

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GEORGE STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hemel Hempstead

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117106

Headteacher: Mr. B. Mellor

Lead inspector: Timothy Gill

Dates of inspection: 7 – 10 June 2004

Inspection number: 256201

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	228
School address:	George Street Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire
Postcode:	HP2 5HJ
Telephone number:	01442 255638
Fax number:	01442 262720
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Dave Macdougall

Date of previous inspection: 25 May 2002

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

George Street Primary School is about the same size as most other primary schools with 121 boys and 107 girls, aged 3 –11. Currently, about 19 per cent of pupils are in receipt of free school meals and this is similar to most other schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is about the same as is usually found, but there is considerable variability between year groups in the number of pupils with learning difficulties. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below the national figure. There are four pupils for whom English is an additional language and the proportion of pupils from ethnic groups is low. Movement of pupils in and out of the school, other than at the normal time of admission, is in line with the national trend. The socio-economic circumstances of the school are not as favourable as elsewhere. Children's attainment on entry varies from year to year but it is below average in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development.



## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21398	Mr. T. R. Gill	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Physical education
14745	Mr. J. Lovell	Lay inspector	
23413	Mr. R. Allen	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History Religious education
20230	Mrs. J. Clayphan	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Personal, social and health education and citizenship

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA  
Herringston Barn  
Herringston  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>10</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>14</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>35</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school** that has the capacity to get even better. It no longer has serious weaknesses. The pupils' achievement is good because of the good, challenging teaching. Leadership and management are good. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the headteacher, the Foundation Stage and of the management team is very good.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good.
- The co-ordination of and the provision for special educational needs (SEN) are very good.
- Although the quality of teaching is consistently good, target setting is not precise enough, some targets are too long-term and marking needs improving.
- The very good enrichment of the curriculum promotes pupils' good attitudes to learning.
- The good support provided by teaching assistants needs to be used better at the start of lessons.
- The pupils' good attitudes, good behaviour and good relationships are a result of the high expectations of the staff.

The school has improved well since the last inspection. Standards in science, information and communication technology (ICT), art and design and religious education (RE) have improved by the end of Year 2, and by the end of Year 6 standards are better in art and design and RE. There has been a very good improvement in curricular provision across the school and in assessment in the Foundation Stage. The re-organisation of the Foundation Stage has been very successful. Assessment is now satisfactory in Years 1-6, and an appropriate start has been made to target setting. There has been a good improvement in the skills of staff in teaching ICT. Time devoted to subjects is now appropriate and closely monitored. The experiences the children receive in the Foundation Stage are carefully planned to meet their needs and ensure that skills are built upon in a systematic way. There has been a very good improvement in leadership and management. The co-ordinators are playing an increasingly effective role in bringing about improvements in their subjects and raising achievement.

### 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	B	C	A
mathematics	D	C	D	B
science	D	C	C	A

*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.*

**The pupils' achievement is good.** The attainment of children entering the Foundation Stage varies considerably from year to year but is generally below average in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. The children are now well prepared for the start of Year 1, reaching all the expected goals except in reading, despite the good teaching. Standards in Year 2 are broadly typical for pupils of that age, while standards in Year 6, where a third of the current pupils had well below average attainment on entry, are below average in English, mathematics and science, average in ICT and RE and above average in art and design. This represents good achievement for Year 6 pupils, in spite of their standards not matching those of the 2003 year group in the table above. In Years 3-4, standards are broadly average overall, but above average in art and design. In Year 5, a year group with few pupils with SEN, standards are above average. The achievement of pupils with SEN and the gifted and talented is good. **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral and social and cultural development, are good.** The pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards their work are good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.** Teaching is **good** throughout the school; as a result the pupils' learning is good and they make good progress. In the nursery, as a result of the good assessment information, the work is consistently well matched to the pupils' learning needs. In the rest of the school, pupils' targets are not so well matched to individuals' needs and they are too long-term. Marking seldom focuses on what needs to be done to improve or acknowledges that targets have been met. The good skills of the teaching assistants are rarely exploited in the introductory work to lessons. A broad range of curricular opportunities meet pupils' needs and they make good progress. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities covering sports and the arts that are well supported. Enrichment of the curriculum is very good and supports pupils' personal and social development as well as widening their experiences. The pupils are well cared for and supported and this is reflected in the confidence they show in adults and the very good relationships they make.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher's firm, decisive leadership is evident in the good way the school has improved since the last inspection. He has a very clear understanding of what needs to be done and how to do it and has shared and explained his vision for the school very effectively and clearly. He has built up good, committed teams who share that vision, are very well motivated and committed to doing the best they can for all pupils, whatever their abilities. As a result of his good management, the school has become a place where good learning occurs. The leadership of the management team is very good and offers very good support to the headteacher and other staff in developing the teaching and learning. The effectiveness of the governing body has improved and is now good. The governors offer the headteacher good support based on a very good understanding of what needs doing in the short and longer term to raise standards further and sustain that improvement. They are involved and active partners in all aspects of school life. All statutory requirements are fully met.

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

The parents have a favourable view of the school and very positive views of some aspects of the school's provision. The parents of pupils with SEN appreciate the regular information they

receive about their children's progress. The pupils generally enjoy being at school and feel confident to seek the support and guidance of staff when they have concerns about their work, or a personal problem, or when they want to share news of something special.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Refine target setting and improve marking.
- Make better use of the teaching assistants' skills throughout the whole lesson.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement is good for all pupils as result of the consistently good teaching and the good action that has been taken over the last two years. The children are likely, by the end of reception, to reach the goals they are expected to in creative development and physical development, exceed the goals in personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development, and reach most of the goals in communication, language and literacy, with the exception of reading. Standards in work seen were average in English, mathematics and science in Year 2 and below average in Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good because the children are well taught.
- Standards are improving in Years 1 to 6.
- Standards in experimentation and investigational science are above average.
- Pupils with SEN achieve well.

