

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LOUDWATER COMBINED SCHOOL**

High Wycombe

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110524

Head teacher: Ann McGinty

Lead inspector: Grace Marriott

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> December 2003

Inspection number: 256781

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4 -11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	179
School address:	School Way Kingsmead Road High Wycombe
Postcode:	HP11 1JJ
Telephone number:	01494 524919
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Jones
Date of previous inspection:	October 2001

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Loudwater Combined School is an average-sized primary school on the edge of High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire. It is smaller than at the time of the last inspection. There are 179 pupils aged 4 to 11 on roll with slightly more girls than boys. The children come overwhelmingly from white UK backgrounds with a few children whose family origins are from countries outside the UK. Very few children have English as an additional language with none at an early stage of learning English. The school has no children from refugee or travellers families. The children come mainly from less affluent families though the proportion of families claiming free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of children with special educational needs is average, though no children have a statement. The main needs identified relate to emotional and behavioural difficulties, dyslexia and speech difficulties. The school has experienced considerable staff turnover in the past two years, with 12 staff leaving and 8 joining, though this has now stabilised. Most children start school in the Early Years (Reception) Class with broadly average knowledge, skills and understanding, though several have limited knowledge and skills for their age.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3674	Grace Marriott	Lead inspector	Science, Information and communication technology, Music, Religious education, English as an additional language,
9400	Pauline Adenwalla	Lay inspector	
20948	John Linstead	Team inspector	Mathematics, Design and technology, Physical education, Foundation stage,
16084	Margaret Coussins	Team inspector	English, Art, Geography, History, 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 MAIN 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>15</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS COURSES</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>29</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

#### **Loudwater Combined is an improving school which provides a satisfactory education.**

Standards are average, though boys are still underachieving in English. The head teacher is providing good leadership and is strongly supported by staff and governors who are very committed to ensuring that the school continues to improve. Teaching is sound overall, with particular strengths in the teaching in Year 2. Pupils and their parents are positive about the school and the quality of education provided. The school provides satisfactory value for money and no longer has serious weaknesses.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Teaching and learning in Year 2 are very good.
- The Year 6 test results in 2003 were well above average in English and above average in mathematics.
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes.
- Pupils have good speaking and listening skills.
- Assessment information not used well enough to match work to pupils' needs.
- Writing skills are weak and in general, boys are not achieving as much as they could in English.
- Schemes of work for different subjects have been improved, but are not yet matched well enough to the specific needs of the school.
- Co-ordinators not yet doing enough monitoring and supporting of teaching and learning.
- Specialist teaching and coaching in sport and music are good.
- The provision for personal social and health education is good.
- The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is good.

**The school has improved significantly since the last inspection.** Standards are higher, particularly in Year 6 and the provision for ICT and science now meet statutory requirements. Teaching and learning are better, with significantly less unsatisfactory teaching despite the difficulties of recruiting staff. Curriculum planning has improved but more still needs to be done to ensure that schemes of work meet pupils' different needs. Current priorities in the school improvement plan are based on a careful analysis of academic standards and quality of teaching and learning. It has an appropriate emphasis on raising standards and improving the quality of subject management to ensure the improvements are secure and lasting.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Achievement is satisfactory overall.** The children in the Early Years Department (Reception Class) are on track to reach the standards expected of children their age. They make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Results in the national tests for Year 6 pupils have improved significantly and were above average overall and as good as those schools whose pupils had achieved similar results in their Year 2 tests. Current standards in Year 6 are average which reflects the differences in ability between the two year groups. Pupils are achieving at a standard which is consistent with their previous work. Test results for Year 2 pupils have not yet improved and in 2003 they were below the national average. However, current Year 2

pupils are working to a much higher standard. Speaking and listening are good and pupils of all ages discuss and ask questions sensibly. Reading standards are average, but there are weaknesses in writing and the presentation of work, particularly where boys are concerned. Achievement in numeracy is satisfactory though some more able pupils are not achieving as well as they could. Standards in ICT are much improved and are now at least average, with much of the work that is above average.

**Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good.** They have good attitudes to learning. Attendance and punctuality are good and support achievement effectively. The school is successful in promoting respect for others.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is satisfactory.**

**The teaching is satisfactory overall**, with significant strengths in Key Stage 1, particularly in Year 2 where the level of challenge is high and pupils respond very well. Lesson planning and assessment are satisfactory overall, but more could be done to challenge some higher-attainers. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall and individual support is often good. Pupils with special educational needs are well-supported by learning support assistants working closely with class teachers. ICT is well taught and this strongly supports work in other subjects. The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. Enrichment and extra-curricular provision are good for older pupils and good in terms of visitors to the school for all, but much less is provided for younger children. The use of visits to extend and enhance pupils' education is limited. The school has good arrangements for promoting the care and welfare of pupils and monitors personal development well. Monitoring of academic development is satisfactory.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are satisfactory overall.** The head teacher is providing good leadership and the relatively new governing body is well-informed and keen to work with the school to raise standards. Most subject co-ordinators have only recently taken on their responsibilities. They clearly understand what they should be doing and have made a sound start, but have not yet been able to achieve a great deal.

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

The school works hard to build a constructive partnership with parents and they are positive about the school. Pupils' views are taken seriously and they enjoy coming to school. Both parents and pupils thought that behaviour had improved. Most pupils are positive about school and prepared to work, particularly when well taught.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

To raise standards further and to build on what has been achieved, the most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Use the assessment information available to plan work which meets the needs of the range of pupils in each class, particularly the extension work for the potential high achievers.
- Improve writing and raise the overall standards achieved in English, particularly for boys.
- Ensure that schemes of work and planning are modified to meet the specific needs of the school.
- Implement as quickly as possible the plans for co-ordinators to monitor and support teaching and learning in their subjects.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6. In 2003 the test results in Year 6 were good overall. Current standards in Year 6 are average. Test results for Year 2 pupils were well below average. However, current Year 2 pupils are working to a satisfactory standard.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 results in 2003 were well above average in English and above average in mathematics.
- Speaking and listening standards are good across the school.
- Children's personal and social development and mathematical development are good in the Early Years Department.
- Year 2 results in 2003 were not as good as other schools.
- Written work not as good as oral work and spelling is a weakness across the school.
- Girls are doing better than boys in English.
- Some of the ICT work is good.
- In music the standard of singing is good.

#### Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.4 (15.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.3 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.0 (15.9)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2002.*

#### Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5(25.9)	26.8(27.0)
mathematics	27.8(24.8)	26.8(26.7)
science	29.2(26.5)	28.6(28.3)

*There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2002.*

#### Commentary

1. Results in the national tests for Year 6 pupils have improved significantly and in 2003 were above average and as good as those schools whose pupils had achieved similar results in their Year 2 tests. Test results for Year 2 pupils have not yet improved and in 2003 they were below the national average. The school is working hard to improve standards and this is reflected in the quality of teaching, particularly in Year 2. In both Year 6 and Year 2 standards are now in line with national expectations. In general, pupils are achieving at a level which is consistent with their previous work, though in mathematics and science some more able pupils are not being challenged enough. Pupils with special educational needs make progress at a similar rate to other pupils, as do the very few pupils for whom English is an additional language.

2. Children in the Early Years department are on track to achieve the nationally recommended early learning goals by the time they are ready to start Year 1. There is a wide difference in the ages and previous experience of children in the class, with nearly a year separating the oldest and youngest. In general they start school with broadly average knowledge, skills and understanding though with a number who have limited knowledge and skills for their age. They make good progress and achieve well in their personal social development, mathematics and in speaking and listening. In other areas their progress and achievement are satisfactory.

3. In English, standards in speaking and listening are good in all year groups. Pupils of all ages discuss well in class. They ask and answer questions sensibly and listen well to other pupils and teachers. Reading standards are satisfactory. Pupils are confident and read competently when reading fiction as they can work out how a story makes sense. They are not as competent with non-fiction where they need to rely on different strategies. There are weaknesses in the standard of writing and presentation of work, particularly where boys are concerned.

4. Achievement in numeracy is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop a sound grasp of number and use a range of strategies to calculate mentally with reasonable accuracy. They measure accurately and compile charts and graphs well using data they have collected. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build satisfactorily on their knowledge and understanding gained in the earlier classes. They use a wider range of strategies to solve problems or calculate mentally. They have a good understanding of place value. However, some more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not achieving as well as they could.

5. Girls are achieving significantly better than boys in English. The difference is not as great in mathematics or science though the boys have weaker writing skills and this affects the standard of work and the quality of presentation. For example, they do not always take enough care in drawing diagrams or recording the results of investigations. In all the subjects where it was possible to make a judgement, standards are broadly in line with expectations and pupils' achievements are at least satisfactory. In ICT pupils are now achieving well. Standards are much improved and are now at least average overall with some areas, for example data handling and the use of graphics, where standards are better than expected. Pupils also have a good appreciation of the use of ICT in real life. Standards in music are generally in line with expectations but the standard of singing is good.

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

Pupils' attitudes to school are **good**. Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is good. The school is successful in promoting its aims of belonging and respect. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this has a positive impact on their personal development. Attendance and punctuality are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- Pupils show respect for others and have very good understanding of right and wrong.
- Relationships between all members of the school community are good.
- House captains show a strong sense of responsibility.
- Pupils other than Year 6 do not have enough opportunities to be enterprising and take responsibility.

### **Commentary**

6. Attendance is slightly above the national average and there is little unauthorised absence. Most pupils are usually punctual to school. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. The school has very good procedures to promote attendance, punctuality and to discourage parents from taking their children on holiday during term time.

7. Throughout the school pupils interest in school life and the range of activities provided is good. They listen attentively in most lessons, particularly where the teaching is good. When given the

opportunity, pupils work well independently. When working in small groups they co-operate happily and effectively, as was seen in Year 3 numeracy and Year 2 Art. Pupils willingly share their work with the rest of the class, developing confidence and a sense of sharing knowledge with the friends. A good example of this was Year 1 pupils confidently reading to the whole class their descriptions of 'Elmer the Elephant'. The learning ethos permeates the school and contributes to the improvement in progress and achievement since the last inspection.

8. Behaviour throughout the school is good. The vast majority of pupils are very friendly and polite. They show care and concern for others and respect adults. The Year 6 House Captains look after younger pupils at lunchtime and this is effective in fostering good pupil relationships. Pupils are well acquainted with the school's system of rewards and sanctions. Teaching and non-teaching staff set a good example of the high standards of behaviour the school expects. Pupils and parents were positive in their praise of the school's prompt actions in respect of any unacceptable behaviour. Plans to form a school council are in hand. There have been no exclusions this academic year.

9. The school's provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. The provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are polite towards each other and adults, for example, opening doors for adults and allowing others to pass on the numerous staircases. Assemblies are used effectively to promote a deeper understanding of how other people might feel and pupils are encouraged to discuss their own feelings in a variety of situations, for example, in a Year 6 PHSE lesson on bullying. Pupils learn about other cultures in a variety of ways, including visiting drama groups. Artefacts from around the world are displayed throughout the school and pupils learn about different faiths and customs. There is a good sense of community within the school and pupils from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds work and play well together.

10. Children in the Early Years Department make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The good induction procedures that the school has in place ensure that children settle happily and know the school routines well. Behaviour is good and children learn to play and work together.

***Ethnic background of pupils***

***Exclusions in the last school year***

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	133		
White – any other White background	3		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	7		
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	2	
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	7		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4		
Black or Black British – African	2		
Chinese	4		
No ethnic group recorded	10	1	

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

## Attendance

### Attendance in 2002/2003

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.2
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.2
National data:	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school is providing its pupils with a **satisfactory** education and it is an improving school. Teaching is sound overall, with particular strengths in the teaching in Year 2, however, in most year groups, assessment information and target setting could be used more effectively. The care provided for pupils is good and the support for academic development is sound. The school works well with parents.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They have improved since the time of the previous inspection and well over nine out of every ten lessons were satisfactory or better. There was some good teaching in every year group but it was particularly good overall in Year 2. The school has gone through a period of difficulty in recruiting staff but this has been managed well to minimise the impact on the standards pupils are achieving.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in Year 2 are consistently high quality.
- The individual teaching in Foundation Stage is good.
- The teaching of ICT is good.
- Teachers strongly emphasise developing vocabulary and speaking skills.
- Lessons motivate and encourage pupils to work hard and learn well.
- Classroom assistants provide good support to enable pupils to participate full in lessons.
- Planning does not always meet the specific needs of all the ability groups within the classes.
- Marking and assessment are not used consistently enough to set targets or help pupils to understand how to improve their work.

