

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NEWTOWN COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Trowbridge

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126293

Head teacher: Mrs S. Ivermee

Lead inspector: Mrs S. M. Barnes

Dates of inspection: 24 – 27 May 2004

Inspection number: 257023

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4–11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	309
School address:	Newtown Trowbridge Wiltshire
Postcode:	BA14 0BB
Telephone number:	01225 752678
Fax number:	01225 761674
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Nicola Phillips
Date of previous inspection:	15 March 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Newtown is a larger than average primary school in Trowbridge in Wiltshire in an area with falling pupil rolls. The 309 boys and girls who attend the school are between the ages of four and eleven and are taught in eleven, mainly mixed age, classes. Attainment on entry is lower than at the time of the previous inspection and is well below average overall, particularly in the areas of communication such as speaking and listening. The pupils come mainly from an inner town area. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average at about seventeen per cent. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above average at over a third. These needs are mainly moderate learning or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. However, the proportion of pupils with statements of their needs is broadly average at just over one per cent. The percentage of pupils who speak a language other than English at home is a bit higher than in most schools at over two per cent and these pupils come from a range of different backgrounds the most common first languages being Portuguese, French and Bengali. Mobility in and out of the school at times other than the normal start and end of the academic year is above average at around eight per cent per year. This has impacted on some year groups to a far greater extent than others. The school went through a period of instability, since the previous inspection due to long-term ill health of senior staff. During this time the school had an acting head teacher for eighteen months. Many of the staff, including the head teacher, have been appointed in the last three years. A significant proportion of the teachers are at an early stage in their careers. Intervention by the local education authority from 2000 to 2003 resulted in additional support for assessment, behaviour, literacy, numeracy, science, special educational needs, Foundation Stage and information and communication technology (ICT). In 2003 the school won an award for its work to involve parents.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16249	Mrs S. M. Barnes	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage English as an additional language Science Art and design Design and technology
19365	Mr G. Stockley	Lay inspector	
21910	Mr G. Longton	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Physical education
18201	Mrs M. Danby	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an effective school** that provides a good quality of education for all its pupils. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average in English and mathematics, but all pupils achieve well. Teaching and learning are good overall. The leadership of the school is good. Parents and pupils are confident that the school is doing a good job. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership by the head teacher and governors is good, but leadership of some subjects is at an early stage of development.
- Although standards in English and mathematics are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' achievements are good.
- School works hard to provide good levels of equality of opportunity for pupils from all groups, including those with special educational needs.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social, moral and health education is very good.
- The quality of the curriculum is good and in particular the planned links between subjects that make learning memorable.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, but variable. It ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory.
- Relationships are good. Children like school and enjoy coming, but too many families take holidays during term time.

Overall there has been a satisfactory level of improvement since the previous inspection. The rate of improvement in the recent past has been good. The school has addressed the issues raised by the previous report. Raising standards in English continue to be an on-going focus. Attainment in information and communication technology, geography and design technology has improved.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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. E\* indicates results in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally*

**Pupils' achievements are good overall.** Attainment on entry to reception is well below the standards normally expected, particularly in language skills. Children from all groups make good overall progress in their learning in the reception classes in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum and their achievements are generally good. However, they are unlikely to attain the goals expected of children their age by the time they transfer into Year 1. Results in end of year tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were well below average for reading and below average for writing. They were well below average for mathematics. Currently standards at the end of Year 2 are below those expected in reading, writing and mathematics. However, this represents good achievement for these pupils as a higher proportion of them than average have special educational needs. At the end of Year 6, standards in tests in 2003 were well below average in English, mathematics and science. Current standards are below average in English and mathematics and broadly average in science. Again this represents good achievement for these pupils in the light of the special educational needs of a higher than average proportion of them. Standards in information and communication technology, and religious education and are in line with those expected for their ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve standards in line with their peers. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and their achievements are good.

**Pupils' moral and social development is very good. Their cultural development is good. Spiritual development is satisfactory.** Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good overall. Attendance is unsatisfactory, despite the good emphasis by the school in working to raise standards.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall throughout the school,** but variable. Assessment is good, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics.

Teachers are good at providing pupils with a good range of practical and interesting tasks and opportunities to practise skills in one subject whilst learning about another. In most classes there is an insistence on high standards of behaviour and application. This has a positive effect on the attitudes pupils develop to their work and to the amount of effort and determination they put in. While pupils in most classes work well, there are a few who have difficulty in maintaining concentration. These are well managed and rarely have any negative impact on the learning of their peers. Teachers plan work effectively using the national literacy and numeracy strategies in English and mathematics. The school provides very well for pupils' personal, social and health education. Assessment is good, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics and is used well. It is being developed in other subjects. The school is effective in meeting the needs of boys and girls from different groups. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well, and their learning is good as a result. The quality of the curriculum is good with good aspects, such as the links with other subjects. Pupils are given good opportunities for enrichment, including trips and visitors, and opportunities to take part in clubs outside the school day. These all have a positive impact on the quality of learning and the ethos of the school. Partnerships with parents are good, as are partnerships with the community. The standards of care, guidance and support which the school provides for all its pupils are good.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good overall.** The leadership of the head teacher is good and she has a clear vision and determination to set systems in place to raise standards further. Leadership and management of English and mathematics are effective. However, the school acknowledges the need to develop the role of the co-ordinators of some other subjects to ensure they have a clear view of standards in their subject throughout the school. Governance of the school is good. Governors have a good level of awareness of school strengths and areas for improvement.

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

Parents have overall positive views of the school. Links with parents are good and have a positive impact on pupils' learning, especially with their reading. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are good. Pupils have positive views of their school and demonstrate these by their good attitudes to work.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in English and mathematics, placing particular focus on improving pupils' skills in speaking and listening.
- Work to ensure a greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Continue to improve the effectiveness of the role of the co-ordinators, so that they have a good knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in their subject across the school and are effective in raising standards.
- Work to improve attendance.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement of pupils throughout the school is good. Standards attained in English and mathematics are below average.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Boys and girls from all groups achieve well.
- Pupils achieve very well in science at Year 6 due to the good intervention in the form of “booster” classes.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to the good support they are given.

#### Commentary

1. There have been changes since the previous inspection to the attainment profiles of children when they start school. Currently standards are well below those expected overall when children start school, particularly in speaking and listening skills. In addition, there are greater proportions of pupils with special educational needs and of pupils who have joined the school since reception, in some year groups than in others. In previous years, pupils have not always attained the targets set for them, by up to a third. However, good leadership has ensured current targets are suitably challenging, based on accurate assessments and likely to be met. There is presently no significant difference in achievement between different groups of pupils or between girls and boys.

