

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SEAFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Seaford

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114419

Headteacher: Mr J Reynard

Lead inspector: Geof Timms

Dates of inspection: 29 September – 2 October 2003

Inspection number: 257423

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	350
School address:	Wilkinson Way Seaford East Sussex
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Trevor Perks
Date of previous inspection:	2 October 2001

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves a mixed area near the centre of the small town of Seaford. A below average proportion of the pupils is entitled to free school meals. The attainment on entry to the school varies considerably between cohorts but is broadly average, overall. Most pupils in the school are White British but there is a small range of other ethnic backgrounds, with a larger group of pupils who are Bangladeshi. Eight pupils speak Bengali or Sylhetti as their first language. Other frequently spoken languages in the school are Hindi, Urdu and Swedish, although several other European and non-European languages are spoken, in addition to English. Three pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition. One teacher provides support for pupils from ethnic minorities, although currently she is only visiting the school for half a day a week. There is also a Bengali speaking member of the support staff who provides additional support for half a day per week. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at times other than normal is significant. The proportion of the pupils with special educational needs is broadly in line with that found nationally. Two pupils have statements of special need entitling them to extra support. The main needs identified are learning difficulties and emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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11104	Michael Fleming	Lay inspector	
18214	Elizabeth Lewin	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education
32325	Martyn Webb	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Special educational needs
5565	Bimla Thakur	Team inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The school is a good, improving school and it provides good value for money. Standards are satisfactory and most pupils achieve the levels expected of them. The leadership is very good and the quality of teaching is good. The school is aware of the areas needing improvement and the headteacher has very clear plans for addressing the priorities.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are improving throughout the school and are good in English by the end of Year 2.
- Standards in mathematics and information and communication technology are too low.
- Pupils' achievement is good in the reception class and for those with English as an additional language.
- The leadership of the headteacher and the senior staff is very good.
- The quality of teaching is good, overall, and very good in a significant proportion of lessons; the work of teaching assistants is very effective.
- The weaker teaching does not ensure the active involvement of all pupils and does not take into account different learning styles.
- The provision for extra-curricular activities, especially in sport, is very good.
- The care and welfare of pupils are very good.
- Pupils' attendance is below average.

There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection. Although there has been turbulence in the staffing and senior management of the school recently, the governing body and teachers have ensured that this has had little impact on pupils. The key issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been addressed effectively.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	C	C	A
mathematics	C	E	E	D
science	E	C	E	D

*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.*

### **Pupils' achievement is good in reception and satisfactory, overall.**

By the end of the Foundation Stage, standards are good and the children have largely achieved as well as expected. They achieve good standards in relation to the goals they are expected to reach in all of the areas of learning. By the end of Year 2, current standards are good in English and improving in the other core subjects. By the end of Year 6, standards in English are broadly in line with those expected. However, the table above shows that in the 2002 national tests, when compared with pupils from similar schools, standards in English were well above average. Standards in mathematics and science were below average when compared with similar schools. However, the most recent tests in 2003 show that standards have significantly improved in mathematics and science. Current standards, from the evidence of the inspection, are below those expected in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). Throughout the school, standards are good in art and design, music and aspects of physical education. Pupils' attitudes values and personal development are good, although their attendance is below average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, and very good in reception and in a significant proportion of lessons throughout the school.**

The best lessons are characterised by very effective planning, providing appropriately challenging work for all pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are particularly strong. Learning intentions are clear and well understood by pupils. Good use is made of questioning to establish what pupils already know and understand as well to encourage thinking and the exploration of ideas. Pupils engage in practical activities and discussion to further develop their understanding and skills. Teaching assistants provide very good support. Teachers know the pupils well and in most classes use a range of assessment methods to promote learning. Good use is made of 'response partners' to promote discussion and extend thinking. Pupils make good progress due to the careful explanations and direct teaching points made by teachers. The pupils work hard when fully involved in their lessons. However, pupils' different learning styles are not always taken into account and this causes occasions when they lack concentration or motivation. For example, where the teaching is weaker pupils are insufficiently involved in the lessons because teachers spend too long talking to them or because the activities are inappropriate. The lessons lack pace and in some subjects, such as ICT and physical education, some teachers' subject knowledge is insufficiently well developed to fully support the intentions of the lesson. The curriculum is very good in the reception class and broadly satisfactory throughout the rest of the school. The school provides pupils with a very good level of care and welfare. The partnership with parents and the community is good

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership of the headteacher and senior staff is very good. The school is well managed.**

The governing body has supported the school very effectively over recent years and through the difficult changes to senior management. They have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The newly appointed headteacher has made a very effective start and has a very clear understanding of the priorities for the future development of the school, and the need to raise the level of pupils' achievement. The senior staff and other teachers have worked hard to ensure that the disrupted management has not had too much impact on the pupils and relationships in the school are very positive, helping create an ethos that is sufficiently challenging and that desires the best for the pupils.

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

Parents' views of the school are largely positive. They are clear about how hard the staff have worked during the last few years to keep the school as successful as it has been. Concerns about the management of the school remain, due to the recent nature of the appointment of the headteacher. The pupils' views of the school are also largely positive. They have some concerns over pupils who misbehave and a number feel they do not have an adult they could share problems with. However, the evidence from the inspection is that the very good, positive ethos in the school is very caring and supportive of pupils.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in mathematics.
- Raise standards in information and communication technology.
- Improve the quality of the satisfactory and unsatisfactory teaching to that of the best.
- Improve levels of attendance.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Standards are good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in English and science. Standards are unsatisfactory in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). In art and design, and music, standards are good. Pupils' achievement is good in the reception class and satisfactory throughout the rest of the school.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in the reception class and they are well on target to achieve the expected early learning goals.
- Standards in art and design, and music, are good and pupils' achievement is good.
- Standards in mathematics and ICT are below those expected and there is underachievement among some pupils.

#### Commentary

1. When children enter the school, their levels of attainment vary but are largely in line with those expected nationally. This is supported by the results of the school's assessment of them. They make good progress in all areas of learning, due to the very good provision and quality of teaching they receive, and the majority are in line to achieve the expected early learning goals by the end of the reception year.
2. As national comparisons for the 2003 test results were not available at the time of the inspection, the 2002 results are published below:

#### Key Stage 1

##### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002*

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.7 (16.6)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.1 (12.8)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	15.4 (16.5)	16.5 (16.2)

*There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. In the 2002 tests seen in the table above, the standards were broadly average in reading at the end of Year 2, while those in writing were below average, and those in mathematics were well below average. The results when compared with those of similar schools were below average in reading and writing, and well below average in mathematics. Even so, the results, especially in reading and writing, have improved steadily since 1998.
4. However, in 2003, as a result of the school focusing on pupils' writing skills, results improved significantly and many more pupils reached the higher levels. The standards evident from the inspection show that standards are still too low in mathematics and ICT, but have improved in reading and writing, and are good in art and design, and music. The standards in ICT are the result of insufficient opportunities to use computers. The school is aware of the need to improve pupils' levels of achievement and has good plans in place and an appropriate focus on the need to raise standards further.