#### Commentary

1. The attainment of children entering the Foundation Stage varies considerably from year to year but is generally below average in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. The children achieve well and are now well prepared for the start of Year 1, though standards are below what is expected in reading despite good teaching.
2. In the table below, which shows the school's results in the Year 2 national tests for 2003, where a significant proportion of the boys had very low attainment on entry to Year 1, the standards were well below average in writing and mathematics and average in reading when compared to both all schools nationally and similar schools – that is, schools with a similar number of pupils entitled to free school meals. These pupils, now in Year 3, have made good progress and their standards are now average. Inspection evidence and the school's monitoring data show that standards in Year 2 are now average in reading, writing, mathematics, science, ICT and RE, and above average in art and design.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.8 (15.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.6 (13.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.1 (15.5)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. In the table below, which is the school's results in the Year 6 national tests for 2003, the standards were average in English and science, and below average in mathematics when compared to all schools nationally and similar schools. When compared to schools whose

pupils scored similarly at the end of Year 2, results were well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics, indicating the good impact the school's action to improve attainment is having. In that year group, the boys did better than the girls in the school and boys nationally. Inspection evidence and the school's monitoring data indicate that in the current Year 6, where a third of the pupils had low attainment on entry, standards are below average in English, mathematics and science, average in ICT and RE and above average in art and design. In Years 3-4, standards are broadly typical and above average in art and design. In Year 5, standards are above average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.6 (27.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.7 (26.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.1 (28.3)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. Across the school, standards in experimentation and investigational science are consistently above average. The pupils' achievement and progress are good because of the systematically developed skills they can draw on.
5. As a result of the very well directed additional help which they receive, the supportive nature of the school community, and their own very good motivation, pupils with SEN make very good progress in meeting their objectives and achieve well.

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

The pupils' good attitudes, behaviour, and values and very good relationships are strengths of the school and contribute well to their learning. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. The pupils' personal development is good. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory and their punctuality is good.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good and sometimes very good attitudes towards learning and the very good range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school.
- Almost all parents report that their children like school.
- The good role models provided by staff and teachers' very high expectations enable the pupils to have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and behave well.
- Good relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff help to promote pupils' good attitudes and personal development.
- Procedures to monitor and promote attendance are good.

**Commentary**

6. The positive picture found at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good and sometimes very good. Parents are positive about the encouragement and support which all staff provide to encourage pupils to become mature and independent. The significant majority of pupils are well

behaved, polite and courteous, and respond well to the supportive and inclusive ethos of the school and, although there are a few pupils who behave in a silly or immature manner, staff work effectively to consistently reinforce very high expectations and promote good behaviour. Pupils with SEN also demonstrate positive attitudes to the school and their work. They are keen to learn and behave very well in lessons. It is evident that they feel valued by their teachers, learning support assistants, and other pupils.

7. An understanding of what is right and wrong is promoted consistently throughout the school. All pupils are very aware of the high expectations of staff and the school rules, which promote an orderly and caring community. Parents are supportive of the school and pleased with the values the school promotes and fairness with which children are treated. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally good and teachers effectively manage incidents of inappropriate behaviour although pupils have some concerns that the behaviour of a very small minority can disrupt their learning. Most pupils work well in groups and independently. They co-operate well and, as they move through the school, they increasingly become able to collaborate, sharing and valuing each other's ideas, and concentrating well on activities, particularly when the objectives are clear and the task is challenging.
8. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection and teachers follow up any concerns, which are often about relationship breakdowns, quickly and effectively although the pupils feel that midday assistants are less effective in identifying and resolving issues. The school has recognised the need to improve support at midday and has planned a number of initiatives including training and the provision of equipment. Already, the 'buddy' system, which is run by pupils, is proving very effective in providing pupils with a sense of responsibility towards each other and in overcoming the isolation which some pupils experience.
9. The table below shows the number of exclusions in 2003. Exclusion was used appropriately.

***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	192	4	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
Parent/pupil preferred not to say	14	5	0
Information not obtained	10	0	0

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

10. Pupils' relationships make a good contribution to their learning. They are supportive of each other and their teachers. The pupils are happy and secure, and enjoy school life in an atmosphere where all are valued. They respond well to the help provided, and enjoy the praise that is often given. Pupils of all ages mix well at playtime and lunchtime.
  
11. Provision for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good with some very strong features. Pupils are provided with a good range of activities that promote their personal development well. There are opportunities, throughout the school, for pupils to enhance their social development and develop an understanding of the responsibilities of living in a community, through undertaking responsibility within the classroom, around the school, in the playground, participating in the 'Pupils' Forum' and through supporting each other in lessons and at play. A very good example of the latter is the 'buddy' system. In addition, a range of extra-curricular activities and visits, including residential trips for older pupils, enhances the pupils' independence and social development. There is a very good level of participation in these activities. Pupils develop a very good understanding of the needs of others through visiting speakers and activities to support a range of charities. Pupils are encouraged, through all school activities, to be honest, trustworthy, and courteous, respecting other people's feelings, values and beliefs. Pupils develop a good understanding of western culture in subjects such as history, art, music, and English. A pupil in Year 5 explained that RE helps them to 'understand that we should be fair to everybody and to overcome racism and understand other cultures.' In one RE lesson pupils in Year 6 lit a candle and reflected on creation and man's abuse of the environment. An appreciation of spirituality is enhanced by wonder and awe at the diversity of natural environments to be found throughout the world and how those environments and climactic differences affect our daily lives and needs.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	4.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.2
National data	0.4

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

12. Attendance in the 2002/3 academic year was broadly in line with the national average, though levels of unauthorised absence were well above the national average. This is a consequence of the rigour with which the school consider requests to authorise absences. Most authorised absences arise through sickness or medical visits, although a small number of parents formally seek the headteacher's approval to withdraw their children from school to participate in annual family holidays during term time and this practice is monitored well. The significant majority of parents ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive punctually.
  
13. Procedures to monitor and promote attendance are good and supported well by the education welfare officer. Parents who fail to notify the school in the event of an absence are contacted on the first day and there are good procedures to follow up absence letters. Good attendance certificates and an attendance cup support these procedures.