### Commentary

11. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is sound overall, with particular strengths in the way in which staff work with individual children. This aspect of the work is very well planned and organised so that the children have a range of interesting learning experiences and learn to make choices, and work and play independently. This enables children to make good progress in personal and social development. In other areas the teaching, for example of the early stages of reading and number work, is good when adults are working with individual children and are able to develop their vocabulary and knowledge well. It is less effective (though still satisfactory) in larger groups where some children may already have mastered a particular skill and are ready to move on more quickly than the rest.

12. Where the teaching was good and often very good, as for example in Year 2, the sessions were lively, interesting and made very good use of the time available. The work was challenging and the use of skilful questioning extended pupils' knowledge and developed their understanding. This was also true in the other lessons such as a design and technology lesson seen in Year 1 where questioning helped pupils to evaluate and improve their work. In a PE lesson in Year 2 (taken by a specialist coach) very good subject knowledge, the use of demonstration by both teacher and pupils developed practical skills and built their confidence. There were also examples in other classes of good teaching which developed pupils' ability to work both independently and in groups. Teachers

work hard to extend pupils' vocabulary in the different subjects, for example by ensuring that pupils learn the correct scientific or mathematical terms, though occasionally the vocabulary used was too difficult for some pupils. In many lessons in every class the learning support assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning. They are well briefed about the work and provide good support for groups of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs which enable them to participate fully in class.

13. The main weakness in the satisfactory teaching in most classes is that teachers tend to plan a very similar range of work for all pupils which does not always meet their needs. The expectation is often that more able pupils will develop the work to a higher level but in practice the tasks, or the time allowed, do not always allow for this. Teachers normally share the aims of lessons with the pupils which helps them to understand what is expected and they respond appropriately and work well. On a few occasions when the pupils did not understand what was expected, or the pace of the lessons slowed, pupils became restless and inattentive and did not achieve as much. In the lessons which were unsatisfactory the work did not develop pupils' knowledge and understanding further by take enough account either of what the pupils could already do or what they were finding difficult.

14. In English the teaching is satisfactory overall, with the main strength in the way in which teachers develop pupils speaking and listening skills. The teaching of writing skills is less effective, particularly where boys are concerned. In mathematics teachers provide a range of activities to interest and motivate pupils. This has helped them to develop the range of strategies they use to solve problems. However, the work planned does not always provide enough challenge for the potentially highest attainers. In the school as a whole the teaching of ICT is good. The computer suite is effectively used to teach pupils a range of skills and they are able to apply these confidently and competently to work in a range of subjects.

15. The quality of assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory overall. Teachers assess work regularly in relation to the expected levels of the National Curriculum and know what their pupils have achieved but in most classes are not using this information as systematically as they could when planning future work or in setting targets with individuals or groups of pupils. Work is regularly marked and discussed with pupils, though the written marking does not always give pupils much guidance on how to improve their work.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5 (12 %)	10 (25%)	25 (58%)	2 (5%)	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 curriculum is **satisfactory**. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the agreed syllabus for religious education by providing a suitably broad and balanced range of activities which are interesting and relevant to the pupils.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Specialist facilities in science and ICT are good.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- The resources and accommodation for pupils in the Foundation Stage are good, though the outdoor area is not used as much as it could be.
- Curriculum planning, including schemes of work, does not always meet the specific needs of the school or individual pupils.
- The wide range of visitors enriches the curriculum.

## Commentary

16. The wide range of visitors enriches the curriculum. Wycombe Wanderers Football team, a history specialist and a well-known astronomer whose recent visits are much appreciated. The pupils benefit greatly from their contributions. The extra-curricular provision including football, hockey, music, and homework clubs is good for older pupils but very limited for younger pupils. The school makes relatively little use of visits to places of interest.

17. The specialist facilities for ICT and science have improved the curriculum and standards in these subjects. Pupils make good use of the ICT suite and there is an increased use of ICT in other subjects as a result of teachers' developing confidence and expertise. The science room has contributed significantly to improved standards in science and to increasing pupils' interest in the subject.

18. The good provision for personal, social and health education is a strong feature of the school throughout all the classes. The school is positively committed to ensuring that all pupils receive a good education and tries to promote pupils' equality of opportunity well.

19. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is spacious and enables groups of children to work comfortably on different activities from the areas of learning at the same time. All areas of learning are provided, but there is scope to improve the variety and breadth of the activities particularly by fully integrating the outside area into the classroom. The accommodation for Years 1 and 2 is adequate, but the classrooms are small and the shared space outside the rooms is difficult to use effectively.

20. The National Literacy and Numeracy strategies have been implemented effectively and curriculum planning in other subjects has improved with the introduction of more detailed schemes of work than were in use at the time of the last inspection. These are helpful but not always used flexibly enough. The revision and development of schemes of work which are more suited to the pupils needs is a high priority, but is at an early stage as many subject co-ordinators are new in role.

## Care, guidance and support

The school's provision for pupils' care and welfare and compliance with statutory health and safety requirements is **good** overall. Provision for monitoring academic development is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality of care offered, which provides a good foundation for raising achievement.
- Good induction procedures help Early Years settle quickly.
- Pupils' views are respected but formal methods of consultation have yet to be implemented.
- Limited use of pupil tracking and target setting to influence planning.

## Commentary

21. The school takes good care of its pupils. The procedures for Child Protection are well known to the head teacher. To ensure consistent understanding throughout the school all current staff are scheduled to attend a course on the subject in January 2004. The school is kept clean and in satisfactory repair and the pupils take care of their environment. For example, in Year 3 geography lessons, pupils surveyed the school grounds, took pictures and wrote letters in their ICT lessons to the school caretaker identifying problem areas. The school has good procedures for ensuring pupils safety despite the difficulties arising from the layout of the site and buildings. There is a dedicated First Aid room and staff are appropriately trained.

22. The school has good monitoring systems. Staff know the pupils very well. Pupils feel valued and know that there is an adult that they can go to if they are worried about something. Pupils' questionnaires and discussions indicate that they like their teachers and enjoy coming to school. Personal achievements are celebrated regularly in assemblies, for example the Golden Book and the House Points system. The regular assessment against National Curriculum levels helps to track

pupils' progress and supports the achievement of most pupils, though some more able pupils are not always challenged enough. However, the support for pupils with special educational needs is usually good. Their particular needs are identified, and the support provided in class is well-targeted and carefully monitored.