## Key Stage 2

### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (26.7)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.3 (25.3)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	26.8 (28.2)	28.3 (28.3)

*There were 62 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

5. In 2002, as represented in the table above, standards at the end of Year 6 were average in English and well below average in mathematics and science, when compared with schools nationally. This was due to many fewer pupils reaching the higher levels in mathematics and science than they did in English. When compared with the same pupils' results at the age of seven, standards were well above average in English but still below average in mathematics and science. However, in 2003, there were significant improvements in the results of the tests and this is also reflected in the work seen during the inspection. Standards are still below average in mathematics but are broadly in line with those expected in English and science. Standards in ICT are also unsatisfactory owing to the pupils not having sufficient opportunities to use computers and practise their skills.
6. Standards in art and design and in music are above those expected and pupils' achievement is good. This is due to the quality of the teaching of specific skills. The results of the school's sports teams shows that standards among the more able pupils in physical education is good and this reflects the exceptional quantity and quality of the provision for extra-curricular activities. Other subjects sampled during the inspection, including religious education, show that pupils are at least achieving levels in line with those expected. Boys' attainment is lower than girls through their early years in the school, as it is when they enter the school, but analysis of results shows that they do catch up by the time they leave. Standards in English for pupils from ethnic minorities generally match the expectations for their age. Achievement is satisfactory and matches well with their peers. A small number of these pupils are new to the English language, and those in the early stages of English acquisition are below the expected standards for their age, but make good progress in relation to their prior attainment as a result of the more focused support they receive. Staff have worked hard to maintain standards during a period of unsettled leadership and management.

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

**Pupils are friendly and well-behaved. They develop positive attitudes to learning. Most aspects of pupils' personal development are good. The level of attendance is not as high as it should be.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils like their teachers and enjoy their lessons.
- Pupils are enthusiastic participants in extra-curricular activities.
- Relationships are good throughout the school.
- The personal development of pupils in the reception class is very good.
- The present system of assemblies does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils' spiritual dimension to be fully developed.
- The School Council offers a means for further developing mutual respect.
- Pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good.

## Commentary

7. Pupils' desire to learn is stimulated effectively during their reception year and sustained for most of the rest of their time at the school. They participate whole-heartedly in all the activities offered, relishing practical work in lessons and involving themselves enthusiastically in sports and other activities after school. They treat resources with respect and work together effectively. Pupils develop good relationships, both with their peers and with teachers and other adults who work in the school. The school encourages an atmosphere which means there is normally no conflict between boys and girls or between pupils of different ages or ethnic backgrounds. Movement around the school is orderly, behaviour at lunch and break is good, and pupils share parents' and teachers' confidence that the rare instances of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively. The number of exclusions is based on only a very small number of pupils, most of whom have left the school. When a pupil had to be excluded recently, the correct procedures were followed.
8. The school is effective in fostering pupils' self-esteem and in encouraging their tolerance of others. Pupils support each other well in lessons and socially. Elected representatives of each class are keen and responsible participants in the school council. They are happy that this is an effective way to participate in decisions that affect the school; some members were involved in interviewing candidates for the headship of the school. Pupils also express an interest in the wider community, for example, by supporting charities and giving musical performances.
9. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Aspects of social and moral development are very good. Social development is a strength of a school community, which is fostering an expectation that all pupils, whatever their ability, strive for their best. The intrinsic satisfaction of behaving courteously, taking care of others, and doing your best, is paramount. Throughout the school, there exists an atmosphere of genuine mutual respect, in which everyone feels valued. Both in classes, and at playtimes and dinner times, social relationships are harmonious, and older pupils show genuine care for the younger ones. Moral development is also very good. Strategies are used successfully to help pupils understand the feelings and reactions of others, and to distinguish right choices from wrong ones in the way they behave. All adults provide consistently good role models, so that children have a clear appreciation of how to behave. As a result, the standards of behaviour and respect in the school are high. The school has recently introduced a school council. This has the potential to contribute significantly to the promotion of the views and feelings of pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language participate well in lessons. They are polite and are keen to learn. Their behaviour is good and they form very good relationships with their peers and all adults who support them.
10. Provision for spiritual development, while still satisfactory, is less distinct and less well-established within the curriculum. Assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to come together in song and worship and to reflect upon themselves; however, there are currently too few occasions for the expression of joy and wonder. Cultural dimensions of the curriculum are good. Pupils understand the importance of festivals and traditions and other outward signs of religion. They respect the views of others and understand that this is important.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data	6.9
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

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

11. Although it is not rare for some pupils to arrive late, this is typically despite their attitude towards school, not because of it. The school has carefully investigated reasons for poor attendance and is establishing, with the help of appropriate agencies, systems for improving the level, particularly by discouraging holidays taken during term-time. Consequently, the level of attendance has improved since the year 2001-2002, when it was well below the national average.

## 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	357	5	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	8	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	9	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 and has improved since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is good and the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with some exceptional opportunities for enrichment.**

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the Foundation Stage and good throughout the rest of the school. There is also very good teaching in both infant and junior classes.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and the provision is enhanced by the excellent use made of good quality support staff.
- The teaching assistants provide very good support across the school.
- The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good.
- Weaker teaching is due to a lack of subject knowledge, slow pace, and pupils spending too much time sitting listening.

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 67 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
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1 (1%)	10 (15%)	33 (49%)	19 (28%)	4 (6%)	0	0
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*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.*

