

10. The personal, social and emotional development of children in the Foundation Stage is broadly typical. The school has maintained the good standards found at the last inspection and has effectively addressed the few points then identified.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall. Teaching is good at all stages of education at the school and an enriched curriculum is provided. Pupils are very well cared for by staff and there are good links with parents and the community.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good throughout Years R to 6. The quality of teaching in the nursery class is also good. Teaching and learning are good in all the subjects where judgments could be made. Assessment of pupils' work is good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A very good level of expectations means that pupils' learning is supported well throughout the school.
- Teachers manage their pupils very well and as a result pupils work well both independently and collaboratively by Year 6.
- Most teachers match tasks closely to the needs of all pupils, but in a small number of lessons tasks are not always as closely matched as they might be.
- Teaching assistants support teachers very well and contribute significantly to the standards achieved.
- There are good assessment procedures in English and mathematics.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted very well.

### **Commentary**

11. The way that nursery and reception children respond to the high expectations that they should act responsibly and be ready to learn, from their first days in school, contributes positively to the good attitudes towards learning seen during the inspection. Examples were seen where the teacher and her assistants worked effectively as a team to extend learning. For example, children have made good gains in learning about houses and homes, because the adults expected them to listen and respond to questions. The adults valued the children's comments and led discussions, each building on the information given by the other. Well established routines with thorough planning and assessment of each individual's needs mean that children learn well, particularly at conversation time.
12. Numerous examples were seen at all stages of education in the school where pupils worked independently and collaboratively. This sense of responsibility contributes to the standards attained. Most teachers have high expectations of behaviour and manage the pupils very well. Of particular note was the way that Year 2 pupils worked with partners during a mathematics lesson. Here, they got on with the task and were encouraged to 'work it out in your head'. As a result they were able to explain their workings with confidence as they reported to the class. In a good Year 5 Indian dance lesson, pupils collaborated well in groups as they developed their own movements, working with interest.
13. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, are usually offered tasks that are well matched to their needs and this means that all are well challenged and learn well. However, in some of the satisfactory lessons there was not always as tight a

match as elsewhere in the school. In a science lesson which was nevertheless well presented, pupils were not challenged enough. On the whole, however, the school promotes equality of opportunity very well.

14. The school has a good number of talented teaching assistants who are valued members of the team. Many examples were seen where they provided effective support. They supported pupils well in the 'nurture group' and in the reception class during circle time, allowing the class teacher to focus on reading. In a good Year 3 mathematics lesson, the teaching assistant was fully involved, supporting pupils of all abilities, and in a good Year 6 English lesson, the assistant employed very good techniques which ensured that pupils with special educational needs achieved well. Overall, teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.
15. Teachers use good assessment procedures to track progress and match tasks to the needs of the pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. They record the National Curriculum levels each pupil is expected to reach each year and review these regularly. Pupils have their own small personal targets to work towards to give them an understanding of what they need to do to improve. Similarly, marking generally suggests ways to improve as well as celebrating success. This means that pupils have an understanding of their own learning. Pupils are also aware of the achievement of others, and are beginning to self-assess. In a good physical education lesson pupils gave marks out of three when they saw movements demonstrated and in a good Year 4 English lesson, the teacher asked: 'How well did you do?' so pupils were encouraged to think about their own work. The school is currently piloting new assessment procedures in the other subjects.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3 (8%)	27 (73%)	7 (19%)	0	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.*

**The curriculum**

The school ensures that all pupils have a good quality and range of learning opportunities to suit their needs. It provides them with good opportunities to widen their experiences through extra-curricular activities and a variety of visitors to the school. The school's good accommodation and resources support their learning well.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school generally takes good account of pupils' different levels of attainment and successfully makes provision for their individual needs so that everyone is included.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- A good range of experiences both within and outside the school day adds breadth to pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- The accommodation and resources are good and used well to support pupils' learning.

**Commentary**

16. The curriculum enables all groups of pupils to achieve well in all subjects and areas of learning. It is organised effectively to meet all statutory requirements, challenge pupils' varying abilities and generally makes sure that each one has tasks that match their needs. This means that all pupils enjoy equality of opportunity. Teachers plan carefully and review their plans in the light of pupils' learning to make sure that work remains suitably demanding. Teachers take care to make good links between subjects. The use of information and communication technology

throughout the curriculum was unsatisfactory at the last inspection but has improved and is now satisfactory. Planning for personal, social and health education is good thanks to an effective programme of specific lessons and the contributions of a variety of visitors such as the school nurse, police and emergency services. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is planned and resourced well. All areas of learning are carefully and effectively considered ensuring that the children have good opportunities to learn by making their own choices and through appropriate adult support. There are good links made with receiving schools so that pupils make the transition smoothly.