23. The school has good induction arrangements for children joining the Early Years Department. Children are gradually settled in to full time school and are very confident with school routines. The new head teacher is developing links with the local secondary schools. Pupils feel confident for their move into Year 7. The school's formal involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is limited. The house captains take their responsibilities seriously and feed back their concerns to the head teacher and the school at assembly. They are confident that notice is taken of their views. There are plans to extend responsibility by introducing a school council.

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

The school's partnership with parents is **good**. The community links and those with other schools are not extensive but they are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have positive views of the school and, as a result, feel included in their children's learning.
- School regularly surveys parents and the governing body responds well to issues raised.
- The Friends Association is supportive and makes a significant contribution to the school's resources.
- The links with the community are limited but those which take place are good.
- Reports to parents are not always pertinent to the individual pupil.

### **Commentary**

24. The school has good links with parents. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. There is a very active Friends Association that raises significant sums of money for the school and organises social events. Parents are confident that the school is doing a good job, and gives them sufficient information about how well their children are doing. Parent's evenings are well attended and the school deals with complaints effectively.

25. The school's links with the community are limited but are good, particularly in terms of developing pupils' personal and social skills and in sport. The school holds festivals at the local church and the choir sings for the elderly. However, they make little use of the area as a resource and there are few visits to places of interest. There are plans to re introduce residential school journeys. Pupils have recently participated in fund raising schemes for Save the Children and Barnardos. The school has recently benefited from visits from the Wycombe Wanderers coaches and the links with Wasps Rugby club. These have led to pupils participating successfully in sporting events across the borough. Children are helped to settle quickly and confidently into school life. The school currently has satisfactory links with local secondary schools for the transfer of pupils.

26. A few parents had concerns about the adequacy of supervision at lunch time but the inspection team did not share this particular concern. The supervisors and pupils thought behaviour had improved this term. They also indicated that the introduction of additional and more varied play equipment had helped enliven playtimes. The inspection evidence supported the parental view that the provision for younger children is limited and apart from choir, the extra curricular clubs are mostly for older pupils. The inspection evidence also supported the views of some parents' that where teaching is less good, higher achieving pupils are not always challenged enough. Homework is satisfactory overall but not always set consistently in every class. The school provides a homework club and there was evidence of older pupils doing Internet research at lunchtime.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The recently appointed head teacher and governing body have established good working relationships and are strongly committed to ensuring that the school continues to improve.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The head teacher has shown good leadership in the short time she has been in post.
- Subject co-ordinators have not been in post long enough to have an impact on teaching and learning.
- The school has made effective use of the good support from the local education authority.
- Financial management is good.

### **Commentary**

27. The membership of the governing body has changed significantly since the last inspection and most governors are relatively new. It is, however, well organised and fulfilling all of its statutory responsibilities. Governors are keen and looking forward to playing a major part in the continuing development of the school. They are well informed but also aware of their need to gain further expertise and experience in order to provide support and challenge to the school in its efforts to improve. For example, they have well laid plans to improve the number and quality of their visits and to continue their training. They have closely monitored the progress of the school following the previous inspection. The head teacher and local authority provided high quality information and support for governors in this so that they have a good grasp of how the school has improved and the areas in which it still needs to do better. Governors use data well to measure how the school is doing compared to similar schools. They have also made good use of information provided by parents to judge the school and make improvements. They are now planning a more active role in shaping the improvement plans drawn up by the new head teacher to move the school forward. They are determined to set challenging targets so that initiatives focus sharply on what needs to be done.

28. The leadership of the head teacher is good. She has a clear vision of how the school is to improve and has successfully motivated others to share her determination to raise standards. She firmly believes in creating an environment in which all are valued and included and where individual needs are well catered for. The head teacher has been in post for less than a term but has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. She has used the support of the local education authority well to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. This has enabled her, at an early stage, to recognise what needs to be done to continue the school's progress. She has drawn up good plans for improvement, concentrating on the raising of standards. The head teacher has also provided training for teachers and monitored lessons. She recognises the need to develop senior managers and has begun to lead them into the roles she expects them to play in the near future.

29. The management of the school is satisfactory. The head teacher is developing the school's management structure and ensuring subject co-ordinators play a more significant part in decision making. Many are new in post and have had little opportunity to play a leading part in their subject's development. At the moment there is little monitoring of teaching, revision of planning or scrutiny of work by co-ordinators. When co-ordinators have had time to consolidate, significant improvements have been made as for example in science, information and communication technology and the management of special needs provision. The head teacher is developing the school's tracking and analysis of progress to measure performance and more effective individual targets are beginning to be set. The school has its performance management systems in place and all staff targets and continuing professional development are clearly linked to the school's plans for improvement. The contributions of non-teaching staff are valued and they are included in these systems. The quality of the school's provision for the continuing professional development of its staff is recognised in the award of 'Investors in People' status. The school has managed to stabilise its staffing for the past year following a time of considerable staff turnover. This, and the improvements in the quality of teaching, have led to the better results achieved in recent national tests in Year 6, though not yet in Year 2.

30. The school manages its finances well. The school's bursar provides regular reports for governors and senior managers, and good data for them to consider alternative budget projections. Through prudent management and informed, strategic planning the school has cleared its deficit budget. The financial implications of the school's plans for improvement are well considered and spending closely analysed and checked. The school considers the value of its financial decisions. Governors are aware of the benefits obtained from the investment in more resources for information and communications technology for both pupils and staff. The school's day-to-day financial transactions are well managed.

31. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and continues to improve. It is well aware of the need to continue to raise standards and its plans to do so are well made. It has successfully overcome the difficulties it has had in making appointments and the improved staffing has led to better results. It has made good use of advice and support from the local authority. It has also sought and acted on the views of parents in order to improve. One outcome, is the provision of a further parents' consultation evening. The school has a head teacher who is a good leader, a stable staffing situation and a good team spirit among all those associated with it and is well placed to continue to improve.

### **Financial information**

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	499124
Total expenditure	491375
Expenditure per pupil	2745

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	30140
Balance carried forward to the next	37889

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

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

Overall the provision for children in the class is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths**

- Good support for individual children.
- The assessment of what children can do is good.
- Adults provide good role models.