12. The quality of teaching in the majority of lessons seen was good or better. In the reception class the teaching is very good, owing to the very good relationships between staff and children, and the very good teamwork evident between the teacher and the nursery nurse. Throughout the rest of the school, the best lessons were characterised by very effective planning, providing appropriately challenging work for all pupils. Resources were good and very well prepared. Relationships between teachers and pupils were particularly strong. Learning intentions are clear and well understood by pupils. Good use is made of questioning to establish what pupils already know and understand as well to encourage thinking and the exploration of ideas. Pupils engage in practical activities and discussion to further develop their understanding and skills. Very good support is provided by teaching assistants, and parents are well deployed, particularly when exploring the local environment. Good use is made of the school grounds, which include a nature area with pond. Opportunities for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills are plentiful and literacy skills are well applied when researching and recording information.
13. Good use is made of books in classrooms by teachers, as well as other sources to locate information. However, the refurbishment of the main school library, which took a year to complete, has prevented pupils developing their skills in locating books in a library. Good use is made of ICT but is underdeveloped because there are insufficient resources available. Pupils' homework in Year 6 demonstrates their capacity for independent study making and effective use of research skills to produce pleasing and well-presented work. Teachers know the pupils well and in most classes use a range of assessment methods to promote learning. Good use is made of 'response partners' to promote discussion and extend thinking.
14. Pupils' learning is enhanced in the best lessons. They make good progress owing to the careful explanations and direct teaching points made by teachers. For example, in reception the teacher introduced children to the programming of a robot and by the end of the lesson most pupils were able to complete this successfully. The pupils work hard when fully involved in their lessons. However, in too many lessons, pupils' different learning styles are not taken into account and this causes occasions when they lack concentration or motivation.
15. The teaching and support offered by specialist staff for those pupils with English as an additional language is good. The specialist support is based within the class as well as on a withdrawal basis. Collaboration between class teachers and the support staff is good, which benefits the children. The planning is shared and suitably modified to meet the specific needs of pupils. Records are maintained well by both the teachers and support staff. Progress is reviewed at regular intervals in different aspects of their learning needs, particularly in relation to literacy. Assessment information is used well to provide suitable additional support. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs, and those who are more able, is also good.
16. Where the teaching is weaker pupils are insufficiently involved in the lessons because teachers spend too long talking to them or because the activities are inappropriate. The lessons lack pace and in some subjects, teachers' subject knowledge is insufficiently well-developed to fully support the intentions of the lesson.
17. Assessment for learning is recognised by the school as an important tool for raising standards and has recently been a focus for development. The assessment co-ordinator plays a lead role in the monitoring of standards and keeping staff well-informed to ensure that assessment information is used effectively to have an impact on teaching and learning. Pupils' responses to the National Curriculum tests are systematically analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in learning at individual pupil, whole-class and year group level. Good use is made of the information by teachers to inform planning and target areas for improvement. The

recent focus on target-setting enables teachers to have high expectations and keep track of pupils' achievements.

## The curriculum

**The overall curriculum provision is satisfactory. There are excellent opportunities for sporting and other extra-curricular activities and very good opportunities for enrichment through trips and visitors.**

### Strengths

- The range of opportunities for extra-curricular activities is very good, and enriches pupils' learning.
- The school has clear plans to develop the curriculum and its leadership, with suitable priorities identified.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is very good.
- Accommodation and resources are good, overall.

### Commentary

18. The curriculum offered to pupils is broad and is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. All statutory requirements are met. Time is generally balanced satisfactorily between subjects and parallel classes. The school has correctly focused attention in the recent past on the core subjects, and there are signs that this focus is beginning to improve standards. In the Foundation Stage the curriculum provided is very imaginative and ensures that all areas of learning are covered appropriately. Currently, the ICT curriculum is unsatisfactory owing to a lack of resources, which limits pupils' opportunities to use computers and therefore their ability to acquire, practise and extend ICT skills or apply them frequently to their work in other subjects. This weakness is due to be addressed shortly through the provision of a computer suite. The time allocation for separate subjects does sometimes constrain opportunities for better links between subjects and more independent work. The school is aware of this and is seeking to develop wider approaches to learning across the curriculum, drawing on ideas set out by the National Primary Strategy. The school actively promotes the arts through its curriculum, including art, dance and music, and with particular strengths in performance. There is an effective whole-school approach to planning, and teachers plan collaboratively across the year groups. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
19. Pupils on the special educational needs register are supported in class, and by withdrawal for one-to one and small group work. The wider provision for pupils of special educational need is satisfactory. The special needs co-ordinator has a good understanding of the arrangements and provisions being made to support pupils with special learning needs, including the writing of targets, liaising with staff, monitoring and reviewing the quality of provision and working with parents. She has developed a clear action plan for further improvements. Good strategies are in place for supporting pupils with emotional, behavioural and more complex learning needs and the school works well with other agencies. Within the school's inclusive, caring ethos, the process of identifying special educational needs is secure, as are the arrangements for the allocation of learning support staff. Teachers are involved in the creation of individual education plans and these are evident in some planning files.
20. The school's extra-curricular provision is very good, with a wide range of clubs most of which take place after school. These activities include football, tennis, dancing, cross-country, gymnastics, basketball and netball. The school recognises the pupils who take part in these activities through a participation scheme that very effectively rewards regular attenders. In addition, there is regular ongoing work towards a school performance. During the inspection, auditions were being held for the musical *Oliver*. A number of pupils also benefit from peripatetic music tuition in a range of instruments. A positive feature of this work is the involvement of many individuals in the running of activities. Pupils benefit considerably from

this additional provision which is taken up eagerly by boys and girls. It is a strength of the school, enriches pupils' learning and contributes positively to attitudes and values, and helps prepare them positively for secondary education.

21. Equality of opportunity is addressed successfully. Arrangements for withdrawing pupils with special educational needs and those who attend extra music tuition are usually managed appropriately, but, occasionally, pupils miss substantial amounts of their class lesson time. The school accommodation is relatively new and has been well maintained and developed to create an attractive and welcoming learning environment. Very good use is made of all areas of the building and pupils and adults respect and value it well. The level and quality of resources throughout the school are good, except for ICT provision which is currently unsatisfactory. The school has already identified this and has plans to address improvements in provision in the near future. The level of staffing is satisfactory.

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

**A friendly and caring ethos is now well established. The school provides pupils with good guidance and support. Systems for ensuring their health and safety are very good.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Induction arrangements for new pupils are very good.
- Pupils feel happy and secure at school.
- Teachers know pupils well.
- An effective school council encourages pupils to play a part in school development.
- The school works very effectively to ensure pupils' health and safety.

### **Commentary**

22. From their earliest days in the school, pupils are cared for well and they know it. This enables pupils in the Foundation Stage to settle quickly and to make good progress in all areas of learning and personal development. The personal circumstances and the varied needs of individual pupils are well known to teachers and their assistants, who establish comfortable and trusting relationships with them. As a result, staff are able to provide appropriate support and care, and they promote pupils' personal development very well. Pupils clearly like their teachers and find them accessible and helpful. Even during the frequent changes of staff that pupils have endured in recent years, their confidence in the continuity of care has underpinned their feelings of stability. Pupils recognise that their opinions are taken seriously and enjoy having an impact on school life through the School Council.
23. Meticulous attention is paid to health and safety issues, such as those which occur in science or physical education lessons. The school site is clean and secure. Effective systems for fire evacuation practices and for attention by trained first aiders are in place. The headteacher provides effective leadership of the system to ensure child protection.
24. Suitable arrangements for inducting pupils from pre-school groups, and to prepare them for secondary school, are in place. The school benefits from the contribution of many adults other than school staff, including visitors who lead assemblies and particularly the many who supervise extra-curricular activities.
25. Teachers and support staff know the individual needs of the pupils with English as an additional language well and work in collaboration to meet their needs. There is early identification of needs through well-established systems of assessment and record-keeping. Pupils are set clear targets for improvement. There are good systems in place for the

induction of new pupils into the school. This helps them to settle well in the school and meet their specific needs.