17. The school currently has a full complement of suitably qualified staff who are well deployed to make good use of their skills and experience. A strong team of highly trained and well-briefed teaching assistants offers particular benefits to pupils with special educational needs. Provision for these pupils is consequently very good. Individual education plans are well prepared with clear and measurable targets, activities and resources that enable pupils to achieve their best.
18. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities including after-school sports clubs such as football, hockey and table tennis, and instrumental tuition for violin. The good range of visits and visitors to the school enriches the curriculum and extends all pupils' learning in a variety of ways. The school places great importance on the arts, and artists and musicians are regular visitors. A visit from local residents originally from India, for example, enhanced pupils' learning in geography, dance, music and religious education throughout the school. The school emphasises that all its enrichment activities are for the benefit of pupils of all ages. Even the younger children in the nursery enjoyed the excitement of a visit to a theatre several miles away and the stimulus it gave to their imagination and creativity. The overall provision is enhanced through after-school homework clubs for pupils in Year 6.
19. The good-sized classrooms provide ample space for whole-class activities and for work in pairs and groups. Pupils may thus work independently and take some responsibility for their own learning. The school now has good outdoor areas for pupils of all ages. Their refurbishment has included markings for traditional playground games. Resources are of good quality and are well organised. Teachers make good use of them to support pupils' learning. The last inspection's key issue of information and communication technology resources has been addressed. A well-equipped computer suite now benefits all pupils and contributes increasingly to the standards attained. The school continues to develop its information and communication technology resources - especially for control and modelling for pupils in Years 3 to 6. A new data-logger, for example, has just arrived to enhance work in science.
20. There has been a slight improvement to the curriculum since the last inspection.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school gives its pupils good guidance and support and takes effective measures to ensure their welfare, health and safety. The pupils are very well involved in the work and development of the school. The school provides a very caring environment in which pupils can learn confidently. Pupils feel safe and secure as a result of the very good relationships they have with the adults in the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils feel confident to approach an adult in the school if they have worries or concerns.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to share views and ideas.

### **Commentary**

21. Pupils feel confident that adults will listen to their worries and concerns and that action will be taken to help them, which is the result of the very good relationships developed in the school. This is evident in the classrooms where pupils happily ask for help when they are unsure of the given tasks and also at lunchtimes where a friendly atmosphere has been created in the lunch

hall. The 'nurture' group is part of the school's strategy to develop pupils' self esteem and confidence and teachers are sensitive and patient when pupils are challenging. Pupils throughout the school are well cared for in a healthy and safe environment. However, some minor structures for formally monitoring health and safety are at an early stage of development. Provision of support, advice and guidance through monitoring is good. Appropriate procedures are in place for child protection and procedures to induct the pupils into the school are good.

22. The school listens to pupils' ideas and views through the recently formed school council. Suggestion books are being introduced to enable all pupils to put forward their thoughts and views to their council class representatives. Pupils' opinions were taken into account during the selection process for the new head teacher and also on the restructuring and use of the playground.
23. The care and support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils very well. The school's values are reflected in the way that pupils with special educational needs are given opportunities to take part in all school activities. Their contributions are valued and their achievements recognised fully. The co-ordinator with responsibility for special educational needs keeps very good records of pupils' progress as they move through the school and these are reviewed regularly. Individual education plans highlight areas for improvement for pupils with clear targets. These are shared with pupils and parents. A key factor is the early identification of such needs and the action taken to make the necessary provision to help pupils. Overall provision for the care, guidance and support of the pupils has improved since the last inspection.

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

Parents have positive views of the school and most support the work it does. The school has developed good links with the community and partner schools.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Regular information home keeps parents informed about the life and work of the school - although its presentation is sometimes bland.
- The school seeks the views of parents which it values and acts upon.
- There are good links with the community to support pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

24. Parents receive regular letters that keep them informed about the routines and events in school. However, these are sometimes bland and do not effectively celebrate the work and life of the school. Parents are invited in to join in productions, consultation evenings and sports days, which they clearly appreciate and are easily able to obtain information on their children's learning and how they are progressing. Not enough written information is provided on the topics and curriculum that their children are studying to enable them to help and support them. The annual written report to parents give clear information on how children are achieving - although the targets for further improvement are sometimes too general and do not clearly tell parents how they can support their children in the next stage of their education.
25. The opinions of parents and carers are often gathered through written consultation or meetings. The governors and staff have asked parents for their views on the requirements for a new headteacher, to contribute to the new personal, social and health education policy, and they were informed about the new behaviour management tracking system. They can also discuss issues with the headteacher at regular parent/head meetings and are encouraged to talk to teachers about their children's progress.
26. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are very well informed about their progress by the co-ordinator with responsibility for special educational needs. Parents are encouraged to

support their child's learning and time is made for them to share their concerns with the co-ordinator when necessary. This partnership has a beneficial impact on the pupils' learning.

