

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **THORPE HESLEY INFANT SCHOOL**

South Yorkshire

LEA area: Rotherham

Unique reference number: 106923

Headteacher: Mrs S Kaskiewicz

Lead inspector: Mr E Jackson

Dates of inspection: 14 – 16 June 2004

Inspection number: 258195

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Type of school:             | Infant School   |
| School category:            | Community   |
| Age range of pupils:        | 3-7   |
| Gender of pupils:           | Mixed   |
| Number on roll:             | 195   |
| School address:             | Upper Wortley Road<br>Thorpe Hesley<br>Rotherham<br>South Yorkshire |
| Postcode:                   | S61 2PL   |
| Telephone number:           | 0114 2570730  |
| Fax number:                 | 0114 2494733  |
| Appropriate authority:      | Governing body  |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr John Francis   |

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Thorpe Hesley is an average sized infant school, with 172 full-time pupils on roll, and 23 full-time equivalent places in the nursery. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups, and none learning English as an additional language. The number of pupils identified with special educational needs is below average. The needs identified are mainly moderate learning difficulties, but also include speech and communication and physical difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, but socio-economic circumstances locally are broadly average. Attainment at entry to the school is broadly average. The school received an Achievement Award for its improved test results in 2002, and is working towards the Activemark Gold, and Investors in People status. It is also part of a local Education Action Zone.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team |           |                | Subject responsibilities  |
|--------------------------------|-----------|----------------|---|
| 3108                           | E Jackson | Lead inspector | English<br>Music<br>Physical education<br>Religious education<br>English as an additional language  |
| 13450                          | J Madden  | Lay inspector  |   |
| 30834                          | A Lawson  | Team inspector | Foundation stage<br>Science<br>Information and communication technology<br>Art<br>Design technology |
| 18320                          | R Willey  | Team inspector | Special educational needs<br>Mathematics<br>Geography<br>History                                    |

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Thorpe Hesley is a **good** school with some very good features. It is very well led and well managed, and offers a good quality of education. It provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership is very good, setting a strong agenda for the school's further development.
- Teaching and learning are good, and very good in the nursery, reception classes, and Year 2.
- Pupils' personal development is very good.
- The staff provide a very good curriculum, enriched very well in creative learning.
- The accommodation for Year 1 pupils is unsatisfactory.
- Staff with subject and other responsibilities have insufficient opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of provision.

The school has maintained the good standards noted at the last inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement is **good**. Most children enter school with average skills for their age. They achieve well by the time they leave the reception classes, and reach standards that are above the goals expected by the end of reception in all areas of learning. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Year 1 and very well in Year 2, so that standards achieved this year are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The table shows that standards improved in reading and mathematics in 2003, but fell in writing because fewer pupils achieved above expected levels. Action taken this year has resulted in the school exceeding its target for higher attainment in writing.

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, although most attain below average levels for their age. Pupils achieve well in most areas of the curriculum, but achieve well above the levels expected for Year 2 in art and design, design and technology, dance, and history. This reflects the school's continuing emphasis on the creative arts and physical development. Achievement is satisfactory in information and communication technology, and standards are as expected. Girls generally achieve higher levels than boys, in line with the national pattern. Pupils' personal development is **very good**, including their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**. They develop very good attitudes to learning, and generally behave very well in and around the school. Their attendance is good, having improved this year.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**, with some very good features. Teaching is **good** overall. The quality of teaching is consistently very good in the nursery and reception classes, with one excellent lesson seen. In Year 2, teaching is consistently good, and often very good. It is satisfactory, and occasionally good, in Year 1. Nursery and reception pupils are often excited by the activities prepared for them, and develop good skills in many areas. Across the school, very good relationships ensure that pupils respond well in most lessons, and the staff in Years 1 and 2 promote interest in lessons that stimulates pupils' learning well. Occasionally, however, Year 1 pupils lose interest when teaching is not well tailored to their needs. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils very well overall. However, pupils' saved work in subjects such as geography, history and religious education is not organised effectively to help pupils and staff maintain a proper overview of progress and achievement. An extensive range of visits and visitors enriches provision very well. Learning activities are very well planned in the nursery, reception and Year 2 classes, and classrooms are vibrant, with children's work displayed to a high standard. The previous report referred to good provision and progress for pupils with special educational needs. Provision has been well maintained between inspections despite the rising number of pupils in need of support. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, but the detached Year 1 classrooms do not provide equivalent quality to that for other pupils. This affects their learning adversely as they are not fully involved in the work of the whole school. Pupils are cared for very well and receive good support and advice to help them make progress. There is a good relationship with parents, who are generally very supportive.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher leads **very well** and the school is **well managed**. The governance of the school is **good**. The headteacher has begun to lead significant changes that are having a positive impact on the quality of education. The leadership provided by key staff is **good** overall, but there are weaknesses with regard to the opportunities they have to check provision in their areas of responsibility in other classes. The school's involvement in the local Education Action Zone helps to raise pupils' achievement, and improves the quality of education provided. Barriers to improvement include the school's uncertainty about funding, and the unsatisfactory accommodation for pupils in Year 1.

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

Parents have positive views and feel that the school is doing its best to ensure their children are developing, maturing and achieving to the best of their ability. There is some concern about the effects of falling numbers on the mixing of pupils in different year groups. Pupils are very happy with their work and life in the school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure that the quality of education in Year 1 is the same as that provided for other pupils, and seek ways to provide Year 1 with equivalent accommodation to the other pupils.
- Organise pupils' completed work in Years 1 and 2 better to ensure more effective overview of progress and achievement.
- Provide suitable opportunities for key staff to monitor provision in their areas of responsibility.

Governors may also wish to consider checking that staff monitor pupils' response and involvement by gender, to ensure that both boys and girls make an equal contribution in lessons.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Children in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) attain above the levels expected in the goals set for them by the end of reception. They achieve well. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards of attainment are above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and their achievement is good. Currently, achievement is satisfactory in Year 1 and very good in Year 2. Girls generally achieve higher levels than boys, in line with the national pattern.

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

- Achievement is so good in the nursery and the reception classes because the quality of teaching is very good.
- There has been good improvement in pupils' achievement in writing in Year 2 in response to changes in teachers' lesson planning and approach to this aspect of pupils' learning.
- Progress and achievement in Year 1 are lower because teaching is generally satisfactory, and educational provision overall is not as good as it is for those pupils in the main school building.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils attain well above the levels usually seen in art and design, design and technology, history and dance, and achieve very well in these subjects.
- Pupils develop good speaking and listening skills, but sometimes boys do not answer questions as often as girls.

#### **Commentary**

1. Although there is a wide range of attainment, most children enter school with average skills. They achieve well by the time they leave the reception classes, and attain higher than the levels expected in the set learning goals. This is because the provision is very good in the nursery and reception classes. Basic language skills develop well in response to the very good range of stimulating activities provided. Children make good progress and achieve well in learning about number. They also learn how to work independently with very good concentration, and how to share space and resources successfully with others. For example, a reception class was observed performing dance in the school hall, and the children showed very good movement, balance and awareness of space for their age.
2. Standards are above average in the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 currently, and achievement is good. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 often made very good progress in lessons seen. Following concern from the analysis of last year's results in national tests in writing, new measures were introduced this year to stimulate pupils' interest further and extend their writing skills. These measures have been successful, and more pupils' written work is above the levels usually seen than last year. A particular strength is in the use of writing skills in other subjects such as history and religious education. Pupils also develop good speaking and listening skills. They use these well to support their progress and achievement across the curriculum.