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

The quality of education this school provides for its pupils is good. The pupils achieve well because of the good standard of teaching and the good support they receive. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Links with the community are good and a wide range of visits and visitors provide good enhancement and enrichment of the curriculum and support pupils' personal and social development as well as widening their experiences. The pupils are well cared for and supported and this is reflected in the confidence they show in adults, the very good relationships and the good progress they make.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good. There are a number of very good features in the teaching of most lessons. Assessment is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Assessment is good in the Foundation Stage.
- The management and organisation of lessons are good.
- Teaching is consistently good and often very good in Year 5.
- Target setting and marking need improving.
- Provision for pupils with SEN is very good.
- The good contribution of the learning support assistants is not made the most of in many lessons.

## Commentary

14. Teaching in the nursery and reception class is consistently good and on occasions very good. There is a good balance between adult-led activities and activities selected by the children. The children's learning is good because they have a wide range of interesting and related experiences, both inside and outside. Planning is detailed and ensures that the children's learning needs are well catered for. Assessment is good; detailed records are kept this helps to match challenging work for all the children in systematic, small steps to ensure that their learning is good.
15. Classrooms, across the school, are well organised and managed. There are well-established routines that are understood and followed by the pupils which help effective learning to occur. Relationships between the staff and pupils are very good and the mutual respect that is shown helps to build an atmosphere conducive to good learning. High expectations, the encouragement and engagement of the pupils and the insistence on high standards of behaviour are features of all the good lessons and these ensure that a good working atmosphere is sustained throughout those lessons, even in classes where behaviour can be challenging, as in Year 6. What the pupils are to learn is usually displayed and this helps to ensure there is appropriate consistency in pupils' learning day by day. It focuses their attention, particularly when the learning objectives and key words on the board are explained and referred to during the rest of the lesson. Teaching is consistently good in mathematics. In the best teaching, the teaching assistants are managed well and play a valuable and full role throughout the lesson in supporting small groups of pupils and individuals, particularly in English, mathematics and science. However, this good practice is not common and their useful deployment during the whole lesson needs improving and to become an integral part of lesson planning so that the learning of the pupils they support can be maximised. In the one lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory, there was a lack of pace and challenge as the work was not well matched to the pupils' previous learning.
16. In Year 5, the pupils' learning was good and often very good. The teaching was sharp and very focused. A very good pace was maintained throughout the lessons and all the pupils were very well motivated, reflecting the enthusiasm of the teacher. Questions were used very well to develop the pupils' understanding. This was the case in a geography lesson on the consequence of traffic reduction in the old part of the local town. As a result, the pupils were developing an increasingly sophisticated appreciation of the advantages of less traffic against the impact this might have on the viability of certain shops. For example, the teacher's very skilful questioning enabled the pupils to see that free all-day parking could exclude the occasional shoppers if other workers in the town took up the parking spaces all day. The discussion that followed made the pupils realise that solutions are not as straight forward as they first seem.
17. Assessment is satisfactory. However, targets are not sufficiently individual and detailed, and they are too long term to be useful. Frequently, the pupils cannot recall their targets. Marking is carried out regularly in all subjects but it seldom focuses on what the pupils need to do to improve or acknowledges that their target has been met. The school has been working on target setting and marking, and there are examples of good practice, but much remains to be done.

18. Pupils with SEN are fully integrated into all lessons and other activities. Well-written individual education plans for pupils with SEN provide suitable steps towards achievable targets. The teachers take good account of these specific needs in the work that they provide, ensuring that while it is challenging, it is appropriate. Learning support assistants are very aware of the needs of individuals, and they work very well to support pupils when the need arises. However, opportunities to use the valuable resource which they provide while the teacher is occupying the attention of the whole class are often missed.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8 (24%)	20 (61%)	4 (12%)	1 (3%)	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 provides a good range of learning opportunities for pupils in all age groups. There are also good opportunities for enrichment. The accommodation and resources are good.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision for pupils with SEN is very good.
- Planning is good, and ensures an appropriate balance between subjects.
- The skills of the learning support assistants are not fully exploited.
- Equality of opportunity and access to the school's educational provision are very good.

**Commentary**

19. The report from the last inspection found that the quality and range of the curriculum were unsatisfactory. While all the required subjects were being taught, there were significant weaknesses in the overall planning, progression and allocation of time in several subjects. Other more detailed weaknesses were described. Since that time, the school has worked very effectively to reverse that situation, producing a very good improvement.
20. In the nursery and reception classes the curriculum is good. Activities are fun and the children are keen to learn. Good use is made of the outside area to enhance the children's learning by providing them with a good range of learning opportunities.
21. The broad range of subjects in the National Curriculum is taught in Years 1 to 6. Strong planning and monitoring ensure there is good balance between subjects, with appropriate time allocations. Learning programmes are well organised and the effective team of subject co-ordinators have good understanding of the school's needs and priorities. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well established, and many of the beneficial aspects of the strategies have been adapted and used across the curriculum. Teachers make good links between subjects, although it is acknowledged that this could

go further. In their planning, teachers recognise the different levels of attainment in their classes. The curriculum for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.

22. The support for pupils with SEN is guided by their individual education plans, which are of very high quality, and ensure that all have access to an appropriate curriculum. These plans not only describe problems and set targets, but are highly effective working documents, providing detailed stratagems and advice on how difficulties may be tackled. Learning support assistants, particularly those who for all or some of their time are attached to particular pupils, know individual needs well and meet them effectively. However, while the class teacher is occupying the attention of the whole class, they may do little beyond sitting with the children.
23. The curriculum is enriched in a number of ways, especially for older pupils. Very good use is made of the local environment in visits to the local high street, for example, and visits to more distant places of interest, like the Imperial War Museum or the Ashmolean Museum. Plans are currently in hand for a Year 6 residential visit to the Isle of Wight. The visitors to the school provide a rich variety of educational experience: the school nurse, drama and musical groups, and the willing volunteers who come regularly to hear pupils read. Special occasions involving the pupils are a strong, popular and frequent feature of the school's life: plays, concerts and singing (as at Christmas and Harvest) in a sheltered housing community, a supermarket, and the local church. Lastly, every day there are regular clubs and activities which vary according to the season - for example, clubs for Maths, Writing, Dance, Photography, and sessions including a variety of activities from which pupils can choose. All of these examples are evidence that the school maintains a very lively educational existence beyond the strict limits of the prescribed curriculum.
24. Resources are of good quality and are well organised. Teachers make good use of them to support pupils' learning. The school is a bright, cheerful and welcoming place in which pupils can achieve well. Wall displays are lively and informative – and provide a further support to learning.

