

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WESTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wombourne, Wolverhampton

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124193

Headteacher: Mr J H Smith

Lead inspector: Mrs O M Cooper

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> March 2004

Inspection number: 258374

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:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	414
School address:	Ounsdale Road Wombourne Wolverhampton West Midlands
Postcode:	WV5 8BH
Telephone number:	(01902) 892 143
Fax number:	(01902) 324 987
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Roy Cleaver
Date of previous inspection:	18 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> May 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This large community primary school serves an area of mixed privately-owned and local authority housing, but is in a relatively advantageous area. However, about half of the pupils live beyond the immediate locality of the school and attend through choice. The pupils are predominantly white, mostly of United Kingdom heritage and none speak English as an additional language. There is one Traveller pupil. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below average, the most prominent difficulties being dyslexia, hearing impairment or speech and communication difficulties. The movement of pupils into the school, other than at the beginning of a school year, is not an issue. Overall attainment on entry to the school is at the level expected for the children's ages. Attainment on entry has declined in recent years with the admission of more pupils from beyond the local area. The school has received several awards in recent years. An Artsmark for creativity in the curriculum and Dyslexia Friendly status were awarded in 2003, a Schools Achievement Award for improving standards was gained in 2002 and the school was recognised as a health-promoting school in 2000.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10859	Mrs O M Cooper	Lead inspector	Art and design Music Foundation stage curriculum
9327	Mr S Vincent	Lay inspector	
17907	Mr M Bowers	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs
32345	Mr H Bailey	Team inspector	English Physical education Religious education
11528	Mr M Wainwright	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school with some very good features.** The leadership of the headteacher is very good and inspires and motivates both pupils and staff. The school atmosphere is very conducive to learning and all pupils are fully included in activities. Consequently, standards are above average in both Years 2 and 6. The teaching is good overall and helps most pupils to achieve well. The management of the school is effective. Given the low income, the good provision and the standards achieved, the school is providing very good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Overall standards are above average, and well above in some subjects, but in mathematics standards should be higher.
- Very good leadership from the headteacher who leads by example.
- Good teaching and very good curricular provision enable pupils to learn effectively.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is very good.
- The monitoring of teaching lacks rigour.
- Procedures for tracking the attainment and progress of pupils from year to year to ensure all are making sufficient progress are in early stages of development.

The school has made very good improvement since its last inspection in 1998. Overall standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 have risen faster than the national trend. Many of the strengths found in the previous inspection have been maintained. The key areas for improvement contained in the previous inspection report have been largely overcome. Assessment procedures have been implemented in all subjects. The curriculum for children in the Reception classes has improved and is satisfactory. Provision in information and communication technology has improved sufficiently.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A\* - top five per cent of schools; 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.*

The table above shows that pupils who left the school in July 2003 achieved well, particularly when compared with similar schools. The value added to pupils' attainment in English between Year 2 and Year 6 put the school in the top five per cent of similar schools. Overall standards in 2003 were well above the national average. This inspection found standards to be similar but slightly lower, due to a year group with an increased proportion of less able pupils, including some with special educational needs. **Achievement is good overall**, but is satisfactory in the Reception classes and for some pupils with special educational needs. Standards on entry to the Nursery are as expected for children of their age. By the end of their time in Reception classes, most children reach the goals they are expected to reach in all areas of learning and a few exceed them. By Year 2, standards are above the national average in reading and are broadly average in writing and mathematics. Standards in writing have improved since 2003, as more pupils are now working at a higher level than expected for their age. In science, standards are well above those expected in Year 2 as pupils' investigative skills are well developed. Standards in Year 6 are above the national average in English and science and are broadly average in mathematics. Standards in English and science indicate standards in mathematics should be higher. With the exception of information and communication technology,

standards are above those expected in Year 6 and are well above in art and design, music, and design and technology because of the good teaching and improved curricular provision.