#### Foundation Stage

2. Children in the Foundation Stage start schooling with standards which cover the full range, but which, when taken overall, are well below those expected for their ages, particularly in communication, language and literacy skills. They make good gains in their learning overall and their achievements are good in all six areas of learning for young children, due to the good quality of education provided for them. By the time they transfer into Year 1, standards overall are below those expected and children are unlikely to attain the early learning goals expected for their age. However, this represents good achievement considering their standards on entry.

#### 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	13.7 (12.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.2 (12.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.4 (13.1)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Results in the national end of key stage tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2003, were below both the national average and the average for similar schools in writing, they were well below average in reading and mathematics. Teacher assessments of standards in science were that they were in line with the average in relation to the proportions of pupils attaining the expected level 2.

However, they were well below other schools nationally in the proportions attaining the higher level 3.

- Standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 are currently below average. This represents good achievement for pupils from all groups. Similarly, although the standards attained by the current Year 2 in mathematics are likely to be below the average in the end of year tests, pupils' achievements are good. Standards in science are below those expected, due to the lower than average proportions of pupils likely to attain the higher level three, but pupils' standards of achievement are good. Standards in information and communication technology, humanities, creative aesthetic and physical subjects and religious education and are broadly in line with those expected for pupils' ages.

## 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	25.2 (24.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.7 (25.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	26.9 (26.3)	28.6 ( 28.3)

*There were 41 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- In tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003, standards in English, mathematics and science were well below the national average. They well below the results of similar schools nationally, both when the criteria of eligibility for free school meals and the performance of the cohort in tests at the end of Year 2 were applied.
- Standards in English and mathematics for the current Year 6 are below average overall. Standards in science are broadly average. However, these standards represent good levels of achievement for these pupils, many of whom have special educational needs. In science, achievement is particularly good and this is largely due to booster groups following analysis of which aspects pupils were confident in and which they were unsure of, which were taken by the co-ordinator, who is also the head teacher. Standards in information and communication technology, and all other subjects, including religious education are broadly in line with those expected for pupils' ages at the end Year 6 and pupils' achievements are good.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school, because of the very good provision that is made for them. Pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those with English as an additional language make progress and achieve in line with their peers.

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

Pupils' attitudes to school are good, as are their behaviour and punctuality. Their moral and social development is very good. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and their cultural development is good. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school promotes good relationships and racial harmony very well.
- It promotes pupils' social and moral development very well, ensuring that pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and the responsibilities of living in a community.
- The school sets high expectations for pupils' conduct and works to achieve them.
- Pupils are very willing to take responsibility and the school provides a good range of opportunities for them to do so.

## Commentary

8. The vast majority of pupils enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to work. They behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite to teachers and other adults and work well together. For example, in a good literacy lesson, pupils worked well in pairs to devise a slogan for a product of their choice. In a whole school assembly all pupils listened attentively as the head teacher told a story, even though the story was planned particularly to appeal to the younger pupils.
9. Pupils benefit from the clear and consistent code of behaviour demonstrated by teachers and other adults, which reinforces their awareness of right and wrong. Those pupils who find it difficult to conform to the high standards of behaviour and attitudes expected by the school are given effective additional help by support staff such as learning mentors and by volunteers from the local community. Despite this additional help, some pupils' behaviour is such that the school considers it has no option but to exclude them and last year 12 pupils were excluded for a total of 20 fixed periods and one pupil was permanently excluded.
10. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and this enhances their moral and social development well. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and make good progress in personal, social and emotional development, although they are unlikely to attain the early learning goals for their age, by the time they start in Year 1. Friendship buddies look after lonely children in the playground, helping them to play with others. Older pupils assist the teachers by setting up and closing down computers. Year 6 pupils carry out tasks such as supporting other teachers, assisting with the photocopying and distribution of the weekly newsletter to parents, and general administrative duties. The children take these responsibilities seriously and carry them out well, providing valuable support to staff. The annual residential visit for older pupils also helps to develop the skills needed to get on with each other.
11. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about other cultures around the world as well as their own cultural heritage, preparing them well for life in a diverse multicultural society. In addition to celebrating religious festivals such as Eid, they learn about life in a small village in India because they receive regular information in connection with a schoolgirl that they are sponsoring. The school has links with several local churches and a mosque leader has visited the school. There are visits to local places of interest such as museums, the Roman baths, the Kennet and Avon canal and the stone circle at Avebury. Pupils also think of others less fortunate than themselves when they raise money for charities such as Action on Homelessness, Children in Need and Unicef.
12. The school has taken firm action to reduce the number of families where attendance is poor and has had some success. However, attendance is still well below the national average and the main reason for this is the number of holidays taken in term time. The school is working closely with the education welfare service to try to improve attendance and certificates are awarded to pupils who achieve full attendance in any term.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data:	6.6
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	0.4
National data:	0.4

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

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	243	20	1
White – Irish	1	1	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	12	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	32	0	0

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall. The quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum is good. There are good opportunities for enrichment in learning.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The quality of assessment is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the reception classes is good overall and gives children a good start to their schooling.
- Teaching of mathematics and English is good throughout the school and pupils make good gains in their learning as a result.
- Teachers have improved knowledge and confidence in the teaching of ICT.
- Overall, teachers have high levels of expectation of pupils' behaviour and concentration.
- Teachers plan effectively in year groups to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum.
- The quality of assessment has been improved since the previous inspection and is good, particularly in the core subjects. Good use is being made of the information it provides to monitor pupils' progress effectively.
- There is a great variation in the quality of teaching and on occasion, adults expect too little of the pupils they are teaching.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	8 (25%)	15 (47%)	7 (22%)	1 (3%)	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