3. Girls generally achieve higher levels than boys by Year 2, in line with the national picture for pupils of this age. The staff are aware of this, and seek to extend all pupils' learning and achievement according to their aptitudes. However, on a number of occasions in whole class discussion or activities such as singing, staff did not monitor effectively enough potential gender bias in their own questioning, or in the resulting pupil response. This often led to some boys making little direct contribution.
4. The table shows the school's results for 2003 compared with the national average. These results were above average in reading, average in writing, and well above average in mathematics. Compared to results in schools in similar socio-economic circumstances, these results were also above average in reading, average in writing and well above average in mathematics. Standards achieved in science were also above average compared to national and similar school results.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading       | 16.3 (16.4)    | 15.7 (15.8)      |
| writing       | 14.8 (15.0)    | 14.6 (14.4)      |
| mathematics   | 17.4 (16.8)    | 16.3 (16.5)      |

*There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. Achievement in Year 1 currently is satisfactory, and the pupils are not progressing as rapidly as others in the school. This is partly because one of the permanent staff has been absent for some time, causing some disruption to the planned activities. This class is taught by two part-time temporary teachers. The quality of teaching for both the Year 1 classes is satisfactory, and occasionally good, but the effectiveness of provision for these pupils is not of the same quality as that for the other children and pupils in the school. The classes are housed in two 'temporary' buildings in the playground, and opportunities to share the atmosphere for learning created in the main school are lost. This has a noticeable impact on the relationships between pupils and staff, the quality of the learning environment, and the sharing of ideas and activities. This then affects the rate of progress and achievement in lessons. However, their attainment is above expectations for their age in mathematics.
6. The school highlights work in the creative arts and physical education, seeing these as essential to an all-round education. The pupils achieve very well in art and design overall, and some Year 2 pupils made exquisite, delicate observational drawings of shells for their age. This was linked to work on the seashore following a visit, and this theme was also developed successfully to promote achievement in poetry, history, geography and dance.
7. Although the majority of pupils with special educational needs attain below average standards they generally achieve well against their targets and in national tests at the end of Year 2 in English and mathematics. This reflects the good support that they receive from class teachers and classroom assistants.

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

Pupils' personal development is very good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They develop very good attitudes to learning, and generally behave very well in and around the school. Their attendance is good, having improved this year.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning in the nursery, reception and Year 2 classes promote good progress and achievement.
- In lessons and around the school, almost all pupils behave very well, allowing lessons and activities to flow smoothly. However, pupils in Year 1 sometimes misbehave, usually when they lose interest in the activities provided for them.
- Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### **Commentary**

8. This is a very strong area of the school's work. Parents are very happy with their children's personal development, and feel that they grow in maturity very well for their age. Inspection findings confirm this.
9. Children's progress in personal, social and emotional development is good in the nursery and reception classes. The children behave very well in response to the staff's very good care for them, and develop very good attitudes to their learning. Children in the reception classes worked as mechanics in an outside area, using car parts and tools such as spanners and screwdrivers. They behaved very responsibly, taking on the role of 'mending' a steering wheel, for example, with great concentration and application.
10. Almost all pupils behave very well in the playground at playtime and lunchtime, and in such whole school activities as assembly. There is a good range of play equipment for pupils to use in the playground, and they generally play sensibly together. There is a quiet area where any pupil who feels lonely or left out may sit. Year 2 pupils are trained to be sociable in this situation, and try to help any unhappy children to join in with an activity, and generally cheer them up. In assemblies observed, behaviour was very good, and these occasions made a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, including the importance of Jesus as a friend for Christians, and playground friends in school.
11. An important aim for the school is to develop pupils' self respect and consideration for others as part of their moral and spiritual growth. This aim is largely realised through the school's overall atmosphere of trust and partnership. Pupils relate well to each other and to the staff, and show consideration for others and the natural world. Lessons in religious education promote a good understanding of different beliefs, and Year 2 pupils discuss Christianity, for example, with inquisitive and enquiring minds.
12. This spirit of enquiry is another of the school's intentions for pupils' learning. From the nursery on, children are helped to ask searching questions, to explore using all their senses, and by Year 2 to operate well at their level as scientists and mathematicians in their own right. They generally develop good skills in independent enquiry in the nursery,

reception and Year 2 classes, but currently pupils' learning is less effective in this regard in the Year 1 classes. This is in part due to the staff's lower expectations, but also to the difference in provision. The staff spend more time managing behaviour in these classes, and there is less opportunity for pupils to make decisions for themselves than in other classes in the school.

13. Pupils' cultural development is very well catered for through English, art and design, music, physical education, history, geography and religious education. The staff take every opportunity to introduce the pupils to a wide range of experiences through trips, visitors to school, and through studying the work of artists and musicians from different styles and cultures. Pupils learn well about the history and general environment of their own locality, and also of the wider world. For example, a week of cultural activities in partnership with the Junior school through the Education Action Zone introduced pupils across the school very well to aspects of life in countries such as India, China, and Australia, including different customs and beliefs.
14. The school has very good systems to promote pupils' punctuality and attendance, and receives good support in this from parents. Attendance has improved this year, and is above the latest national average figures. Last year, attendance was satisfactory, and in line with national averages, as shown in the table.

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

| Authorised absence |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data        | 5.4 |
| National data      | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data          | 0.3 |
| National data        | 0.4 |

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

**Exclusions**

There have been no exclusions.

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is **good**, with some very good features. Teaching meets pupils' needs well, and the curriculum is enriched well to stimulate their interest in learning. The accommodation for pupils in Year 1 currently is unsatisfactory, and adversely affects their learning opportunities.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching is good, and leads to good progress in learning, maintained since the last inspection. Teaching was often very good in the nursery, reception and Year 2 classes, and was occasionally good in Year 1 classes.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Nursery and reception pupils are often excited by the activities prepared for them.
- In Year 2 (and for a small group of Year 1 pupils in a mixed age class), teaching is consistently good, and often very good.
- The staff in Year 1 sometimes promote pupils' learning well, but pupils lose interest when teaching is not tailored to their needs closely enough.
- The very good relationships promoted by the staff ensure that pupils respond well in lessons.
- Assessment information gained about pupils' progress and achievement is used well to plan new tasks and activities for them.