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

The overall care, guidance and support for pupils is good. Induction procedures are satisfactory. The standards identified at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and improved in several areas such as health and safety and the quality of guidance. The involvement of pupils in the life and work of the school is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very good relationships with teachers and support staff, giving them confidence to seek advice and support or to share their concerns and news.
- Midday assistants are not always sufficiently responsive to individual pupils' needs.
- Arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of pupils are good.
- The school has established sound procedures for seeking pupils' views, but pupils do not always recognise that these are valued.

### **Commentary**

25. The very good and trusting relationships between pupils and staff give all pupils the confidence to seek support and guidance when they have concerns about their work, or a

personal problem, or when they want to share news of something special. This is reflected in the very positive views, expressed by pupils, of teaching and support staff working in the school, their willingness to listen and their fairness. Pupils are less confident that they can turn to midday staff for support but this weakness has been identified by the school and is being addressed.

26. Teachers and learning support staff monitor pupils' personal and academic development well and this shows a good improvement since the last inspection.
27. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and well being of pupils have improved since the last inspection. First aid provision is satisfactory and sufficient staff are qualified to provide assistance in the event of an emergency. Equipment is regularly checked and tested and emergency evacuations practised. The school completes appropriate risk assessments for visits and has a developing portfolio of risk assessments to ensure the safety of pupils, staff and users of the site. Safe practice is promoted in lessons.
28. Child protection procedures, based on those of the Local Area Protection Committee, meet requirements. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and has been appropriately trained. Teaching staff and some governors have undertaken relevant training and all adults helping in school are subject to appropriate police checks. The school exercises its responsibilities with vigilance and care.
29. The school places great importance on hearing the pupils' views with courtesy. This is seen regularly in and out of classrooms and through formal structures such as the 'Pupils' Voice' forum, with representatives from Years 1 to 6. This forum seeks pupils' views on issues affecting the whole school and on making improvements for the benefit of the whole school community. Pupils have discussed issues such as midday play arrangements and had their views sought on lessons. Within classes they are involved, although none can recollect their contribution, in establishing a code of conduct within each class. This code is prominently displayed in classrooms. Pupils do not get sufficient feedback on the consideration of their ideas and, as a consequence, do not feel that their views are always valued.

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

The partnership between school and home and other schools is satisfactory. Links with the community are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have favourable views about the school.
- The school has very good procedures for seeking and taking account of parents' views but the outcome of such consultations is not always made sufficiently clear to parents.
- The quality of information provided to parents is inconsistent.
- The parent teacher association (PTA) provides good support for the work of the school.
- Links with the community enrich the curriculum and benefit pupils' social development.

### **Commentary**

30. The parents are pleased with the education which the school provides and the values which it promotes. They are very positive about some aspects of the school's provision. A

minority of parents expressed some concerns about bullying and pupils' behaviour. Inspectors support the positive views of parents and judge that staff have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage behaviour well to achieve overall good standards of behaviour, effectively addressing any problems.

31. The school has very good arrangements to seek parents' views on a wide range of issues. Parents are regularly surveyed on a wide range of issues and at a recent 'wine and whinge' meeting a valuable parental suggestion regarding road safety was successfully followed up and implemented. Parents' views are valued and used well to contribute to the school improvement planning process. However, the quality of feedback to parents is often inadequate, lacking any formal structure.
32. The school normally manages to resolve any concerns of parents informally. However, in the event that a parent should wish to make a formal complaint, there is an appropriate complaints procedure.
33. The school is very accessible to parents. The three consultation evenings on pupils' progress are very well supported by parents. The annual reports are satisfactory overall but they do not always make it clear to parents what their child has to do to improve. Parents are given regular information about what their children are learning but this again varies from class to class and sometimes uses educational jargon, which is not readily understood by all parents. Whilst there are meetings in the Foundation Stage to explain to parents what their children have to do, this practice is not followed in the rest of the school. The school and governors are very aware of the need to improve this and have appropriate plans to deal with this. The majority of parents support their children well at home by sharing books with them and helping them with their homework. A small number help regularly in school.
34. The school works hard to maintain contact with parents and carers of pupils with SEN, and to involve them in what it tries to do to meet pupils' needs. Particularly, they are invited to participate in the regular and frequent reviews of the children's progress towards the targets set in their individual educational plans. The school works closely with outside agencies, with whom there are well established relationships, seeking advice and the extension of provision where it is available.
35. The PTA successfully raises money to support the work of the school and, having recently paid for a pergola, which is very much appreciated by pupils, is now raising funds to buy some staging. Besides a summer fete, table top sales and quiz nights, they organise events, such as a rounders competition and an Easter egg competition, to bring together the wider community of the school and provide good opportunities for pupils' personal and social development. The work of the PTA is appreciated by staff and pupils and benefits the pupils well.
36. The school uses the local area well, and visitors from a range of charities help pupils to develop a sense of social responsibility. Visitors such as a group of African dancers, a Buddhist talking about making mandalas, and work with Landmark East are examples of how the community contributes well to raising pupils' awareness of our diverse culture. The community adds a richness to the curriculum and helps to enthuse pupils.
37. Links with other schools are satisfactory. Year 6 and Year 7 teachers and SEN co-ordinators meet to discuss those pupils transferring to the next stage of their education.