13. The quality of teaching and learning in the reception classes and in Years 1 to 6 is good overall, and the majority is good, but the standard fluctuates between excellent and unsatisfactory. Generally lessons are exciting and interesting and adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. Pupils respond well with generally good levels of concentration and application to their tasks. However, on a few occasions, including in some otherwise satisfactory lessons, low expectations of presentation of work, pupils' behaviour and concentration or of what they can achieve, lead to pupils making less progress than they might.
14. Teachers have very clear learning intentions for lessons and in the best lessons these are shared with pupils so they have an idea of what they are going to learn. Pupils are becoming increasingly involved in assessing their own work and in monitoring their own progress. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously and their evaluative comments are encouraging. This helps to boost the pupils' self-esteem.
15. The quality of planning is good and teachers plan together effectively in year groups. As a result, there is equality of access to the full curriculum by pupils in parallel classes. Teachers have good levels of confidence and knowledge in the teaching of mathematics and English. They make effective use of the numeracy and literacy strategies linked to national guidance. As a result, lessons are interesting and move on with good pace. Pupils are given good opportunities to practise their skills and make good gains in their learning as a result. Teachers are gaining confidence in the use of ICT and teaching in this subject is satisfactory overall.
16. Teaching and learning of pupils with English as an additional language are good overall and enable these pupils to make progress in line with their peers. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers work effectively with outside agencies to provide specialist guidance where necessary. There is good, detailed assessment of what pupils can and cannot do and the next targets for them to work towards. These individual education programmes are reviewed regularly and are known to all staff. As a result, these pupils are set work which is at the right level for them and they make good progress towards their targets.
17. The quality of assessment is good overall and significantly improved since the previous inspection. There has been a strong emphasis on the development of more efficient systems, since the appointment of the current head teacher. Very good assessment systems have been developed in literacy, numeracy and science. They work particularly effectively in literacy. Tracking of pupils' progress in preceding years indicates that on occasion there was a difference between the targets that were being set and pupils' actual attainment of about thirty per cent. Current targets are more tightly matched to pupils' abilities and linked to rigorous assessment systems. For English and mathematics, assessment is helping raise standards throughout the school. Teachers know what pupils can and cannot do and they use this information to help them set targets for individual pupils. Assessment systems for all other subjects of the curriculum are in the early stages of development. At the end of the year the success of these systems will be evaluated and refined to give teachers the necessary information about where each pupil is and what they need to aim for next without the system becoming too onerous for staff to manage.

## The curriculum

The curriculum, the enrichment activities provided for pupils and the accommodation and resources are good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Personal, social and health education permeates the work of the school effectively.
- It is an inclusive school and caters well for individual needs, including pupils with special educational needs.
- Cross-curricular links enhance pupils' learning.
- The school has developed and adapted the curriculum in order to raise standards.
- Extra-curricular activities are varied and enrich pupils' learning and personal development.

### Commentary

18. The school provides a broad, well-planned curriculum that meets statutory requirements for National Curriculum subjects and the requirements of the Agreed Local Syllabus for religious education. It is regularly reviewed and changes are made where they are considered beneficial. For example, as part of its strategy to raise standards, the school has successfully introduced a new mathematics programme, based on interactive whole class teaching, after first trialling it in two year groups. The teaching programmes for English, mathematics and personal, social and health education and citizenship are very comprehensive with a good balance between the different elements in each subject. The school's commitment to effective personal, social and health education and citizenship is shown in the way that it has very successfully embedded aspects of these programmes in its everyday business, in links with other subjects and in the extra-curricular activities it makes available. This is supported by the weekly lessons and discussion forums in every class. In other subjects the school's programmes are satisfactory. Homework is used effectively to consolidate basic literacy and numeracy skills and to extend learning in topics currently being studied.
19. The curriculum is effectively enhanced by good cross-curricular links that add interest and help to consolidate pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Improving these links between subjects is a current school priority and commitment to it is evident across the school. In addition, the good range of extra-curricular activities provided further enriches pupils' learning. These include visits from artists and musicians, representatives of other faiths and cultures, and the police, visits to artistic and sporting events and places of interest, an annual residential visit for Year 6 pupils and many school clubs catering for a wide range of interests, including competitive sport.
20. Curriculum organisation is complex because nearly all classes contain mixed age groups, but it works satisfactorily and ensures that most pupils make good progress. The combined reception/Year 1 and Year 2/3 classes, which each span two key stages in education, are reorganised for some lessons to ensure that pupils follow the distinctive programmes defined nationally for infant and junior pupils. Pupils benefit from being able to focus on some non-core subject topics in blocks of time, rather than spreading their learning thinly across the year.
21. Newtown is an inclusive school. The teaching programmes are carefully planned to cater for all pupils' needs, providing extension and additional support as needed, and all pupils have an equal opportunity to take part in school activities. Teachers review each pupil's progress against their targets fortnightly, as well as at the end of each half term, and revise the plans accordingly. Consequently most pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Class teachers or one of the well-trained learning assistants provide most of the necessary support in class. However, for some pupils, especially those with emotional or social needs, the school provides a good range of extra support sessions outside the classroom. These include learning mentors, social and enrichment groups and anger management training. These are

effective in helping the targeted pupils to deal with their difficulties and cope with school, and help to ensure that other pupils are able to continue their education without disruption. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well and the school makes good use of specialist help through the local education authority, to evaluate these pupils' needs and monitor their progress.

22. The school is able to provide a good curriculum because it has enough effective teachers and well trained support staff, makes effective use of a good range of resources and benefits from good accommodation. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. In particular, the outdoor facilities for the youngest children and the range of extra-curricular opportunities for all pupils are much better. Parents agree that there is a good range of activities that their children enjoy and that all pupils have an equal opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability.

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

The school makes good provision to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides pupils with good support and guidance, and involves them well in the work of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good procedures for health and safety ensure all pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Most pupils have a trusting relationship with an adult in the school and have access to well-informed support, advice and guidance.
- There are good arrangements to settle new pupils into the school.

### **Commentary**

23. The school is a safe and secure place where good attention to health and safety matters ensures that children are able to learn and develop in a healthy and caring environment. Risk assessments have been carried out for the main risks in and around the school and for educational visits. The head teacher and the health and safety governor undertake frequent site inspections and the maintenance officer has a work schedule which includes regular health and safety checks. There are good arrangements for dealing with any accidents and minor injuries to pupils, with several staff trained in first aid, and the governors monitor the record of minor injuries.
24. The school has good arrangements for child protection. All staff are trained and aware of their need to be vigilant. They understand what they should do if they have concerns. The school works effectively with specialist support agencies such as the behaviour support team in order to provide additional support for those pupils who have challenging needs. This support includes social skills and anger management sessions and "think time" to give some children the opportunity to make a good choice and take responsibility for their behaviour.
25. The school has good pastoral care systems in place to support particularly those pupils who find it hard to deal with their own and others' feelings. Learning mentors provide good support to these pupils on a one-to-one basis by listening to them and supporting them in developing their social skills and particularly their anger management skills. This effective support has resulted in improved behaviour around the school and a reduction in the number of pupils being sent to the head teacher. Assessment is good overall and is used well to monitor pupils' academic achievements, particularly in English and mathematics.
26. Pupils have a good opportunity to be involved in making decisions about their school through the work of the school councils. There are separate councils for the older pupils and the younger ones and they meet on alternate weeks under the guidance of the deputy head teacher. Photographs of members of the councils are displayed on the school notice board, together with copies of the recent minutes, so that all pupils can find out what the councils have been discussing and items for the next meeting. The councils have discussed a range of

matters, including assemblies, toilets and playtimes. The junior council organised a sponsored event to raise money to have a chessboard painted on the playground.