#### **Commentary**

32. Since the last inspection the school has amalgamated its early years provision into one reception class from which children enter Year 1. There is a wide difference in the ages of children in the class with nearly a year separating the oldest and youngest. However, children settle quickly and soon adapt to the daily routines. The accommodation available is good. The reception classroom offers space for practical activities that are used effectively to support learning and provide children with time to learn through play. The outdoor area is sufficient for children to use the play equipment and move around with space and safety but it is not used as fully as it might be. Other activities are more formally structured and used well to link the different areas of learning. The planning of work provides a good range and variety of activities throughout the day.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

#### **Main strengths**

- Children learn to co-operate well, taking turns and sharing equipment.
- Good individual support and attention meets children's learning needs well.

#### **Commentary**

33. Children are achieving well in this area. The classroom is well organised to ensure that children can learn from the activities provided. A good balance is struck between activities that children choose and those that they are asked to undertake. Teachers provide almost individual attention because of the relatively small numbers so children's learning needs are being met most effectively. Adults take great care to create a calm working atmosphere in which children learn to behave well and co-operate with each other. For example, two children were most polite to each other and shared the use of the mouse equally when playing a computer game. Children listen to each other well, take turns when playing games and choose activities for themselves when given the opportunity. The gains children have made in this area prepare them well in all other areas of learning as they develop positive attitudes to learning, especially in collaboration with others.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

Provision and teaching in communication, language and literacy are **satisfactory**.

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

- Most children talk freely, often using whole sentences and express themselves well.
- Adults give considerable emphasis to talking with children as they play or work with them which promotes language development well.
- The teaching of letter sounds is not helping some children to make faster progress.

## **Commentary**

34. Children start with skills in this area that are in line with those expected and most are on course to reach the expected learning goals. Most children talk freely, often using whole sentences and express themselves well. In one lesson, for example, children pretended to be characters in a book they had read and answered questions posed to them from the rest of the class. These questions, and their answers, showed a good understanding of the story and the sorts of things the characters might say. Adults talk to children calmly and set good models of speech for them. Considerable emphasis is given to talking with children as they play or work with adults which promotes language development well. Children enjoy listening to stories and practising reading. Most children tell their own stories from the pictures but there are also a few more able children who are reading whole books and writing simple sentences. Others are beginning to write recognisable words and all have an appropriate knowledge of the sounds letters make. At the moment teachers mainly concentrate on the learning of one new sound every week and planned activities consolidate this learning well. However, teachers' planning is not sufficient for needs of some children who are clearly able and ready to cope with more than this.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All children are likely to achieve the expected standards and the higher achievers are already close to these targets.
- Teachers make good use of the opportunities during the day to re-inforce children's knowledge and understanding.
- The planning of some work does not take enough account of children's different abilities.

## **Commentary**

35. Children are achieving well against their expected attainments and all are on course to reach the early learning goals for children in the foundation stage. Some more able pupils are close to reaching these now. Children accurately count and order numbers to ten with many able to add one to a given number. This was evident in games involving dice in which children moved their markers correctly and in their responses to questions from their teachers. Teachers make good use of the opportunities that present themselves during the day. These include registration, rearranging number lines, buying items in the class shop and using the computer with mathematics games. Children's understanding of number is also reinforced well through planned activities in sand, water and play dough. Children are beginning to recognise patterns and shapes in the world and for example, can continue a repeating pattern or describe the properties of a cube. They form simple sets of animals or objects with a common property. Teachers make good use of the opportunities afforded by the small numbers of children in the class to give individual support but the planning of 'formal work' takes insufficient account of children's different abilities. All children are currently on the same page of the mathematics scheme being used although there are clear differences in their levels of understanding.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strength**

- The range of resources is good.

### **Commentary**

36. Children are achieving at the expected levels for their ages. There are good resources that children can choose such as the small toys and train tracks that allow them to learn about the world around them. Baking activities provide a rich source of learning which includes watching how ingredients mix and change and also developing mathematical language. Children use computers confidently, showing that they can use the mouse skilfully to move objects around the screen. They also used small tools well when using glue and scissors to assemble different materials to make a manger scene for their Christmas cards. In their conversations children talk freely about their experiences, such as what they have done at home. These show they have an appreciation of the passing of time and the order in which events happen.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strength**

- Children join in physical education confidently and translate feelings and ideas into physical movements.

### **Commentary**

37. Children have the appropriate skills for using large play equipment and construction materials. They have access to a satisfactory range of outdoor play toys in the outside play area. They are expected to spend some time learning from the resources in the classroom but have some freedom to choose from indoor or outdoor play once this time has passed. Children use the various toys and climbing and balancing equipment, showing skills that are typical for their age. Adults provide appropriate teaching, encouraging children to move with care and to share toys and equipment. Children change for physical education lessons in the hall independently and move around the indoor space confidently. They have good body control and are aware of safety needs, taking care to avoid collisions for example. They can translate the feelings and emotions music conjures into actions. This was well illustrated in one lesson for example when children marched, stomped and used facial expressions showing a 'bad mood.' Children's skills in the finer movements needed for writing, drawing and painting are appropriately developed. Teachers demonstrate and help children to use paint brushes and form letters correctly using a variety of means. By the end of reception, children's skills in physical activities and those used in activities such as painting are close to the expected levels.

### **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strength and weakness**

- Children have many opportunities for imaginative play.
- The classroom displays are not providing as exciting and stimulating an environment as they could.

## **Commentary**

38. Teaching is sound and children make appropriate gains in their learning. Their achievements are satisfactory and most are on course to reach the levels expected by the end of the reception year. There are many opportunities for children to use their imagination through play in home corners and through exploring materials, for example through buying and selling in the class shop and using the dressing up clothes available. Some displays have a creative learning element although overall they do not create an exciting and invigorating environment. Children are helped to observe closely and to draw with care. They have used the computer to good effect and showed good progress in making a picture of a candle for example. In their play children take on the roles of different characters inventing dialogue, for example buying things in the shop. They also direct others to do the same with instructions such as, ' You be the shopkeeper and sell me those.' Children listen to music and describe their feelings appropriately as well as interpret it in dance and body movements.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Speaking and listening are good across the school.
- Standards in English in Years 3 to 6 are improving.
- Higher attaining pupils achieve well across the school.
- Too many pupils have moved into Years 3 to 6 without being able to read well enough for their age group.
- Spelling, handwriting and presentation are weaknesses.
- The standard of boys' writing is not as good as that of girls.