## Commentary

15. The table shows that all the teaching seen was at least satisfactory, and that almost half of lessons were very good. One lesson was excellent. This was a circle time session in a reception class. The children listened carefully, and thought deeply about how they would describe something they were 'getting better at'. The teacher had really good rapport with these young children, and led them further into a challenging discussion of how they might better share the playground equipment, using a puppet very skilfully to encourage their contributions.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons**

| Excellent | Very good | Good     | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 1 (3%)    | 16 (46%)  | 12 (34%) | 6 (17%)      | 0              | 0    | 0         |

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

16. The quality of teaching and learning in the nursery and reception classes is very good. This is because the deputy headteacher leads this area of the school very well, and is very well-supported by a strong staff team. A recently trained teacher was absorbed into the team very well so that the children in her class had no break in the continuity of their learning. The high quality of the relationships here forms a very solid basis for the future impact of the close understanding between the staff and the pupils across the school. This understanding has a strong effect on pupils' learning, because it feeds well into the assessment of their progress, and into how in general staff plan carefully to meet the pupils' changing needs from week-to-week.
17. Support assistants work very closely and effectively with class teachers. They are well briefed about their roles within lessons and report clearly on outcomes and pupils' achievement daily, usually in discussion with class teachers but sometimes in writing. Some assistants have good training to enable them to work with pupils on definitive programmes such as 'Reading Rescue' and 'Early Learning Support'. One assistant is attending a course on 'Positive Play' and has played an active role in leading training sessions with teachers. Another works extensively with pupils with special educational needs in Years 1 and 2, helping them successfully to make good progress towards their targets.
18. These staff are skilled in making assessments of pupils' small steps of progress against their targets in order to prepare new work for them. However, the targets set are not always specific and measurable which creates difficulties sometimes when trying to

establish whether they have been achieved. Reports for review meetings with parents are thorough and evaluate provision and progress well. Support assistants are well qualified and have regular training opportunities in order to update their knowledge and expertise so provide good support.

19. High quality teaching in Year 2 exemplifies the staff's skilled linking of topics and themes to weave a learning thread across a number of subjects for the pupils. The teachers planned very effectively how they would build on a visit to the seaside to develop a variety of skills in different learning areas. In English, the pupils became skilled in writing alliterative poems, and in forming compound word such as seagull. In art and design, they drew wonderful observational drawings of shells. In ICT, with a specialist teacher from the Education Action Zone, they learned how to merge text and images using their own poems and digital photographs from their visit, good level skills for their age. This learning was very effective as the pupils were motivated from the excitement of the visit, and the work was skilfully planned to build very successfully on their previous learning to develop and extend their skills.
20. Teachers in Year 1 link science and art and design well, in line with the school's intentions, so that pupils create good mixed media images of the elements earth, water and air. This activity kept the pupils' interest well, and good use was made of ICT for some pupils to experiment on-screen using a paint program. Many of the pupils became noisy, but they were excited and interested in the task, and made good progress in developing their drawing and painting skills. However, on other occasions, the staff have difficulty in managing pupils' behaviour when the tasks do not interest them, or they are not well-pitched to the pupils' prior achievement. Sometimes, whole class sessions on the carpet last too long, as in a literacy session, and pupils become bored and restless. The pupils' loss of concentration is exacerbated by their detachment from the main school.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a very good curriculum. The needs of pupils are met very well in the foundation stage and in Years 1 and 2. An extensive range of visits and visitors ensure a very rich curriculum. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and resources are very good in most subjects.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision of enrichment activities for all aspects of the curriculum is very good.
  - Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and pupils achieve well as a result.
  - All pupils are fully included in school life and have equality of access to the curriculum.
  - Teachers are developing good links between subjects, particularly strong in creating opportunities for pupils to practise their writing.
  - Accommodation is good in the school's main block but only satisfactory for pupils in Year 1.
22. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements including provision for religious education and collective worship. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented effectively and this is reflected in the good provision and pupil attainment in these subjects. All subjects have co-ordinators and there are policies and guidance for teachers in place based on the latest national guidance. Concerns expressed at the time of the last inspection relating to planning for the progressive acquisition of skills in some

subjects have been successfully addressed and are now a strong feature of many subjects.

23. The staff provide a very rich curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes, covering all the required areas of learning. The curriculum is planned and organised very well and the procedures to assess what children know, understand and can do are very good.
24. All elements of subjects are delivered and the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is very good. Lessons are planned carefully and include clearly identified learning objectives. Numerous and varied visits are made by all classes. The cross-curricular use of visits means that they make a very good contribution to a number of subjects. Visitors include a number of theatre groups who make a significant contribution to the performing arts, 'Zoolab' for animal handling, the local football club captain and numerous visitors whose family origins are from overseas to contribute to the 'Multi-cultural Arts' week. In addition, there are regular contributions from other important helpers such as the school nurse, local police, and the vicar who add significantly to pupils' all-round understanding.
25. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are well supported by class teachers and classroom assistants. They are given individual and group support in lessons both inside and outside the classroom. Classroom assistants help pupils to achieve the targets set on individual learning programmes and as a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress across the school. A co-ordinator for able and talented pupils has recently been appointed and a register of these pupils is being compiled. As yet no special provision is made for them, but teachers know their pupils well and ensure that higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged in lessons.
26. There is a strong commitment to inclusion across the school and this was a feature of a number of lessons and assemblies. It is supported by the very good ethos for learning in the school. No pupils are excluded from out of school activities because of gender, ability or physical disability.
27. The headteacher has encouraged teachers to link subjects across the curriculum. This has promoted a continued positive and relevant learning environment for pupils, as well as conserving the use of curriculum time. In particular, many opportunities have been created for pupils to extend the writing skills they acquire in literacy lessons. In history and religious education, very good use is made of diaries and newspaper reports as well as mini books that record sustained narratives about events and characters. In art and design, pupils also produce mini books about famous artists such as Van Gogh. Although links involving subjects such as mathematics, science and ICT are not yet as strong, they are also developing well.
28. Accommodation in the main building provides good spaces and shared areas for teaching for the majority of the school's pupils. However, this is not the case for pupils in Year 1 who are accommodated in basic 'temporary' classrooms. Displays, which are a quality feature within the main building, are restricted in these buildings, and pupils in Year 1 do not enjoy the aesthetically pleasing and stimulating environment of the main building. Year 1 pupils also do not have easy access to the hall, library and resource facilities (including toilets for one class) all of which are located at a distance from them. All pupils suffer from the lack of good, level grassed area. The present provision is small and slopes prodigiously, affording an element of risk for pupils using it. The staff ensure that the pupils are careful, and the pupils respond well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

Pupils are **well** cared for, guided and supported by the school. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is very good. There is good care, welfare, health and safety in the school and satisfactory involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils and staff share very good relationships so that support for pupils is based on personal knowledge as well as assessment procedures.
- Pupils' individual targets clearly help them understand how to improve their work and learning.
- The school is a secure environment with an emphasis on the health of pupils, there are however some areas of provision where staff need more training.