27. The school also takes note of pupils' views in other ways. Last year the children were asked to complete a questionnaire about bullying. As a result of the findings of the survey, a working party of parents and governors produced a useful leaflet for the children, giving them advice on how to avoid bullying and what to do if they are bullied.
28. Discussions with several parents and pupils during the inspection indicated that pupils who join the school from other schools are well supported and settle in quickly. They are allocated a "buddy" to show them the school routines and they quickly make friends of their own.

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

Links with parents, other schools and the wider community are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides parents with good quality information about the school and about their children's standards and progress.
- The school involves parents well by seeking, valuing and acting on their views.
- There are good procedures to deal with parental concerns and complaints.

### **Commentary**

29. The school works effectively with parents and won an award in 2003 for this area of its work. Parents are valued by the school and regarded as significant partners in their children's education. Parents spoken to during the inspection said that the teachers and the head teacher are friendly and approachable. They are able to talk to staff whenever they have a concern and feel well informed about their children's progress. Although many parents help their children at home, a significant number choose to leave their children's education mainly to the school.
30. The school issues a weekly newsletter that keeps parents well informed about forthcoming events and other relevant matters. It also contains the names of pupils who have qualified for reading achievements and those who have become "Superstars". A copy of the school's home learning policy is sent to parents each September. This gives details of the weekly homework timetable for each year group, together with suggested time allocations. The school's policy for the promotion of self-esteem and positive behaviour is issued to parents in the form of a clear, easy to understand leaflet. A termly curriculum plan is sent to parents so that they can help their children with topic work at home.
31. The school provides workshops and courses for parents to help them understand what their children are learning at school. Unfortunately some of these have not been particularly well attended and the school has recognised the need to try to engage more parents in their children's education. Several parents are currently attending a SHARE project, where they work alongside their children before the start of the school day under the guidance of the head teacher.
32. Teachers produce a good quality annual written report on each pupil that is clear and easy to read. It lists the child's main achievements, together with some targets that are mostly clear and specific. There is a section for the pupil's own comments, including what they are good at and what they would like to improve.
33. The school seeks parents' views on a regular basis. It issues questionnaires from time to time and monthly parent forums are held to assist the school in finding out what parents think. Any

concerns or complaints raised by parents are investigated promptly and thoroughly and appropriate action is taken.

34. The school's productive links with the community include the Seesaw Nursery, which is based on the school site, local businesses, the local residents' association and three local churches. Volunteers from one of the churches work as mentors to some of the pupils and the pupils attend the local church for a Christmas service. The school has a room available for community events and members of the local community are invited to school productions. The school's computer suite is used by members of the local community.
35. Good educational links exist with the two local secondary schools. Students from these schools come to Newtown to teach physical education, lead drama workshops, support children's reading and introduce pupils in Year 6 to a foreign language. The school also provides work experience opportunities for students from the secondary schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The quality of leadership and management of the head teacher is good. Governance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The head teacher has a clear vision for raising standards in the school and has worked effectively to bring this about.
- The governors are supportive of the school and work hard to perform their roles effectively. They provide good levels of both challenge and support.
- The new systems for monitoring how well pupils are progressing in their work are being developed and are starting to be used effectively to help raise standards.

### **Commentary**

36. The school is well led and managed by the head teacher who has been in post for three years. The good quality of leadership of the head teacher has already resulted in a steady rise in standards in some areas. Since the time of previous inspection there was a period of about eighteen months, due to ill health of senior staff, when the school had an acting head teacher, and this resulted in a certain amount of lack of continuity in action to resolve the key issues of that report. Since that time the local education authority intervened to provide extra support to enable the school to raise standards in a number of areas.
37. Strong emphasis is currently placed on the importance of setting up effective and manageable systems to monitor progress and standards, particularly in the core subjects and teaching, learning and standards are monitored rigorously. All staff are involved in this process and clear targets are set for improvement. Weaknesses in science, for example have been tackled rigorously so that standards, which were well below those expected at the end of Year 6 in 2003, are now in line. The school is fully inclusive and as a result achievement is satisfactory overall for boys and girls of all levels of ability.
38. Curriculum co-ordinators, many of whom are at an early stage in their career and new to their post, are starting to develop their roles and responsibilities well overall. This has been successfully started for the core subjects and the Foundation Stage and now the school is working to set similar effective systems of monitoring and action to raise standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Leadership and management of provision for

pupils with special educational needs are good and lead to these pupils making good progress towards their learning targets. Performance management and self-evaluation are used

effectively to determine which areas are working effectively and what can be improved still further.

39. Governance is good overall. The governors who are very supportive of the school and are keen to improve their skills have attended a commendable number of courses in how to develop their role effectively. They challenge the school rigorously as well as providing support. They have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are suitably involved in setting targets for pupils' attainment. Governors ensure that statutory requirements are met.
40. Financial management is good. The school bursar has a good, detailed knowledge and manages the school systems very efficiently. The principles of best value are effectively applied. The recommendations of the most recent financial audit have been implemented and financial and internal control systems are operating effectively. The school makes good strategic use of resources, including specific grants and other funding. There has been a good level of improvement in this aspect since the previous inspection.

### Financial information

#### Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	881,348
Total expenditure	891,124
Expenditure per pupil	2,884

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	31,692
Balance carried forward to the next	21,914

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

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

The overall provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

The children in the three reception classes receive a good start to their education. The Foundation Stage is managed well by an experienced, but recently appointed practitioner. Teaching and learning are good overall in all areas, with good examples seen. Good planning and assessment systems contribute to the effectiveness of the early years education. Teachers plan together each week to ensure that all children have equal access to a broad and worthwhile curriculum, based on the “stepping stones” for early development. However, unfortunately classroom assistants do not always have time to take part in planning and so do not always have a clear understanding of the purpose of some activities. This results in occasional incidents of low levels of challenge and expectation in parts of otherwise good lessons and at these times the quality of teaching and learning is only satisfactory overall. The reception teachers track children’s progress well and use the information gained effectively in planning future lessons. The overall attainment of children on entry to the school is well below average, particularly in communication skills such as speaking and listening. By the time they move into Year 1, most children will have achieved well, but are still unlikely to attain the early learning goals in any of the six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

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

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

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

- Children are developing their levels of personal independence well.
- They behave very well for their age.
- Some children have difficulty in learning to share with their peers.