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

**Parents are supportive of the school's work for the benefit of their children. The school has satisfactory relationships with other schools and the wider community.**

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

- Parents value the care taken of their children.
- Parents are pleased that staff maintain a stable learning and nurturing environment despite frequent changes of personnel.
- Although few parents are willing to become involved in its organisation, the parents association provides valuable financial support for the school.

#### **Commentary**

26. The school works hard to involve parents with the education of their children. Parents receive fortnightly newsletters, which provide useful information about tests and forthcoming school events and clarify the school's approach to issues that affect them. For example, too many parents continue to arrange to take their children out from school to go on holiday, so a recent newsletter explained how this is regarded and the bad effect it can have on a child's education. This is part of the school's strategy, devised in consultation with the local education authority and educational welfare service, which is modifying parental attitudes and thereby improving levels of attendance.
27. There are plenty of formal opportunities for parents to receive information about their children's progress, and informal consultations can easily be arranged. Currently, annual reports on pupils' progress include a useful section which indicates what a pupil should do to improve, but too often subjects are reported in a general way which describes what has been taught rather than indicating clearly what the pupil has learnt. Modifications are under consideration for future reports. The school displays a very positive attitude to parents, including regularly canvassing their opinions and responding appropriately to the views expressed.
28. Suitable arrangements for inducting pupils from pre-school groups, and to prepare them for secondary school, are in place. The school benefits from the contribution of many adults other than school staff, including visitors who lead assemblies and particularly the many who supervise extra-curricular activities. There is good liaison with parents of pupils from minority ethnic groups. Parents' views are sought and home visits are arranged as necessary. This strengthens partnership with the parents in their children's learning. Languages from home are welcomed in school and the pupils' cultural backgrounds celebrated. There are annual displays of the languages that are spoken by pupils in the school. This benefits the children and their parents, and adds to the welcoming ethos of the school.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership demonstrated by the newly appointed headteacher and the key staff is very good. The management of the school is good. The governance of the school is very good and governors have supported the school very effectively.**

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

- The school has successfully overcome the recent unsettled leadership through hard work by acting headteachers, senior staff, and governors.

- The newly appointed headteacher demonstrates a very good appreciation of how to improve the school in future and offers dynamic and purposeful leadership.
- The governors have supported, monitored and challenged the school well through turbulent times.
- The school is well managed, and the teaching and non-teaching staff form an effective and hard-working team.

### Commentary

29. The recent history of the school has been one of unsettled senior leadership, temporary appointments and disrupted curriculum development. This period is now over and the recently appointed headteacher has a clear and appropriate vision for the future of the school. He has quickly ascertained a number of immediate priorities and added these to the existing school improvement planning. The appointment of a permanent deputy headteacher is imminent and this will enable the completion of the planned senior management team structure. Parents are very positive about the way the staff have worked together to prevent standards slipping.
30. The governing body has supported the school well throughout the recent years and has worked very hard to ensure that the pupils were provided for appropriately at all times. It has been closely involved in many aspects of the school's work. Individual governors use their skills in a range of ways, from helping with the grounds, helping in classrooms and helping produce the school prospectus. They have a very good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the effective committee structure enables their work to be carried out efficiently and effectively.
31. The subject co-ordinators have a very good understanding of their role and how they can act as support or models for other teachers. They are enthusiastic and very aware of the action needed to improve standards in their subjects. The analysis of data and test results is enabling the leadership to get a firm grip on the areas of the school's work needing improvement. Co-ordinators in the core subjects have had opportunities to monitor other teachers' lessons as well as pupils' work. The good use of ICT enables all planning to be centrally monitored.
32. The provision for pupils from minority ethnic groups is well managed. Leadership is strong overall. There are well-established systems of accountability through the special educational needs co-ordinator, and the Ethnic Minority Pupils' Service team leader from the local authority. There is an analysis of the languages currently spoken in the school by bilingual pupils, but not of their current stages of the English language acquisition. There are good monitoring and tracking procedures in the school, which are also useful in analysing performance in the national tests and measuring the value added. A review of the provision is now due, in order to establish how effective it is in meeting individual needs, although at present this aspect of the school's life is not a part of the school improvement plan. The co-ordinator's role could develop further in providing in-service training for staff and sharing good practice.

### Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	769,842
Total expenditure	916,127
Expenditure per pupil	2,367

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	16,953
Balance carried forward to the next	31,278

33. The school is well managed. Systems are understandably in need of some improvement under the new leadership but the administrative staff, together with the senior teachers, have worked hard to ensure the smooth running of the school. Resources are used well and the school works hard to ensure best value in all aspects of its work. The finance committee, bursar and headteacher work hard to ensure they get the best value through careful financial management and purchasing arrangements. Overall, the school gives good value for money.

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is one of the strengths of the school, and is very good. Children enter reception with attainment that is broadly in line with the average, but varies from year to year, and there is a wide range of ability reflecting their pre-school experiences. The teaching is very good and the teacher and nursery nurse make a very effective team, and they have excellent and productive relationships with the children. Excellent use is made of the present very good accommodation, particularly in giving pupils a high level of independence in selecting activities. The curriculum is very well planned and assessment is detailed and effective in helping plan suitable learning experiences for all children. By the end of the year, the majority of the children will have achieved the expected goals in all of the areas of learning.

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

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

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

- The children achieve very well because the activities planned offer them very good opportunities for independent as well as adult-led activities.
- Children learn to share, co-operate and work and play together well.

#### **Commentary**

34. The teacher makes very effective use of the available accommodation, both indoors and outdoors. The spare classroom provides a range of imaginative play areas based on the class fairy tales topic but also very cleverly linked to literacy and numeracy skills. The outdoor area is well used, not simply for physical activities but also for curriculum-led work. For example, one activity linked to numeracy required pupils to devise and create a number plate for the wheeled toys. They have opportunities to select activities at an advanced level as, for example, when in the Queen's counting house they were able to make sandwiches with bread and honey.
35. Many activities are planned to enable children to learn to share and play together, as well as to spend lengthening amounts of time focusing on a task and seeing it to completion. They share toys, role-play opportunities and learn to take turns well through a range of group teacher-led activities. The very effective teaching is providing the children with good learning skills for their future schooling. The teacher has developed a very good pictorial timetable that enables children to understand the pattern of the day and what is expected of them. Very good examples of older children helping younger, part-time children were observed, further extending their independence and maturity.