**The provision for pupils' personal development is very good.** This includes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Most pupils arrive on time and are very keen to learn. Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities and attend regularly. **Attendance is satisfactory**, but is adversely affected by pupils taking holidays in term time. Attendance is monitored effectively.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good** and enables pupils to acquire knowledge and develop their skills well. All pupils have a clear understanding of the purposes of lessons and how they will help them move to the next stage in their learning. The teaching in Reception classes is hampered by the accommodation and resources which do not allow regular access to outdoor learning, and by low staffing levels. The curricular provision is very good, with innovative developments and interesting activities. The school's care for its pupils and its links with parents are very good, and significantly enhance the overall provision.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school are good overall.** The headteacher provides very good leadership with a clear focus on raising standards. Other senior managers provide good support. Management of the school is effective and financial management is good. The procedures for tracking pupils' progress are not fully embedded, although developing well. The governance of the school is good. All statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents and pupils are highly satisfied with the school's provision. Parents have every confidence in the leadership and management of the school and pupils feel well cared for.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards further in mathematics.
- Increase the rigour in monitoring of teaching.
- Improve the procedures for tracking pupils' attainment from year to year.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall in all the areas of learning and is good in the Nursery. For pupils in Years 1 to 6, achievement is good overall in most subjects and is very good in music in Years 3 to 6. In information and communication technology and in mathematics, overall achievement is satisfactory. The teaching in mathematics is not as good as in other subjects and hinders pupils' learning and achievement. There is little difference in the achievement of boys and girls in lessons, except in years where there are far more boys who tend to dominate class discussions. A few of the most able pupils underachieve in some lessons and some pupils with hearing or visual impairment could achieve more with better resources. Current standards in Year 2 are above average in English, well above expectations for pupils of this age in science and broadly average in mathematics. Standards in Year 6 are above average in English and science and broadly average in mathematics. Standards show an improving trend, with overall average points scores rising faster than the national trend in Year 2 and Year 6 in recent years. Standards in Year 2 dipped in all subjects in 2000, but have improved steadily since. This is the current Year 6 group, which has received additional support to boost pupils' attainment and which has had some success. Nevertheless, standards are expected to dip in Year 6 in 2004.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are well above those expected nationally in art and design, music, and design and technology.
- Standards in science in Year 2 are well above those expected.
- Standards in mathematics should be higher.
- A few potentially gifted and talented pupils could achieve more (already identified by the school).

#### Commentary

1. Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were above the national average in reading and mathematics and were broadly average in writing. Standards in writing dipped in 2003, because the proportion reaching the higher Level 3 was below the national average, whereas in reading and mathematics it was well above. This inspection found the decline to have been overcome. When the school's results were compared with similar schools, the results were in line with the average in reading and mathematics and were below the average in writing. Because the proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals decreased, the school was benchmarked against schools where up to eight per cent of pupils received free school meals, whereas in previous years it had been in the second group. This led to the similar schools' comparative grades declining. The table below shows that this school improved its average point scores in reading and mathematics, whereas nationally there was a slight decline.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.9 (16.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.0 (15.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.9 (16.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*



- Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were well above the national average in English, above the national average in science and were broadly average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was well above the national average in English and above the national average in science, but matched the national average in mathematics. These results indicate standards in mathematics should be higher. Standards in mathematics have remained at broadly average levels for the last four years. The table below shows that the school's average points scores rose in all three subjects in 2003, whereas English average point scores nationally declined slightly.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.0 (27.6)	26.8.(27.0)
mathematics	27.5 (27.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.7 (29.5)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 63 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- This inspection found standards in the Foundation Stage to be in line with those expected for children of their age in all the areas of learning. Most children are on course to reach the goals they are expected to meet by the end of their time in Reception and a few will exceed them. However, the children in the Nursery achieve well, whereas those in Reception achieve satisfactorily. This is because of the level of staffing and the accommodation, which have a negative impact on the overall teaching and learning in Reception classes. The Nursery provides a more stimulating environment and better access to outdoor learning.
- In Year 2, current standards are above average in reading and are broadly average in writing and in mathematics, where teaching is satisfactory overall. Strong emphasis has been placed on helping the pupils to understand how to structure their writing and, along with the opportunities to write in many other subjects, has been beneficial in halting the decline in standards. A high proportion of pupils is on course to achieve the higher level by the end of Year 2. In science, standards are well above those expected for pupils of their age as investigative skills develop well and pupils have a good understanding of fair tests.
- Standards of work in Year 6 are currently above average in English and science and broadly average in mathematics. This does not indicate a decline in standards in English, but a year group with a higher proportion of lower-attaining pupils, some with learning difficulties in English, and few average-attaining pupils. Standards in writing are not as high as in reading. The teaching in mathematics is satisfactory overall and varies between the different sets in the year groups. Occasionally, the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in lessons, when all start activities from the same starting point, before moving on to more challenging activities. The school has recognised the need to identify potentially gifted and talented pupils and to set further challenges for them.
- Standards in many subjects have risen since the previous inspection because of the good teaching, improved assessment procedures and improved curricular provision. Standards in religious education, physical education, geography, history, design and technology, science and English have risen in both Years 2 and 6. In music, art and design, and information and communication technology, standards have risen by Year 6. In religious education, physical education, geography and history, standards are above those expected for pupils in Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement is good. In music, design and technology and art and design, standards are above those expected in Year 2 and rise to well above expected levels by Year 6 because of some very good teaching and learning.
- Pupils have individual targets for improvement and know what they have to do to move towards the next stage in their learning. Year 6 pupils discuss with confidence the levels they are aiming to achieve in national tests. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in

