

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LANGSTONE INFANT SCHOOL**

Portsmouth, Hampshire

LEA area: Portsmouth

Unique reference number: 116207

Headteacher: Mrs C Baxter (acting)

Lead inspector: Mrs E M D Mackie

Dates of inspection: 15 – 17 March 2004

Inspection number: 256693

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	237
School address:	Ascot Road Copnor Portsmouth Hampshire
Postcode:	PO3 6EY
Telephone number:	02392 832642
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Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Otton
Date of previous inspection:	29 June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Langstone Infant School is located in the well-established residential area of Copnor in Portsmouth, that includes owner-occupied, privately rented and public housing. The catchment area has changed since the last inspection to include more social housing. Almost all pupils come from the area around the school. From time to time, children from asylum-seeking families, refugees and Traveller children join the school, causing periods of greater mobility than usual. The school roll has fallen from 250 last year, and there are now 237 pupils on roll, of whom 70 are in the Foundation Stage. There is a broad range of attainment when children enter the Reception classes but overall, attainment is below average. Fourteen per cent of pupils receive free school meals. Nearly four per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds and seven of these speak English as an additional language and are in the early stages of learning English. The principal first languages are Tagalog, Polish and Kurdish. Eighteen per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs for learning, behavioural or physical difficulties. This is average, nationally, and includes the designated provision for two pupils who have statements of special educational need. The school received the Schools Achievement Award in 2001 and the Investor in People award in 2002. Significant partners are the adjacent junior school, a local pre-school group, local churches and the local authority support service for ethnic minority pupils.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23482	Diana Mackie	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Music Foundation Stage English as an additional language Personal, social and health education
9769	Margaret Morrissey	Lay inspector	
28200	Paul Stevens	Team inspector	English History Geography
32142	Beryl Richmond	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Religious education Physical education Special educational needs

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# REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
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>17</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>34</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an improving school** with many good features. Teaching and learning are good and pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave well. Standards are average overall and pupils achieve well from a below average start. Parents and pupils are well satisfied with the school. Leadership, management and governance are very good. **The school gives good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' good achievement from a below average start
- Below average standards in English
- The very good educational direction of the acting headteacher
- The good quality of teaching, learning and the curricular provision
- Very good relationships and pupils' very good attitudes and good personal development
- The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs
- The lack of challenge for higher-attaining pupils in some lessons
- The high quality of care for the pupils, including very good lunchtime care
- The very good involvement of governors in running the school

There has been good overall improvement since the last inspection in June 1998, with very good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Key issues raised have been dealt with rigorously. Attendance figures have improved and links with parents to improve attendance are now good. Standards in English, though still below average, have improved, and there has been good improvement in standards in science. Governance of the school is now very good and all statutory requirements are met. The daily act of worship is a strong feature of the school day.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	E	E	D	D
writing	E	E	D	D
mathematics	E	E	C	C

*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*

**Overall achievement is good**, and standards are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2. In the 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 2, this school's performance in comparison with all schools nationally and in comparison with similar schools was below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. At the higher level, Level 3, overall results were also below average. Pupils now achieve well in Years 1 and 2 from a low start. Pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to attain below average standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing and average standards in mathematics, science, and information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of the school year. More able pupils still need more challenge. Standards are above average in art and design, average in geography, history, music, physical education and religious education. No judgement is given in design and technology because too little was seen. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior learning. Pupils from minority ethnic heritages or who speak English as an additional language achieve in line with their peers.

Children in the Reception year are on course to exceed the nationally expected goals for their age in personal, social and emotional development and achieve the goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development by the end of the school year. However, despite children's overall good achievement, standards in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development are below average because of the low starting point of many children.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.**

Pupils have very good attitudes to school and they behave well. Most pupils work hard, are responsible and show respect for other people's cultures, faiths and views. Attendance is good. There were no exclusions in the last reported year.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good and teaching and learning are good throughout the school.**

Teachers plan interesting lessons that are usually well matched to pupils' needs. As a result, they learn at a good rate. Teachers work very well as a team with the learning support assistants. Management of pupils is good so that they are well behaved and productive in lessons. Literacy and numeracy are taught well. Very good leadership has a significant effect on the quality of teaching. However, higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.

The good curriculum provides a wide range of experiences for pupils to learn in interesting and stimulating ways. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Planning is very effective in ensuring that all pupils have full access to the curriculum.

Pupils are very well cared for, and they are guided and supported well in their learning. Lunchtime supervision is very well organised.

Links with parents are good, and parents contribute well to the school's achievements. There are good links with the community, including local churches. Links with other schools and with colleges are satisfactory and pupils transfer smoothly to the junior phase of education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership by the acting headteacher is **very good** and she is very well supported by senior staff. Management is very good and governance of the school is of very good quality. Governors monitor the school's work very well and know its strengths and weaknesses. They fulfil their roles conscientiously and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents have positive views of the school and say they feel welcome. They feel comfortable about coming into school with questions or a problem. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school. They like the activities the teachers organise and enjoy playtimes.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve standards in English
- Ensure that higher-attaining pupils achieve as well as possible

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement is good in the Reception year and Years 1 and 2 and overall standards are average by the end of Year 2. Standards in English are below average but they are improving. In mathematics, science, and all other subjects, standards are at least average, and in art and design, they are above average.

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

- Pupils achieve well from a below average start
- Standards in art and design are above average
- Standards in English are improving, and in ICT they are improving rapidly

#### **Commentary**

1. Tracking of pupils' progress since they started school shows that in 2003 they achieved well, based on their starting points. Results were higher than in 2002 as a result of the school's determined efforts to raise standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.2 (14.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.2 (12.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.2 (15.1)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 84 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. Evidence from the current inspection shows that pupils in Year 2 achieve below average standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing and average standards in mathematics and science. The very good quality of the headteacher's educational direction, the commitment of subject managers and the good teaching are having a positive effect on pupils' achievement. The school's target-setting process for all pupils is also playing an increasing role in helping to raise standards. Pupils from minority ethnic heritages achieve well, attain as well as their peers and benefit from the school's inclusive and caring approach. Because of the school's attention to the provision of appropriate resources, including an extended range of non-fiction books, boys and girls achieve equally well and the standards they attain are similar. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well from their individual starting points because of the very good quality of support they receive. All pupils, regardless of gender, capability, ethnic heritage or faith, achieve at least well during their time at the school.
3. In the Reception classes, children are on course to exceed the goals expected by the end of the Reception year in personal, social and emotional development. In knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development, they are likely to achieve the goals. Standards in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development are below average because of the weak language skills of many children when they start school. However, children achieve well in all the six required areas of learning.



4. In English, speaking and listening are promoted well in Years 1 and 2 but a significant number of pupils have difficulty in expressing their ideas clearly. Because of the school's systematic teaching of letter sounds and regular learning of lists of words, standards of reading and spelling are improving, but they are still below average by the end of Year 2. Throughout the school, pupils write for a fair range of purposes, but could do more in subjects such as religious education. Handwriting, which has been an area of development in the school, develops well, though some pupils do not form their letters of a consistent size. Reading and writing are promoted successfully in other subjects, but writing is not planned systematically. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 write short stories with a clear sense of narrative.
5. In mathematics, pupils in Years 1 and 2 build effectively on what they have learned in the Reception year. Basic skills, such as counting forwards and backwards in twos, fives and tens help pupils to work quickly with larger numbers. Learning develops well in shape, measurement and data handling, and pupils achieve well here because they experience a great deal of practical work. In science, achievement is good. Pupils understand the idea of fair testing but need more opportunities to set up their own investigations. Pupils write up their findings well, with accurate and attractive drawings to illustrate their work. Standards in ICT are average and they are improving rapidly because of the professional expertise in the school, the improved equipment and the pupils' enthusiasm. In religious education, pupils achieve satisfactorily and standards are broadly in line with those expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils become increasingly aware of the main faiths practised in modern Britain.
6. Evidence from discussions with pupils and subject managers and scrutiny of displays and pupils' written work, indicates progress and achievement in the humanities (geography and history) are at least satisfactory. Pupils become increasingly aware of the significance of features in the neighbourhood of the school, and begin to ask questions about human interaction with the natural world. In art and design pupils achieve very well, in music they achieve well and in physical education they achieve satisfactorily. Standards in art and design are above average because the subject is promoted well in other subjects. No judgement is given in design and technology as little work was seen.
7. Pupils who speak English as an additional language settle in quickly and achieve well. They benefit from regular, well-focused support from the school's learning support assistants and from specialist bilingual assistants from the Local Education Authority. Both of these modes of support enhance pupils' ability to communicate in their home languages, follow lessons and contribute effectively.
8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their starting points. Very good management of this area of education and early identification of their needs lead to well-directed target setting for each pupil. These targets are clear, specific, achievable and suitably challenging. Teachers track pupils well to ensure that at least good progress is made over time. Dedicated and well-trained support staff give pupils help that builds confidence and helps pupils to enjoy success. This is particularly so when staff focus on the development of language skills so that pupils can contribute during whole-class sessions and in group activities.