## **Commentary**

29. Teachers have a very good relationship with pupils, which begin with the care taken to get to know pupils before they start school. Pupils benefit from a staged start to their life at the school that varies according to their age and needs, as a result they are confident and develop trusting, secure relationships with adults. This continues as they get older and pupils interviewed all felt they had someone who was special for them on the staff. When pupils leave school, because of this security and support they are confident and outgoing.
30. The school uses assessments effectively to set targets for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. These are discussed with pupils and new ones set termly to improve their achievement and development. This applies equally to pupils with special educational needs and those of higher ability. Work in the classroom is generally planned at a level to ensure that pupils are working to the level of their capability.
31. The school environment is secure during the school day, much appreciated by parents for whom this is a priority. The school is part of the Healthy Schools' Initiative and tries hard to ensure pupils each healthily and drink sufficient water during their time in school. The school doctor, nurse and visiting dentist monitor other aspects of pupils care in the school. The school is clean and inviting with health and safety assessments regularly undertaken. Child protection procedures are in place although training in recently revised procedures has not yet been arranged for all staff.

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

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The majority of parents are very supportive of the school and feel it is doing the very best for their children.
- Parents make positive contributions to the school and their children's learning.

- The information provided for parents on pupils standards and progress is regular and supportive, but some parents feel that they should be more involved in the decision making process as it effects their children.
- Links with the community support both the curriculum and pupils' personal development.

## **Commentary**

32. The school has the confidence of the majority of parents who feel that the school is doing its best to ensure their children are maturing and achieving to the best of their ability. In the nursery and reception classes parents have frequent informal contact with the staff.
33. Parents are able to support their children in school in a very positive way through the sharing of targets, the informative reports at the end of the school year, meetings with staff and weekly newsletters. Those who are able help in the classrooms and handle such matters as the school bank and book club. Particular initiatives such as book sharing between parents and children and the Family Literacy programme are having a positive impact on improving parental skills in helping their children. Some parents, however, feel that the school does not keep them sufficiently up to date and well informed about the major issues affecting their children's education, for example staffing issues.
34. The local community is used in particular to support the curriculum through visits to the local area and visits from locally based individuals who provide a service to the community, including staff from the Education Action Zone. The school also ensures that pupils visit sites in the wider area to develop, for example science, by visiting the Magna Science Centre. The school and church are at the heart of this community and jointly contribute to the life of its inhabitants through services, events and fundraising and in this way introduces pupils to a wide variety of its inhabitants and increases their confidence and personal development.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The head teacher's leadership is very good, supported very well by the deputy head teacher, and management is good. The governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a very good vision for the school's development, based on raising attainment, and her aspirations for the school are high.
- The deputy headteacher contributes very well to overall leadership, but has little time away from her class to undertake her management role.
- The school's commitment to the professional development of all staff is very good.
- The school's budget is very stretched and this limits the choices that can be made when allocation funding to priorities.

## **Commentary**

35. The headteacher's rigorous leadership of the school has had a positive effect on the quality of the curriculum offered to pupils, which is now very good. Her priority has been to ensure that all staff are committed to high quality education and are focused on raising standards, and the evidence would indicate that this is happening. For example, recent test data shows that higher attaining pupils are now doing better in national tests than they were. The headteacher has a clear vision of what is needed to take the school forward, matched with the ability and enthusiasm to do so. This has not been an easy task, with many established staff, but great strides have been made in the quality of teacher's planning to ensure all pupils benefit from a challenging curriculum.
36. The deputy headteacher provides very good leadership of the Foundation Stage and as a result, children achieve well in the nursery and reception classes. However, whilst having a clear professional view of key priorities for the school to develop, she has little time away from her teaching commitments and is therefore not able to undertake her management role fully. This lessens her involvement in whole school developments. Subject leaders also lack the time to formally check the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school and as a result, they do not have the necessary impact to bring about key improvements.
37. Governors have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, a good improvement since the previous inspection. Governors fully understand the problems caused by changed funding arrangements and ensure that all decisions are taken in the best interests of all pupils. Governors are very supportive, but are still developing their role of becoming "critical friends". However, many governors now monitor areas of the curriculum and come into school to monitor how well new initiatives are developing.
38. The management of the school is good. Day-to-day procedures ensure that the school functions smoothly and without undue burdens on teaching staff. There have been good improvements since the previous inspection to the clarity and effectiveness of the school improvement plan. It is now a thorough and focused document, with a manageable set of appropriate priorities that have been identified through the headteacher's and governors' monitoring and evaluation. High expectations are evident in the stated success criteria, as is the commitment to staff training. The headteacher and governors make very good use of the school's involvement in the Education Action Zone to provide relevant and good quality training opportunities for teachers. Performance management targets are closely linked to key areas of school improvement, based on raising children's achievement.
39. An established co-ordinator for special educational needs is well supported by the headteacher. The school has established good procedures and practice for the identification of need. Support for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is given by a very experienced support assistant who is due to retire shortly. As the number of pupils with special educational needs is rising across the school, a new pattern of support is now envisaged. This is planned to include more support assistants working with targeted pupils and avoid expertise being confined to an individual member of staff. This is in keeping with the school's commitment to inclusion for all.

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

| Income and expenditure (£) |         | Balances (£)               |   |
|----------------------------|---------|----------------------------|---|
| Total income               | 526,070 | Balance from previous year | 0 |

|                       |         |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Total expenditure     | 513,941 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,507   |

|                                     |        |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance carried forward to the next | 12,129 |
|-------------------------------------|--------|

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

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

The school makes **very good** provision for children in the Foundation Stage. Since the previous inspection, there has been good improvement in the standards reached. The majority of children now reach standards that are above the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. The quality of teaching has also improved since the previous inspection and is now consistently very good in the nursery and reception classes. Most children enter school with skills that are average and they achieve well by the time they leave the reception classes. A real strength of provision in the Foundation Stage is the rich curriculum offered. Learning activities are very well planned and classrooms are vibrant, with children's work displayed to a high standard.

The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. The curriculum is planned and organised very well and the procedures to assess what children know, understand and can do are very good. Teachers and learning support staff work very well in effective teams and this is having a positive effect on the pupils' overall achievement. Those children with special educational needs are identified early and contact is made with external agencies to provide specialist support if this is deemed necessary. Currently, there are too few opportunities for the co-ordinator to formally check the quality of teaching and learning in all classes in the Foundation Stage and this is an area for improvement. Accommodation in the nursery and reception classes is good and resources are very good.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are given good opportunities to make choices and become independent.
- Children are taught to share resources and act responsibly.

### **Commentary**

40. Teaching in both the nursery and reception classes is very good and by the end of the reception year most children are likely to reach standards above expectations. Children achieve well, particularly in their ability to act responsibly. In the nursery, many activities are carefully planned to give children as much responsibility as possible. For example, at the start of each session, children have to choose their names to "self-register" as they come into the room, then they also go and register themselves for snack time.
41. Children respond well to this responsibility and are also soon adept at tidying up after each activity and ensuring that tables are left tidy for the next group. This very good practice continues in the reception classes. Outdoors, children learn to share large resources and take turns fairly. During general activity sessions, older children concentrate well for long periods. They perform jobs of responsibility which take them on errands around the school with increasing independence and confidence.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Basic skills in phonics (letter sounds) are taught thoroughly so that children achieve well.
- Children are taught how to write for a range of purposes, so they develop new skills quickly.
- There is insufficient monitoring of the responses made by the boys when teachers ask questions and boys often sit and let the girls speak.