#### **Commentary**

39. The 2003 results in Year 2 for reading and writing were below the national average, but the inspection found that standards are improving in the current Year 2 because of good quality teaching. At both key stages more pupils achieved the higher levels (levels 3 and 5) than pupils did so nationally. In Year 2, some pupils underachieved in reading. The school has made good progress in developing pupils' English skills at Key Stage 2 and the test results in 2003 were well above average. This was a significant improvement over the previous year and since the last inspection. Current standards in Year 6 are broadly average, mainly because there are fewer pupils of higher ability.

40. Achievement is satisfactory overall with higher attainers achieving well at both key stages. There are however, significant weaknesses in boys' writing at both key stages although this is more marked in the younger classes. Spelling, handwriting and presentation are not good enough to help pupils improve their overall standards in writing. Many younger pupils spell in a way which is phonetically plausible, but inaccurate as they do not have enough knowledge about letter combination and are writing only what they can hear. These inaccuracies are also evident in the older classes. Handwriting is sometimes untidy and teachers do not always present pupils with consistent models of handwriting to ensure they develop a fluent, legible, joined up style. The presentation of their work is sometimes untidy and in general teachers do not have high enough expectations for acceptable standards.

41. Standards in speaking and listening are good because boys and girls of all ages have a broad and rich vocabulary so they can communicate well with each other and adults. Teachers and support staff provide good role models.

42. Standards in reading are satisfactory overall although there are significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls. The school has identified this in the school improvement plan. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 read their reading books with confidence as they are very familiar with the stories and can work out how a story makes sense, though they could not name authors whose books they enjoy. They find it harder to read non-fiction books where the meaning is less obvious and they need to rely on different strategies.

43. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are enthusiastic readers who can talk about preferences for the work of different authors and write their own work in the style of an author they like. Anne Fine was a popular choice for many of the Year 6 pupils. They are generally fluent and competent readers of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. There are well organised book areas in most classes and interesting book displays which include those for research in other areas of the curriculum. There are however, books in classrooms and in the library which are worn and need updating or replacing.

44. Pupils with special educational needs in English achieve well when they are working towards targets in their individual education plans. The targets are detailed and relevant to their needs. This is an improvement since the last inspection due to the focus given to target setting by the special educational needs co-ordinator.

45. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall. However, the best teaching is having a very positive impact on standards and achievement. In Years 1 and 2 teachers are working hard to improve reading through whole class shared reading sessions where they demonstrate successful reading strategies. In Year 2, in a very successful spelling lesson, the teacher made the learning fun and exciting, and as a result, pupils learnt very well and standards and achievement were good. Similarly in a lesson in Year 6 where reading was well taught the resources appealed to boys, the marking was constructive and pupils had more opportunities to write in different styles for different purposes. In general the teaching of oral skills is good. Whole class sessions at the beginning of literacy lessons enable pupils to develop good listening skills and become confident speakers. In other aspects of English teaching is satisfactory but questioning is not as thorough or probing as it could be and does not develop pupils' knowledge and understanding as well as it could. Though teachers discuss work with pupils, written marking did not give pupils very much guidance on how to improve their work.

46. The English co-ordinator has a clear view of what needs to be improved and appropriate plans for developing the leadership and monitoring in the subject. For example, the staff are now planning specifically for the improvement of writing as a result of careful analysis and assessment of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work and their answers in recent tests.

### **Literacy across the curriculum**

47. Speaking and listening skills are promoted well in other subjects and pupils use these well in discussion. Weaknesses in writing, including spelling and handwriting, can be a barrier to learning in other subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strength and weaknesses**

- Teachers motivate pupils well so that they work hard and have positive attitudes to learning.
- The planning of activities is not well enough matched to pupils' different abilities.
- Teachers' marking is inconsistent.

### **Commentary**

48. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are achieving satisfactorily and reaching levels of attainment that are broadly in line with what is expected for their age by Year 2. This is better than the standards suggested by the results of the national tests earlier this year when pupils' attainment was below the national average. These results reflect the improvements in teaching, assessment and planning. Pupils develop a sound grasp of number and use a range of strategies to mentally calculate. They are mostly accurate when using different number operations and have an appropriate knowledge of number bonds and tables. Pupils measure accurately and compile charts and graphs well using data they have collected.

49. By Year 6 pupils achieve satisfactorily and are reaching standards that are in line with the national average. However, they have the potential to achieve better than this, especially more able pupils who are not at present being sufficiently challenged. The national tests earlier this year showed pupils reached standards which were above the national average. This represented a significant improvement over previous years' standards when attainment had been consistently below or well below average. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build satisfactorily on their knowledge and understanding gained in the earlier classes. They have increased the strategies they use to solve problems or calculate mentally. For example they have a good understanding of place value and use

this well when dealing with large numbers or fractions of a whole. Pupils work hard and settle quickly to their tasks. When given the chance they organise themselves well, work collaboratively and show good attitudes to learning.

50. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers motivate their pupils well by sharing the learning objectives to give meaning to their work and then providing interesting activities. For example older pupils collected their own data and constructed their own graphs from books they found in the classroom. Earlier pupils had collected data and produced graphs at home which they were keen to show. In a class of younger pupils the teacher used a variety of activities to keep interest high. Pupils discussed ideas on 'time' as a whole, used clocks individually then played games and completed group tasks. They worked hard but clearly enjoyed the activities. In the best lessons teachers make good use of questions and pupils' responses to deepen understanding and provide ideas for all to share.

51. The weaknesses in teaching are in the planning and marking of work. Teachers have only recently had access to a co-ordinated scheme of work but this is not being used consistently enough in all classes. In the best lessons the learning objectives are clear and activities are well suited to the levels of understanding. Most teachers set different group tasks but the planning for different abilities, especially for the most able, does not consistently build on what pupils can do and so extend their knowledge. Older pupils practised making more graphs rather than being given a more challenging task which would extend their understanding of how to use and present the data. A scrutiny of pupils' work over time shows little difference in what is set only in how well pupils accomplish the tasks. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. All teachers praise pupils and usually mark work for accuracy. Pupils in Year 2 have individual targets which focus specifically on what they need to do to improve. But relatively little written marking shows pupils where they went wrong or clear ways to improve their work next time.

52. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The head teacher has analysed pupils' answers in the recent national tests in Key Stage 2 to highlight possible areas of weakness. However, she has had too little time to make an impact on the school's provision. At the moment the school's schemes of work lack cohesion with little indication of how skills, knowledge and understanding are to be developed systematically.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

53. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use mathematics across the curriculum. Pupils collect data and produce graphs in science and geography. They also use mathematical skills in using different aspects of ICT.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in science have improved since the last inspection.
- The specialist science room is well used.
- The emphasis on practical and investigative work is helping to raise standards.
- ICT is being well-used to support pupils' learning.
- More needs to be done on providing work which is challenging for the more able pupils.
- The quality of presentation of pupils' work is too variable.