27. The school has developed many links with the community and uses the surrounding area to enhance the learning opportunities for the children. Walks round the locality help pupils to understand their own local culture. Senior citizens come to share their memories on life during the Second World War, and a local resident came to work with pupils on Indian dance. Police and fire service personnel talk to pupils to raise awareness on current issues. The school has also developed good links with local business and industry. The school is currently looking at ways to enable more community use of its facilities. The parent teacher association is a small and hard working group that organises fundraising and social events for the school. This is very much appreciated by the school and their approach is popular with the parents. They have recently provided funds to improve the play ground facilities and also dictionaries which were presented to the school leavers. Funds are also available to help with the expenses of theatre trips for the pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The school is soundly governed. The headteacher and deputy head provide very good leadership and overall management at the school is good. The high standards of leadership and management identified at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides a very strong sense of vision and purpose.
- The deputy head has a very strong complementary role.
- The role of co-ordinators of foundation subjects is under developed.
- The school makes good use of regular self-evaluation.
- The governing body needs to have a more focused approach to monitoring the curriculum.
- Senior managers provide very positive role models and strongly promote inclusion.

### **Commentary**

28. The governing body is supportive of the school and has a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. It fulfils its statutory responsibilities appropriately and is prepared to challenge when necessary. Individual governors bring a wide range of experience to the role – including among their number, for example, people with backgrounds in industry, financial management, personnel and education. There are governors who have specific responsibilities for literacy, numeracy, special educational needs and health and safety. There is also a half termly 'duty' governor. These governors visit the school from time to time to discuss their responsibilities with members of the staff and to observe lessons – although not in a focused enough way. Several individual governors provide good links with local industry which benefit the school in several ways. The work of the governing body as a whole is effectively supported by a series of committees.
29. The headteacher provides very good leadership. He has a high level of commitment to the school and a clear vision for its further development. This is firmly entrenched in further raising standards within an enriched curriculum - as well as enhancing the personal and social skills of the pupils. He initiates and supports innovation. He is well regarded by all parties and under his leadership both standards and teaching have improved in recent years. The deputy head has a very effective complementary role – being responsible, for example, for leading a recent re-evaluation of the school's planning and assessment structures. With the headteacher and other members of the senior management, she provides a very good role model. There is a senior management team which meets to discuss both emergent and strategic issues and which – as it is representative of different age groups – acts as an effective means of two-way communication within the school. The school improvement plan is a practical working document whose construction involved staff and governors at appropriate stages and whose

progress is regularly evaluated. It would, however, be more comprehensive if it included more individual subject action plans.

30. The headteacher regularly monitors teaching in a focused way and reports back to those concerned. Members of the local authority advisory service also visit some lessons. Performance management strategies are fully in place. These involve support as well as teaching staff. Co-ordinators have a good understanding of their subject's strengths and weaknesses. They monitor planning and some pupils' work to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are being met. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology have also monitored some teaching – but the role of the other co-ordinators is less well developed, which reduces their capacity to measure standards and the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility. This also means that a valuable opportunity for professional development is missed. No evidence was seen, however, of a negative impact on standards in the subjects concerned. Regular self-evaluation and the analysis of data are a key part of the school's culture and the results of self-evaluation are put to good use in dictating the school's strategic development. Support staff are very well deployed and make a good overall contribution to the work of the school. The school has a very good regard for inclusion, the promotion of equality and concern for the needs of individuals. Management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Routine administration is effective.
31. Financial planning and control are effective and involve all relevant parties where appropriate. The most recent local authority audit was very positive. The school budget reflects the school's needs well. The school's declining carry forward of funds from one financial year to the other is carefully planned for and there are appropriate contingency plans in place to prevent it becoming too small in the future. There is good regard for the principles of best value and all statutory requirements are met. The parents are happy with the quality of leadership and management at the school, and the strengths noted in the last report have been maintained.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	552110
Total expenditure	535179
Expenditure per pupil	2466

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	12000
Balance carried forward to the next	16931



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

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

The Foundation Stage at the school comprises a reception class and an afternoon pre-school group (nursery). Most children enter the reception class from the nursery which is located in the next classroom and with which there are good links. The close relationship between the nursery and the reception class means that the children make a smooth transition from one to the other. Children enter the reception class with attainment that is below average. Due to the consistently good teaching in all areas of learning and the very good support by teaching assistants, pupils achieve well by the end of the reception year. They are likely to attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning. There has been good improvement in provision since the last inspection as teaching has moved from satisfactory to good and outdoor provision has developed. The curriculum has also improved and activities are focused, meeting children's needs well. It is well planned, practical and provides a good balance between direct teaching and child chosen activities.

The provision is managed effectively. A good team of staff who share consistently high expectations for the children has been created in a relatively short time. Teachers and their assistants know the children well and meet their needs successfully in all areas of learning. Children with special educational needs are very well supported and included in all activities. Assessment is a strength, as during lessons staff regularly collect and record observations of children's experiences and achievements to inform their planning for the next steps in teaching and for each child's foundation profile. The accommodation is good but is an area for development with the building of a new nursery nearing completion.