#### **Commentary**

41. Teaching and learning are generally good. All the children receive plenty of praise and encouragement. This is effective in building up their self-esteem and confidence. The children quickly develop their confidence and establish good relationships with one another, their class teachers and the classroom assistants. Children behave well and are encouraged to be considerate of others, although some still find it hard to share equipment and adult time. All the teachers work effectively to promote children’s personal development by establishing routines such as washing hands and toileting or getting changed for physical education sessions. Children are starting to display high levels of concentration and involvement in activities, particularly those they find enjoyable, such as playing with models of characters from storybooks. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to make choices in the activities they are to take part in, and record this so that it is easy to see what they have taken part in and ensure they have a balanced curriculum. This develops children’s sense of responsibility well.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

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

- Children’s speaking and listening skills are fostered effectively.
- Early reading skills are developed well.

## Commentary

42. Many opportunities are provided for children to extend their speaking skills through all areas of learning. When they enter reception classes, children have skills in speaking and listening which are starting from a low base. They enjoy listening to stories and sharing books, and many can describe the main story settings, events and principle characters. Many are at very early stages of skill in speaking and listening, using simple statements and gestures, for example when talking about the pictures in a book. For most, reading ability is in its initial stages, but it is encouraged appropriately. Children have favourite books, which they hold correctly and turn pages of carefully. Some children are beginning to read some simple words. Teaching and learning are generally good. All three classrooms have a good range of picture books, including non-fiction titles, which are accessible to the children. Good use is also made of classroom computers to support children's early reading and writing skills.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical vocabulary is developed well.
- Teachers make lessons interesting.

## Commentary

43. The children make good progress in their early understanding of number, shape and measure. Many children in reception can handle simple addition with numbers to five and ten and the more confident are beginning to add and subtracting numbers. There is a good range of games and puzzles, specifically designed to support early understanding of number, which are used well to support number work and children enjoy their lessons. Teaching and learning are good. In all three classes, the well-planned use of a range of resources makes lessons interesting. Children's use of mathematical vocabulary is developing well, due to the good emphasis teachers place upon this aspect of learning. Children have the ability to select a particular named shape and enjoy games where they have to use these, such as making geometrically shaped play-dough pizzas. They can describe a simple journey, for example when retelling the journey made by characters in a book.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to explore and learn about their world in the classroom and outdoors.
- They have good access to computers which they learn to use with confidence.

## Commentary

44. Children make good progress in this area of learning because they have plenty of opportunities to experience a wide range of activities, such as sand and water, play-dough and working with construction toys. Teaching and learning are good. The children are interested in all activities presented to them, such as playing in the adventure garden and so make good overall gains in their learning. They quickly learn to use computers and are developing good control of the mouse. They learn to use a range of tools and techniques safely. The children learn more about their world by observing, handling and discussing a variety of objects, such as toy

animals, and start to notice and comment upon patterns. They gain an awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others through regular religious education lessons. Teachers use questioning well to extend the children's vocabulary, and use of language, to explain their thoughts and ideas, and to encourage children to think about their world. Activities are planned well to support and extend learning through the topic in all curriculum areas.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills on a range of large exercise equipment.
- They are developing their expertise effectively in the use of pencils, scissors and other small tools.

### **Commentary**

45. Children in the reception classes have daily access to a suitable area where they can ride tricycles and play with construction equipment or other large toys. Its use is planned well and it is used effectively for a range of outdoor activities. Planned physical education sessions in the school hall are also used well to develop children's skills and co-ordination. Children experiment moving with confidence in a variety of ways, such as using "pigeon steps". Teaching and learning in this curriculum area are good overall and as a result children learn to persevere in repeating attempts when learning a new skill, such as when they learn to catch and throw beanbags. They know the effects of exercise on their bodies and that they need to warm up before physical activities. Manipulative skills are developed effectively through the use of pencils, brushes, scissors and small construction apparatus in the classroom and building with small and large construction toys. Children have good opportunities to manipulate a range of small equipment, such as the computer mouse, with dexterity.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have plenty of opportunities for imaginative play.
- Access to a range of resources for creative work promotes freedom and independence.

### **Commentary**

46. Children have a range of opportunities to develop their creativity. Planning of this area is carefully thought out, giving children a good range of experiences. Teaching and learning are good overall. Children handle play-dough and use a variety of tools to create different effects. They learn to sing a number of songs and rhymes, such as singing "Row, row, row your boat", whilst tidying up the classroom. They have many good opportunities to use their imagination through role-play and enjoy playing with the "dinosaur island", for example. They develop a repertoire of actions, putting a series of movements together, such as "marching like a big dinosaur", and enjoy listening to stories based on themselves and people and places they know well, such as "Yellow class rowed to a magic jungle island". They engage in imaginative play based on their own first hand experiences, such as playing with the "small world" characters.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The national literacy strategy is now being used very effectively in most classes.
- Pupils get very good opportunities to use the range of their literacy skills across other subjects of the curriculum.
- Achievement is good and standards are improving.
- Pupils have clear targets that show them how to improve.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are well supported and achieve well, relative to their starting points.
- The standard of handwriting and presentation varies from good to unsatisfactory.