relation to their capabilities and targets set in their individual education or behaviour plans. Because of the effective strategies, which are in place to help some pupils modify their behaviour, they make good progress and achieve well. Pupils with hearing or vision impairment achieve satisfactorily, but not as well as they could do, because the school is still awaiting the arrival of some specific resources to support their learning. Teaching assistants and class teachers do all they can to support these pupils in lessons. However, there are occasions when teaching assistants are not available and there are insufficient staff to support individual pupils with vision impairment when involved in practical tasks. The Traveller pupil achieves as well as other pupils, and does not need additional support in class lessons.

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

Pupils like school; are keen to learn and enjoy what the school offers. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. The provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Attendance is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very positive attitudes and behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Management of behaviour and the very good relationships at all levels.
- Pupils' increasing independence in learning.
- The school's very good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural education.

### **Commentary**

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.3%	School data	0.6%
National data	5.4%	National data	0.4%

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

8. Pupils have very positive attitudes and almost always behave very well in lessons. This includes pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have a positive impact on their learning. They are sensible and willing learners with high levels of interest in their work. From the responses to their questionnaires, they are happy to be in school, enjoy finding out new things and most find work interesting and fun. A high proportion takes part in extra-curricular clubs and activities. Parents confirm that their children enjoy school. Behaviour in the playground is good. Pupils play together well and there is no feeling of intimidation or aggression. They understand the playground rules and take responsibility for managing the play equipment, which they perceive to have been a great success.
9. The school has high expectations for good behaviour and the whole-school approach to discipline is working very well and supporting pupils with behavioural difficulties. The sanctions and rewards are consistent and clearly understood. Behaviour in lessons and at other times is monitored systematically and on the few occasions when standards slip, it is dealt with properly and with the involvement of parents. If appropriate, a strategy to manage and improve behaviour is put in place. Relationships at all levels are very good and there have been no exclusions for a number of years. The children in Reception classes are likely to reach the targets they are expected to reach in their personal, social and emotional development by the time they enter Year 1.
10. Pupils are making good progress as independent learners, supported by their very good attitudes and behaviour. They are increasingly able to work together in pairs or groups and are at ease with each other, sharing ideas or speaking at the front of the class. They have the confidence to ask questions when they don't understand. By the time they are in Years 5 and

6, they have a very good understanding of how well they are doing and are able to talk about their targets for development and their likely results by the end of Year 6. They particularly enjoy finding out things for themselves and can explain how they do this using the library, the Internet, or in the kind of lessons where they experiment in order to reach a conclusion or explore an idea. The school's commitment to including all pupils fully in lessons is evident the way pupils work with each other without any fuss, and with care and concern for others.