Links with the local specialist sports college give the school access to facilities and involvement in competitions, which enhances the opportunities available to pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The effectiveness of the governing body has improved and is now good. Useful structures are now in place to give subject leaders a greater stake in improving their subjects and the quality of the pupils' learning. All the issues raised in the previous report have been dealt with. The improvement in leadership and management has been very good and the school has the potential to further improve.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a very good strategic view and his motivation of staff is very good.
- The leadership of the management team is very good.
- Across the school, there is a shared commitment to raising standards.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The procedures for the regular monitoring and evaluation of work and acting on the information are very good.
- Co-ordinators now offer good leadership and are becoming increasingly effective.
- Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage and SEN are very good.

### **Commentary**

38. The headteacher has a very clear understanding of what needs to be done and how to do it and has shared and explained his vision for the school very effectively and clearly. He has built up good, committed teams who share that vision, are very well motivated and committed to doing the best they can for all pupils, whatever their abilities. As a result, this is a very inclusive school and the school works hard to meet the needs of all its pupils. All pupils are equally valued and their achievements celebrated whatever their ability, helping to build their confidence and aid their learning. Under the headteacher's good management, the school has now become a place where good learning takes place. The leadership of the management team is very good and offers very good support to the headteacher and other staff in developing the teaching and learning that goes on in the school.
39. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. The Foundation Stage leader is knowledgeable and her innovative leadership of teaching and the curriculum is evident in the good progress the children make while in the nursery. Links with the rest of the school are now good and ensure a smooth transition from the Foundation Stage to Year 1 with the minimum disruption to the children's learning.
40. The school's provision for pupils with SEN is very well led. The co-ordinator places the highest priority upon the progress and full integration of these pupils, so that the support for them is very good. Her leadership is firm, well organised and collaborative, involving teachers, learning support assistants and parents and carers. Very well drafted and frequently reviewed individual education plans provide very good direction for teaching. The provision for pupils with SEN is a strength of the school.

41. The monitoring of teaching and learning is good and has resulted in good professional development being well targeted to meet the needs of staff and the pupils' learning. Analysis of performance data is now very good and the information used effectively to improve performance.
42. Since the last inspection the leadership and management provided by co-ordinators have improved significantly. The co-ordinators are playing an increasingly effective role in bringing about improvements in their subjects and raising achievement.
43. The governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. The Chair of Governors has a good understanding of the school's needs and the governors, as a whole, are offering the headteacher good support based on a very good understanding of what needs doing in the short and longer term to raise standards further and sustain that improvement. They are involved and active partners in all aspects of school life and have a good cross-section of talent to draw on. The governors are well informed. They have a good understanding of the performance of the school compared to other schools nationally and have a very good appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of their school. Some governors are also regular helpers in the school and this helps to inform the decisions they make. Financial management is prudent. The school provides good value for money.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	641,248
Total expenditure	670,496
Expenditure per pupil	2,953

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	35,104
Balance carried forward to the next	5,856

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

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

44. Provision is good for children in the Foundation Stage. Their achievement is good. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection. Children are admitted to the nursery in September and January and spend three terms there before going into the reception class. Children's attainment on entry varies from year to year but overall it is below average in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development.
45. The provision is led and managed very well with the result that standards are starting to rise. Teaching and learning are good in reception and good with some very good features in the nursery. Activities are stimulating and fun so that children want to learn. Children now in reception are achieving at a faster rate in literacy and mathematics than those last year because the teacher's expectations are higher. Teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good. The main strengths of the teaching are very good planning with particularly sharp, appropriate detail in the nursery, and good use of the nursery nurse and learning support assistants in both rooms. All adults have high expectations and use skilled questions well, which stimulate children to extend their thinking and develop their ability to reason. Adults ensure that the needs of all children, including those with SEN, are met well. The shortcomings identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed very well. Children's progress is now monitored in detail, especially in the nursery, and the outside area is now secure, attractive and used very well with a good range of resources. There are good induction arrangements in place which help children to settle happily and everyday arrangements encourage parents and carers to be well involved in children's learning.

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

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

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

- Very good teaching and relationships between adults and children ensure that the children achieve very well by encouraging them to take responsibility for their own actions from a very early age.
- The children have exceeded the early learning goals before the end of their time in reception.

#### **Commentary**

46. Teachers and other staff provide a very secure and happy environment where children are encouraged to take full part in all activities and to be increasingly responsible for aspects of their own learning. There is a good balance between directed and self-chosen tasks and children move purposefully from one to another. They start to co-operate well with each other in the nursery so that by the end of reception they treat each other with high levels of respect and form very good relationships with both adults and other children. In

the reception class the children are becoming increasingly confident,

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers and support staff use language very well to develop children's listening and verbal skills.
- Early reading and writing skills are taught well.

### **Commentary**

47. Many children enter nursery with under-developed speaking skills. Adults speak clearly and work hard during activities using a judicious mixture of questions and simple information which intrigue and challenge children to listen and to start to use language. Children's listening skills are further stimulated by interesting stories and rhymes so that by the end of reception they are accustomed to listening intently and have acquired and are starting to use a wide vocabulary. This was demonstrated when they vied with each other to describe the giant's size in Jack and the Beanstalk! A useful short class session dramatising Jack's adventures revealed that children were often hesitant when speaking to an audience, but that they were prepared to try to use sentences or long phrases.
48. Children in the nursery regularly take books home to share with their families and there is a good selection for them to use during the mornings. Higher attaining children are encouraged to recognise the sounds that words start with and to identify rhyming pairs of objects. By the end of reception most children build simple words by sounding them out, and many use their knowledge of phonics to write a mixture of emergent writing, which only they can understand, and a few recognisable words. Their reading skills are a little below average but they enjoy using books and take them home regularly. Overall, the children are on course to reach the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy by the end of their time in reception, which represents good achievement from their entry into nursery.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good and sometimes very good teaching ensures that children are provided with a wide range of appropriate and interesting activities and achieve very well.