#### Commentary

47. Standards declined in the period following the previous report, due in the main to changes in the attainment of pupils on entry to the school, increasing numbers of pupils with special educational needs and instability caused by changes in staffing. Results in end of year tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were well below average for reading and below average for writing. These results were well below similar schools on the basis of eligibility for free school meals in reading and below the results of similar schools in writing. At the end of Year 6, standards in tests in 2003 were well below average in English. This was well below the results of similar schools when eligibility for free school meals was the criterion, and also below the results of schools that had attained similar results in the tests at the end of Year 2.
48. Overall, standards of work seen in lessons and completed work in Year 2 and Year 6 are still below average. However, in view of the very low starting point for many pupils this represents good achievement and standards are definitely improving throughout the school. The assessment of skills in reading and writing is now good and the information is used very well to plan the next steps and to provide individual targets for each pupil.
49. Standards in listening and speaking are below expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Although most pupils appear to listen well, for example in assemblies or when their teacher is explaining what they have to work on in the lesson, many pupils find it quite difficult to understand what has actually been said. Pupils are now beginning to improve in these two areas from very low starting points on entry to the school. Teachers now pay very good attention to developing listening and oral skills, both in literacy lessons and when teaching other subjects. They explain new work very well and check that new language is fully understood. At the end of lessons pupils are given many opportunities to practise their skills in speaking by reporting to the whole class on all they have achieved. But not enough opportunities are planned for extra practice in speaking throughout the school.
50. Teachers have worked hard to improve the standard of reading and the majority of pupils are making good progress. There is additional help in reading for pupils with special educational needs. Most classroom support assistants give valuable help to all pupils. There is now good emphasis in Years 1 and 2 on teaching pupils to blend and segment letter sounds within words; this promotes good progress in reading. In shared reading sessions, teachers promote skills effectively, sometimes looking at a picture, discussing the plot, the vocabulary and characters of a story before reading the book. This is an effective way of helping pupils to tackle new text, to improve their understanding of the story and to create interest. Higher attaining pupils in the upper juniors are very confident readers. For example, they are very familiar with the Harry Potter books and many are now members of the local library. However,

in all classes there are still pupils who find reading difficult, especially when it comes to tackling unfamiliar words and texts. The school is doing everything possible to encourage these pupils and to teach strategies that will help them to read with greater accuracy and understanding. Many more parents are now taking a keen interest in helping their children to read. The home /school notebooks are used very well in many families and have become a very useful aid to improving standards. The recently introduced special certificates to reward improvement in reading have proved very popular with pupils and parents. The short book reviews which pupils write at the end of each book they read, are helping to improve writing skills.

51. The development of writing skills has been a focus of school improvement and is leading to better standards of work. For example, when writing stories, Year 2 pupils plan ten things they want to include. They are developing their settings well and introducing some interesting characters. However, spelling throughout the school is weak and many pupils find difficulty in writing because of this. In Years 3 to 6, pupils learn about a range of writing techniques and know features of different styles of writing. For example, In a Year 6 lesson, pupils discussed what makes a good report before preparing one on their recent residential visit. In a Year 4/5 lesson, pupils worked very hard to design and redraft an advert, making good use of their improving ICT skills to present the finished product.
52. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported throughout the school through well-focused individual education plans that detail targets these pupils should achieve. Very good relationships help these pupils to make good progress.
53. During the inspection the standard of teaching was always at least good throughout the school, with many lessons observed being very good and one judged to be excellent. The work undertaken by staff to increase the time spent in reading and writing in many other subjects is proving to be very effective. Teachers plan well and the systems in place for the assessment in English and careful marking are good and as a result pupils from all groups make good gains in their learning.
54. Leadership is good and is firmly focused on improvement and the school has made good use of expertise within the local authority to help them steer the school forward. The libraries are attractive and well stocked. The new supply of “big books” is helping to improve the pupils’ interest in reading.

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

55. Now that the standard of writing is beginning to improve it is being used more and with increasing effectiveness in other subjects such as geography, history and religious education.
56. The school has set challenging targets for its present Year 6 pupils. Inspection findings indicate that in spite of the significant number of pupils with special educational needs it has a good chance of meeting these.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and standards are improving.
- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour, which allows pupils to focus on their work.
- Teachers give clear explanations and instructions and present ideas in a range of ways to cater for pupils’ different learning styles.
- All aspects of the curriculum are covered thoroughly and are consolidated well through links with other subjects and homework.

- Weaknesses in pupils' achievement are identified and innovative programmes put in place to remedy them.

### **Commentary**

57. The standards attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are below those expected of pupils of their age. In the 2003 national tests the school's results for both of these year groups were well below the average for schools nationally and for those in similar contexts. Too many pupils did not reach the level expected for their age and very few performed better. However, standards are rising as a result of improvements in the quality of teaching and the effectiveness with which the school identifies and targets weaknesses. Pupils are making good progress in developing number, shape, space, measuring and data handling skills but many are held back by slow mental recall and weak speaking and listening skills that inhibit their problem solving and investigative capabilities. The school is aware of these weaknesses and has made changes to the curriculum and teaching methods that are beginning to have a positive impact on learning.
58. Pupils' achievement is good as a result of effective teaching and well-targeted support. Pupils of all ages like mathematics and work hard, making good progress. All pupils achieve well, regardless of gender, ethnic and social background or language, intellectual and physical capabilities because the school has worked hard to ensure that each has an equal opportunity to succeed. Individual achievement is assessed well in lessons and tracked over time. The information gained is used to focus teaching, target additional support in lessons and provide additional booster lessons for specific pupils.
59. Teaching is good throughout the school and leads to good quality learning. Teachers' discipline is very good because they insist on high standards of behaviour and consistently apply the school's behaviour policy. The consistency helps pupils to understand how they are expected to behave and nearly all respond very well, whether working independently or with others. This means that they are able to focus on their work without distractions. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to give clear explanations, demonstrations and instructions so that pupils understand what they have to do and are able work productively. The consistent use of correct mathematical vocabulary also helps pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of mathematics and helps them to talk about their work and explain their reasoning. Teachers are good at demonstrating what they want their pupils to learn and to do, using a variety of approaches to help them remember. Homework is used well to consolidate understanding and develop mathematics skills.
60. The leadership and management of the subject are good. There is a shared focus on raising standards and several changes have been made to the way the curriculum is taught in order to tackle weaknesses. For example, 'Fast Maths' has been introduced in all classes to speed up pupils' mental recall, and interactive whole class teaching has been trialled in some year groups and is to be extended to others. Good use is made of performance data and work sampling to monitor pupils' achievement and identify actions to improve areas in need of development. Observations of teaching with feedback to staff have helped to improve the quality of teaching.
61. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Standards declined sharply during the period due to changes in the attainment of pupils on entry to the school, increasing numbers of pupils with special educational needs and instability caused by changes in staffing. However, improvements have been made and teaching and the curriculum, which were sound, are now good, leading to good achievement and rising standards.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

62. The use of mathematics in other subjects is good. Although the links are not necessarily embedded in subject schemes of work, they are well planned so that pupils have timely opportunities to consolidate mathematics skills by applying them in different subject contexts.