11. The school promotes pupils' spiritual awareness well. The curriculum gives many opportunities to explore their values and beliefs and consider how these affect their daily lives. In circle time, the younger children learn to express their feelings and their emotions and to see how their behaviour affects others. Older pupils have learned greatly from drama sessions which challenge them to express their innermost feelings in mime. Their religious education lessons teach them to understand that not everyone has the same system of beliefs, but they are all of value. The school's ethos is strongly based on the school's aims of care and respect for themselves and others, where each pupil's individual character is valued.
12. Moral and social development are promoted very well. Pupils are well able to distinguish right from wrong and this is based on the code of conduct which is understood and accepted. Lessons deal with ethical issues in history as well as the present day and pupils are confident in expressing their views. Their ideas of fairness are well developed. Many lessons give opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills. Lessons frequently require them to work in pairs or groups; they learn to play and work as a team and they are given responsibilities, which they all enjoy. The school council is working well and gives counsellors the responsibility to represent the views of others. It shows all pupils how to raise issues and have them dealt with in a democratic manner.
13. Cultural development is very richly provided. Displays show very high standards in art; music is important and many pupils play an instrument at some time. There are many visitors into the school, for example to work on Indian dance and drama; visits in the locality teach them about their own local heritage, including links with an inner-city school where pupils come from a diverse ethnic background.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The teaching is good and enables pupils to achieve well. The curriculum is very good overall, but the accommodation has a negative effect on the range of experiences and the teaching for children in Reception classes. Care for pupils and links with parents are very good.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and has been maintained since the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are very good, or better, in a significant proportion of lessons.
- Teaching in Reception classes has improved since the previous inspection and is satisfactory.
- Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge.
- Lesson planning is good and pupils know what they are expected to learn.
- The procedures for tracking pupils' attainment and progress from year to year are in the very early stages of development. Teachers' on going assessments of pupils' attainment in lessons are good.
- In occasional lessons, the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

## Commentary

14. The table below shows that in three out of every four lessons, teaching is good and in almost one in three lessons, teaching is of very good quality. There are also examples of excellent teaching. This confirms the views of pupils and parents that teaching is good, enabling pupils to acquire knowledge and develop skills at a brisk pace. The excellent teaching was in music, English and physical education. The links with Ounsdale High School and the support from subject specialists and other visitors has a positive effect on the quality of teaching. Teaching in the Reception classes is satisfactory because of the high ratio of children per adult compared with the Nursery and also the accommodation and resources. Some of the resources are well worn and unattractive.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 60 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (5%)	15 (25%)	25 (42%)	17 (28%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

15. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach and the deployment of subject specialists to teach other classes, or all classes as in music, is beneficial for the pupils as they achieve well. The flexible approach to the deployment of teachers for different units of work leads to more interesting lessons and better quality of learning. In Year 6, for example, a World War II extravaganza was planned around lessons in music, history, physical education and personal development. Pupils developed a range of skills and gained knowledge from a visitor who answered pupils' questions about life during the war. Teachers also have good knowledge of the pupils with special educational needs; they are guided by their individual education plans and so provide challenging but achievable activities. These pupils are fully included in shared text work and mental mathematics sessions and respond well to questions they can answer.
16. Teachers plan lessons well and in detail. The purpose of lessons is clearly identified, written up in all lessons and shared with the pupils. This gives a clear focus for learning. In discussions with pupils they talked about how this helps them to understand their rate of learning and how well they are doing in lessons. The school has identified that the next step is to involve pupils further in assessing their own performance. Time towards the end of lessons is used effectively to assess pupils' learning and often to inform pupils of where their learning will develop further in the following lesson. Activities are often planned at different levels of complexity to cater for pupils of differing attainment, often based on teachers' assessments from the previous lesson. However, in some lessons, this assessment information is not used effectively; all pupils start with the same tasks before moving onto the more challenging activities and this leads to some underachievement for the most able pupils. Careful consideration is given to seating arrangements for pupils with hearing or sight impairment to ensure they are in the best learning position. The school is still awaiting the delivery of technical equipment to support hearing-impaired pupils. For other pupils with special educational needs, specific activities are organised, as teachers use the information given in individual education plans. The commitment to including all pupils fully in lessons is evident in policies and in lesson planning.
17. Assessment procedures have improved significantly since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. Whilst there are sound procedures to assess pupils' attainment in all subjects, the systems for tracking the attainment of all pupils from year to year to ensure all are making sufficient progress is not fully embedded. Consequently, the school is only just beginning to identify specific groups of pupils who have not made the progress of which they are capable. A current priority for the school is to improve its provision for potentially gifted and talented pupils as it judges this to be a weakness, and inspectors agree.