### **Commentary**

49. Very good teaching in the nursery awakens in children an alert interest in numbers. Towards the end of two or three terms many children recognise numbers to 25 and higher attainers start to understand that three and one make four. Adults place great emphasis on correct vocabulary which children begin to understand clearly. Activities which are fun, like estimating how many teddies are needed to fill boxes of different sizes, help children to be aware of the relationship between size and quantity.

50. Good teaching with high expectations in reception continues to build on this firm basis. Children become familiar with numbers up to and over one hundred. Many children use strategies correctly to add two numbers to make totals up to twenty. The majority understand the meaning of 'between' and list numbers between, for example, seven and eleven, demonstrating secure knowledge of order. Estimation became more reasoned during the inspection when children looked at bean pods and adapted their initial estimates of how many beans were likely to be in a pod and then contrasted them with the number of peas in pods. They have a clear idea of simple shapes and understand how to make simple measurements. Virtually all children are achieving very well and are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the end of reception.

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

51. It was not possible to gather enough evidence to make a firm judgement on this wide area. Children in reception showed average computer skills when painting pictures about Jack and the Beanstalk and are aware of the names for and uses of several parts of the computer. Children in both nursery and reception understand the changes that occur in the cycles of an egg becoming a butterfly, and a seed growing into a flowering plant. A bucket and pulley system initiated deep discussions between children in both nursery and reception. Younger children did not understand that they needed to stop pulling in order to lower the bucket, while older children discovered that a full bucket took more effort to raise than an empty one.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good emphasis on teaching fine motor skills has a positive effect on cutting and writing skills.
- Very good access to the outside area encourages the development of physical skills.

### **Commentary**

52. Children enter nursery with poorly developed fine motor control. Both teachers place great importance on providing a short daily session as children come into school with activities that are specifically designed at different levels to improve children's ability to manipulate tools and pencils. Parents and carers are well involved as they help nursery children to find their designated task for the day and explain what it is. Children in nursery showed good control when cutting paper jackets for teddy and using chopsticks to pick up small toys. Their use of other tools was also developing well. In reception, children learned to sharpen charcoal pencils and practised using small tweezers to sort coins. By the end of reception children's fine motor control is average. A physical education session on the school field for reception children revealed that they were confident to move in and use an enormous open space; most had good control of their bodies and used balls with average skill. They really enjoyed a simple game that involved stealing other teams' balls and started to understand some elements of team play! The children are in line to reach the goals they are expected to by the end of reception as a result of the good teaching that

has enabled the children to achieve well.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching provides children with many opportunities to develop creative skills.

### **Commentary**

53. Each day children in both nursery and reception experience a wide range of exciting activities which enable them to use their imagination in a variety of ways. Paint and drawing equipment are always available and there are areas for role play both indoors and outside with different themes. During the inspection there were clothes for pirates and fairies outside which initiated animated drama from reception children. Paintings in the nursery indicated that children had learned the names of adult and baby animals recently. Very well executed pictures in reception of African animals using patterned tissue paper and vertical brush strokes showed that children are developing very good observational skills. The children are on course to reach the goals they are expected to, and some children will exceed them in drawing and painting, by the end of reception. Good teaching enables the children to achieve well.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Teaching is good and often very good, and the pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and achieve well.
- The subject is very well led, and well resourced.
- Pupils' targets are insufficiently individualised.
- The vocabulary and word skills of Year 6 pupils are limited.
- Homework is well used to support reading development.
- Standards of marking are inconsistent, and advice to pupils on what they need to do to improve is often not provided.
- The resource provided by learning support assistants is under-used.

#### **Commentary**

54. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Although standards are variable, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning are now consistently good, and leadership is now very good.
55. In the national attainment tests in 2003, standards at the end of Year 2 in reading were average, and in writing they were below average. At the end of Year 6, standards in English overall were in line with the national average. Inspection findings (applied to the current year groups, for whom test results are awaited) are that standards are average in Year 2, with reading slightly better than writing, and that they are below average in Year 6. The reasons for these apparent anomalies lie in low levels of literacy and speaking skills when pupils enter the school, and in significant differences in attainment from year to year. For example, the current Year 5 is expected to achieve at least average levels in a year's time. As pupils move up the school, they build well upon past attainment and make good progress.
56. In the majority of lessons, the quality of learning is good, and often very good, supporting the good progress made over time. This is a result of pupils' keenness to learn, and their enjoyment of English, and of good or very good teaching. The relationships between pupils, teachers and other adults are very good. Because pupils and their aptitudes and problems are well known, mutual confidence and trust support the best learning. Teachers have a firm, friendly and collaborative approach which is the driving force of the best teaching. The National Literacy Strategy is well understood, and is well adapted and applied to the needs of the school. Planning is very good, and as a result, lessons are well structured and varied, stimulating and holding pupils' interest and attention. Teaching assistants are very effective because they know pupils well and provide those who need it with well-focused support. However, when the teacher is addressing the whole class, the opportunity to involve them by, for example, sharing aspects of the teaching with the teacher or by observing or monitoring, is lost, and a valuable resource is wasted. Marking is of inconsistent quality; comments, if provided at all, are often no more than bland congratulations. There is a limited amount of evaluative analysis, and there are some

suggestions for improvement, but follow-up of these suggestions in subsequent marking is usually absent.