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

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

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

- Good team work from staff promotes clear procedures and high expectations for children's social and emotional development.
- Due to good teaching and well established procedures, children learn and achieve well and are likely to attain average standards by the end of the reception year.

#### **Commentary**

32. The reception teacher and her assistants promote children's awareness of social responsibility by choosing children to be helpers each day. These undertake a range of responsibilities including fetching equipment and putting it away and taking the register to the office. Numerous examples were seen where children worked unsupervised, behaving well and sharing resources. For example, children in the nursery played with sand and animals, making caves for them to live in. They played well together 'chatting' about their work. In a good reception class literacy lesson, children tidied away efficiently and moved to the carpet ready for their next instruction. They played a 'sticky label' game at the end of the lesson with clear explanations from the teacher which encouraged them to co-operate and work well together. Children are beginning to develop social awareness, shown when they applauded others in the class who tried hard. They walked sensibly to the hall for assembly and moved about the class safely. The emphases on this area of learning, where children take turns and join in together, helps them to develop social skills. They take responsibility for their clothes when changing for physical activities and the common approach which all adults have results in good relationships which help to develop positive attitudes to learning, values and behaviour.
33. During the inspection, nursery children took part in outdoor activities. They quickly followed directions from the nursery assistant, choosing activities with no fuss. They used space well in

skipping and jumping movements and some pupils were able to roll a hoop with good control. The imaginative activities offered, ensured that the children showed sustained levels of concentration and behaved well.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good overall and all staff provide many opportunities for children to develop language skills.
- The focus on conversation helps to develop speaking and listening skills, which are below average on entry.
- Early reading and writing skills are taught systematically and well.

### **Commentary**

34. Most children are on course to achieve the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They achieve well. Emphasis is placed on speaking and listening from an early age and this contributes positively to the standards attained, although many children enter the reception class with below average skills. For example, some children confused 'bend down' with 'lie down' in discussion time, whilst others showed a greater understanding of language, talking confidently about the game that they were playing. In circle time they were able to describe the wormery in the classroom, reporting their observations in a simple way to the class.
35. Children in the reception class have ample opportunities to share books and most recognise initial sounds and talk about their favourite texts. They can sequence pictures to make a story and read simple classroom captions. During the inspection children enjoyed looking at books, especially in the reading area which contained a wide range of material. Books were displayed on the topic of homes which was the current focus. Writing lists for 'fantasy houses' extended this work as did the role play area with the house of the 'Three Bears'.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Adults take every opportunity to develop mathematical understanding and as a result, children achieve well and are likely to meet the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year.
- Adults provide a good variety of interesting practical activities that stimulate the children and support their learning. They make good use of number in everyday situations.

### **Commentary**

36. Teaching and learning are good over all. Adults take every opportunity to develop the children's mathematical skills and particularly to develop their mathematical language. They question children while they are engaged in a variety of activities, always trying to draw out and encourage mathematical understanding. For example, in a discussion about everyday words which describe position and direction, pupils were fascinated by 'Jill' the puppet, which was moved to a new position when they closed their eyes. It was their job to describe where she had been put! This good use of resources stimulated learning and ensured that all children

were engaged in the lesson. The children also learn to identify shapes with a 'shape town', displayed for all to see, using squares, triangles and rectangles.

37. Children make good progress in number recognition and counting because the teacher and the teaching assistants reinforce this aspect of learning in an incidental way when opportunities occur during the day. Good self esteem is encouraged and can be illustrated by the caption: 'We are marvellous at Maths'.

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

It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards in this area of learning but the standards seen were mostly average. Work on display covered a wide range of topics from 'weather changes' and 'looking at things in the garden', to observation of worms and where they live. Models of homes were well made using a variety of materials and formed an extension to topic work.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well and are on course to meet the goals expected by the end of the reception year because there are many opportunities to develop their skills.
- Children are developing a good awareness of space.

### **Commentary**

38. Children have good opportunities inside and outside to develop their co-ordination. A good range of equipment is available to use outdoors for climbing and balancing. Hoops and balls are used to develop manipulative skills and children are beginning to have a good awareness of space when they are in the playground. This area has been developed by re-marking it. Large toys are shared with the nursery and used for pupils when the weather permits. In the classroom, good opportunities are provided for children to use construction kits to make models and they have access to a range of equipment such as scissors, paintbrushes and pencils.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is good provision for role play and children participate well in this.
- There are good opportunities to use a range of materials.