## The curriculum

The overall curriculum provision and the range of opportunities to enrich the pupils' learning activities are very good and contribute effectively to pupils' learning and achievement. The accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum offers a very wide range of relevant and interesting opportunities for learning and has improved since the previous inspection.
- Curriculum development and innovation are very good.
- Equality of access and opportunity for all groups of pupils is good.
- A very good range of extra-curricular activities, including sport and the arts, significantly contributes to the pupils' learning.
- Outdoor provision for children in Reception classes is restricted by the accommodation.

### Commentary

18. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to improve the curricular opportunities it provides and has ensured that collective acts of worship meet statutory requirements. A strength of the curriculum documentation is in the links made with the school's aims. The introduction of guided reading sessions on class timetables has made a significant impact on the pupils' attainments in English.
19. Curriculum documentation reflects the school's commitment to continuous curriculum innovation and development. Pupils' learning is enriched through a wide range of extra-curricular activities covering the arts and sport. The staff work together well, with effective guidance from the Headteacher, to develop creativity in the curriculum. Whilst this is in the early stages, there is evidence of achievement. These initiatives are further supported through the expertise of visitors from the community. In the Foundation Stage, there has been good improvement in the planning.
20. The Headteacher has worked diligently to ensure there is a good match of experienced teachers to meet pupils' needs. They are deployed effectively so that specific expertise in a number of subjects benefits a wide range of pupils. The school is committed to ensuring all pupils have full access to the curriculum, including those with special educational needs. The curricular provision for these pupils is satisfactory. Individual education or behaviour plans are in use and are of sound quality. In most lessons, pupils with special educational needs are supported by teaching assistants, many of whom have been trained in aspects of their role. Regular meetings between advisory teachers and individual pupils with hearing or vision impairment ensure that pupils' attainment and progress are assessed and reviewed. There are very good relationships between these teachers and class teachers in respect of the links between the work completed in class, and the learning aims during these individual sessions. The requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are met. The overall quality of resources is generally satisfactory but they will need to be upgraded in some subjects when the budget, which is restricted, allows.
21. Provision for information and communication technology is satisfactory, an improvement since the previous inspection. Thoughtful investment in this subject is paying off in terms of rising standards. The accommodation and resources provide good facilities for pupils to learn. In addition, there is some out-of-hours use of facilities.
22. In numeracy lessons, pupils acquire basic number skills well because there is a good emphasis on this element. However, skills are not being reinforced and applied sufficiently well in investigative tasks.

23. The accommodation is spacious with many additional rooms. Good and full use is made of what is available and staff work hard to enhance the environment with some very attractive and pertinent displays. However, there are some weaknesses. For example, the school is very spread out and difficult to navigate with narrow corridors in parts and the need to pass through classrooms to reach one Reception class and the Nursery, which can disturb some lessons. Reception classes have no access to the secure outdoor area, which restricts opportunities for these young children to investigate and explore the world around them.
24. The school has very effective links with partner institutions. There is a smooth transfer of pupils to secondary school, including the efficient transfer of pupils' records. The school arranges a meeting for parents prior to their children moving from the Nursery into Reception and this helps the children to settle more quickly. Similarly, pupils are well supported as they move from Year 2 to Year 3.

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

The school is a secure and friendly environment in which pupils are cared for very well. They receive good support for their learning and they are valued as individuals. The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The safe and healthy environment in which to work and play.
- The support and guidance available to all pupils.
- The way the school values pupils' views and involves them in its work and their own learning.
- Assessment procedures to track academic progress need to be developed further.