57. In speaking and listening, standards are at least average in all age groups. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 think carefully about what they have to say, and they try hard to find the right word, although their vocabulary is limited as few pupils are able to speak well when they start their formal education. Pupils of all ages are respectful listeners. They wait their turns, and conversations in pairs and groups are highly productive in promoting a good quality of learning. Among older pupils, these discussions show judgement and maturity though, again, the right word often does not come easily. They are less confident when making formal presentations, and they are not provided with enough opportunities to practise these skills.
58. In reading, standards are in line with national averages in Years 2 and 6. In Year 2, pupils were discussing the work of Roald Dahl with obvious enjoyment, and with good knowledge of a range of texts. They understand how books work, and many have a good perception of the author's intention and how he achieves his effects. Pupils throughout the school read aloud with understanding, but their use of expression when reading aloud is not strong. This is increasingly the case with older pupils, and reading aloud in Year 6 is mostly accurate, but it is often dull and unrelieved. The majority of pupils make good use of the variety of well-chosen and entertaining books which the school provides. The policy of ensuring that each pupil takes a book home daily and the use of reading records combine to support good achievement.
59. In writing, standards at the end of Year 2 are well supported by pupils' reading, and a selection of stories using elements of Roald Dahl's stories shows that pupils understand the importance of choosing words carefully to attain a desired effect, and that they can produce well-sequenced stories. By the end of Year 6, pupils of average or above average levels of attainment can vary the lengths and grammatical structure of their sentences to add interest to their writing. Word handling skills, however, bring the standard down to below average. Pupils do not have the range and variety of words which might be expected of children of their age, and, as a result, mis-spelling and incorrect use are frequent, and expression is immature.
60. Target setting is being developed, but targets when they are set (and pupils remember them), are not sufficiently individual and detailed, and they are too long-term to be useful.
61. English is very well led by a co-ordinator who has a strong and effective view of the importance of literacy and a good vision of the priorities for the subject. Resources are good and are well used.

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

62. In the teaching of other subjects than English, literacy skills are supported satisfactorily through the use of key words and subject-specific language. However, there is not a consistent approach to the correction of errors of English in written work, and the marking of the use of language across the curriculum is often neglected. The school library contains a good collection of fiction and non-fiction, and it successfully supplements the good classroom libraries. The majority of parents support the home-school reading scheme, and it has a strong and beneficial effect upon the progress which pupils make in literacy.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning were at least good in every lesson observed and there was very good teaching and learning in Year 5.
- Good leadership and management are starting to drive the subject forward.
- There is good emphasis on developing pupils' thinking and reasoning skills.
- Targets for individuals or groups are not yet used systematically, and marking is mediocre in quality.
- Learning support assistants are not always used effectively during the entire lesson.

## Commentary

63. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils now in Year 2 attain at broadly average levels. Pupils in Year 1 also work at average levels with indications that higher attaining pupils are starting to work above average in some areas. Pupils in Year 6 attained below average in national tests at the end of Year 2, and they continue to perform below the national average, partly because this group contains a large number of lower attaining pupils and partly because they have received teaching of variable quality in the past. Year 5 contains a large number of higher attaining pupils who are working above the level expected for their age.
64. Pupils' achievement is improving as a result of better quality teaching and is becoming good as standards in several classes start to rise. Pupils with SEN are well supported and achieve as well as their classmates.
65. Teaching and learning are good for several reasons. Teachers plan clearly, and during the inspection they ensured that pupils had tasks that matched their abilities. This enabled pupils to understand and to work confidently. Very high expectations of good behaviour and clear explanations of what pupils are going to learn ensure that everyone pays attention and knows the direction of the session. Teachers are highly aware that many pupils find it hard to think and to apply their knowledge in different situations and they place good emphasis on this area of learning. Effective mental sessions, usually linked to the main topic, help pupils to become alert and to think quickly and accurately. Teachers use questions well, which also encourage pupils to develop their thinking skills. The snappy use of talking partners ensures that all pupils have a chance to discuss and extend their understanding. The final parts of lessons are used well to check pupils' understanding. Some teachers extend this to include a heightening of pupils' awareness of what they have achieved, and also to give a taster of what will be tackled next. Where teaching is very good, very high expectations and the very effective use of adult help enable different groups of pupils to work hard at the absolute limit of their understanding. Areas that need strengthening include the regular use of targets in every room to sharpen pupils' awareness of what they need to do to improve further, and marking to include more information on what pupils should aim for next. Learning support assistants are well briefed and do a valuable and effective job during the time that pupils work at tasks, but in some rooms they do little while the teacher talks to the whole class.
66. The co-ordinator has been in post for less than a year, but her leadership and management are becoming increasingly good and effective. She has a clear overview of the subject, has monitored teaching in most classes, seen planning and sampled pupils' work, and knows how she wants the subject to develop. Assessment is satisfactory, but not good, because at present no analysis is being made of test results to check for any regular areas that need strengthening. Overall there has been good improvement since the last inspection.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Progress has been made in developing numeracy across the curriculum since the last inspection and it is now satisfactory. It is used in science in the form of graphs to record data, in geography to support map work about co-ordinates, and in history through time lines to heighten pupils' awareness of chronology. However, it is sometimes incidental and not planned to link with work in mathematics lessons.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and almost all the pupils make good progress because of the good teaching they receive.
- The development of investigational skills is very good.
- Resources are good.
- Marking is variable.
- Leadership and the management of science are very good.

## Commentary

68. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Attainment in the work seen was average at the end of Year 2, and was almost average at the end of Year 6, where a high proportion of the pupils have SEN. This represents good achievement because the pupils entered Year 1 with below average attainment. This good achievement is because of the consistently good, very challenging teaching that ensures nearly all the pupils make good progress. The pupils with SEN achieve equally well because of the good teaching and support they receive that ensures they are fully involved in their work and able to complete it successfully.
69. Teaching and learning are good. In all lessons, very high standards of behaviour are insisted upon and this helps to create an atmosphere in which good learning can thrive. The relationships between pupils, teachers and other adults are very good; this aids the pupils' confidence and further promotes their learning. There is a good insistence that the correct scientific terms are used and the pupils mostly do this confidently. Across the school, a high proportion of the lesson time is devoted to investigation and experimentation, which the pupils do with enthusiasm. In a Year 6 lesson, the pupils demonstrated their very good skills when they discussed the limitations of the data they had collected on the growth of dandelions; suggesting factors that could have influenced the results such as variety of grass and the amount of water being restricted because of other large plants nearby. The good range and ample supplies of equipment that they have to use when experimenting enhance the pupils' learning, as, for example, when pupils in Year 2 had plenty of good quality ramps to find the relationship between the height of the ramp and the distance the toy cars travelled. Assessment is good. It is used effectively to plan work. It enables the more able pupils to be identified and given suitably challenging work to ensure that their progress is good and that they achieve well. Marking is done regularly but in some books insufficient reference is made to the scientific content of the work and what the pupils need to do to improve.
70. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and offers very good support to colleagues. He has a very good understanding of what is needed to take the subject forward. Working with good support from the local education authority, he has very carefully monitored standards and ensured good action has been taken to remedy the identified weaknesses. As a result, the school is well placed to improve standards further.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

71. It was not possible to observe teaching in Year 6, and therefore no overall judgement can be made about provision. However, the scheme of work is comprehensive, assessment is good, and samples of work indicate that pupils attain at average levels. This represents

good improvement since the last inspection when there were several areas of weakness.