### **Commentary**

39. Careful attention to the provision of role-play areas enhances learning. The present house for the 'Three Bears', with its good range of resources, provides exciting play and links with the topic on homes. In the nursery, children protect themselves with hard hats and build their own homes with large bricks or visit the 'grocer's shop'. These imaginative role-play areas stimulate children to talk and to play well together, forming good links with literacy and social development.
40. The children paint pictures of houses, contribute to a class picture of underground homes and make patterns. Children have opportunities to make models and decorate them carefully. Links

with literacy can be seen where children draw pictures to illustrate their writing; for example 'Mum and I went shopping'. Further links are evident with mathematics, as in a class picture of a town made with shapes. All this work is attractively displayed, celebrating success.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Pupils achieve well over their time in school thanks to good teaching which is well matched to their needs.
- Pupils' listening and speaking develop very well. Pupils read well – particularly in Years 1 and 2.
- Assessments are thorough and support good target setting. Targets are monitored so pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do next.
- The development of literacy is emphasised well in all subjects of the curriculum.

#### **Commentary**

41. The development of literacy throughout the school was a key issue at the last inspection. Standards were broadly average by Year 2 but below average by Year 6. Writing was below average throughout the school. Effective monitoring by the school management team, with the support of the local education authority, has contributed to good improvement, particularly of the curriculum, teaching, and use of assessment. In consequence standards have also improved. By Year 2 standards are - on balance - above average. Standards are broadly average by Year 6, where there is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. All pupils achieve well, and some very well, when compared with their attainment on entry to the school.
42. Teaching and learning are good overall and at times they are very good. Teachers and support staff relate very well to pupils. This helps to give pupils confidence in expressing their views and ideas. In conversation they increasingly adapt their talk well to the purpose because they concentrate and question responsively. Teachers and their well-briefed support assistants pay close attention to the development of all language skills but ensure that first of all listening and speaking skills are well developed. This means that pupils have a secure body of language which they can later adapt and reuse in a variety of ways according to circumstances. Thanks to plentiful opportunities for discussion and speaking to a variety of audiences and sensitive but focused correction and attention to grammar, pupils steadily build up a good vocabulary and understanding of language structure.
43. There were few opportunities for role play and drama during the last inspection but that is no longer the case. Pupils in Year 5 created short sketches in religious education, for example, which helped to reinforce particular moral points well. The school has recently placed a strong emphasis on guided reading where pupils are encouraged to read for a variety of purposes. This helps pupils to appreciate the effect of different styles and registers and in turn helps them to write better themselves. Most pupils now read regularly with interest. The stock of books housed in classrooms throughout the school is good, including new fiction titles designed to appeal to both boys and girls. This has helped make the gap in achievement between girls and boys much narrower than normal. Pupils have a satisfactory idea of how to locate information; for example by using alphabetical order. The proposed development next year of a school library shows that the school management knows standards in library skills could be better. Standards in writing are broadly average because the positive impact of improvements in the other language skills takes time to show effect. Pupils in Year 2, for example, do not regularly join their writing or develop their ideas at length, so fewer reach higher levels in writing than in other aspects. They do not, however, lack the ideas or the ability to write them down coherently.

44. Curriculum leadership is good because teaching and learning are closely monitored to make sure all pupils have work which meets their needs. Assessments are regular and thorough and help match work precisely to pupils' ability. Pupils know their targets, which are referred to in lessons. At the end of each lesson teachers and pupils evaluate what they have done and how well they have moved forward. Focused written comments in exercise and homework books and - for older pupils - the regular use of National Curriculum levels also help everyone to see what needs to be done next.

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

45. Pupils' English skills are well developed through all their studies. Speaking and listening for a variety of purposes are emphasised in discussions and presentations in various subjects - and even assemblies. In each subject targeted vocabulary is emphasised. This means that correct scientific language or specific religious terms, for example, are properly used so that pupils may express themselves more accurately. Marking takes account of spelling and grammar - so issues are addressed promptly in different subjects. The use of information and communication technology for research helps pupils read a variety of styles, and word-processing supports drafting in a number of subjects. There are opportunities to write for various purposes throughout the curriculum, especially opportunities to write at length in the humanities.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and as a result, achievement is good.
- Good emphasis on different methods of calculation means that pupils can explain strategies well and share them with each other, and pupils generally know what they have to do to improve their own work.
- Leadership of the subject is very good.
- The subject is very well led and progress is carefully monitored.
- Numeracy skills are developed satisfactorily in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

46. Standards have improved steadily since the previous inspection, especially by Year 6. The co-ordinator gives very good leadership and has closely monitored standards. Any areas of potential weakness have been addressed. For example, the school has looked at teaching methods to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. The teaching staff work effectively as a team and know their pupils well. This means that all pupils in most classes are offered tasks that are well matched to their level of attainment. The good quality of the teaching and learning is another positive feature, an improvement since the previous inspection.
47. A strong feature of the lessons seen was the way that pupils were encouraged to explain their strategies. For example, in a good lesson for pupils in Year 2, they used whiteboards to record their answers to problems, working well with partners and then reporting their workings to the class. One pupil referred to previous work to give examples. The teacher frequently asked individuals to explain how they reached their answer. Consequently, other pupils learned new ways of working.
48. This strategy was used well in a good Year 5 lesson where a pupil commented: 'It makes maths work easier'. In another good lesson in Year 3, where pupils drew a bar chart with a scale going up in twos, most pupils had a developing understanding of the use of scales and graphing and what to place on a vertical axis. Pupils were well engaged on their task which was

well matched to their needs, stimulating learning. In Year 6, pupils working in pairs explained their strategies for solving problems using a combination of operations successfully.