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

**Provision for communication, language and literacy is very good, and the scrutiny of work from the previous year shows that achievement in reading and writing skills is good.**

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

- Books and the use of language have a high profile in the classroom and a very good, imaginative range of activities supports the good achievement evident in speaking and listening, reading and writing.
- Bilingual pupils are well supported.

#### **Commentary**

36. Nursery rhymes and fairy tales have a high profile and give pupils a very good grounding in stories from different cultures. The imaginative conversion of a spare classroom to a range of role-play areas based on nursery rhymes and the story of *The Gingerbread Man*, provides children with a colourful and exciting learning environment. This provides many opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills. Children listen attentively and with enjoyment to stories. They are able to order the events in such well-known tales and are quickly learning to write their own names. The staff provide a very good range of activities designed to extend pupils' writing skills in imaginative ways. They learn to trace and then copy others' writing, and by the end of the year the higher-attaining pupils can write common three-letter words accurately. Writing areas encourage children to use their emergent writing skills in a range of ways.
37. The annual book week provides a very good opportunity to promote reading and books. Very good use of a teacher from the bi-lingual support service, who used puppets to talk with children, together with the high profile displays of bilingual books in a range of languages, supports pupils who do not have English as a first language and they achieve as well as their peers.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Provision in mathematical development is good and children develop good number understanding.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is good and the children make good progress in number work.
- The teaching is good and sufficiently challenging for all children. Activities are matched appropriately to children's prior understanding.

### **Commentary**

38. The children are able to count together the number of children in the class. They take part in a good, fast-paced mental activity, involving counting the spots on dice. This develops the speed of their counting and gives them confidence when using numbers. When this is conquered the teacher sets a further challenge by using two dice, and this creates opportunities to extend the understanding, especially of the more able children. The teacher targets specific questions at individuals, ensuring that the work is not too hard or too easy for them. Where there are errors the teacher returns to children to re-check their understanding.
39. Children are able to match numbered parts of a gingerbread man to the numbers on a card. Computer software is used to write numbers, enabling children to see how they are formed. This is important, as last year a number of pupils were still reversing numbers when they wrote them in books.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The activities planned by the teacher ensure a good range of learning about science, technology and the wider world.
- Where there is direct teaching of ICT, and then practice of specific skills, pupils' achievement is very good.

### **Commentary**

40. Children have a range of opportunities to learn about different materials and the ways these can be used. They test materials to see which are best for protecting eggs. They know what is needed to make bread and, as part of the literacy theme, they make very good gingerbread men. During the year they have opportunities to make models, and they learn some basic design skills. For example, they make card animals with moving limbs. Children working in the 'shoemaker's shop' create some well-designed paper slippers that will fit their feet.
41. The computers are used well to support work in lessons. For example, children use the mouse to draw numbers. In one very good lesson, children were very effectively shown how to program a robot to make it move a certain distance. One group then designed and made a fox-head cover for the robot and it was programmed to try and catch a cut-out gingerbread man. This work resulted in a great deal of excitement and enthusiasm, and real awe when they managed to program the robot successfully. A very good visit to a supermarket supports the learning in ICT as the children scan their purchases through the till.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children are encouraged to be very active through a range of activities. They are achieving well and developing confidence and good levels of control, balance and skill.

### **Commentary**

42. The teacher provides many activities designed to help develop pupils' skills in using and controlling small apparatus, tools and a variety of materials. In addition, the good outdoor area enables children to spend time using large wheeled toys and other bigger more physical equipment. This also supports the development of their very good physical skills. In one session, children show how well they know that exercise leads their heart to beat faster. They have a good control of their movements and show a good awareness of others as they play 'follow the leader' or run and stop on a signal. Most children demonstrate good skills in throwing, catching and balancing a beanbag and these lessons are supported by the teacher's very good subject knowledge and expertise.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

43. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards in this area of learning, but the work seen was good. Flower paintings in the style of Van Gogh were colourful and imaginative and showed a good level of control of the tools and the media used. A range of creative work is used to help teach children about different festivals, such as Christmas, Diwali and Easter.
44. In one very good session, the youngest children try to recreate sounds they had heard on a walk round the school using musical instruments. They sing a nursery rhyme with instruments and keep time very accurately.

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

### **ENGLISH**

**Provision for English is good. Standards in English are above average in Years 1 and 2, with significant improvements seen in writing, and average in Years 3 to 6. Standards in speaking and listening skills are above average across the school as a whole.**

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

- Standards in writing at Year 1 and 2 have improved considerably.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average.
- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- Clear learning intentions and quality feedback are strong features in most lessons.
- Very good use of teaching assistants.
- The monitoring of standards, the analysis of assessment data and its impact on teaching and learning is effective.
- Standards in English have fallen at Key Stage 2.
- Insufficient use of the school library and of ICT.
- Inconsistencies in marking.

#### **Commentary**

45. The results of the most recent National Curriculum tests for Year 2 show that standards are likely to be above average in writing and average in reading. The school has worked hard and has been successful in raising standards, particularly in writing. These standards were also reflected when observing pupils in lessons, talking with them and looking at their work during the inspection. The results of the National Curriculum tests for Year 6 in 2003 show a fall in standards, particularly in writing. Standards in writing were below average overall and in reading the proportion of those reaching level 5 was below average. However, standards seen during the inspection did not match those reflected in the tests. Observation in lessons, discussions with pupils and looking at their work showed standards to be average, overall, and in some classes they were above average.
46. Standards in speaking and listening are above average, with pupils achieving well and making good progress across the school. The majority of pupils listen very carefully to adults and to one another. They speak confidently and clearly and are able to discuss effectively in pairs and larger groups. Good use is made of 'response partners' during lessons, in all subjects, to prompt thinking and to enable pupils to extend and explore ideas. Drama lessons provide pupils with further opportunities to engage in meaningful discussion.
47. Achievement in reading and writing is good in Years 1 and 2. Considerable emphasis has been placed on improving pupils' literacy skills. The introduction of guided reading sessions, where the focus is on the teaching of reading skills and strategies, has been successful and resulted in pupils making good progress. Pupils enjoy reading and do so with fluency and expression. Good use is made of the Infant library and books in classrooms. Although pupils can successfully retrieve information in books and discuss books using correct terminology, such as fiction, non-fiction, author, illustrator, contents, and index, they do not know how the library is organised. The teaching of writing has also improved considerably and can be attributed to more focused teaching using a more interactive approach and teacher modelling.
48. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is variable. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in reading and writing and in some classes progress is good or very good. Pupils' attitudes to reading vary. Most are keen, avid readers and in spite of not having had access to the school library

over the last year have made use of the local town library. However, library skills are generally unsatisfactory and a number of pupils is unaware of how the library is organised and how books are shelved.