72. Pupils in Year 2 have average facility when using computers. They create pictures, word process and find information with increasing independence. Portfolio evidence indicates that they control a floor turtle effectively by programming clear commands. Pupils in Year 6 have used Robolab equipment to make fairground models. They have worked at average levels in exploring the effect of changing data on spreadsheets, and making predictions and using spreadsheets to test them. Their multi-media work based on a history topic also indicates broadly average attainment.
73. Three lessons were observed. Teaching in one was good and the teacher used strategies which maintained pupils' interest and ensured that all pupils were involved in learning despite the restricted space for the whole class. In the other two lessons, one teacher had satisfactory expectations of pupils' behaviour and interest, and in the other there was limited challenge.
74. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and is responsible for the recent improvements. She is aware of standards throughout the school by observing several lessons and seeing samples of pupils' work. Resources are satisfactory. There was little evidence during the inspection that classroom computers are used regularly.

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

75. Through use of the computer suite the pupils are able to widen their knowledge and understanding in other subjects across the curriculum satisfactorily. The work is planned so that the tasks in other subjects are carefully linked to the development and practising of ICT skills. For example, the pupils in Year 2 used a web site to find out information about famous people. In science, the Internet is used to research topics. Word processing is used effectively to improve the presentation of work in many subjects.

### **HUMANITIES**

*Religious education was inspected in full and is reported in detail below. Geography and history were sampled.*

76. In **geography**, teachers' planning and recently completed work show that coverage of the curriculum is good and that standards are average. Teaching is well supported by the range of good quality displays around the school. There is a good range of resources, such as informative maps and pictures of two alternative localities, in southwest England and in India. In a very good lesson the pupils conducted a survey in the old town of the priorities for traffic management. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and a clear vision for the development of the subject. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection.
77. In **history**, good coverage of the National Curriculum recommendations is built into the planning of lessons for each year. Displays include characters from the past, incidents like the Great Fire of London, and cultures like that of the ancient Egyptians. These displays are very comprehensive and clearly the result of some very interesting learning. Historical work is well supported by visits to such places as the Ashmolean Museum and the Imperial War Museum. From an examination of samples of work it is clear that pupils generally attain average standards. The co-ordinator demonstrates good subject

knowledge and a clear and relevant vision of developmental priorities. Resources are good and are used well, providing a vivid and lively dimension to the quality of learning. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection.

## Religious education

The provision for religious education is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, particularly in the handling of sensitive topics, is good.
- The Locally Agreed Syllabus is used well.
- Marking is not sufficiently focused upon advising pupils about how they can improve.

## Commentary

78. There has been a substantial improvement since the last inspection, when standards were found to be unsatisfactory. The subject was unsatisfactorily managed, and no monitoring was taking place. Management is now good, and standards throughout the school are broadly in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The co-ordinator now monitors planning in all year groups.
79. Achievement is good. Pupils throughout the school have a sensitive understanding of the importance of religion in people's lives, and they accumulate a good range of knowledge about features of a number of world religions. With a major and recurring focus upon Christianity, they follow a well-structured course from year to year which is based upon advice from the local education authority. As a result, pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Hinduism. They also show a maturity of approach to moral problems, like the choices between right and wrong, and the observance of rules of life.
80. Teachers engage pupils in the consideration of sensitive topics in a non-directive and collaborative way. Formal assessment procedures have recently been introduced, and progress is tracked against teaching objectives. Marking, however, is inconsistent and targets for improvement are not clear.
81. The programme for learning is very well set out, and its delivery is well monitored by the co-ordinator, whose rigorous evaluation establishes clear priorities for the subject. Resources are good, although there is a need to augment the stocks of big books.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

*There was not enough evidence to report on art and design, design and technology, music or physical education in full. Where possible the subjects were sampled.*

82. In **art and design**, an examination of the good range of work and the teachers' planning shows that standards are above average and achievement is good. The curriculum is well covered. Techniques and skills are developed in a systematic way and are used to help the pupils respond to a variety of stimuli. The pupils' paintings show a good use of colour

and the ability to mix colour well. The finish is good and well controlled. There is some evidence of computers being used to support art and design work but they are not used consistently. These standards represent a good improvement since the previous inspection.

83. No lessons were seen in **design and technology**. Planning indicates that the range of work being covered is appropriate and should ensure a full coverage of the curriculum. Examples of work around the school show a good attention to the quality of the finished work. There was also some evidence that evaluating what has been produced is an integral part of the designing process.
84. No lessons were seen in **music**, though the whole school was heard singing in assembly. The singing was satisfactory. There are good opportunities for the pupils to learn to play a musical instrument.
85. No lessons were seen in **physical education**. There are a good opportunities for the pupils to take part in a range of after-school sporting activities, such as football and athletics.

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

*This area of the curriculum was sampled.*

86. The school actively promotes pupils' learning about personal, social, health and citizenship issues through weekly circle time and work is also covered in the programme for RE and other subjects. There is effective promotion of drugs awareness and sex education. The school pays good attention to health awareness. The pupils learn about the importance of exercise and a good diet. The pupils get on well with adults and with each other and show tolerance and respect for views different from their own. The pupils frequently work together in pairs or in groups of different sizes in all subjects, encouraging co-operation and the listening to views of others. They are supportive of one another when problems arise, such as in the playground when they can turn for help to one of the playground 'buddies.'

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<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	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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
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	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
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).*