49. Teachers use assessment well to check pupils' understanding. For example, in a good Year 6 lesson, the teaching assistant assessed pupils during the mental session, noting their mathematical development. This gave useful information about each pupil. Teachers set targets to indicate which level each pupil is expected to reach by the end of the year and these are regularly reviewed. Pupils have their own specific small targets that they can refer to in lessons and lesson targets are written in books at the start of the lesson. Marking generally shows ways to help pupils improve their own work.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

50. Numeracy has been satisfactorily developed in other subjects. For example, in information and communication technology, pupils use spreadsheets to calculate weights and lengths. In other lessons appropriate computer programs are used as an extension to class work. A link was made with science - with graphs to show how long it takes a jelly to dissolve and in art and craft with symmetrical patterns on display. In Indian dance pupils count the beats as they move and in English pupils sequence events when looking at texts.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement in science is good.
- Teaching is good overall and learning is made interesting for the pupils – but work set in some lessons is not closely enough matched to the needs and aspirations of pupils with different levels of attainment.
- Pupils do not have enough say over the course of their scientific investigations and this adversely affects standards in the higher levels of investigative science.
- Pupils are often enthusiastic about their science lessons.

### **Commentary**

51. In the 2003 tests of pupils at the end of Year 6, the results were at the national average and well above average in relation to similar schools – a measure related to the percentage of pupils with free school meals. Results in the science tests have been consistently higher than those of the other assessed subjects over the past few years. In the same year's teacher assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2, the percentage gaining the expected Level 2 was well above average, while the percentage gaining the higher Level 3 was average. Current standards are around the national average throughout the school. The majority of pupils enter the school with below average knowledge and understanding and their overall achievement is good. Standards in science overall are now higher than they were at the time of the previous inspection. However, standards in investigative science are not as high as those in the more knowledge based aspects of the subject.
52. Most Year 1 pupils have a sound understanding of what happens when light is shone on an object. They appreciate through investigation that some materials are reflective while some are transparent. Year 2 pupils successfully distinguish between natural and man-made substances and have a developing awareness that some substances can be changed back to their original state after manipulation while others can not. Year 4 pupils are clear about which materials form good electrical conductors and which do not, and use this knowledge in their construction of simple circuits. They carry out a series of experiments to, for example, investigate heat insulation and aspects of forces – in most cases appreciating the need for only one variable to

be changed in order for their test to be 'fair'. From time to time, however, they have difficulty in understanding the relevant scientific terminology. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils have an appreciation of the need for scientific reliability and are clear about processes which are reversible or irreversible. Throughout the school, however, there is little evidence of pupils having the opportunity to design their own investigations in order to solve scientific problems and this has a negative impact on the standards which could be reached in investigative science – particularly at the higher levels.

53. The pupils are very interested in science and often get quite enthusiastic about their lessons – particularly the practical aspects. Occasionally this very enthusiasm leads to over exuberance. On the whole, however, they are attentive during discussions, keen to contribute their ideas and work well together while carrying out their investigations. The quality of the teaching seen during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to very good – but was good overall. Planning was generally thorough and methods were varied and served well to stimulate the pupils. Behaviour management was effective in maintaining positive attitudes and good relationships. Resources were interesting and relevant, while questioning stimulated the pupils to think deeply about the issues they were investigating. The pace of pupils' learning was usually good. However, evidence from some lessons and from the work scrutiny indicates that the work set for pupils is not finely enough matched to the needs and aspirations of pupils of different levels of attainment. This detracts from the standards that could potentially be reached by pupils of all levels of attainment – particularly in investigative science.
54. There are appropriate planning structures in place for science and the school has recently introduced a new system for assessing pupils' progress in the subject. There is some use of information and communication technology to support the subject through, for example, the use of databases – although this could be developed further. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject's strengths and areas for further development. Overall provision is enhanced by a good number of extra-curricular enrichment activities.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well. They enter the school with below average attainment but have average standards by the time they leave.
- Word processing skills are well developed.
- There are good resources including a new computer suite.
- ICT contributes well to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