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

Pupils' attitudes are very good; behaviour, values and personal development are good. Attendance is now good and it has improved since the last inspection.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils have very good attitudes to learning and to the school community
- The school succeeds in promoting very good relationships
- The good behaviour of the majority of pupils
- Good opportunities for spiritual, social, moral and cultural development
- Improved attendance, above that in most primary schools

## Commentary

9. The school has a happy and positive atmosphere that promotes good behaviour and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils respond well to rewards and sanctions and are pleased to be praised; this is confirmed by parents. Promoting harmony, including racial harmony, is a priority of the school. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection; parents say there have been incidents of slight bullying but that these have been dealt with swiftly. There were no exclusions in the last school year.
10. The majority of pupils have very positive attitudes to school. In lessons and in discussion, pupils display an open enthusiasm for learning. They have a keen interest and involvement in activities; for example, in a physical education lesson in the Reception year where pupils were challenged and excited when practicing balancing and making their own decisions to form body shapes. Pupils in all years make a significant contribution to class discussions. They are able to sustain concentration and to persevere, and by Year 2, are organising their own work with growing independence.
11. Relationships are very good. There is a strong element of respect for teachers, for other adults in school, and for other pupils. Pupils respond well to the good examples set by staff, and treat each other with care. Parents say there is a bubbly atmosphere in the school, that children have a sense of belonging, and that the school helps pupils to develop independence and maturity.
12. Provision for spiritual awareness is good. Pupils are given opportunities to explore the intangible; for example, children in a Reception class questioned how a bulb, which looks dead, can become a flower. The inspirational teaching encourages them to continue to question why and how, and all are amazed that the sunflower seeds they have planted and watered are showing green shoots. A pupil in Year 2 explained to the other pupils that she had taken the class puppet home to care for him; she had kept him in bed with her because, like her, he was afraid of the dark. Moral development is good. All pupils understand right from wrong and show this in their daily actions. The school promotes fairness, tolerance and honesty. The time given for reflection and discussion in lessons helps pupils understand the school's moral code.
13. Social development is good. Children in the Reception classes, through the establishment of helpful routines and firm, fair rules, get a very good start. This provides a positive basis for the development of responsibility and good personal conduct. In Years 1 and 2, pupils gradually take responsibility for themselves and for others. This is especially well developed in pupils in Year 2, and demonstrated by the sophisticated attitudes the older pupils take when manning 'friendship' benches in the playground. All pupils are involved in making and upholding school and classroom rules. Cultural development is good overall. Pupils are aware of their own culture and traditions, and a range of activities ensures multicultural understanding is developing; for example, it is developed through religious education, visits to other faith churches, personal social health education and visitors to the school.
14. Most pupils with special educational needs have a positive attitude to their work. They are keen to make progress and enjoy success and are usually well behaved. They respond well to the encouragement they receive, which helps to boost their confidence and enables them to take pride in their achievements.

## Attendance

15. Attendance overall is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Parents receive very clear information on attendance procedures. They are left in no doubt of the school's expectations and respond effectively.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.5	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.*

## Exclusions

16. There were no exclusions in the last academic year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of educational provision is **good**.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good, and teachers assess pupils' progress effectively. This leads to pupils' good achievement.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good leadership and management have had a significant effect on the quality of teaching and learning
- Teachers work very well as a team, and secure knowledge of the curriculum helps them to plan lessons well
- Pupils apply themselves well during activities because teachers encourage them, engage with them effectively, and help them to see what they have to do to improve
- Staff manage the pupils well so that behaviour is good and pupils work well independently and in groups, but the first part of lessons is sometimes too long
- Higher-attaining pupils are sometimes not challenged sufficiently
- Learning support assistants are deployed very well to help pupils

### Commentary

17. The quality of learning is the teachers' prime concern when they plan lessons. Staff work together very effectively to provide a consistent approach to teaching and learning. This approach is based on a sure knowledge of pupils' capabilities, ascertained through regular assessments and teaching methods agreed during staff training. As a result, there is continuity as pupils move from class to class. The learning objectives are explored at the beginning of each lesson so that pupils know what they are to do and learn. Staff usually manage pupils well, but when the first part of lessons is too long, pupils begin to fidget because they want to get on with the interesting activities that have been prepared for them.
18. Very good leadership underpins the effective teaching and learning in the school. The acting headteacher and senior staff have monitored lessons so that agreed practice is followed and good ideas are shared. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection, when nearly a fifth of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory or poor. Staff training, including

very good support from the Local Education Authority, has ensured that teachers have a sure understanding of the appropriate curriculum for the age groups. Learning support assistants are included in the school's rigorous training programme so that pupils with special educational needs are supported very well. Work planned in lessons, however, is not always challenging enough for higher-attaining pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from very good support from school learning support assistants and also from bilingual staff from the Local Education Authority who visit the school weekly. Opportunities for learning extend outside the school day. Clubs, including the breakfast and after-school clubs, develop pupils' social skills and reinforce and extend what has been learnt in lessons. The use of homework to support learning is satisfactory.

19. The quality of teaching in the Reception classes is good and gives the children a positive start to their schooling. Staff put appropriate emphasis on language skills, particularly speech, and on early mathematical skills. This emphasis builds up children's confidence and encourages them to express their ideas. The teachers and learning support assistants work very well together in the planning and teaching of activities. Lessons are well prepared and interesting so that children are motivated to learn. Children's progress is checked regularly and work is planned well. However, staff do not always focus enough on the learning objectives during activities; for example, sometimes children spent too much time drawing and did not have enough time to finish their writing. Children with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, are supported very well. Children who need help are identified at an early stage and help is very well targeted to support them.
20. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of the teaching seen was good in English, mathematics, science and ICT. In the lessons seen, it was good overall in music and physical education. Judgements are not given for teaching in other subjects as not enough was seen. Pupils usually get on with work at a good rate because lessons are well prepared. Routines and the organisation of groups are well established. Pupils behave well because teachers manage them effectively, following the agreed school and class rules. In the first part of lessons, teachers sometimes spend too long on explaining and practising new ideas and pupils sit for too long. They become restless and higher-attaining pupils, who have already 'got the message', want to get on with independent or group work. Also, pupils need some kind of stimulus to encourage them to answer every question; for example, in mathematics. In the best lessons, pupils have small boards to write their answers on, and all pupils are expected to 'show' their answers so that the teacher can check their understanding.
21. During activities that follow the initial part of lessons, teachers engage well with pupils. Pupils say that the teaching is good and teachers help them to improve. Questioning is of good quality and pupils are expected to explain what they are doing. Teachers take note of pupils' understanding and use the information to set meaningful and challenging targets. For example, in English, teachers help pupils to see how they are progressing through the steps outlined in the National Literacy Strategy. This involvement of pupils in the assessment process is leading to better standards. Pupils know what they need to do to improve, are helped to do so and can recognise their success. This reinforces their confidence and self-esteem. This especially helps pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. These pupils benefit from learning through small steps and achieving regular success. Marking of pupils' work is good in all classes. Teachers give clear messages to pupils about what they have done well and what they could do better.
22. Teachers use a good variety of resources well to promote learning. The use of interactive whiteboards is well established, and teachers use them effectively to get pupils to absorb new ideas. For example, in mathematics, a computer program that shows strings of beads helps pupils to understand counting on or counting back in twos. This is having a positive effect on standards as learning is reinforced and pupils' confidence is boosted. Simpler resources are also used to teach new ideas. In music, pictures of cats and kittens help pupils to become aware of crotchets and quavers; for example, pupils say the phrase 'Cat, kitten, kitten, cat'.