## Commentary

54. In 2003, results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 showed standards which were higher in terms of the expected level 2 than the national standards and better than those achieved in the two previous years. However, the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level 3 has been well below average. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have also shown some improvement over the last two years and are now broadly average both in terms of the expected level 4 and the higher level 5. The pupils achieved results in Year 6 which were consistent with their Year 2 assessments and the results of girls and boys were similar. Current standards in Years 2 and 6 are also broadly average. Science results, and overall standards, have improved to a significant extent because of improvements to the planning of work, better resources and some specialist teaching.

55. In the lessons observed the teaching was satisfactory overall, with strengths in the way in which teachers develop pupils' knowledge of scientific vocabulary and their understanding of scientific method. Pupils in Year 1 were able to suggest a variety of ways in which they could test materials to see which ones were waterproof. In Year 4 they understood the need for devising a fair test to find out which materials were the best insulators, though they did not recognise quickly enough when results were inconsistent. Year 6 pupils studying light were required to explain their findings using correct technical vocabulary such as concave and convex lenses, image and reflection when describing their findings. The main weakness in teaching is the lack of planned work to extend those with the potential to achieve at the highest levels. For example, though pupils were expected to record the results of investigations systematically, there was relatively little evidence of pupils being expected to devise investigations or recording methods for themselves.

56. Work in pupils' books shows appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum with an increasing emphasis on practical and investigative work with some good use made of both numeracy and ICT skills for example in presenting the results of tests using charts and graphs. However, the presentation of work is too variable, with many pupils, particularly the boys, making basic spelling errors and taking relatively little care over the completion of worksheets. Pupils' work is regularly assessed though the marking does not always give much guidance on how pupils could improve their work.

57. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a clear and appropriate action plan which initially placed considerable emphasis on improving the quality of planning and building up resources so that non-specialist teachers were well-supported and confident. The school's own analysis of results and pupils' work showed the need to improve further the quality of investigations and the planning of activities to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and this is currently the priority. Resources have improved significantly and the specialist science room is a considerable and well used asset. The opening ceremony performed by Dr Heather Coupar, the well-known physicist and astronomer, has done much to raise the profile of science in the school. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

### Main strengths

- The new ICT suite is being used effectively.
- The development of ICT has been well managed.
- ICT is used well to support pupils' learning across the curriculum.
- Staff confidence and expertise have improved.
- There is scope to extend further the use of ICT, particularly in control and modelling.

## Commentary

58. Pupils' ICT skills are average overall, with strengths in their understanding of how to apply their knowledge of ICT to work in a range of subjects. The evidence from displays and pupils' work also shows that their knowledge, understanding and skills are rapidly improving. In the direct teaching sessions observed pupils in different year groups were confidently using a range of appropriate programs to create documents, add graphics and present information in a variety of ways. Work in ICT is particularly well-integrated into other subjects. In one lesson in Year 6 pupils made effective use of a data-projector linked to an interactive white board to extend their knowledge of how to create a spreadsheet. In Year 5, they were drawing on their mathematical understanding of shape and space to enable them to use a three dimensional planning programme to plan how their classroom might be re-organised. Year 3 pupils had used the digital camera to identify areas of the school which needed improvements.

59. The teaching of ICT is generally good and has resulted in rapidly rising standards over the last two years. In most of the lessons seen teachers showed a good understanding of the programs being used and gave clear demonstrations of new techniques, using specialist vocabulary well, with the result that pupils learnt effectively. Occasionally the task had not been presented carefully enough and pupils got stuck because they did not understand the question or problem. Pupils enjoy opportunities to use ICT and showed good levels of co-operation when sharing a computer. The work on display showed the use of paint programs and word processing. The least developed area of ICT is the use of computers in control technology, though satisfactory, this has been clearly recognised as a major area for development.

60. The leadership and management of ICT are good and the provision has improved greatly since the last inspection. ICT was a key issue and the school has tackled the improvement systematically. Development planning identified the training of staff and the planning of ICT across the curriculum as key factors together with the upgrading of equipment. Staff expertise and confidence has improved. The creation of the ICT suite together with the purchase of CD ROMs, a data projector and interactive white board, and a digital camera have also played a major role in raising standards. The world wide web is being increasingly used for research and the school has clear guidance and suitable safeguards for Internet use.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

61. ICT is used very effectively across the curriculum and its place is now clearly identified in all subjects. Lessons seen during the inspection and the displays show good use of applications such as word processing, graphics, data handling, and the use of the internet for research in subjects such as art, mathematics, English, science, geography and history.

## HUMANITIES

Work was sampled in history but only one lesson seen. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision. The evidence from pupils' work shows that standards are **average**. Displays around the school show completed work and pupils can explain what they learnt for example in Year 1 pupils could talk explain about the difference between old and new toys. In Year 2 they discussed how they had designed an information book about toys from the past. In Year 6 pupils learnt about Victorian attitudes to children and the teacher and pupils frequently used the display in their classroom to make useful links to other subjects. Visitors to school make a good contribution to work in history.

## **Geography**

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' knowledge of the local environment is good.
- Pupils' knowledge and use of geographical vocabulary is good.
- Subject planning does not indicate clearly enough how work will build on what pupils already know.

### **Commentary**

62. Standards in geography are broadly in line with expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 learnt about their immediate environment, forming sensible opinions about which parts of the school they like best and how the parts they do not like could be improved. In Year 2, they could make appropriate comparisons between two locations, identifying significant differences between an island and a town. Year 3 pupils learn about pollution and describe and discuss different types of pollution from different sources. They had also considered how the school environment could be improved. This work was effectively linked with both English and ICT as the pupils drafted and word processed letters using photographs to identify areas where environmental improvements were needed. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 use ICT well in their project on rivers and investigative work on water. In general, pupils use the technical geographical vocabulary well from the earliest years and ICT is being used well to support learning.

63. There is currently no co-ordinator for geography but the management of geography has been satisfactory. However, teaching plans for geography are not closely enough tailored to the needs of the school and do not yet indicate clearly enough how work will build on what pupils have already learnt to improve their skills and knowledge.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have a good knowledge of the main stories of Christianity.
- Pupils respond well to opportunities for discussion.
- The range of resources and artefacts is good.
- Good links are made with literacy.