### **Commentary**

55. Pupils achieve well in acquiring the major skills to enable them to find things out, bring together information and communicate it in variety of ways. In these areas, they attain the standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
56. Pupils in all classes word-process their work well. Younger pupils soon learn to select fonts, sizes and colours to create desired effects. They quickly learn to add pictures to their text. By Year 6 pupils present, for example, geography project work on rivers well, having a clear idea of the needs of their audience. Higher attainers produce multi-media presentations with an obvious professional look to them.
57. The strands of control and modelling are less strongly developed but satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 plan and control the movements of a floor robot, while pupils in Year 2 write their own programs to control a robot on a computer screen. Pupils in Year 5 have undertaken simple tasks in graphical modelling, while the files of Year 6 pupils show that they have taken pictures

with a digital camera. There was otherwise little to show that pupils in Years 3 to 6 have much experience of controlling devices or of monitoring events; for example by using sensors. The school has recently purchased a data logger in order to provide a better balance to learning in these areas.

58. Teaching and learning are good overall because teachers and support assistants have a good grasp of what they teach and ensure that work is tailored to pupils' needs, including those with special educational needs. Pupils' work is monitored in lessons and problems addressed quickly when they are unsure. Pupils' knowledge and skills are starting to be assessed in detail through a new framework recently devised by the co-ordinator. This means that their strengths and weaknesses are identified and appropriate action taken more quickly to help them achieve more. This demonstrates the good leadership and direction provided by the subject co-ordinator to take the subject forward.
59. There have been good improvements since the last inspection, especially in resources which were then unsatisfactory. A computer projector, digital camera and a range of desktop and laptop machines allow teachers to use ICT in virtually all subjects. The school's new computer suite is used regularly by all classes to teach and develop pupils' basic skills. The school continues to enhance provision. Teachers and support assistants benefit from ongoing training to improve their confidence and skills and this is showing positive results - particularly in the use of ICT across the curriculum.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

60. The use of ICT across the curriculum is now satisfactory - whereas formerly it was unsatisfactory. It is used frequently to assist pupils with literacy and numeracy. Good use is made of appropriate software particularly to support pupils with special educational needs. Good word processing shows improving skills throughout the school in drafting and redrafting to increase accuracy. Pupils in Year 2 use simple graphs and older pupils use databases and spreadsheets to process and display data, calculating and adjusting, for example, how they spend their pocket money to stay within a budget. Year 5 pupils use the Internet; for example in researching for geography projects on India. This has included some use of ICT for mapping. Pupils are currently developing their skills in using data-loggers to gather and display data in science investigations. The use of painting and drawing programs is common throughout the school - helping pupils illustrate their work.

### **HUMANITIES**

*Religious education was inspected in detail and is reported on in full below. History and geography were not a focus of this inspection and so are not reported on in any detail.*

61. Scrutiny of planning and previous work and discussions with staff indicate that the requirements of the National Curriculum are being met in the case of both history and geography. In history, for example, Year 2 pupils have some knowledge of the games played by Victorian children and can identify features of toys they are presented with which indicate that they are old. Year 4 pupils successfully compare classical Athens and Sparta and have explored Ancient Greek religion and beliefs. Year 6 pupils show empathy with the plight of World War 2 evacuees. They have also explored the impact of enemy bombing on affected populations. As part of a geography topic, Year 2 pupils described their local village and its services. Year 4 pupils understand some of the reasons why settlements grew up in particular locations and can compare the characteristics of different settlements both in the United Kingdom and in other countries. Year 6 pupils have investigated the physical characteristics of rivers.



## Religious Education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have positive – and often very positive - attitudes towards religious education lessons and achieve well.
- The subject is well taught.
- The role of the co-ordinator, and assessment strategies are still under developed.
- Many pupils have difficulty in understanding some of the higher level concepts that they are presented with.

### Commentary

62. Provision for religious education and the standards being reached meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The pupils achieve well. These findings are broadly similar to those of the previous inspection. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development – including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Much of the work covered has a Christian focus but key features of other major world religions are explored as well. Year 1 pupils, for example, have a developing concept of how they think God would like them to behave – although only a minority are able to express reasons why people go to church. Year 2 pupils have a sound recall of the key features of the Christmas story and appreciate the purpose of different artefacts associated with Christian worship. Pupils in Year 4 understand several aspects of the Hindu religion and traditions associated with these. Pupils in Year 5 are able - to some extent - to extrapolate some of the sayings of Christ into modern settings – although few produce sustained arguments to support their views or tackle particularly controversial issues. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have a good recall of key elements of the Muslim faith. In a lesson seen during the inspection, they were beginning to understand human suffering within the context of Buddhism. Many, however, had difficulty in appreciating or explaining deeper concepts explored in the lesson – such as that of re-incarnation.
63. Most pupils are very interested in the topics covered in religious education lessons and contribute enthusiastically to discussions – being keen to express their own views, while still being prepared to listen to those of others. Teaching is good overall. Planning is generally effective. Methods are varied and stimulate the pupils' interest. Issues – which are often very challenging – are tackled very sensitively. Pupils are generally very well managed. Their views are respected and all are included in discussions.
64. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory overall and the co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject's developmental needs. There is some use of information and communication technology to support the subject – although this is still limited. Assessment strategies are still in their infancy.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Physical education was inspected in full and is reported on in full below. **Art and design, design and technology** and **music** are not reported on in any detail as they were not a focus of this inspection. However, examination of planning and previous work and discussions with staff indicate that a wide range of experiences are provided in each of the subjects. Year 6 pupils, for example, carried out research into different kinds of biscuits and provided reasons for individual choices of recipe. They produced good quality sketches prior to constructing containers to put their biscuits in. During the inspection much of the art work throughout the school was based on that of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century American artist Georgia O'Keeffe. Year 1 pupils used paint and tissue to re-create their own versions of O'Keefe's 'Oriental Poppies' while Year 2 pupils used silk paints to produce their