For example, mathematics is used well to support learning in science and design and technology where accurate measurement and the recording of data contribute to pupils' understanding of those subjects. Number work in geography consolidates pupils understanding of the relationship between numbers as well as their growing knowledge of distances between places and the meaning of contour lines. Data handling and symmetry provide effective and meaningful contexts for developing information and communication handling skills.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils' achievements in science are good overall and very good for the oldest pupils, and standards are broadly similar to the national average for pupils by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching throughout the school is good overall and enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress in their learning.
- Very good use is made of "booster" work for the oldest pupils and this has a very positive impact on the standards they achieve.
- Management of science is effective and clearly focused on raising standards even higher.
- Good attention is paid to all aspects of science, especially in pupils learning to ask questions and plan their own investigations.

### Commentary

63. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2003 indicated that standards were broadly in line with the national average. However, when the proportions of pupils attaining the higher level 3 were taken into account, standards were well below those attained nationally. In tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003, standards were well below the national average and well below the average for similar schools, both when eligibility for free school meals and attainment at the end of Year 2 were taken into account.
64. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were judged to be average. However, since that time standards have dipped and have been consistently well below average, except for 2001, when they were very low and in the bottom five per cent of results nationally. In part this was due to changes in the attainment of pupils on entry and also to the higher than average numbers of pupils who joined the school at times other than the start of the Reception class, many of whom had special educational needs. But also there is firm evidence that assessment was not detailed enough or used accurately to analyse pupils' strengths and weaknesses in order to put in programmes for improvement.
65. Inspection evidence indicates that the school has successfully introduced good quality strategies to boost provision in science amongst all groups of pupils. Pupils in Year 2 are in line to attain standards which are below those expected, as fewer than average are likely to attain the higher level 3. At the end of Year 6, pupils are likely to attain broadly average standards. This represents good achievement for pupils in Year 2 and very good achievement for pupils in Year 6. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls, or between different groups. The strategies have now been successfully implemented and the school has now focussed its full attention on raising standards in science. Factors that contribute to these rising standards include good teaching throughout the school, good implementation of all aspects of the curriculum, especially scientific enquiry and the good relationships between teachers and pupils.
66. Teaching is good overall throughout the school. Teachers plan lessons well so that pupils have good opportunities to learn to question why things are the way they are and to set up

experiments to test their theories. The majority of teachers manage their pupils very well, with questions well tailored to suit the wide range of ability clearly evident in most classes throughout the school. This practical aspect of the subject motivates pupils well, and it is evident that the majority of pupils find the emphasis on finding things out interesting and enjoyable. These good aspects of teaching contribute very firmly to rising standards as do the booster classes organised by the co-ordinator for older pupils to ensure they attain their potential.

67. Leadership of science is effective, and the co-ordinator works hard to support learning throughout the school. The school has made a good start at analysing the scores achieved in national tests, taking stock of strengths and identifying areas for future development. The systematic monitoring of teaching and learning is good. The marking of pupils' work by teachers celebrates success and indicates if pupils have achieved the targets set for them. However, not all work is dated and the presentation of some work in some classes is not always as neat and clear as it could be.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ICT is used well in other subjects.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge.
- Pupils achieve well throughout Years 1 and 2.
- The quality of teaching is not consistent throughout the school.

### **Commentary**

68. Standards in ICT are in line with those expected nationally of pupils by the time they reach Year 2 and Year 6. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils were not taught all aspects of the subject and consequently standards were below expectations overall. Now the full curriculum is taught and standards have risen. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and produce work of which they are proud. The progress of pupils in the older year groups varies from unsatisfactory to good because of variation in the quality of teaching but their achievement is satisfactory overall.
69. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 where high expectations of work and behaviour encourage and motivate pupils to do their best. Consequently, their learning is good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. The teaching seen ranged from unsatisfactory, when the expectations of work and behaviour were not high enough, to good. All pupils enjoy using computers because they are motivated by the well-chosen tasks planned by their teachers that give them a purpose for applying their newly learned skills and knowledge. Most teachers promote good relationships well and emphasise the importance of being polite, taking turns and helping each other. Because of this most pupils work well together and are productive during lessons.
70. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Staff training and observations of teaching have helped teachers to improve their confidence and subject knowledge and the quality of their teaching. All have at least sound knowledge of the curriculum now. The curriculum has been developed and planning ensures that all the required aspects are taught and that links with other subjects are exploited. However, there is not enough guidance to help teachers ensure that their teaching enables pupils to make good progress within and between year groups and this has contributed to the variations found in achievement.

71. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. All key issues have been satisfactorily addressed. In addition, resources have increased, so that, in addition to at least one computer system in each class and a few extra in communal areas, the school now has a small suite and a room with a data projector and large screen. The latter is used well, not just to introduce new ICT skills and prepare pupils for work in the ICT suite, but also to support learning in other subjects. Overall, the school has fewer computers per head than most schools and this limits the amount of time pupils have to use them. Different operating systems and the lack of Internet access in the temporary classrooms cause some inconvenience, but much of this will be resolved after refurbishment of these classrooms this summer.

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

72. The school makes good links between ICT and other subjects that enable pupils to consolidate and extend their ICT skills and understanding, as well as developing learning in the other subjects. This area was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. For example, pupils use the Internet and word processing software to research and present information about Henry VIII. They develop editing skills when using a word processor to improve the quality of a given text. They consolidate their understanding of data by creating charts and graphs from data they have gathered in mathematics lessons and by using them to find things out. They use graphics software to investigate designs for slippers and to develop sets of instructions to control Pelican traffic lights in design and technology. They investigate geographic features and their locality using digital maps in geography.

### **HUMANITIES**

Insufficient inspection evidence means that it was not possible to make judgements about provision in **history and geography**. However, there was sufficient evidence from work in pupils' books and on display around the school to make judgements about standards. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are likely to be in line with those expected in both geography and history. This indicates an improvement in geography since the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are very good opportunities provided for pupils to practise their literacy skills in geography and history.
- Pupils' enthusiasm contributes a great deal to their achievement.
- Pupils enjoy making a study of the past and discovering more about their local area.

### **Commentary**

73. No lessons were observed in **history** during the inspection but teachers' planning and a sample of pupils' work throughout the year indicate that pupils reach national expectations and achieve well. Year 2 pupils make a study of their school from the time it was built to the present day. This helps them understand the passage of time. Year 3/4 pupils research information about the life of Henry V111 and fashions of the era. Year 5/6 pupils study ancient Greece. They have used information from the Internet, books, illustrations and artefacts to help them write The Story of Andrew and the Hydra. The more able pupils produced work of a very good standard, writing seven chapters. Many pupils used their art skills to very good effect, showing fine detail in their finished illustrations of Greek urns.
74. Although it was only possible to observe one lesson in **geography**, an analysis of pupils' work over the past year and on display indicates that pupils achieve well throughout the school. Year 2 pupils are familiar with their local area. They make maps of their way to school. They look at maps of the British Isles, Europe and the World and can identify many places on them. In the lesson observed, taught very well by the Year 6 teacher, the pupils learned of the difference between a hill and a mountain, making good use of the first hand knowledge they

had gained on their residential visit the week before the inspection when they had climbed a very high hill. Pupils used atlases with confidence. The teacher constantly challenged all the pupils to learn the meaning of technical language, thus making an important link to their literacy development.