23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good, and there is good teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants. Pupils' needs are accurately assessed, using support from outside agencies, if necessary, and their Individual Education Plans are targeted carefully to help them learn. Most teachers use a wide range of successful strategies to motivate, involve and challenge pupils, and regularly monitor the progress pupils are making towards achieving their targets. Records are well maintained and regularly updated. The effectiveness of the work of learning support assistants is usually very good when they are working with individuals, groups or the whole class. Occasionally, pupils do not have enough support when the whole class is being taught.
24. Literacy and numeracy are promoted well in all subjects. Because the improvement of speaking and listening is a priority, staff take time to discuss pupils' understanding and help pupils to express their ideas. Specific language is taught and used well throughout the curriculum. Teachers expect and encourage pupils to use correct vocabulary; for example, in science teachers promote the use of scientific language. Displays are well labelled so that reading is prominent as pupils move around the classrooms and corridors. Writing is promoted effectively in subjects such as geography, history and science. Pupils' skills in numeracy are practised effectively in subjects such as science and geography. The use of ICT across the curriculum is good. Pupils use it increasingly to support and extend their learning and to practise and hone their skills in all subjects. Teachers use the interactive whiteboards with increasing skill
25. The assessment manager plays a leading role in the monitoring of standards, and she keeps staff and governors well informed to ensure that there is whole-school awareness of strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' performance. Results in national tests are systematically analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in attainment at individual pupil, whole-class and year group levels. Teachers in all classes use assessment information effectively to plan appropriate lessons and promote pupils' learning. Information is also used effectively as part of the target-setting process. Parents are involved in this process so that they know how well their children are getting on and where improvements can be made.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	7 (19%)	22 (62%)	7 (19%)	0 (0%)	0 (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 quality of the curriculum is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good
- Pupils have equal access to the curriculum
- Opportunities for learning outside lessons are good
- The quality of staffing, accommodation and resources is good
- The organisation of time spent on mathematics results in lessons that are too long

## Commentary

26. The school provides the statutory curriculum in all subjects, including the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education, and enriches learning with a wide variety of experiences outside lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the curriculum concentrated too much on direct teaching of literacy and numeracy at the expense of creative work. A strong feature is the school's use of assessment information to adapt the planned curriculum to meet pupils' immediate needs.
27. The quality and range of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage are good. It fully meets national recommendations and prepares children well for the beginning of the National Curriculum in Year 1. There is appropriate emphasis on the development of social and language skills so that children settle well into school and gradually acquire the vocabulary and confidence to join in class activities and communicate increasingly effectively with other children and the school staff.
28. Pupils say they enjoy school activities. They learn well from the opportunities to carry out investigations in science, and investigative work is a good feature in all subjects. Visits and visitors enrich learning. For example, pupils go to a working Victorian farm and visit the Hindu temple in Southampton. Parents and others widen pupils' understanding by talking about their jobs, hobbies and experiences. A topic on 'toys through the ages' included a visit from a grandparent who showed his fascinating collection of toys. Pupils not only realised how toys had changed across the years, but also developed their speaking and listening by preparing questions. Literacy and numeracy are promoted regularly across the curriculum, but there is no clear plan to show how literacy, especially writing, can be developed in other subjects in a systematic way. Teachers link most subjects effectively; for example, art and design and ICT are used well in other subjects.
29. The school's programme for personal, social and health education provides a good foundation for pupils to learn about a safe and healthy lifestyle with a view to good citizenship. Personal, social and health education is both a regular feature of the timetable and part of pupils' learning in subjects such as science. There is appropriate provision of sex education and early guidance on the misuse of drugs. The school uses imaginative methods such as asking pupils to apply to be a helper in the playground or the office. This contributes well to their writing skills. Teachers record pupils' personal and social growth and use what they learn to focus clearly on individual areas of need. Members of the local police and fire services reinforce important messages about how pupils can help themselves to keep safe. There is a very good number of clubs for sport, music and other activities. These enhance opportunities for pupils to enrich their learning and extend their social development. There are good links with the staff in Year 3 and the manager for special educational needs in the adjacent junior school so that pupils move there smoothly.
30. The curriculum includes a good range of activities to stimulate pupils to learn at a good rate. As a result they enjoy school. However, in mathematics, where the allocated weekly time is spent in four lessons, lessons are too long. As a result, some sessions lack the sharpness needed to help the school to build further on its success in raising standards in the subject. Provision for pupils with special educational needs meets the various requirements of individual pupils very well so that they are fully involved in lessons. This is because the extra adult support they receive enables them to succeed. In addition, teachers plan appropriate tasks for these pupils so that they can complete them on their own, which improves their ability to work independently. The provision outlined in statements of special educational need is fully in place and is reviewed annually in line with national guidance. Very good systems ensure that these pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life. A register of gifted and talented pupils has been established. This paves the way for better provision for more able pupils. At present, planning does not always include enough opportunities for these pupils to learn as fast as they could.

31. There is a good number of appropriately qualified and experienced teaching and support staff. Professional training ensures that staff fulfil their roles very effectively. Spacious classrooms and special areas for music and drama provide a good environment for learning. The well-developed school grounds, normally used extensively to enhance teaching and learning, are out of use at present because of building work, but they will soon be available again. Resources for teaching and learning are good overall, and they are well organised and stored. Teachers use a wide variety of resources of high quality to develop pupils' skills; for example, a broad range of media is explored in art and design and a variety of modern technology is used in ICT. The electronic whiteboards provide an excellent means of communicating new ideas to pupils, and they reinforce learning when pupils contribute by putting their ideas on them.

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

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are good. Health and safety of the environment are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Procedures for care, welfare, health and safety are very good
- The very good provision for lunchtime care
- Good support and advice, based on monitoring
- Very good induction procedures for pupils

### **Commentary**

32. The procedures for pupils' safety and welfare are very good and well established. Daily awareness of health and safety is evident from staff and pupils around the school and in lessons. The work of the site manager is of high quality. He fulfils his responsibilities for day-to-day health and safety issues and the efficient maintenance of the school very well. Cleaning staff ensure that the school is bright and sparkling, providing a warm welcome and a good example to the pupils. Care and monitoring are supported by the governing body and the designated governor for health, safety and premises. Risk assessment procedures are well established and the site manager reviews safe working procedures very efficiently – this has been especially important during the current extensive building work.
33. There are very effective child protection procedures that meet statutory requirements. The policy is agreed by the governing body and is well known to all staff. First-aid provision is very good; pupils are confident to seek help and are well cared for. Parents rightly feel that the care provided for their children is a 'plus point'. Pupils express their views in class discussions during 'circle time', when they sit in a circle to discuss social issues. The school listens to these views; for example, pupils say what they would like the reorganised school grounds to look like.
34. The school uses a wide range of methods of assessment to ensure that all pupils' needs are met. Pupils with special educational needs are very well cared for. Their work is regularly monitored to ensure that they are making progress towards the targets set for them. Outside agencies are involved as required, to help meet their specific targets. Pupils, including asylum seekers and refugees, integrate well because of the school's welcoming and inclusive approach. Those who speak English as an additional language are given very good support through the effective bilingual services of the Local Education Authority.
35. Lunchtime arrangements at the school are very good. The senior supervisor fulfils her role very well. She and the headteacher have benefited from training from an organisation that promotes better provision during this important part of the school day. Care of the pupils is planned with commitment and flair, as the senior supervisor briefs staff each day, basing arrangements on the current weather forecast, and ensuring that all pupils' needs are catered for. Some supervisors also work as learning support assistants, and they are briefed at the

beginning of the school day so that there is a smooth transition from lessons to the lunchtime period. Activities are chosen thoughtfully for pupils with special educational needs; this helps them to behave well and make friends. Pupils with health problems, such as asthma, are monitored and cared for very well. Behind all of these arrangements lie three important features emphasised in the school. One is the pupils' right to play, enjoy friendships and be valued as individuals, free from harassment. The second is that pupils can always go to an adult for help, and the third is that pupils have the duty to treat other people with respect.

36. There are good procedures for the educational and personal support of pupils. From the Reception classes up through the school, pupils understand what they are expected to learn and do in lessons, and they evaluate whether they have achieved these objectives in the plenary sessions at the end of lessons. Pupils like the school. When asked to suggest what they would change, the majority respond by saying that they like it the way it is and would not change anything. Pupils with special needs have good support to meet the targets set in their Individual Education Plans. Procedures for induction of pupils are very good, and support for pupils who join the school during the term are also very good.