### **Commentary**

25. The school does all it can to provide a safe and healthy environment which supports pupils' learning. Pastoral care, arrangements for discipline, the behaviour management of individual children, child protection, attendance and family support are handled very well. Medical and welfare facilities are very good. Induction arrangements for children new to the school are good, as is the transition on to secondary school. Procedures for child protection follow the local guidelines and are led jointly by the headteacher and deputy. Staff are properly trained to ensure that if any member of staff has any concern about any child, they understand how to react. Health and safety arrangements are well organised and an external review has confirmed that all the necessary procedures and risk assessments are in place. Parents are very confident that their children are well looked after.
26. Because the school is very aware of each pupil as an individual, and has a good understanding of any personal or medical needs or particular family circumstances, it is able to support their personal development very effectively. This includes pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with hearing impairment, for example, have their hearing aids checked regularly. Attendance, behaviour, successes and achievements in and out of school are known. The quality of relationships between staff, pupils and parents underpins this and ensures pupils are supported very well. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Whilst there has been good improvement since the previous inspection, the tracking of pupils' attainment and progress from year to year is only just getting established. The system being implemented does not easily highlight the pupils within a year group who have made insufficient progress in their attainment and so will need help to catch up. However, pupils are grouped in ways to help them learn and some have access to additional classes and extra support at important times in their school life. Teachers' on-going assessments of pupils in lessons and through marking are used to plan activities which meet pupils' learning needs. Many pupils, including most of those with special educational needs, achieve well. A small number of pupils with hearing or visual impairment could achieve more with additional

resources, although class teachers and teaching assistants provide as much support as they can.

27. The pupils' questionnaires show overwhelmingly that they have a trusting relationship with adults. They also say they help them succeed, they are fair and listen to their point of view. Equally importantly, pupils now have opportunities to make their views known through the school council. The councillors take their work seriously and do a very good job of representing their constituents. There have been recent positive outcomes regarding the playground and the availability of water in classes; there is no shortage of new questions to be asked. Pupils contribute to school organisation in other ways, such as the prefects and librarians. Individual and personal responsibility is also encouraged and pupils share their targets with their teachers, they know where they are going and know they have to play their part in getting there. Conversations with any group of pupils will quickly reveal what they think of 'their' school.

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

The school has a very positive relationship with parents, who are pleased with what it does for their children. Links with the local community and other schools are good and are beneficial.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very strong links between home and school enhance pupils' learning.
- The way the school deals with problems and concerns is appreciated by parents.
- There is a wide range of productive community links.
- Effective links with other schools enrich the provision.

### **Commentary**

28. The questionnaires and the parents' meeting show that parents are pleased with what the school does and what their children achieve. Approval is widespread, but the work of the headteacher in building the relationship with parents is particularly highly regarded. There is evident trust between parents and staff and the headteacher has done much to be available and visible to parents at the start and close of the day. There is good written communication about general matters, forthcoming events and specifically about the curriculum and topics to be studied. School documentation and pupils' annual reports are good. Parents are kept well-informed; they say they find the school very approachable and feel it listens to their views. As a result, parents play a valuable role in their children's education and the work of the school. They are involved in fund-raising through the parents' association, support school activities and sports teams and help in school with many activities and on school trips. Equally importantly, most parents attend the regular consultation meetings, share their children's targets, do their best to help their children to work at home and fully support the school's homework policy.
29. Many parents have commented that when they have had a concern, it has been dealt with positively. Whilst it is never possible to guarantee satisfaction, the determination and communication skills of the headteacher are significant factors in trying to do so.
30. The school is an important part of its local community and is used by various groups almost every night and weekend; there is an After-School Care Club and there is soon to be a Breakfast Club. Children go out into the local community to support their lessons, they visit their local church (for whom they raise funds), and visit residential homes at Christmas. Sports coaches come into the school and there are many visitors who bring special skills to enrich the curriculum.
31. The school works well with its partner schools. Headteachers meet regularly and subject leaders meet to share practice and experience. There are regular sporting and musical contacts. Particularly noteworthy are the links with Ounsdale High School, where there are close curricular links for transitional work, exchange visits by teaching staff and careful

planning for the transfer of pupils. The high school has been particularly helpful in supporting this school in its progress towards the Gold Artsmark accreditation.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall management and governance of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good; of other key staff it is good. This is an improvement in the leadership of the school since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The team-building and motivational skills of the headteacher.
- A very caring ethos with shared commitment to improvement.
- A strong focus on raising standards.
- The good support of the governing body.
- Good financial management.
- Arrangements for the monitoring of standards in mathematics are insufficiently effective.
- Systems in place for tracking pupils' attainment are not sufficiently established to be fully useful.