### **Commentary**

42. Teaching is very good in both the nursery and reception classes, with the right emphasis placed on teaching basic skills. As a result, most children are likely to reach standards above those expected by the end of the reception year. Lessons are very well planned, so all adults know how to arrange learning activities to build upon the learning objective, which may be a writing or reading activity. Children in the nursery have individual teaching of how to write each letter of the alphabet and are watched carefully to see that they write it correctly. As a result, children achieve well in early literacy skills. Parents and carers are closely involved in activities at home to build on these skills, for example through guided homework tasks.
43. This focus on early skills is continued very well in the reception classes, with the sounds of letters taught through interesting games and activities. Occasionally, not enough attention is paid to the frequency with which boys answer questions, and some boys just sit and let the girls answer all the questions. Staff do not always monitor this closely to ensure that boys take a full part.
44. Early writing skills are taught very effectively, with children being taught to write for a range of purposes, such as writing items of news, or reports about how to plant bulbs. Children who have special educational needs achieve well because they are given good support when needed. Children achieve well in reading, with most being able to locate the title of the book and use picture clues to help them read simple stories. All children enjoy sharing books with adults and other children and listen attentively to stories.

## **Mathematical development**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and know how young children learn new concepts.
- Resources are very good and are used effectively to teach new skills.

### **Commentary**

45. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is very good, with very effective liaison between teachers and learning support staff. Lessons are conducted at a very brisk

pace, with a very good range of activities planned to extend children's early concepts of number and shape. Most children are likely to reach standards above those expected. Very good planning, brisk lessons and precise questions motivate children well so that children of all abilities achieve well. In a very good lesson in the nursery, the teacher invited children to come and find "butterflies" in the sandpit. Children were kept totally engrossed and one child who had come into the nursery upset, soon completely forgot his earlier tears as he tried to find five mini-beasts to put beside the number 5.

46. Older children in the reception classes receive more formal activities, but these are equally effective. In one lesson, the teacher used a very good range of questions and resources to challenge children to think about numbers. She asked; "How many spots will this ladybird have if she already has 3 and we give her 5 more?" Higher attaining children showed very good mental recall of numbers beyond 10 and most children could order numbers backwards and forwards to fifteen, a good level for their age.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A very good range of interesting activities are planned to provide first-hand learning experiences.
- Resources are used very effectively to deepen knowledge and understanding.

### **Commentary**

47. Teaching is very good and children achieve well, reaching standards above those expected by the end of the reception year. An impressive variety of interesting activities is planned to stimulate curiosity, develop new skills and deepen understanding of the pupils' world around them. In the reception classes, a very good range of resources are used to teach early science skills as children are given the tasks of planting seeds, then observing and recording the changes that they see.

48. To develop early geographical skills, children look at aerial photographs of their village and identify familiar buildings, such as their school and the church. They map the journey from school to church well for their age. In history, parents and grandparents bring lessons to life as children look at toys and learn to compare how their toys differ from those in the past. Design technology skills are extended well as children use construction kits to make models. Information and technology skills also develop well as young children sit at computers and use the mouse carefully to draw pictures, which they print off independently.

## **Physical development**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's outdoor accommodation is used effectively to promote the development of adventurous activities.
- Dance is taught very well and children develop very good control and response to music.

### **Commentary**

49. Teaching is very good and most children are likely to reach standards above those expected. All children achieve well because staff make good use of the school's accommodation and the very good range of resources. Younger children in the nursery benefit from daily outdoor lessons, where they enjoy using large-wheeled toys to negotiate a track around the large store shed. They "park" their bikes carefully after use in marked "parking bays". Those pupils with special educational needs are given close personal supervision by adults, to ensure that they develop physical skills to the best of their capabilities.
50. Older reception children are taught dance very well. In the hall, pupils respond well to music, moving their bodies with control and imagination. Children work well together in large groups; for example, in one lesson, they made a line to show a "dancing caterpillar". They made a lively and amusing sight as they all moved to show "jerky, spiky" movements like a caterpillar, and had great fun together. There are also good opportunities for children to develop their skills in manipulating small objects such as scissors.

### **Creative development**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Excellent relationships support lessons in music, art and drama, as children and all staff have fun together, but with a very clear focus on the extension of skills.
- Not all boys take part when singing and this is not always picked up by the staff.
- Resources are very good and children have the opportunity to explore a wide range of media and techniques.

### **Commentary**

51. Teaching is very effective and all staff use the excellent relationships they have with children, and each other, to provide a lively and very interesting range of activities. As a result, children achieve well and reach standards that are above those expected. In a very good music lesson, children sang a Thorpe Hesley rap, which cleverly incorporated two nursery rhymes and had a strong, clapped beat. Almost all the girls joined in the singing, but over half the boys didn't and were not prompted enough to take a full part. However, all children made very good progress in their response to musical notation.
52. A very good range of resources is used to ensure that children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of media. For example, children are taught to use clay very well and their simple sculptures are of good quality for their age.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 2 have risen this year to be above average in reading and writing.
- Teaching is very good in Year 2, leading to very good achievement for the pupils, although teaching and achievement are satisfactory in Year 1.
- English skills are used and developed well in other subjects such as history.
- Boys do not contribute as much as they should orally in some lessons.
- Teachers' good marking and assessment helps pupils to improve their work effectively.
- The subject is well led and managed.

#### Commentary

53. Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 were above average in reading, and average in writing in 2003. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected level was above average in both reading and writing, but fewer pupils than average attained above expectations. Although these results were above those in similar schools in reading and in line in writing, the school believed from its evaluation that these results were not good enough, particularly in writing. Following concentrated staff development, and a school focus on improving pupils' writing skills, the current Year 2 achieve levels that are above average overall in writing as well as reading. This includes a higher proportion than last year's national average achieving higher than expected levels. Speaking and listening skills are also above average, as is spelling, but handwriting is about average in Year 2. However, the staff do not monitor closely enough which pupils are joining in when the whole class reads or speaks together, and often a small group of boys is missed.
54. The quality of teaching is good overall, and it is very good in Year 2, (including for a small group of Year 1 pupils in one mixed age class), and this has been a key factor in improving pupils' achievement. The two teachers work closely together, one of them the subject coordinator, and they plan the use and development of literacy skills very well in dedicated English lessons, but also across the other subjects. For example, when studying the Great Fire of London in history, the staff encourage the pupils to write their own 'contemporary' newspaper article in English lessons. Similarly, following a seaside visit, the staff extended the development of linked vocabulary into art and design and dance. This approach is very effective in giving meaning and purpose to pupils' work in English. For example, pupils understood the effective use of alliteration by composing poems with as many words as possible beginning with 's' to evoke the swishing sound of the sea. They also learned how to form and use compound nouns such as lifeboat and sandcastle effectively.
55. This school approach to the use and development of English skills is also followed by the staff in Year 1. For example, pupils improved their skills in making effective lists in listing the equipment needed in a design and technology session. Good writing skills also ensued in their subsequent evaluations, as when one girl wrote, 'I like my model because the door opens.' This is good use and control of language for this age. Teaching is satisfactory, and support staff are generally effective in helping pupils with their work,

particularly those with special educational needs. Occasionally, adults perform tasks such as tidying away resources that should be the pupils' responsibility.