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

The school has good links with parents and the community, and satisfactory links with other schools.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good links between the school and the community
- Parents are happy with the progress pupils make
- The overall effectiveness of the school's links with parents are good

### **Commentary**

37. The school's partnership with parents is good. The good parental support is beneficial to pupils' progress. Parents say pupils like school and the school is approachable and welcoming. They feel it is a friendly school and that their children have a sense of belonging. Parents like the 'buddy' system, and the 'friendship bench' that operates in the playground, saying they are helpful for other pupils.
38. Parents receive good information from the school, and their views are regularly sought to inform school decisions. They appreciate the informative weekly newsletter. However, a few would like classroom timetables to help them to support their children's learning at home. Parents are encouraged to come into the school and work with pupils. They find this very beneficial and think it supports and increases pupils' progress. Parents feel well informed on pupils' progress. The school provides good opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress with teachers. Parents are pleased with the annual written reports.
39. The school informs parents at an early stage in planning work for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers invite parents into school to discuss pupils' Individual Education Plans. Most parents come into school to discuss the support planned for their children. The school invites parents to all reviews and they can make an appointment at any time. Links between home and school are regular and constructive so that parents are aware of what they can do to help their children make good progress. Appropriate bilingual support is given for parents of children who speak English as an additional language. This ensures that pupils soon integrate and parents are kept up-to-date with their children's progress. There are very good induction arrangements when children start school in the Reception classes so that parents and children are aware of school procedures and children get to know the staff who will be working with them.
40. The parents' support group provides very good help for the school. It raises a considerable amount of money, which is used well to support curricular subjects. The group is very much



appreciated by the staff, and valued by the headteacher who views it as another line of communication with parents.

41. Community involvement has a good effect on pupils' learning. Local people are regularly invited into the school, both to broaden learning and to raise the pupils' local and wider environmental awareness. Links with other schools, colleges and universities are satisfactory. Assessment information is shared effectively when pupils move to the junior school, and there are good links with receiving staff. There are plans to strengthen this aspect of professional liaison. Pre-school links are good, further developed through an effective network of professionals working with young children in the locality. Students studying childcare and those who are training to be teachers benefit from the good role models in the school. The school works well with the local secondary school, both with students on work experience and those in the sixth form who are considering becoming teachers.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership, management and governance of the school are all of very good quality. The acting headteacher provides very good educational leadership, and key staff supported her very effectively. Governors fulfil their roles very well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The high quality of the acting headteacher's educational leadership
- The promotion of very effective teamwork amongst staff
- The very good level of governors' involvement in running the school
- The high quality of the school's self-evaluation
- The very good quality of professional training for all staff

### **Commentary**

42. The acting headteacher has been in charge for only three months and she already demonstrates a sure grasp of how to take the school forward. She has built very effectively on the strong foundation left by the last headteacher. Teachers with key roles support her very well and all staff work together as an effective team, committed to teaching and learning of high quality. Leadership, management and governance are all contributing very well to the continual development of the school. They have improved since the last inspection, when nearly a fifth of the teaching was less than satisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation are now key features in the school; as a result, teaching and curricular provision are better. The overall effectiveness of the school is sound and a rosier picture is emerging. Staff and governors know that standards in English are the prime area for improvement. They are not afraid to face up to areas identified for development and are united in their determination to deal with them robustly. They want the pupils to enjoy school and achieve at the best possible levels. The expertise to address the needs of higher-attaining pupils exists in the school, as demonstrated in the policy for gifted and talented pupils. The staff and governors recognise the need to harness this expertise to provide challenge more regularly for all higher-attaining pupils and ensure that they perform as well as possible in national tests.
43. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met. They understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and shape its direction very well through well-informed support and challenge. Under the enthusiastic leadership of the chair of governors, all aspects of school life are monitored, discussed and managed rigorously. Improved accommodation and resources, recruitment of staff and attention to the views of parents, have been organised and managed very well. The system of governors' committees works very effectively. Strategic management for the extension of services, including pre-school provision, has placed heavy

demands on the time and efforts of the acting headteacher and governors, but developments are well in hand. The re-design of the school grounds, to ensure that pupils gain maximum academic and recreational benefits, is being managed enthusiastically in committee.

44. School self-evaluation of very good quality underpins the helpful school development plan. Analysis of the school's performance in national tests informs decisions by staff and governors about curricular provision, staff appointments, teaching methods, resources and the organisation of classes. Staff responsibilities are clear, and they have been considered carefully so that the needs of all groups of children, regardless of their capabilities or family backgrounds, can be met properly. Management of the Foundation Stage is very good, so that children benefit from good curricular provision and teaching.
45. Occasional periods of high mobility, have been managed very effectively when a number of pupils join the school other than at the beginning of the school year. Children from asylum-seeking families have been integrated very well. The school has given sympathetic social support, and staff have helped these pupils to achieve well academically. Some, after only a short time at the school, already work in groups with other higher-attaining pupils.
46. The manager for special educational needs provides very good leadership. She ensures that all pupils have been accurately assessed, using outside agencies when necessary, and that pupils have relevant achievable targets. She has focused her work well on the development of pupils' language skills. Needs are identified and dealt with as early as possible, so that some pupils achieve the expected standards for their age by the end of Year 2. The manager works very closely with all colleagues, regularly monitors the use made of Individual Education Plans and monitors pupils' work in lessons. The school has reviewed the policy for special educational needs to make sure that it reflects national guidance. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is well informed and regularly updates the governing body about provision.
47. The statutory performance management of teachers has been implemented well so that there is a whole-school approach to issues concerning teaching, learning and standards. Teachers are very self-critical and they are keen to play their part in addressing priorities identified in the school development plan. All staff regularly meet with senior members of staff to discuss professional development. Training is managed well so that staff can do their jobs well. There are very good systems to support newly qualified teachers and those new to the school. Newly recruited staff praise the way they have been inducted into the school's ways of working. All staff, including learning support assistants and administrative, caretaking and lunchtime staff are properly trained for their posts. The school is justly proud of its Investor in People award.
48. Prudent management of the school's finances has resulted in a well-resourced and attractive environment for the pupils, with further improvements in hand. The large carry-forward in funding from last year included funding allocated for improvements and equipment linked to the current (delayed) major building work, and will be fully spent in the next three months as new rooms come into use. The acting headteacher provides appropriate financial information for governors so that expenditure is monitored regularly. Governors are rigorous in their attention to detail in management of the school's budget and other funding; for example, specific funding for aspects such as special educational needs and staff training is used very effectively. Value for money is considered thoroughly, and governors evaluate their spending meticulously, looking at best value in terms of academic and welfare benefits to the pupils. For example, the designated governor for special educational needs keeps a keen eye on the effects of expenditure on staffing and resources for pupils who need extra help, to ensure that money is well spent.

49. Day-to-day administrative tasks are carried out very effectively by the office staff so that lessons are not disturbed. ICT is used very well in the management of the school. Financial management is secure, and records are audited appropriately, with subsequent follow-up of any recommendations.

### **Financial information**

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	650,566
Total expenditure	637,881
Expenditure per pupil	2,552

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	73,239
Balance carried forward to the next	85,924

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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good** and children achieve well.

There is a wide range of attainment on entry to school, but overall, attainment is below average because so many children start school with weak speech and language skills. Children make good progress and achieve well in the six nationally agreed areas of learning for young children. Children who speak English as an additional language benefit from the school's emphasis on language development, and they achieve well. By the end of the Reception classes, children exceed the expected goals in personal, social and emotional development. They achieve them in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. In communication, language and literature and mathematical development, their attainment, despite good progress, is below average. Standards in these two areas of learning are lower than at the time of the previous inspection because of the significant number of children who have poor levels of language and significant speech and language difficulties. In knowledge and understanding of the world, standards are better than those reported at the last inspection. Good curricular provision and teaching have been maintained. Teachers plan well for children to follow the 'stepping stones' of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Assessment procedures to measure children's progress through the curriculum are good, and information is used effectively to plan appropriate tasks for the children. Children with special educational needs are identified early so that their problems are overcome as soon as possible.