interpretations of 'Purple Petunias' and Year 5 pupils used water colours to paint attractive pictures of apple blossom. Pupils in Year 6 integrated literature, music and art on the theme of H.G.Wells' 'War of the Worlds' – composing appropriate music and producing attractive pastel renderings based on an episode from the book. In a good music lesson seen during the inspection, Year 6 pupils listened to Tchaikovsky's 'Serenade for Strings' and discussed the images it conjured up for them. They then used a selection of pictures as inspiration for the creation of their own group compositions, which they subsequently wrote down in simple graphic notation and then performed. Music – including both singing and the playing of instruments – also features strongly in assemblies. Provision for art and design and music is greatly enhanced by out of class activities such as an after school art club, peripatetic instrumental tuition, out of school visits and visitors to the school.

## Physical education

Provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most teaching is good – but some teachers are insecure in their delivery of the subject.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons and enjoy the subject – but some become over excited and too noisy.
- Assessment strategies are under developed.

## Commentary

65. Standards are around the national average in all the aspects of physical education that were seen during the inspection and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This finding is broadly similar to that of the previous inspection. In swimming the majority of pupils can swim the nationally expected 25 metres before they leave the school and some can swim further. It was not possible to judge standards in athletics as no lessons were observed during the inspection week.
66. Year 1 pupils have appropriate levels of throwing skills, while Year 2 pupils are able to jump, land and produce balances – some in a symmetrical shape. Most are able to comment on their performances and those of others and make suggestions for improvement. In a Year 3 gymnastics lesson, the pupils successfully explored space using large apparatus and created sequences of movements – although the quality of these was sometimes lessened by the limitations of pupils' individual gymnastic skills. In a successful Year 5 dance lesson, the pupils created a movement based on 'suspense' following an earlier introduction to Indian dancing.
67. Most pupils enjoy physical education. In the lessons seen during the inspection, pupils' attitudes varied from unsatisfactory to very good. In the most successful lesson seen during the inspection, their concentration levels were very high. They worked hard to improve their performance and collaborated very well with one another when working in groups. In less successful lessons, they were over excited and noisy and had poor levels of concentration. Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are examples where it is good. In the better lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils' performance and behaviour. Their subject knowledge is good, which has a positive impact on the standards being reached by the pupils. In less successful lessons, teachers' subject knowledge is not so secure and their pupil management strategies are not fully effective.
68. The national initiative to ensure that pupils receive at least two hours a week of high quality activity through physical education, school sports and club links (PESSCL) is being broadly met. Extra-curricular clubs include football, netball and table tennis, and competitive matches take place against other schools. Physical education has been a whole school developmental priority in the recent past and this is already impacting well on provision and on the confidence of most staff. Resources are good and the subject is soundly co-ordinated. Assessment strategies are under developed and – apart from music being played in dance lessons – there

is no evidence of information and communication technology being used to support the physical education curriculum.

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

*This curriculum area was sampled.*

69. The school has a high regard for pupils' personal, social and health education and this permeates all areas of school life. A range of aspects were covered in lessons observed during the inspection. Year 1 pupils, for example, explored ways in which they could take care of their environment, while Year 2 pupils looked at both the need to take responsibility for others and their own right to be safe. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils discussed the concept of parliamentary democracy and the voting system. The teacher used good strategies to maintain the pupils' interest and develop their awareness. For instance, they were provided with two election manifestos and then put into pairs to 'brainstorm' which was the more realistic. Higher attaining pupils were given the task of writing their own simple manifestos. The teacher used well formed questions to establish pupils' understanding and to challenge them, while the pupils, themselves, were given good opportunities to share their views with the rest of the class. Teaching, learning and the attitudes displayed by the pupils were all good. In addition to regularly timetabled lessons, aspects of personal, social and health education and citizenship are regularly covered in assemblies and in religious education and science lessons.

## 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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
<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	2
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	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).*