56. However, Year 1 teachers spend a good deal of time in lessons managing pupils' behaviour, so that progress is slower than for Year 2 pupils, although it is satisfactory. This is partly because in one class lesson planning does not make clear enough how pupils of different levels of achievement will be expected to work. In the other class, pupils have to sit on the carpet as a whole group for far too long so that some, particularly boys, become bored and restless. In these classes, pupils often talk when others, including the teacher, are already speaking.
57. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is often detailed and developmental so that pupils know what they need to do to improve. Targets for improvement are agreed and shared effectively with pupils and their parents. Assessment information is used very well in Year 2 to promote further learning, and satisfactorily in Year 1.
58. The subject leader has good influence on the subject, and has monitored teaching and learning in all classes this year as part of the school's drive to improve standards in writing. All staff have had the opportunity to visit other schools where there is good practice in this area, and this has helped them focus on what is required in this school to good effect. He has ensured that good quality book resources have been acquired recently through the Education Action Zone. These supplement well the use of Book Bags containing a main text and related activities shared by pupils in each class and those parents who are able to come in. This is an effective bridge between school and home, using high quality resources, often also introducing a younger sibling to school activities.
59. The quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection, as improvement has kept pace with the national improvement. However, a higher proportion of pupils now achieve above the levels expected by the end of Year 2.

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

60. This is an important strength in the school's work. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their ongoing work across the curriculum, and to use the appropriate vocabulary, as in mathematics. Writing is joined, punctuated and well illustrated in subjects such as geography. Accurate spelling is expected whatever the subject, and the staff focus on key literacy skills in all areas of work. Good work in a literacy lesson with a teacher from the Education Action Zone enabled pupils in Year 2 to become familiar with a simplified word-processing program to create text about the seaside with merged photographic images.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- Attainment is above average by the end of Year 2 and achievement is good because pupils are constantly challenged to think mathematically and explain their strategies.
- Targets for pupils to achieve are updated regularly and in Year 2 particularly, comments geared to improving pupils' work are added when work is marked.

- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good quality support they are given.
- The subject leader has limited opportunities to gain a full overview of the subject.

## **Commentary**

61. In a year when there were more pupils with special educational needs than usual, the national tests of 2003 showed pupils' attainment to be well above average when compared with all other schools with fewer pupils scoring in the lower grades. The school's tracking procedures show that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well, and sometimes very well, during the two years they spend in the school. This is an improvement on the already good standards in place at the time of the last inspection.
62. Teachers know their pupils well and track their progress effectively, regularly updating the targets inside their exercise books. They adapt work well in their planning so that it is suited to pupils' differing abilities and ask both focused and open ended questions in lessons to challenge all pupils appropriately. Pupils are given many opportunities to explain their strategies, as in a Year 1 lesson when a spider was being moved ten steps backwards or forwards around a hundred number square.
63. The pace of lessons is brisk and questions are directed to ensure all pupils are involved. Teachers' expectations are high, their explanations clear and resources used well to underpin pupils' understanding and handling of abstract concepts. Vocabulary is rehearsed well, as in a lesson about multiplication with pupils mainly from Year 2, in which terms such as 'investigation', 'multiplication' and 'sets of' were used repeatedly. This lesson also illustrated why pupils with special educational needs make good progress as the learning assistant has been well briefed and used praise well to keep them on task and enthusiastic.
64. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy raised the profile of mathematics across the school and attainment has improved year on year since 2000. The subject leader currently sees only samples of teachers' planning for lessons and pupils' work and has few opportunities to observe teaching or talk to pupils.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

65. Pupils regularly measure materials in design and technology and teachers are beginning to plan opportunities to use mathematics in other areas of the curriculum also. Year 2 pupils have made good use of charts and diagrams to organise and display information about their holiday destinations.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching of investigation skills is good so that pupils develop well their understanding of how to test a simple prediction.
- The successful aspects of teaching are sometimes diminished by the way finished work is organised in Year 1.
- The school provides an interesting science curriculum and good links are made with other subjects, particularly literacy.
- The subject leader has insufficient opportunity to check the quality of teaching throughout the school and so is unable to identify areas for improvement.

## **Commentary**

66. The teaching of science is good and pupils attain standards above national expectations and they achieve well. High standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
67. The teaching of science is good. What teachers do particularly well is to plan opportunities for pupils to make simple predictions about what they think may happen, then carry out investigations to test these. For example, pupils in Year 1 planned an investigation to see whether plants need water to grow and they are currently monitoring a range of experiments to see which plants grow best.
68. Resources are used well to teach key points. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, pupils were carrying out investigations to test the effect of exercise on their body. The teacher introduced a thermometer so the pupils could test their temperature before and during the exercise and they were astonished to see that their temperature increased by one degree within 30 seconds! Pupils with special educational needs are given good support by learning support staff, which means that they are fully included in all activities. As a result, these pupils achieve as well as other pupils.
69. Some of the good aspects of teaching science are diminished by the way pupils' completed work is organised. This is weaker in Year 1 than in Year 2. For example, pupils' finished work, often undated, is kept in folders and mixed up with work from other subjects in a haphazard way. Pupils are therefore unable to see any progression to their work in science, or gain sufficient benefit from their teacher's marking.
70. The school provides all pupils with an interesting curriculum that is based on first-hand learning experiences. Where possible, visits are made to give pupils the chance to deepen their knowledge and understanding of key concepts. A good example of this has been in Year 1, when a visit to "Magna" enabled pupils to find out more about forces. Effective links are made with other subjects to support learning, particularly in literacy. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they are able to present their work using a range of writing styles to record their work. During the previous inspection, it was noted that teachers did not always take account of the difficulties of measurement for some pupils, but numeracy skills are now used well to support learning. Pupils present their findings using a range of graphs and charts. Some use is made of information and communication technology to support learning, but the evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that this is still an area for the school to develop. However, the school has already identified this and some new resources have been purchased for the staff to review.

71. Leadership and management of the subject are good, an improvement since the previous inspection. Science is now planned from a scheme of work that follows national guidance and this ensures that pupils' skills are built up gradually. A clear action plan for the subject is in place, which identifies relevant and achievable priorities for development. Whilst the co-ordinator has sampled pupils' work throughout the school, she does not have enough time away from class duties to check the quality of teaching, so areas for improvement can not be easily identified.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management of the subject are good and there is a clear drive to improve teachers' subject knowledge through extra training involving Education Action Zone staff.
- The computer booth in Year 2 is too small for whole class teaching and the siting of it means that most Year 1 pupils are not able to use it easily.
- Some effective use is made of information technology to support learning in other subjects, particularly in art and design, but there are also missed opportunities.