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

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

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

- Children exceed the expected goals by the end of the Reception year
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and staff work well together as a team
- Children follow well-established routines confidently

#### **Commentary**

50. Achievement is good, and children exceed the expected goals for this area of learning by the end of the Reception year. Children concentrate for increasing lengths of time and develop greater levels of independence in dressing and personal hygiene. Staff guide and support them well so that they soon settle into school routines and learn to share and be considerate for one another. Their self-control strengthens and they gradually develop an understanding of what is right and what is wrong. Children, including those from minority ethnic groups, become increasingly confident in asking for help when they need it, and become more responsible as they help to clear away after activities, or get ready for outside play. During the year, they adapt confidently to the brisker pace of lessons as they approach the time when they start the National Curriculum in Year 1. Their developing self-esteem and improved levels of attention help them to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. They play happily with older pupils in the playground and move around the school sensibly; for example, when they go to the school hall for assemblies.
51. In all three classes, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Relationships are very good and children learn to respond positively to gentle reprimands when their behaviour is unacceptable. As a result, children behave well and there is a purposeful atmosphere in the classrooms. Routines are well established so that children know what to do, for example when they go out to play. They are encouraged to use their initiative, become increasingly

confident and act responsibly; for example, they take the register to the office and help to organise snack time. As at the last inspection, teamwork amongst staff was strong. All staff take time to talk to children and use praise effectively to raise the children's self-esteem. In class discussions, staff promote good levels of social awareness as they talk about being fair and listening to the views of others.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make good progress and achieve well
- Staff promote language and literacy throughout the day
- Children develop a love of literature from their earliest days in school
- A significant number of children have language difficulties

### **Commentary**

52. Children achieve well from a low start. Compared with local schools, a larger than usual percentage of children are identified with speech and language difficulties when they start school. A significant number of children have difficulty in expressing their ideas, but they enjoy saying rhymes and joining in the repetitive sections of stories. Staff encourage them to use appropriate vocabulary, particularly in mathematics and literacy lessons. Children handle books and turn pages carefully and enjoy reading. In all three classes, children gain an increasing understanding of how print carries meaning and that they can find out about things by looking in books. By the end of the Reception year, most children recognise letter shapes and sounds and 'read' stories successfully by referring to the pictures. Quicker-learning children read simple books with repetitive texts and know about the contents and index pages in reference books. There is a good range of attractive story and non-fiction books in all classes and children develop a love of literature that makes them want to learn to read. Most children form letters correctly, and a few begin to write sentences independently. All children illustrate their writing with lively drawings.
53. The good quality of teaching and learning contributes well to the children's good progress. Children are encouraged to develop language through discussions, stories, writing and role-play. Staff listen to them patiently, and children gradually acquire the confidence to speak in class sessions and to explain what they are doing during activities. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported very well. Good teaching of letter sounds and shapes begins as soon as children start school. Staff provide a wide range of opportunities for children to talk, communicate and extend their vocabulary. Skills are also fostered through enthusiastic story-telling and well-organised reading areas in the classrooms. Staff provide areas where children can make marks and practise their writing. Manipulative skills for writing are also developed through practice in painting, drawing and play with construction kits. Elements of the literacy hour are introduced gradually so that children recognise links between reading and writing as they explore texts together and look for repeated words and patterns of letters.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well, but language difficulties hamper the faster progress of many children
- Staff use a good range of strategies to help children to learn

- Assessments of children's progress are used well to plan future work

### **Commentary**

54. Children develop mathematical skills in practical ways throughout the day. Achievement is good. Through a wide range of sorting and matching experiences, they develop a growing vocabulary to express size, shape and colour. Below average language skills hamper children's faster progress. Staff work persistently on this aspect of children's learning. When they play purposefully with sand, children develop mathematical language such as 'more' and 'less'. Children's understanding of 'heavier' and 'lighter' develops well. Songs and games help children to gain knowledge and understanding of numbers to ten. Higher-attaining children recognise larger numbers, count confidently forwards and backwards to 20 and begin to add small numbers together as they gain early understanding of addition and subtraction. All children talk about 'one more' or 'one less'. Understanding of sequence and order grows as children sit in groups to work with adults and play with well-chosen puzzles and games. They name simple two-dimensional shapes and can recognise examples of them in the world around them. Slower-learning children are well supported; they rely heavily on adult support to express their mathematical understanding.
55. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff use an appropriate mix of direct teaching, questioning and stimulating activities to promote children's learning and extend their mathematical vocabulary. Staff prepare appropriate activities well so that children learn in a practical way. All staff are involved in the day-to-day assessments of children's progress. These are used well to inform the planning of future work. Teachers ensure that children develop a good range of mental strategies and encourage them to think hard before they answer questions. Children record their investigations in simple ways; for example, in charts that show the different heights of members of the class.

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

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children experience a good range of activities and achieve well
- Staff encourage children to learn through exploration and experimentation.
- Standards have improved since the last inspection

### **Commentary**

56. Children develop early investigative skills as they learn about seasonal changes and find out about their environment. They sow seeds and learn to care for plants. Staff provide interesting activities that help children to develop investigative skills; for example, they observe plants and seeds through magnifying glasses. As they make simple models with construction kits, children reflect their knowledge of the real world; they make cars, lorries and houses. In all three classes, children enjoy cooking. Because of good levels of adult support, appropriate language is developed effectively, and children acquire an increasing vocabulary to explain what they know. Children gain an increasing understanding of different cultures and ways of life. This raises the esteem of children from minority ethnic heritages. In the computer suite, children develop appropriate skills in ICT and use them to explore simple programs on the classroom computers. Overall achievement is good in this area of learning and standards have improved since the last inspection
57. Teaching and learning are of good quality and, because staff are secure in their knowledge of the curriculum for young children, activities are stimulating and appropriate for the age group. Staff interact very well with the children, pick up their ideas and take their learning forward effectively. Learning is based firmly on experiences that are relevant to the children's daily lives. The school environment is used well to support learning about the natural world, though

this is currently inhibited because of extensive building work at the school. Teachers organise interesting trips to broaden children's experiences and extend their general knowledge. Staff plan tasks that prepare children very effectively for subjects in the National Curriculum such as science, design and technology and ICT.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff ensure that children have plenty of exercise
- Activities are planned well, leading to children's good achievement

### **Commentary**

58. Children run, jump, climb and balance with confidence. They move around with an awareness of space and are controlled and purposeful. They have opportunities to dance, play with small equipment, climb and jump in the well-equipped school hall. Children respond well to the teacher's instructions and develop increasing levels of control. Children play with older pupils during break times and lunchtimes, when they run about and join in games with appropriate co-ordination. Children have many opportunities to model with dough, use simple craft equipment, construct models from reclaimed materials, play with model vehicles and build with construction kits.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is good and staff ensure that all children, including those who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, learn at a good rate and achieve well. Staff plan well for the children to have regular exercise and to practise with small equipment. There are regular assessments of children's progress, as outlined in the 'stepping stones' of the curriculum for the age group. Lessons are planned effectively so that there is a warm-up session at the beginning and a cool-down at the end. Children acquire proper routines, and have opportunities to refine and improve their movements. In the classroom, staff plan stimulating activities for children to develop finer manipulative skills for writing, drawing and painting. In the writing areas, children write letters and record messages. Regular opportunities for drawing and painting help children to develop increased levels of pencil and brush control.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well
- Staff organise a wide range of activities to stimulate the children's imagination

### **Commentary**

60. Early experimentation with paint and brushes leads to bright pictures and models as children explore colour, texture and shape in two- and three-dimensions. Achievement is good. The children use a good variety of materials including paint, crayons and felt tipped pens to make pictures. These often link with topics, and help to reinforce and consolidate learning. Children gradually learn to make decisions and choices when selecting materials and equipment. This develops their independence and provides valuable opportunities for them to use their initiative and imagination. Children roll, squeeze and shape malleable materials, such as dough, to

develop skills and techniques for model-making. In music, children acquire a good repertoire of nursery rhymes and simple songs. They sing tunefully, listen well and join with older pupils to sing confidently in the hall during assemblies. In role-play areas, children interact with one another confidently during imaginative play. They benefit from taking part in assemblies for their parents, who say they enjoy these occasions very much.

61. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff organise activities well and children are given opportunities to explore materials and to practise techniques in a purposeful atmosphere, without fear of criticism. Because staff listen well to children, creative activities provide valuable opportunities for children to discuss their ideas. Children explore their feelings and develop their imagination. Planning is good and children's artwork is valued and displayed attractively; this raises their self-esteem. In the role-play areas, staff extend dramatic play as they ask the children who they are pretending to be and what they are doing. Because of the good teaching, children, including those who have special educational needs, learn at a good rate and achieve well.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision for English is **good**.

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

- Standards, though improving, are below average by the end of Year 2
- Good provision is steadily raising standards
- The quality of teaching and learning is good
- Leadership and management are good
- Systems for assessment of pupils' work are good
- The quality of resources is good

#### **Commentary**

62. Pupils in Year 2 attain below the national average standards for English. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were well below average for reading and writing. However, pupils' performance was then judged to be average in speaking and listening, and it is now below average. This is because so many children now have language problems when they start school. In the national tests in 2003, pupils' standards in reading and writing were higher than those attained over the previous two years. Standards in writing were better than they have been for five years. The improvements are associated with better provision. Current standards are below average in speaking and listening, reading and writing, but they are improving. Pupils who have special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language achieve well.
63. Pupils lack confidence when speaking. They respond to questions with single words or phrases. They find it hard to construct sentences, for example when they were expected to create a caption for a picture of a healthy food. However, this improves when teachers expect pupils to think or explain; for example, pupils explained how to use a glossary. In discussions, pupils have 'talking partners', with whom they have short chats before putting forward answers to the whole class. This is effective in helping them to sort out their ideas. Pupils listen attentively and respond to a range of instructions. In subjects, such as physical education, pupils achieve well because of this. Their speaking and listening improves in group work when they collaborate to complete tasks. More able pupils express individual opinions about stories they are reading, but other pupils are reticent to do so.



64. By the end of Year 2, the regular teaching of letter sounds and patterns enables pupils of all abilities to read simple texts by themselves. This enables them to gain increasing independence with their reading, to enjoy books, gain information and follow stories with increasing appreciation of the plot and the characters. Fluency varies; and higher-attaining pupils add expression. In the literacy hour, pupils join in the reading of enlarged texts with increasing confidence. More able pupils talk about the story and the characters, but average and below average pupils, though they enjoy reading their books individually to adults, have difficulties in expressing how they feel about the contents. All pupils are becoming more independent in locating and using non-fiction books, and more able pupils do so confidently. Non-fiction books are well organised in the school corridor – soon to be relocated in a new library.
65. By the end of Year 2, most pupils write simple, grammatically correct sentences and demonstrate a clear sense of narrative. They spell simple words accurately and join their handwriting, although it is sometimes inconsistent in shape and size. Lower-attaining pupils do not use capital letters and full stops consistently, but they know about them and correct their work when reminded. More able pupils show more structure in the development of stories, and use adjectives to add interest to their work. However, they rarely use more adventurous punctuation; for example, they rarely use exclamation and speech marks, or include a variety of connectives other than 'and', 'but' and 'then'. Higher-attaining pupils produce some interesting, sustained pieces of work that show pleasure in writing.
66. Teaching is good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection. Good teaching improves pupils' speaking by targeting those pupils who are reluctant to answer questions. It meets their different learning needs in reading and writing through careful planning. Teachers organise groups for those with special educational needs, or with English as an additional language, where they receive guidance of very good quality from learning support assistants and from visiting bilingual assistants. Teaching is also good where pupils have the opportunity to use what they have learnt; for example, they write short books about topics they have studied in history and geography. A few lessons did not balance whole-class teaching sufficiently with opportunities for individual or group work. The initial part of the lessons was too long. However, pupils behave well, and have a positive attitude to the subject.
67. The subject manager provides strong and informed leadership. Good systems for recording how well pupils attain are already in place. Teachers make good use of the information in planning to meet different needs. For example, there has been a successful focus on reducing differences in performance between boys and girls. The subject manager has written a very good action plan that promotes teamwork amongst staff in a bid to raise standards further. A good range of books and other resources support reading. In addition, the school encourages parents to work with their children by reading with them and helping them with spellings at home.

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

68. Generally, there are good opportunities for discussion and group activities to promote language and literacy. Specific subject vocabulary is taught well and it is displayed effectively in presentations around the school. Teachers give pupils a fair number of opportunities to practise their writing skills, but more activities could be exploited to raise the profile of writing in the school. In history and geography, there is evidence of pupils writing about the past and about the environment and compiling short books for others to read. In science, pupils label diagrams and record their findings, using correct scientific vocabulary. In religious education, there is less evidence of writing.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is of good quality overall; it is improving because of very good leadership
- The initial part of lessons is sometimes too long - children sit for long periods and become fidgety
- The high quality of support for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they achieve well
- Teachers do not always demand enough of the more able pupils
- Teachers use the interactive whiteboards well to support pupils' learning

### **Commentary**

69. Satisfactory standards at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2, the school's performance was average in comparison with all schools and also when compared with schools in similar contexts. Since 1999 there has been an overall upward trend in the school's performance, in line with the national trend. Current standards in Year 2 are broadly in line with national expectations, but brighter pupils do not always achieve as well as they could. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy well, and there are signs that teachers are increasingly providing opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge in practical situations. Throughout the school, boys and girls achieve similarly. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, based on their earlier learning. Pupils from ethnic minorities and those who speak English as an additional language achieve in line with their peers. The emphasis on the development of mathematical language is especially helpful for these pupils.
70. By the end of Year 2, pupils, through practical work and good teaching, have a basic understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They add and subtract numbers to 20 mentally, and investigate number patterns and sequences; for example, they use repeated addition to solve simple multiplication problems. Higher-achieving pupils work with larger numbers. Most pupils can count confidently in twos, fives and tens and can order numbers correctly up to a hundred. They begin to estimate and recognise the usefulness of being able to halve or double numbers. However, more able pupils are not consistently challenged with thought-provoking mathematical ideas during lessons; for example, there is not enough emphasis on the checking of answers when subtracting, by using the inverse process of addition. Pupils acquire a satisfactory understanding of shape and measurement, and move from using non-standard units to measuring in metres and centimetres.
71. Very well organised staff training, with very effective leadership from the acting headteacher and the subject manager, has resulted in a more consistent approach to teaching in mathematics. Problem-solving is promoted more effectively, and teaching strategies are more varied. Teachers help pupils to gain a deeper understanding of how simple graphs, tables, charts and diagrams can be used to record and interpret information; for example, pupils use graphs to investigate favourite foods. Learning support assistants help pupils with special educational needs to contribute to class discussions and to succeed with their individual work. ICT is used effectively by pupils for creating simple graphs and learning about direction, turning and angles. Staff use electronic whiteboards very effectively to illustrate their teaching and promote pupils' learning.
72. The quality of teaching is good overall. It varies from very good to satisfactory. Lessons have a clear structure that includes mental work and instruction and opportunities for pupils to work in groups at different levels of difficulty. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in mathematics lessons are usually good and relationships are very good. Long lessons include some initial periods when pupils sit on the carpet for too long. In the less effective, though satisfactory

lessons, pupils become restless during these periods. However, in the best lessons, teachers harness pupils' enthusiasm in order to stimulate learning. There is an atmosphere of enthusiasm and fun as pupils are kept 'on their toes' by teachers during brisk sessions of mental arithmetic. Teachers add challenge when they see that pupils have absorbed ideas. This was demonstrated in a good lesson in Year 1, when pupils sharpened up their understanding of counting forwards and backwards. Teachers also recognise when pupils need more practice; for example, in a very good lesson in Year 2 the teacher regularly drew pupils together to tease out ideas and to reinforce understanding of division as the inverse of multiplication.