49. The quality of teaching is good, overall, enabling pupils to learn effectively. Lessons are well planned, with clear learning intentions that are shared with the pupils. Questioning is skilfully used not only to check out what pupils already know but to clarify their understanding of learning and promote thinking. Learning intentions are revisited throughout the lesson to ensure that learning is on track. Pupils are encouraged to self-evaluate and recognise where learning is successful. In most classes their contributions are valued and feedback is positive. Teaching methods are imaginative and varied accounting for the differing learning styles of pupils and leading to high levels of interest and participation. A good example of this is the use of 'response partners' for discussion, which prompts thinking and further exploration of ideas. Exceptional teaching was seen in one lesson, where the teacher skilfully orchestrated all of the above skills and attributes and pupils were taught about punctuation in a particularly inspiring and effective way. Very good use is made of teaching assistants, throughout the school, to support groups and individuals. A good example of this is where small groups of pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn from part of a literacy lesson to follow a specialised programme of work. Where teaching is less successful the pace of lessons tends to be too slow. Although the quality of marking of pupils' work is good in some classes, there are inconsistencies across the school as a whole. Where it is good, pupils are provided with feedback in relation to the learning intention and guidance on how to improve. When the learning intention is included in the title, this aids marking and serves as a useful record.
50. The subject leader is enthusiastic and keen to improve standards. An action plan has been developed, focusing on raising achievement in writing in Years 3 to 6 and providing further training for staff on guided reading. The school library is now ready for use, with all books having been entered onto the newly installed computer system. All that remains is for pupils to be taught how to use the new system and for the library to have an effect on their learning. The school monitors performance very well by tracking pupils' achievement and setting targets. Test outcomes are analysed and weaknesses addressed in planning. This has been shown to have a very positive impact, particularly in the raising of standards in writing in Years 1 and 2. More recently it was found, in the reading comprehension tests in 2003, that pupils had difficulty in responding to questions which required reading beyond one page to find an answer. This has now become a focus for learning. Although resources are generally good, the lack of access to computers means that the use of ICT in English is unsatisfactory.
51. There have been significant improvements in writing across the school as a whole but particularly in Key Stage 1, since the last inspection. The school is well placed now, to improve results in Year 6 and make better progress towards achieving the targets set for the subject

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

52. Literacy skills are taught through a number of subjects. Pupils have plentiful opportunities for discussion in lessons and good use is made of debate. Pupils write in different genres, recognising and using the different characteristics effectively in order to write newspaper reports and personal accounts in a diary. Pupils are taught correct terminology within subjects and use it well. This happens, for example, in science and history lessons. Good use is made of books in classrooms as well as other sources to locate information. However, the refurbishment of the main school library, which took a year to complete, has prevented pupils from developing their skills in locating books in a library.

## MATHEMATICS

**Provision for mathematics is satisfactory, but improving rapidly, and having a good impact on raising standards.**

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision is improving well owing to the good action plan and a shared understanding of what the school needs to do to improve.
- Teachers are becoming increasingly confident in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy.
- Very good support is available for the lower attaining pupils with help from learning support assistants.
- The planning is not always differentiated well enough to suit the range of abilities within class, and to enable pupils to reach their full potential.
- Mental and oral work at the start of a lesson is not sufficiently challenging to help pupils increase their numeracy skills and not enough time is left for pupils to show the levels of progress they have made at the end of some lessons.

### Commentary

53. There has been good improvement in standards since the last inspection, particularly in the junior years, where achievement is rising. There is a marked improvement in pupils' achievement in Year 6, reflected in the 2003 national test results. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is almost in line with what is expected, and there is significant increase in the number of pupils who attain the higher levels. In lessons, the standards the pupils are achieving are generally at those expected nationally. The national test results show that attainment by the end of Year 2 is below expectations for the age, but the pupils managed to achieve the appropriately challenging targets set for them. There is some improvement in the test results from the previous year, but results at the higher levels have dipped. When the value-added information is analysed, the school makes the expected or slightly better progress. The school self-evaluation records that there is still some underachievement in mathematics, even though the test results have improved in 2003. Teachers are aware of this, and the school is addressing it as the top priority. The successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has proven useful in raising standards, and helped to achieve a good degree of consistency in the teaching practice throughout the school.
54. Pupils have made satisfactory progress, overall. The school's analysis of the test results of pupils from ethnic minorities shows no significant variation in the achievement of their peers. In lessons seen, there were no detectable differences between the attainment of girls and boys or in the attainment of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. The schools' tracking systems show that pupils supported through small group work have made good progress. Teaching assistants provide very good levels of support in the numeracy sessions, ensuring that pupils access the subject as well as possible. This is the result of a good level of collaboration with the class teachers to plan and prepare work, and to evaluate progress.
55. Teachers give good demonstrations of different methods of calculating and recording answers, often involving pupils in their illustrations. They make good use of the practical apparatus to reinforce the pupils' understanding, and frequently ask appropriate questions to check their understanding. The level of challenge offered in the mental and oral work is variable between teachers and not always successful in increasing pupils' mental and oral skills. There is a lack of a variety in the activities that are offered, which makes teaching less interesting for some pupils. There is also some inconsistency in the way the lessons are concluded. Time at the end of the lesson is not always used well by all teachers to evaluate the success of the lesson in meeting the learning intentions, and to find out how well the pupils of different abilities have learned. Homework in mathematics, although satisfactory, is not exploited fully as a resource to extend or to consolidate what is learnt in the school.

56. Teachers and pupils are beginning to use the calculator increasingly well as a tool for teaching and learning. Very good use of the calculator was seen in one Year 6 class, where pupils used calculators effectively to explore the place value of numbers with a decimal point. The use of the computer was seen in one Year 4 class to support the teaching of decimal notation. Generally, there is a limited use of the computer in the school to support mathematics, particularly in relation to understanding the properties of shapes, space and measures, and in data-handling. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, although variable, ranging between very good and satisfactory. Where teaching is good or better, expectations are high and the pupils of different abilities are given suitably challenging tasks. Where teaching is satisfactory, activities are differentiated, but the level of challenge is not appropriate for the range of abilities within class and the pace of the work is slow. Pupils are passive listeners at times, as the activities planned do not provide good opportunities to take an active part in their own learning. The quality of marking is improving, but there are differences in ways teachers provide feedback as to how pupils could improve their next piece of work. Management is good. The subject co-ordinator is a very good role model as a teacher and also displays very good leadership qualities. She is supported well by the senior management team in analysing test results, tracking pupils progress and, because of this, is able to show the value added by the school to the pupils' achievement.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

57. Literacy skills are taught effectively through numeracy sessions. For example, pupils' are given appropriate vocabulary to learn, and to use when explaining their methods of calculation. Often, mathematical terms, and charts are displayed on classroom walls. This helps to promote the use of subject-specific language. Numeracy across the curriculum is evident in subjects, such as science and geography, where pupils apply their skills in measuring, and present their investigations in tables and graphs, although this work is not represented at higher levels. An examination of pupils' books showed very few examples of pupils using mathematics to solve more complex problems, where pupils have to select appropriate operations and apply efficient calculation strategies. In lessons, there were limited examples of pupils using mathematics in a variety of practical contexts to consolidate their understanding.