### **Commentary**

64. Standards in RE are at least consistent with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Work seen in lessons and on display indicated satisfactory achievement and understanding of the main stories and beliefs of the major world religions. RE also makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. In lessons pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs and respect those of other people. Visitors to the school, and some pupils, had described and explained ceremonies such as the Jewish Shabbat Meal, the Hindu festival of Divali and the Muslim observance of Ramadan. Year 6 pupils showed a sound knowledge of a range of creation stories from different cultures and could identify and explain key points in a Maori story from New Zealand. They used this information well to prepare books for younger classes, thinking about how to write in a way which would interest the pupils and convey the story's meaning. In a very good lesson in Year 2 the pupils were fascinated by the Old Testament story of creation and asked some very thoughtful questions.

65. Teaching and learning are sound overall and supported the standards being achieved and the contribution RE makes to pupils' personal development. Where teaching was most effective, good story telling and questioning prompted pupils to think for themselves and the range of activities made good links to other subjects. In a satisfactory lesson, though pupils had reasonably good knowledge of the Christmas Story, the task did not engage their interest enough and they tended to become restless and inattentive.

66. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over responsibility but has already audited and re-organised resources so that they are more accessible and consequently being used much more effectively. She has identified sensible priorities such as arranging visits to local places of worship to develop the pupils' understanding of the different religious traditions in Britain and providing more training for teachers. She has, as yet, not had the opportunity to observe work in classrooms.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

Too few lessons were observed in art, music and design and technology to make secure overall judgements about the provision in these subjects.

In design and technology too little work was available upon which to form an overall judgement about the standards being reached. The standard of teaching seen was satisfactory overall though with some weaknesses in planning. In one lesson, in Year 1, the good teaching enabled pupils to make good progress although their attainment was in line with that expected. Through the quality of questioning pupils were led to their own conclusions with all able to say what they would do better next time. Older pupils designed and made different types of bread. They showed imagination in their recipes and prepared the mixtures appropriately for the oven. In the less successful lesson the planning of activities was inappropriate and did not extend pupils' designing or making skills. The leadership and management are satisfactory although the co-ordinator has been in post for a very short while. She is presently attending training but has clear plans for the future development of the subject, especially in planning, assessing pupils' progress and improving teachers' knowledge and confidence.

Work was sampled in art and the indications from pupils' work are that standards are average. For example in Year 2, pupils' designs reflected their awareness of colour, shape and space. Art has a high profile in the school and nearly all of the shared areas have interesting displays of pupils' work. The recent initiative to create an "art gallery" in school was a great success and did much to improve the enthusiasm and enjoyment of the subject. The displays around the school and in classes show that pupils work with a range of materials including paint, collage, fabric and clay. A competition was held for collage work where pupils from different year groups teamed up and worked together which worked well and helped to build relationships between the older and younger pupils.

In music, it was clear from the assemblies observed that the standard of singing is good. Pupils also sang confidently and tunefully, responding to the guidance and encouragement of the conductor. The choir performs regularly. In the lessons seen the work was well planned and captured the imagination of the pupils who responded enthusiastically. In a very good Year 2 lesson, groups of pupils created themes very effectively using percussion instruments to provide a musical accompaniment to the familiar story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. In a lively Year 3 lesson the music of *Peter and the Wolf* by Prokofiev enabled pupils to develop their knowledge of the instruments of the orchestra and how these could be used to portray characters. The music co-ordinator has only recently taken on responsibility for the subject. She is keen to see the subject develop further and to help teachers increase their confidence.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths

- Outside experts are providing very good coaching for younger pupils in ball skills.
- The school has good links with local professional sports clubs and these enhance provision in PE.

### Commentary

67. Standards in PE are in line with expectations overall and pupils are achieving satisfactorily, though pupils in Year 2 have better football skills than is expected of pupils this age. This is due to the high quality of teaching they have from expert coaches provided by a local professional football club. They trap, kick and head balls with good control and use different parts of their bodies to cushion or move the ball.

68. By Year 6, pupils' ball skills demonstrated in rugby practice are in line with those expected of pupils this age. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of the rules of passing in rugby. They throw and catch while running and display an ability to fool opponents by feigning passes. In the only gymnastics lesson seen in Year 4 pupils' skills were below those expected. These pupils had poor body control and there was little quality about their balances, body shapes or movements.

69. The standard of teaching is satisfactory overall. School staff provide pupils with activities that enable them to practise gymnastic or ball skills appropriately. They have sufficient knowledge to demonstrate and help pupils improve. Teachers motivate pupils well so that they try hard to answer the tasks set. They make appropriate use of pupils to demonstrate and show others what they might do. The main weakness in teaching is that teachers concentrate too much on the range of movements or skills pupils have rather than on the quality of these. Pupils learn more moves or movements but do not develop them as well as they could. Pupils benefit from the expertise of outside coaches who understand how skills can be broken down into sub skills and then provide activities to develop them. These teachers have high levels of skill themselves and so can demonstrate well and provide additional support for pupils having difficulties.

70. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Younger pupils benefit from the coaching they receive in football skills but these are not being built on as this coaching has not yet extended into Key Stage 2 though this is planned. Additionally there is no school football team and little sport against other schools except for occasional netball matches. On the other hand pupils have the opportunity to learn rugby and hockey skills in school time and in the after school clubs taken by the deputy head. Expert tennis coaching has also been provided by the Lawn Tennis Association. Boys and girls enjoy these sessions and the school is building a reputation for its success in rugby. Older pupils for example have successfully competed in local tournaments and received coaching from the local professional rugby club.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in PSHE is **good**.

Throughout the school, the provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is well planned. The specific requirements in relation to health education, sex and drugs are met and teachers also respond well to personal and social issues as they arise. Though only one lesson could be observed, it is clear that the work done in PSHE lessons, as well as the general ethos of the school, helps pupils to become mature, and responsible and to show respect for others. In a Year 6 lesson on bullying, pupils discussed issues very sensibly and clearly understood the impact that actions might have on other people. The provision for citizenship is not quite as strong, though many elements of this are covered through PSHE, the consultation with pupils and the opportunities for them to take part in making decisions are not as extensive as they could be. The school is aware of this and taking steps to improve this aspect of its work, initially through the formation of a school council.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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