73. Pupils work with partners effectively and are usually productive during activities. They learn at a better rate in lessons where teachers ensure that they have something to do during the initial mental arithmetic sessions; for example, pupils show their answers on small boards. There is no hiding place in this situation – every pupil has to answer. Throughout the school, pupils show pride in their work in exercise books, where work is neatly presented. Time is planned at the end of lessons for reflection on what has been learnt. Teachers ask probing questions to elicit understanding and extend pupils' skills and knowledge. Throughout the school, teachers and learning support assistants involve pupils with special educational needs productively in activities.
74. Teachers use information from the school's results in national tests effectively to address areas for improvement. Aspects of mathematics, such as problem-solving, are given greater significance and there has been general improvement in planning and teaching since the last inspection. Information from the school's own assessments is used well to set targets for most pupils as an incentive to higher achievement, but greater use could be made of this information to spur higher-attaining pupils to achieve higher levels in national tests. Teachers record the progress of each pupil carefully. Pupils' work is marked regularly with helpful comments that indicate what has been done well or what needs to be improved.
75. The acting headteacher has, through her determination to raise standards in the school, created a positive atmosphere that inspires both staff and children. The subject manager provides very good leadership and is an effective role model for other teachers. Her leadership has contributed significantly to the improving quality of provision. Simple but helpful items have been introduced to support the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy; for example, pupils use small whiteboards to record their answers and show them to the teacher in mental arithmetic sessions.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

76. Mathematics is promoted effectively in other subjects as teachers make it relevant by including opportunities for pupils to draw graphs, explore patterns, measure and make calculations in science, geography and art and design. Work in art and design includes pupils' mathematical understanding of symmetry. Pupils use their understanding of measurement for accurate work in science.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are achieving well
- Teachers do not track the progress of higher-attaining pupils well enough to ensure they are being set appropriately challenging work

## Commentary

77. Only one science lesson was seen during the inspection because of the school's timetabling arrangements. No judgement is therefore given for teaching and learning. However, pupils' work and classroom displays were scrutinised and discussions were held with pupils and the manager for science. Pupils in Year 2 explained the work that they had done during the school year, and planning was checked. Standards are broadly average in Year 2 and all pupils are achieving well. As many pupils started school with below average knowledge and understanding of the world, and below average language and social skills, this means that their achievement is good. Higher-attaining pupils are not tracked sufficiently rigorously to ensure that they attain the higher level in national tests in Year 2.
78. In the lesson seen during the inspection, teaching was good. The teacher was well organised, had clear learning objectives, used assessment well to plan work for pupils at different stages of learning, and set challenging tasks for all the pupils. A group of pupils used a relevant science program on laptop computers; this enhanced their learning. The class teacher and the learning support assistant worked together very well. They intervened skilfully to provide appropriate support when it was needed, and presented the right amount of challenge through effective questioning. Literacy and numeracy are developed effectively in science, as pupils record and measure during investigations.
79. There has been a good improvement in provision since the last inspection. Standards in Year 2 have improved, and detailed analysis of test results has resulted in more planned opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations. Pupils now have useful checklists in their books so that they can see how well they are getting on. The checklists show progress in achieving the steps necessary to reach each National Curriculum level in the investigative strand of science. The scheme of work has been revised so that it fully complies with the National Curriculum. A more rigorous assessment system has been put into place. However, pupils who have the potential to achieve the higher Level 3 are not tracked rigorously enough.
80. The leadership and management of science are very good. The subject manager has been monitoring teaching and learning in lessons and giving teachers developmental feedback. Evidence gained from the scrutiny of work, and from talking to pupils, shows that the impact of this feedback is good. But the subject manager recognises that more consistency in planning across the infant classes would be beneficial. Because of the extensive building work that has been taking place recently, the grounds of the school have not been used as much as usual for teaching science. When the work is complete the grounds will be used as an important resource once again.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**, with some very good features.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is well planned and used across the whole curriculum
- Children achieve well
- Resources are good and are improving
- Teachers teach and use ICT confidently
- A significant number of pupils work too slowly on the machines

## Commentary

81. Standards in ICT are average by the end of Year 2, and pupils achieve well. This is in line with standards at the time of the last inspection. However, pupils' attainment is improving rapidly because of the very good leadership. There is no difference between the performance of girls

and boys or of pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs, and pupils for whom English is an additional language, are supported well and have full access to the subject. The well organised use of the computer suite and systematic curricular planning, together with increasing use in other subjects, contribute to the school's success in keeping up with the developing importance of the subject. Good planning ensures that pupils experience all the areas of ICT required in the National Curriculum. Literacy and numeracy are developed well through its use.

82. Pupils' use of ICT is wider and more varied than is usually seen in infant schools, but in the lessons seen, many children were rather slow in using the keyboard. By the end of Year 2, they are secure in their use of the mouse, and are able to click on and drag images effectively. In geography, they create attractive maps by placing significant buildings and trees alongside the roads. They also plot their route to school from home on a local map. Pupils use the keyboard confidently for word-processing, though a significant number work slowly when copying text to the machines. Most carry out simple editing that involves using the cursor to move forward and back along the text to alter and correct features such as capital letters or wrong spellings. They save and print their work independently. The more able pupils make choices from menus, and can import pictures to add to text. In work linking with mathematics, pupils enter data and display their results in simple graphs; for example, they investigated the favourite fruits of their classmates. In art and design pupils use simple drawing packages to create pictures, and in links with mathematics, they draw attractive symmetrical pictures. Pupils record sequences of events, such as the growth of a bean seed in science, by moving appropriate pictures into squares. In history, they record growth from babyhood to childhood by placing images along a line representing time.
83. In a very good lesson in the computer suite, pupils followed and then wrote their own instructions to form simple shapes. Most drew a rectangle successfully, and knew that 90 degrees is a 'square corner'. Skills of control develop well as pupils guide a robotic toy, programming it to move in a given direction for a certain distance. Less able pupils were given instructions to follow and were well supported. Higher-attaining pupils devised their own instructions. Pupils benefit from seeing teachers use interactive whiteboards regularly. Work in English includes independent use of tape recorders to listen to music and stories. Use of ICT across the curriculum is very good. Digital cameras are used by pupils to record work in physical education. Links with a school in New Zealand, where a classmate has moved, provide opportunities for pupils to send e-mails. This further widens their experience of using technology and emphasises its many uses in modern society.
84. The quality of teaching is good, with evidence of some very good teaching. Staff are confident because of their very good professional training and regular support from the subject manager. This is a subject that pupils enjoy and they have very positive attitudes to it. It is taught effectively in the computer suite and skills are then practised and reinforced through the use of computers in the classrooms. Lessons are well planned and teachers are confident in their grasp of how the subject can enhance learning. In the suite, teachers explain tasks clearly, stop to correct or reinforce what pupils should be doing and encourage pupils to succeed. They give pupils time to explore programs and make mistakes without fear of criticism. This helps to build confidence as pupils practise newly learnt skills. Pupils usually work in pairs in the computer suite and this co-operative style of working makes a good contribution to their social development.
85. The accommodation and resources for ICT are good. The computer suite, machines in the classrooms, and interactive whiteboards in most rooms, provide a wide range of experience of modern technology for pupils. A set of six laptop computers allows teachers to organise intensive practice for pupils on a rota basis, as the machines are moved from class to class. Provision will improve further with the imminent addition of an up-to-date, computer suite. The range of software is good and serves all subjects well.

86. The subject manager provides very good leadership. She is enthusiastic and advises colleagues effectively. The scheme of work provides good support for teachers when planning lessons, and there is a very good system of assessment. Records are well kept, and analysis of how well pupils are doing is exemplary. Information from records gives parents and carers, as well as pupils, a clear indication of progress.

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

87. This is a strength of the school. ICT is promoted very well throughout the curriculum. Subject managers plan its use in all subjects, and teachers include it effectively in their planning. Pupils use it regularly as a tool for learning.

## **HUMANITIES**

Provision is **satisfactory** overall, with many good features.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**. Planning is based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus. There is a daily act of collective worship. Statutory requirements are met.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- School assemblies contribute well to religious education
- The curriculum is enriched by visits to places of worship and by visitors to the school

### **Commentary**

88. Work was sampled, assemblies were observed and pupils talked about what they had been learning. No judgement is given about the overall quality of teaching and learning, as the only teaching seen was that in assemblies. Standards of attainment are broadly in line with what would be expected, and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. In Year 1, pupils' work showed that they had been learning about the Christian and Hindu faiths. They developed their literacy skills in interesting writing about how Hindus celebrate Diwali and why Christians give gifts at Christmas. There was insufficient recorded work in Year 2, but pupils were able to talk satisfactorily about the work they had been doing. Bible stories are taught regularly both in assemblies and lessons, and pupils know that there are different places of worship. They also know that the principal milestones of life, such as birth and marriage, are celebrated in the religions they study – Christianity and Hinduism. The broad range of faiths highlighted in assemblies raises the self-esteem of pupils from minority ethnic heritages, who recognise that their cultures are valued in the school.
89. School assemblies linked well with religious education; for example, pupils were challenged to think about the important role of mothers. The teacher linked this assembly well to Mothering Sunday. She talked about the important qualities of her own mother, and she asked the pupils to reflect on the qualities of their own mothers. She then showed them a small statue of Mary to make the link with the life of Jesus in the Bible. Pupils are given an appropriate amount of time to reflect during collective worship, but a few find it hard to concentrate. Good opportunities for enrichment include visits to places of worship, and members of different faiths support the school well by coming in to talk to the pupils. A local Christian group came to tell the story of St Paul through drama and song.
90. Leadership and management are good. The subject manager has monitored attainment to ensure that requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus are met. She has identified that teachers need further training in the use of a range of resources for the subject. This is clearly identified in the school action plan, and the school has assembled a good range of artefacts to support the improvements.

## GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

Provision in geography and history is at least **satisfactory**.

### Commentary

91. Not enough evidence was gained from inspection to make secure judgements about teaching and learning in these subjects. Work was sampled, displays were scrutinised and discussions were held. An interview with a representative group of pupils suggested that their knowledge, understanding and skills are average and broadly in line with expectations. The evidence gathered indicates that satisfactory standards have been maintained since the last inspection and the subjects are managed well. In geography, pupils compared features of their own town with those of a contrasting locality, and knew how to use maps, including reference to a key. In history, pupils become increasingly aware of the passage of time. They recalled important features of life in Victorian times and compared them with those of today. A scrutiny of work showed that pupils cover the statutory curriculum. In both subjects, satisfactory assessment procedures are in place and resources, including the use of the locality, are good.
92. Displays show that work in both subjects is linked well to art and design and to ICT. Beautiful collage maps of the locality were created after pupils had been for walks, and pupils plotted their routes to school on local maps taken from the Internet. The presence of globes in the classrooms makes pupils aware of the wider world. They know that the blue represents water. In one class, pupils became more aware of the vast distance to New Zealand as they looked to see where a member of the class had moved to. They exchange e-mails with her. ICT was used effectively in history to create a time-line on which significant stages of their lives were recorded. Teachers enrich pupils' learning through visits and local walks; for example, pupils visit a Victorian working farm.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Provision is **good** in art and design, music and physical education. It is **satisfactory** in design and technology. Pupils' work was sampled in these four subjects, discussions were held with staff and pupils, and planning was scrutinised. As leadership and management improve, standards are rising and there is a sense of enthusiasm amongst staff and pupils. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from opportunities to express their ideas in subjects where the written word, though important, does not inhibit their enjoyment. The study of a range of cultures raises the self-esteem of pupils from minority ethnic heritages.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy a good range of activities
- Standards in art and design are above average
- Subject managers are enthusiastic

### Commentary

93. No lessons were seen in art and design, but from scrutiny of pupils' work it is clear that standards are above average by the end of Year 2. Pupils achieve very well and create imaginative two- and three-dimensional work using a wide range of materials. Leadership and management of the subject are very good and the school's organisation of the curriculum allows for art and design to be used and celebrated in many other subjects. In a topic about buildings, which had links with geography and history, pupils took rubbings of different patterns and designs. They made beautiful clay tiles, carefully decorated to show the detail of windows, doors and roofs. After a visit to a Hindu temple, pupils copied pictures of Vishnu and Lakshmi, using crayons well to create the dress, movement and spirit of the story. Teachers use the work of famous artists very well to inspire pupils; for example, Gustav Klimt's picture, 'The

Kiss', was recreated as a beautiful collage, using card, fabric and a range of papers to capture the shimmer and colour of the original picture. Retired teachers from the school have worked with pupils to make striking fabric collages of school scenes, both indoors and out. In very good pieces of work, pupils used pen and watercolour to reproduce the atmosphere in Tiffany's 'Memorial Window'. The extensive range of pupils' work reflects good teaching and curricular provision.

94. Part of only one lesson was seen in design and technology, and there was very little pupils' work available. No judgement can therefore be given on achievement, standards or the quality of teaching and learning. Planning for the subject covers the required areas of learning outlined in the National Curriculum. Some pupils in Year 2 talked about things they had made and done. Work in Year 2, on making vehicles, is broadly in line with expectations. Pupils were designing and making their vehicles well, and the teacher questioned the pupils every effectively at the end of the lesson. This encouraged them to evaluate their work and the work of other pupils. They considered ways in which the vehicles could be improved, and shared good ideas. Evaluation was a strength in the teaching and learning. Pupils in Year 1 are making fruit salad as part of their learning in food technology. This links well with the school's promotion of healthy eating. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The recently appointed subject manager has taken on her role positively and has ideas to enhance provision. She is planning to establish priorities for the development of the subject. She will monitor provision, teaching and learning as part of the school's rolling programme.
95. In music, pupils achieve well. Standards are in line with expectations by the end of Year 2, and they are improving. Teaching was good in the two lessons seen. The leadership and management are very good, and pupils are being exposed to a growing range of musical experiences. The recently appointed subject manager is knowledgeable and she conveys her own obvious enthusiasm to staff and pupils. In assemblies, pupils sing together with a good sense of rhythm and pitch. There is appropriate emphasis on listening. In assemblies, reflective music is played to create an appropriate atmosphere. Work on composition has developed well. In a good lesson, pupils created pieces of music inspired by pictures linked to a country walk they had completed the previous week. They chose from a wide range of instruments, and the resulting music was lovely. Sounds were combined to create a rural scene, against a background of the blowing wind. The teacher reminded pupils of the importance of silence, and reminded them of 'rests' in music when they play the recorder. At the end of the lesson, pupils listened thoughtfully to Grieg's 'Morning', and one pupil said that the flutes sounded like birds singing. A visitor played Asian drums for another class, and pupils joined in to create a variety of rhythms based on crotchets and quavers, represented as cats and kittens. The recorder is taught within the school day to all pupils in Year 2 who wish to play, and choir and recorder clubs provide valuable opportunities for pupils to practise and enhance skills learnt in lessons.
96. Three gymnastics lessons were observed in Year 2. The teaching and learning was good overall. It ranged from very good to satisfactory. In the better lessons, pupils were very active, displayed good attitudes to their work and were encouraged to aim for high standards of performance by trying their best and evaluating what they had done. In the less successful lesson, pupils were not active enough. There are regular games lessons in which pupils play hockey and acquire skills for team games. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils' attainment in gymnastics is broadly average but in one class pupils are attaining higher standards than in the other two. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject manager monitors provision and has identified, as priorities, the development of planning for gymnastics and the need to improve dance. After-school clubs provide valuable opportunities for pupils to practise and enhance their abilities and play in teams. Social skills are developed well in the subject as pupils learn to co-operate to achieve success.



## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are encouraged to be responsible from an early age
- They become confident because staff listen to them well and help them to sort out problems
- Healthy eating is promoted very well
- Extra-curricular activities provide opportunities for pupils to extend their learning in areas they enjoy
- Very good good relationships are fostered in circle time
- Staff are good role models

### Commentary

97. Pupils relate to one another and to adults very well. They are prepared very well for later life through the school's well-planned programme to ensure their good welfare and development. In religious education, pupils gain a growing understanding of the wide range of faiths and cultures and become more aware of the multicultural diversity of contemporary British society. Staff listen to pupils well, helping them to sort out their ideas and overcome minor problems, such as upsets in friendships. There are appropriate arrangements for the teaching of sex education, and making pupils aware of drugs and alcohol abuse. This is done effectively through science lessons; for example, pupils learn that animals reproduce their own kind, and that medicines have to be used carefully by adults. Sensitive teaching and support prepares pupils well for the later stages of life.
98. In the Reception year, children learn social skills such as taking turns, sharing and helping one another. Throughout the school, pupils are proud to be chosen to do jobs, such as taking the registers to the office, or being the monitor who tidies the tables at the end of lessons. Teachers plan time for pupils to express their views and air their ideas. In 'circle time', pupils in each class sit in a circle and discuss social issues. Support for charities through fund-raising events enables pupils to show concern for, and to help people less fortunate than themselves. Teachers promote ideas about healthy lifestyles in physical education and science lessons. The school has a healthy eating policy, and fruit is provided for pupils every day. Clubs give pupils the chance to play together in teams and learn the important lessons of pulling together to achieve success.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

*Inspection judgement*

*Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
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	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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