### **Commentary**

72. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations for the subject and pupils in Year 2 are now achieving well because they are being taught new skills quickly. Standards are not as high as those found at the previous inspection and this is mainly due to the fact that expectations are higher than they were and resources and staff training here have not kept pace. The school is making good use of its involvement with the local Education Action Zone to provide specialist teaching to pupils in Year 2 and to give all staff training to further extend their skills. This is having a positive effect on pupils' achievement in Year 2. For example, in a lesson observed with a group of Year 2 pupils working with the specialist teacher, pupils were fascinated by the potential of a new program that would enable them to merge text and graphics. They made very good progress during the session because they were given very good opportunities to develop new skills and become familiar with a new program. However, almost all children have weak keyboard typing skills, which slows their ability to work quickly.
73. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects and they do this well in art and design. For example, in two very good lessons in Year 2, effective use was made of the computer suite for pupils to explore making observational drawings of shells directly onto the screen. What could be improved is the way teachers plan to use new technology in lessons. They are currently unable to do this well enough, and some opportunities are missed, because they have not yet had the opportunity to up-date their own skills in the use of new software and this will take time.
74. The booth only contains six computers, so no whole class teaching can take place and this slows the pace at which new skills can be taught. Most Year 1 pupils do not have access to the booth until they are in Year 2, and their achievement is satisfactory rather than good because of this.

75. The effective subject co-ordinator has recognised where the key priorities are and has put in place a training programme that is intended to improve teachers' subject knowledge and their knowledge of new resources and software.

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

76. This is satisfactory. Teachers make the best use of the resources and accommodation that to use ICT skills to support learning in other subjects. This is done well in art and design and in some aspects of literacy. However, some opportunities are missed for pupils to develop new skills independently. For example, the school makes effective use of digital cameras to record visits out of school or to record pupils' ongoing work in classrooms, but pupils are not being taught how to use the cameras independently.

## **HUMANITIES**

No lessons were seen in history. Pupils' books showed that attainment is well above average by the end of Year 2 and achievement by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good. Work is well organised to avoid duplication for pupils in mixed age classes and to develop subject skills systematically. Consequently, pupils show a good understanding of the passage of time and the importance of evidence in understanding the past. Recording work is made interesting and exciting by the use of 'mini books' for topics; the one used after a visit to a local castle had been designed with a castellated top. Higher attaining pupils, in particular, write at length and all are encouraged to use several formats from newspaper accounts to sustained narrative that includes dialogue. All pupils include a contents page and glossary and pupils in Year 2 also include an index, again illustrating how history is used to develop pupils' literacy skills. Good links are made with ICT by the import of digital photographs taken on visits to illustrate their work. Good progress has been made in all aspects of the subject since the last inspection.

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- High expectations and good teaching result in Year 2 pupils attaining above the standards seen in most schools, and achieving well.
- Good teaching gives pupils a strong foundation in the skills associated with the subject.
- Good links are made with other subjects especially history, ICT and science.
- Although the stock is being improved, there are not enough books or computer programs currently to support the subject well.
- The subject leader is given no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.

### **Commentary**

77. As a result of teachers' high expectations, pupils produce a high volume of quality work particularly in Year 2. Standards are above those found in most schools and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.

78. Teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and teachers have good subject knowledge. They use effective questioning to prompt pupils' memories and include all pupils in discussions. In a very good Year 2 lesson about reasons for people visiting the seaside, the teacher shared a postcard that one member of the class had sent from Spain. Using information found on the card, pupils established that their classmate was at the seaside. Teachers emphasise vocabulary related to the subject and by repeating it throughout the lesson ensure that pupils learn and understand new terms. Teachers' marking is consistent and helpful, and homework is set regularly.
79. Mapping skills are particularly well taught. There is a globe in every classroom and when Year 2 pupils use atlases, they do so with confidence using simple co-ordinates to establish a point on a map. Large scale aerial photographs of the neighbourhood surrounding the school are used well to enable pupils to understand what the earth looks like from the air and how maps can be drawn and buildings identified. In a Year 2 classroom, good quality three-dimensional models made by the pupils showing the contours of the countryside were displayed alongside photographs and maps ensuring pupils understand the relationship between them.
80. Good links are established between geography and other subjects. Pupils who had been to Bridlington were prompted to discuss the past when they recalled their visit to the museum there. ICT is used well both to enhance teaching, allowing digital photographs to be shared on screen for example, and for pupils to generate art work relating to the topic they are studying, such as pictures of the River Thames and London.
81. A two-year cycle of work that encourages the systematic acquisition of skills has been established to avoid duplicating topics when pupils are taught in mixed age classes. The Library Service is helping the school gradually to improve its stock of books which is currently in need of a top-up.
82. The subject leader manages the subject effectively. She recognises the need for further programs to be acquired so that ICT can be used more widely to support teaching in the subject. She also co-ordinates planning across the school well and introduces new elements as she feels appropriate. This year she substituted Katie Morag and the Isle of Struay for Jamaica, for instance. She has, however, no opportunity to observe teaching or talk to pupils and this is limiting her overview of the subject. As a result of her leadership and good teaching, all aspects of the subject have been improved since the last inspection.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils in Year 2 have well-developed understanding of the major religions studied.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to study aspects of major faiths, and this helps to develop their spiritual and cultural understanding well.
- The retelling of parables sometimes misses the essential point for the pupils.
- The subject is effectively led and managed, and there are good resources and artefacts to support pupils' learning.

## Commentary

83. Pupils in Year 2 achieve above the levels expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus. They show very good understanding of the main tenets of Christianity and Judaism. In discussion, it is clear that they have been expected to think about the meaning and symbolism of major festivals and important days, such as Sunday for Christians and Shabbat for those of the Jewish faith. They have good recall of the reverence given to religious artefacts and texts such as the Torah and the Bible. In discussing the Christian belief in the believer's soul entering heaven, Year 2 boys and girls readily developed a theological debate about the nature of God and everlasting omnipotence. This indicates very good opportunities in lessons and assemblies to think about the major aspects of belief.
84. Only part of one lesson was seen, with Year 1 pupils, so no judgement is possible on teaching overall. The teacher told the story of the Good Samaritan as part of the week's theme on friendship and helping others. This built on a whole-school assembly led by the vicar of the local church, in which she had involved children from across the school well in helping her tell from the Bible how Jesus had cured a man of blindness. In the Year 1 lesson, the teacher focused on the intention of the questioner to trick Jesus, resulting in the parable of the help offered by a potential enemy to an injured Jewish man. This was very difficult for the pupils to understand, so that the main focus on helping others even when there might be an excuse not to was not clearly taught.
85. From general inspection evidence, this is untypical of how the subject is delivered. Although the subject has not been a focus for development recently, planning shows that the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus are fully met, and that pupils are given good opportunities to think about religion, belief and spiritual development. Good links are drawn between assembly, collective worship, circle time, and subject specific teaching in developing pupils' moral sense, and their self-awareness in response to spiritual questions. Pupils' work is not well organised, however, so that it is difficult to track their progress and achievement.
86. The coordinator leads the subject effectively. She has built up a good collection of artefacts to support the work on Judaism and Christianity, with some further support materials from the Buddhist faith. She keeps a reasonable overview through monitoring teachers' planning. She organises visits to the local church to celebrate major festivals, and is involved in the forthcoming multicultural and multi-faith week planned with the EAZ and the Junior school. The quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Work was sampled in design and technology and music, so no overall judgement on the quality of the schools' provision has been made. No lessons were seen in design and technology, and only one in music, so no overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching. However, in design and technology, it is clear that pupils are taught a wide range of skills because they attain standards that are well above those found in most schools and they achieve very well. The very good standards that were found at the previous inspection have been maintained. A key strength of the subject is the way pupils are taught to plan and evaluate their work. The staff's high expectations are evident because the quality of pupils'

finished work is quite impressive. Pupils' literacy skills are also extended well. For example, in Year 2, work on puppets included stories written about the adventures of their puppet!