75. The leadership and management of history and geography are satisfactory but the co-ordinators have not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom. Resources are good. Assessment is in the very early stages of development.

## Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning covers all elements of the subject and includes a good emphasis on world religions.
- Lessons pay good attention to supporting pupils' personal skills.
- Religious education supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education very well.

## Commentary

76. The curriculum fully meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' attainment matches expectations, with pupils in the Year 6 class and the Year 5/6 class observed during the inspection achieving well. They provided a very good example of the school using religious education to help improve the pupils' literacy skills. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. For example, at the beginning of one lesson the pupils were challenged to spend two minutes writing as many words as they could remember from previous lessons about Judaism. Later in the same lesson one group of pupils wrote a commentary for a video of a visit to a synagogue while another group produced a leaflet which could be used to help people as they visited the synagogue. Pupils used the Internet and a very good collection of books and artefacts to research their project before producing a very commendable booklet.
77. Pupils enjoy assemblies when Bible stories are included. In one assembly conducted by a group of Christian people from a local church, pupils listened very well as the story of the Good Samaritan was told and linked very effectively to the pupils' own lives and the school's assembly theme for the week. Religious education lessons often include a good element of personal education where moral and social issues are discussed.
78. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. Resources for the subject are very good and add interest to the lessons. They are carefully used by all staff and pupils, who treat them with respect. The co-ordinator has attended a course on the assessment of religious education which has only just become available in the area. She intends to develop it throughout the school in the near future.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

79. It was not possible to gather enough evidence for art and design, music and design technology to make secure judgements about the provision in these subjects. No lessons were seen in design technology during inspection, but work in books and on wall was scrutinised and schemes of work and policies and planning analysed. Too few lessons were seen in music and art and design to enable a provision judgement to be made.
80. The standard of work seen in **art and design** is broadly in line with the nationally expected level at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Planning indicates that the requirements of the National Curriculum are being followed and artwork is used appropriately to illustrate work in other subjects. The work seen around the school shows a suitable range of artwork, including a study of the work of a broad range of different artists from a range of different cultures. For

example, pupils throughout the school worked on a series of plaques in the style of famous artists to brighten the hall. Good use is made of artwork to brighten walls and corridors and the careful way these are mounted and presented has a positive impact on pupils' self-esteem. Pupils talk with enthusiasm of work with visiting artists and sculptors. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have sketchbooks, but the use of these to develop skills and act as a record of what pupils have achieved is variable. Not all work is dated or marked and in at least one class most of the pages of many pupils' books have been torn out. The school is starting to establish a system for recording what pupils achieve in relation to the National Curriculum levels.

81. In **design and technology**, examples of pupils' work in books and on walls show that they learn to plan their designs carefully from an early age. The standard of work seen was broadly in line with that expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This indicates an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils design and make puppets, using a range of skills including sewing and sticking fabric. Year 2 pupils design a machine to lift a stone. Older pupils carefully design and make slippers and pupils in Year 6 use their knowledge of the Internet to research moving parts in toys.
82. There was not enough evidence to judge the overall quality of provision or achievement in **music**. One lesson was seen that was taught by a peripatetic teacher. The teaching was good and pupils made progress in the lesson, achieving standards of composition and singing that were broadly as expected for their age. Singing in assemblies is mainly satisfactory and is occasionally good. Specialist instrumental tuition is offered and enables pupils who take it up to extend their musical skills, as was seen when Year 3 brass players performed for younger pupils in an assembly. Most staff do not feel confident teaching the subject so the school buys in specialist music teaching for all classes from Year 2 upwards.

## Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- There is good enrichment with a wide variety of sports clubs.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to join in all activities.
- There is good provision for teaching swimming in the school's private pool.
- Assessment is in the very early stages of development.

## Commentary

83. Overall, standards are in line with national expectations and pupils achieve well across a varied range of activities. The curriculum is good and pupils develop skills effectively in dance, games and gymnastics. Swimming is arranged for pupils in the Year 3/4 classes during school time and clubs are available for older pupils after school in the school's own pool. This results in all pupils being able to swim the regulation distance by the time they leave the school, with many reaching higher standards.
84. During the inspection pupils of all ages were observed in games lessons. While Year 1 pupils concentrated on developing their skills of throwing and catching a ball, older pupils used these skills to good effect in games lessons involving hockey, cricket and rounders. They achieved well due to their enthusiasm and the good teaching and coaching available from teachers and other adults from a local college.
85. Most effective teaching results in good learning. The qualities that are typical of good teaching are:
  - Careful planning that ensure skills are introduced a step at a time and practised seriously.

- High expectations that result in considerable challenge.
- The effective use of praise and demonstration to reinforce learning and boost the pupils' self-esteem.
- Very good management of pupils and resources.
- The use of appropriate warm up and cool down exercises.
- The good use of pace to keep all pupils involved.

86. The new co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She is very keen to continue improving standards. A new scheme of work has already been provided. Resources are good and well stored. Assessment is in the early stages of development.

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

87. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good and leads to good pupil achievement. Although none of the regular timetabled lessons were observed, personal, social, health and citizenship issues are important to the school and permeate its work. There is a comprehensive programme that includes health and drugs education, sex and relationships and personal safety. Pupils' actions and their work in books and displays shows that they are developing self-confidence, good relationships, an awareness of their roles as citizens, and are learning how to be healthy and keep safe. Pupils respond very well to the opportunities provided for them to take responsibility, both for their work and for other tasks that contribute to the smooth running of the school. They carry out tasks sensibly and enthusiastically, as seen, for example, when acting as 'friendship buddies' and 'ICT consultants'. They consider people's differences and needs and are learning about life in different cultures and environments.

88. All staff promote pupils' personal development and citizenship well in other lessons and around the school. The school's policies are consistently applied, setting high expectations for behaviour and emphasising that pupils are responsible for the choices they make and their consequences. While most pupils respond very well, the school has a good range of strategies in place that support and develop the small minority of pupils who do not conform to the school's expectations.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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