## **SCIENCE**

**Provision for science is satisfactory and improving, and pupils are achieving levels broadly in line with those expected nationally.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in science are improving.
- There is an emphasis on investigative science.
- Pupils are acquiring and using appropriate scientific vocabulary.
- Many pupils are able to formulate predictions and then test these.
- The subject is well led.
- The work is not always well matched to pupils' learning needs.
- The marking does not let pupils know what they need to do to improve.

### **Commentary**

58. The 2002 test results for Year 6 pupils were lower than those of the previous year, and trends over time demonstrate an inconsistency in the standards attained. Results for 2003 show an improvement over the previous year. There is no significant variation between the results of boys and girls. Inspection evidence of the current performance of the pupils in Year 2 indicates that they are achieving generally average standards by the age of seven. The rate of progress

in learning is satisfactory and sometimes good, with some of the more able pupils making good progress, particularly in experimental and investigative science. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their observational and practical skills through investigative work, and to record what they find in their own words, and this aspect of science is still developing. For example, the youngest pupils correctly identify that the robots they are using in a mathematical investigation work from electrical power provided by a battery and they are aware of some of the dangers of electricity. By Year 2, standards are in line with those expected for pupils aged seven. They investigate simple electrical circuits and know that a lamp will not light if the circuit is not complete.

59. There is a steadily increasing emphasis as pupils move through the school on experimental and investigative methods. This relatively recent increased focus on investigations has resulted in some of the older pupils having gaps in their skills and understanding. Teachers are aware of this and are working hard to identify those skills that are less well-developed and to devise activities to improve skills. Pupils in Year 6 know some of the features of a fair test, for example, the need to use two spoons for testing, one for the stirring and one for the measuring. There is a clear and growing expectation through the school that pupils should describe what they are doing in their own words, incorporating the specific vocabulary that they have been taught. This was demonstrated by pupils in a Year 5 class who, having initially learned what they were going to learn in language they understood, completed the lesson by describing their learning using the correct scientific vocabulary they had been taught to use during their investigation. Because of this work, it appears that the planned improvements in addressing this area are beginning to have an impact.
60. The quality of teaching is usually at least satisfactory, sometimes good and very good. Resources are readily available and time is usually used well, with some lessons conducted at a suitably brisk pace. Teachers' knowledge of the subject matter is usually good. The management of pupils is uniformly very good throughout the school. The range of teaching strategies used to develop pupils' learning is appropriately broad. The quality of teachers' questioning skills is usually high. When posing questions, most teachers take care to ensure that a wide range of pupils is allowed to respond. The marking of pupils' work is carried out frequently, but written comments made on written work do not give pupils sufficient ideas as to how they can improve their work. Assessment information is generally used well for the benefit of all pupils, but is not always translated into planned work being appropriately matched to the specific needs of individuals or groups.
61. The subject co-ordinator is a very knowledgeable teacher who is keen to raise standards. The subject is led and managed very well and areas for improvement have been clearly identified in the subject action plan, which has had the involvement of a governor. Some monitoring of teaching and learning, and of written work, has taken place and more is planned. As a result, the school is gaining a clearer overview of standards upon which to base further improvements. Consequently, the co-ordinator has correctly identified the need to improve experimental and investigative approaches to science and improve methods of assessment. There are some good links between teaching in science, ICT, and design and technology, but there is scope for further development within planning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

**Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is improving but standards and pupils' achievement are still unsatisfactory.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The resources are insufficient to support effective teaching.
- The whole-class teaching of skills needs to improve.
- ICT is being used effectively to support learning in an increasing range of subjects.

- The subject is well led.
- There is a commitment from staff to raise standards.
- The significant contribution made by support staff.

### **Commentary**

62. By Year 2 and Year 6 standards are slightly below those expected nationally. From their earliest years in the school, pupils quickly develop positive attitudes towards computers. They use computerised robots confidently in imaginative play and in their early understanding of number literacy skills. By the end of Year 2, they use word processing programs and use graphics applications to create pictures skilfully in the style of Mondrian, Miro and Pollock as part of their artwork designs. They are less secure in acquiring word processing skills. By the end of Year 6, pupils are secure in using the characteristics of word processors, spreadsheets and graphics software to develop their work, but are less secure in the exchange of information and ideas in a variety of ways, including access to the Internet.
63. Pupils' achievement is hampered by the current unsatisfactory provision of resources. This results in limited access to computers in order to practise and apply skills. When a teacher attempts to teach the whole class these skills there is often too great a time delay in pupils having access to a computer and consequently they have often forgotten much of what has been taught. In some cases, pupils make steady progress in acquiring knowledge and developing understanding and skills. As they move through the school, pupils use simple control programs appropriately to create instructions for a programmable vehicle. They know how to use the Internet to find information. For example, in Year 6, pupils accessed information about the weather in response to questions proposed by their teacher. Some pupils are able to use their navigational skills to acquire relevant data swiftly but many are less secure in this. By Year 6, some pupils can merge text and pictures and most can edit text on-screen using different word-processing applications, and confidently create and rename files. A recent focus has been for pupils to develop their skills in the use of multi-media devices. However, the lack of computers results in this progress being inconsistent, owing to the infrequency and length of time which pupils have to practise, extend and apply their skills.
64. Pupils with special educational needs make steady progress in relation to their prior learning, and many of them show a particular interest in this subject. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. They work with sustained concentration, behave well and carry out good, collaborative work. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers display a commitment to raising standards and look forward to working with improved resources. Teachers' knowledge, skills and understanding are secure, sometimes good and very good, and their knowledge of the programs is satisfactory, overall. The management of behaviour is good. Pupils are given clear instructions, but they sometimes have too much information to retain until they have the opportunity to use it. Pupils were not always aware of the progress they had made during the lessons observed.
65. The school has a very recently appointed subject leader. He has quickly established a clear view of the priorities for improvement and has drafted an appropriate action plan setting out clearly what the school intends to do. He is well supported by the school's senior management team and a committed staff. He displays appropriate technical knowledge, the ability to lead curricular planning and in identifying the support teachers require. Currently, assessment tends to focus on the completion of tasks rather than on progress in learning. This needs further refinement to identify pupils who are able successfully to apply skills in a range of contexts. The policy and scheme of work provide appropriate levels of detail to help planning, but need updating to ensure that continuity and progression fully meet curricular requirements.
66. Teachers have a greater understanding of the potential of ICT, using it for their planning and as a support for much of their teaching. They make good use of ICT in the preparation of teaching materials, labels and notices. Good use is also made of the interactive whiteboard to model good practice and to enhance visual learning for pupils. The school currently has plans for the

development of an ICT suite. This will greatly enhance its ability to meet curricular requirements and its ability to raise standards for pupils.