In music, pupils in Year 2 sang a round they had written about the sea to the tune of 'I hear thunder'. They achieved this skilfully and tunefully in four parts, good level work for their age, in response to the good teaching. They learn standard notation to develop rhythmic understanding, and have good opportunities to compose their own response in impressionist style to their visit to the seaside. Singing is generally good, although a significant proportion of boys do not articulate the words to songs, leaving this to the girls. Staff do not intervene enough to ensure that boys contribute fully. There are good resources available to support the subject, including instruments from a range of world cultures. No music lesson was observed in the previous inspection, but the subject appears to have been maintained at the same good levels as described then.

## **Art and design**

Provision for art and design is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching of art is very good and as a result, pupils achieve high standards.
- Resources are very good and this has a positive effect on the quality of work that is produced.
- Some opportunities to monitor and assess skills in lessons are missed and work is not organised as well as it could be, particularly in Year 1.

## **Commentary**

87. Pupils achieve well and attain standards that are well above those typically found in most schools, improved since the last inspection.
88. The quality of teaching is very good. In two very good lessons in Year 2, both teachers taught new skills and techniques through demonstration and explanation very effectively. Pupils were enthralled as they watched one teacher model a starfish using clay. They learned how to pull and stretch the clay, or how to make a join if this was needed. In another Year 2 class, pupils were taught how to use pen and inks to make very detailed drawings of shells. Their eyes sparkled as they saw how their teacher demonstrated new skills and they were very keen and eager to make a start on the lesson. Pupils' vocabulary was extended well in these lessons as their teachers introduced technical words such as 'slip' for soft clay, and explained that 'aqua' is the Latin word for water when using aqua pastels. ICT skills are generally used well to support learning in the subject. For example, in the Year 2 lessons, pupils used the computer mouse skilfully to make an observational drawing of a shell.
89. Resources in the subject are very good and have a positive effect on the quality of work produced. In discussion with a group of Year 2 pupils, they revealed impressive knowledge of the work of famous artists and were able to compare, with unusual clarity for their age, the work of Paul Klee, Vincent van Gogh and Escher. As pupils had been given the opportunity to work with a very wide range of good quality media and use different techniques, they could explain how van Gogh used texture to great effect, whilst Escher excelled in fine drawings showing great detail. In lessons, when asked whether they

preferred using oil pastels or chalk pastels, they chose chalk pastels, "because you can use your fingers to blend the colours".

90. Leadership and management of the subject are good, with effective use made of the school's involvement in the EAZ initiative to broaden pupils' experiences in multicultural art. Pupils' art and design work is also displayed very well throughout the school. However, there are some areas for improvement. For example, although there is no requirement for pupils to have a sketchbook, they are so skilful that they would benefit from using one to develop and explore their personal styles. The way pupils' finished work is organised is untidy, particularly in Year 1. For example, work is kept in folders, often undated and mixed up with work in other subjects. Consequently, pupils are unable to see how their work progresses over time. Also, some opportunities to formally assess skills are missed in lessons, when a teacher or learning support assistant could quickly check how well pupils were doing.

### **Physical education**

Provision in dance is **very good** for Year 2 pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good in Year 2, drawing out pupils' subtle skills in movement and dance.
- The pupils respond very well in imaginative response to their visit to the seaside.

### **Commentary**

91. Pupils attain standards in dance that are well above those usually seen at this age. They achieve very well. This maintains the levels seen at the last inspection. The pupils clearly have a good repertoire of movements developed from previous work, and the teachers exploit this very well, expecting the pupils to reach high standards.
92. The quality of teaching in Year 2 is very good, and inspires the pupils to develop their creative response to the stimulus of music or given objects so that it flows into a very good range of individual and paired work. A well-chosen piece of music stimulates very effective warm-up, leading into creative dance using the shells used earlier in English, and to be used later in art and design. This development of the theme for the seaside visit is not allowed to become boring by the staff as they prompt the pupils skilfully to interpret the shape, line, form and essence of the shells in movement.
93. The pupils clearly relish the opportunity to use their very good physical skills, and they use the space extremely well for their age, working round and with other pupils without any mishap or encroachment on working area. For example, one girl accelerated swiftly across the 'beach', then dropped dramatically onto the 'sand' to trace intricate whorls and spirals with her hands and feet.
94. Both the teachers have very good observational and assessment skills so that they pick out pupils to demonstrate particular techniques or combined movements. One of the staff noticed that two girls had begun to weave their dances together, asked them to show the class, made comments about their work to help them improve, then suggested that other pupils might wish to link their activities. This took possibly one and a half minutes, and

resulted in an explosion of new ideas as pupils discussed and refined their now joint dances.

95. The staff assess very well through observation, and comment skilfully to help the pupils improve their work. However, they do not emphasise enough that pupils should also analyse and comment on their own and other pupils' work in order to improve their own assessment skills, and use the evaluation to improve.
96. The coordinator, who taught a very good dance lesson with reception children (see paragraph 50), is a subject specialist, and leads the subject very well. She is currently leading the school's bid for Activemark status. Resources are satisfactory, and the hall is suitably surfaced and equipped. Outside play space is restricted as there are temporary classrooms on the playground, and the small grassed area has a steep slope that staff are vigilant in supervising to prevent accidents. However, it would be better fenced off. The quality of provision in the subject has been maintained since the last inspection.

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

97. The school teaches this area of the curriculum very well, beginning successfully in the nursery and reception classes. There are cross-curricular links, which are a very good feature of teaching, and many opportunities during assemblies for introducing aspects of personal, social and emotional development. These arrangements are effective in ensuring pupils' understanding in this area develops very well. The co-ordinator has recently received training and is presently in the process of writing the policy. All staff have received training in teaching through Circle Time and this is now an important weekly feature of the timetable for all pupils.

## 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                               | 2            |
| <b>Overall standards achieved</b>                                    | <b>3</b>     |
| Pupils' achievement  | 3            |
| <b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>        | <b>2</b>     |
| Attendance   | 3            |
| Attitudes  | 2            |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions                        | 2            |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development            | 2            |
| <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                           | 2            |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities     | 2            |
| Accommodation and resources  | 3            |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety                             | 3            |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils                              | 2            |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views                  | 4            |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents                 | 3            |
| The quality of the school's links with the community                 | 3            |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges                   | 4            |
| <b>The leadership and management of the school</b>                   | <b>3</b>     |
| The governance of the school   | 3            |
| The leadership of the headteacher                                    | 2            |
| The leadership of other key staff                                    | 3            |
| 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).*