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

67. Computers are used across a range of subjects. For example, in music and art, software is used to support creative activities such as drawing and composing. In literacy, word processing is regularly used to enhance pupils' writing skills.

### **HUMANITIES**

68. During the inspection, the humanities, consisting of history, geography and religious education, were not a main focus so judgements are based on analysis of work, a small number of lesson observations and discussions with subject leaders. Overall, achievement in these subjects is at least in line with that expected and, in religious education, achievement is in line with that expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
69. An appropriate range of topics is covered within each subject and pupils have adequate opportunities to develop the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding. For example, in one history lesson in Year 4, pupils recognised the disadvantages as well as the advantages of the Nile flooding. This helped them to recognise the characteristics of writing in different genres when recording information as either a newspaper report or a personal account in a diary. In another lesson, Year 5 pupils were able to consider effectively differing points of view when debating around the assertion that "Henry VIII was right to divorce Catherine of Aragon". They demonstrated a clear understanding of it not being possible to know the exact reasons for the divorce, and being dependent on various sources of information in order to make an informed judgement. Their very good debating skills enabled them to influence as well as respect the views of others.
70. In geography, Year 6 pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the differences between primary and secondary sources of information. They use the Internet effectively as a secondary source of information to find weather facts about places around the world. They make good progress in interpreting the information accurately by, for example, recognising that the temperatures can be presented in two ways and the need for a key to interpret the various symbols. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress in learning about the differences between what they see at eye-level and from above. Looking at aerial photographs to identify human and physical features prepares them for understanding how to interpret a plan. Pupils in Year 1, through a walk exploring the immediate surroundings of the school, make good use of the locality. This enables them to cite important features and begin to place them in preparation for mapping.
71. Subject leaders within the humanities work very well together. Action plans are shared and school portfolios of work have been developed to reflect standards. Monitoring roles have improved since the previous inspection. A focus on assessment has increased staff confidence in making better use of National Curriculum levels and recognising significant achievement, where pupils' achievement is below or above the standard expected for their age. Planning is accessed through the school Intranet. Opportunities have yet to be provided for subject leaders to observe lessons as well as see the outcomes of pupils' work.

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

72. Not enough evidence was gathered in design and technology or physical education to judge provision, but the quality of the work seen was at least satisfactory and, particularly in physical education, often good. Where the lessons were good, pupils were active and fully involved. Physical education has a high profile in the school and this is evident in the work of pupils who are largely enthusiastic and enjoy taking part in the many clubs as well as their lessons. In

design and technology, pupils have numerous opportunities to design, make and evaluate objects. The tasks chosen are not always sufficiently interesting, or introduced in such a way as to enthuse, pupils and this can result in some confusion over tasks and underachievement among the pupils. However, the very good work in designing and making slippers in both the reception class and in Year 6 showed the good progress in developing pupils' skills that is largely evident, leading to good achievement, overall.

## **Art and design**

**Provision in art and design is good and pupils achieve well.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teachers use a very wide range of other artists' work to inspire pupils.
- The pupils develop good skills, using a range of materials and media.
- Pupils' good achievement is supported by their success in competitions.

### **Commentary**

73. Year 1 pupils create effective portraits in the style of Picasso. They use bright colours and interesting shapes, in paint and collage. The good teaching has used a wide range of reproductions to inform and inspire pupils. The pupils show pride in their work and are happy to show and discuss it with others. They demonstrate good achievement in learning about Picasso; for example, they know that one picture represents a woman crying. In a good Year 5 lesson, the teacher made good use of work by Cezanne and Picasso to compare and contrast still-life pictures. This work developed into some good drawing of objects and a growing level of control of a range of media. The teaching was good, although more emphasis on observational skills would have kept pupils eyes more closely on the objects rather than on their work. In work from the previous year, William Morris had been used well to encourage pupils to design their own wallpaper patterns.
74. The pupils in the infant classes make good use of sketch-books to practise using a range of media and tools. Their mark-making skills are above those expected for their age. Observational drawing forms a large part of their work and this is successful in developing drawing skills and observational skills to a good level. Older pupils use string patterns to make effective prints and further extend their skills by experimenting with different media. Some very good painted seascapes, created after a visit to the seaside, won a local competition. During the inspection Year 2 pupils worked on creating seascapes, using Monet and Van Gogh as inspiration, and they very effectively produced work that shows movement and reflection on the sea. This work is successful because the teacher's knowledge and understanding are very good and she is able to pass her enthusiasm for the subject on to the pupils.

## **Music**

Provision in music is good and there is evidence of a good level of achievement throughout the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very effective deployment of a teaching assistant enables her expertise to have a very positive impact on the pupils' achievement.
- The singing in assembly and the standards in the best lessons are above those expected for pupils of this age.

## **Commentary**

75. The school is fortunate in having an enthusiastic and gifted teaching assistant with expertise in music, and her skills are used very effectively. She is responsible for the musical aspects of school productions. She organises and leads choirs and musical groups, including opportunities for pupils to perform in competitions and in the community. In addition, she takes a lead in some classroom teaching, supporting teachers very effectively and also providing modelling and coaching of lessons as part of their professional development. The good quality singing of pupils, as seen in assemblies and on recordings of performances shows how effective her work is in developing pupils' skills and also in creating their obvious enthusiasm for the subject. The other teaching observed during the inspection has clearly been affected by the teaching assistant's work, as it was all of good quality, with largely appropriate use of the correct terminology and gave pupils opportunities to compose and perform using their voices and a range of instruments.
76. Good use is made of ICT in music. In assemblies, computer presentations are used to tell pupils about the music being played, and some background to the composer or instruments. Also, together with overhead projectors, the computer is used to display words for hymns. These, together with the playing of the recorded backing music, are all used by pupils. In addition, the school has piloted a scheme for electronically composing music and pupils have performed this at a conference, showing the possibilities of the technology.

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

77. The school's provision for the personal, social and health education of pupils is very good. This is achieved both through the subjects of the curriculum, as well as through the good relationships fostered at all levels within the school community. Aspects of sex education are developed appropriately throughout the school, leading to more specific work in Year 6.

## 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	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<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	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	3

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