### **Commentary**

32. The headteacher provides energetic and inspirational leadership. His commitment to providing a caring ethos and raising standards is very apparent. He is constantly active in the classrooms and around the school so that he knows his staff and pupils very well. The headteacher is also committed to creating a strong staff and has worked hard to ensure that their teamwork is effective. New teachers are selected with care so that the team is constantly being strengthened and pupils benefit greatly from any increase in expertise. During his tenure of the post, standards have risen consistently, so that they are now above those expected of pupils in Year 6 in most subjects. There is a very purposeful air to the school, learning is enjoyed and all pupils are fully included in lessons. The aims set out in the school's mission statement are very evident in practice.
33. The headteacher's view of the school's strengths and weaknesses is well informed. His frequent informal visits to all classes and his personal teaching commitments provide a good overall view. The priorities for development are set out clearly in the school's improvement plan, which is an effective document for providing a focus for development. The weaknesses in the school's improvement plan noted in the previous inspection report have been remedied.
34. The deputy headteacher is a committed, loyal and well-respected member of the management team and does much to support new members of staff. He provides effective support for the headteacher, as do other senior managers, who are keen to influence developments in their areas of responsibility. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is co-ordinated satisfactorily. Whilst most of the individual education plans are of good quality, a few contain targets that are too general. Most of the pupils are listed appropriately, although a few require further review. Support for pupils with complex needs in respect of vision impairment is insufficient and pupils with hearing impairment are not supported sufficiently by appropriate resources to aid hearing in classrooms. The organisation of subject monitoring is too inflexible. Subjects are not prioritised according to need as the school is following its three-year plan. This, for example, has hampered the mathematics co-ordinator in fulfilling some aspects of her role.
35. There are suitable systems for monitoring pupils' attainment and their progress through the school. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. They now need refinement so that the most effective use can be made of the information obtained.
36. Governors are knowledgeable and committed. They maintain a keen overview of the school and are conscientious in ensuring that all statutory requirements are met. They have a sharp



view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Every effort is made to make the best use of the school's finances in order to effect improvement. Measures taken are successful, for example in the appointment of some domestic staff and in the setting up of the computer suite.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	915,619.53	Balance from previous year	53,860
Total expenditure	928,420.72	Balance carried forward to the next	41,058.81
Expenditure per pupil	2,164.15		

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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory overall** and is **good** in the Nursery. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection, but with further work to be done.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Induction procedures are good and help children to settle quickly in the Nursery.
- The planning of activities is good and has improved significantly.
- Links with parents are effective and support the children's learning.
- The accommodation and staffing level in the Reception classes have a negative impact on teaching and learning.

### **Commentary**

37. The children are admitted to the Nursery part-time in September or January, having reached the age of three years and four months. They transfer to the Reception classes the following September or January and gradually work up to full-time attendance. The Nursery staff have forged close links with parents and put on workshops to help parents understand the activities their children will undertake and how they can support them. Assessments soon after children start in the Nursery indicate that attainment is broadly in line with that expected for the children's ages, although social skills are not quite as well developed as other skills. By the end of their time in Reception classes, standards are in line with those expected in all the areas of learning. Most achieve the goals expected for children of their age and a few exceed them. There is some underachievement in writing in Reception classes, where the children's skills are slow to develop. Teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory overall in all the areas of learning and are good in the Nursery.
38. Recent improvements to the Nursery accommodation have enabled the nursery nurses to integrate outdoor learning successfully into many activities. The staff in the Nursery know the children well, work closely together as a team and often adapt their teaching, choosing activities that interest the children and motivate them to learn. There are currently 59 children in two Reception classes, with one teaching assistant shared between them. This leads to a high child:adult ratio and insufficient support at times. The shape of the accommodation in the Reception classes adds further complications and makes oversight of all the children difficult during purposeful play activities. Teachers use the space as well as they can, ensuring they have oversight of all the children, but in doing so cannot organise some activities as they wish. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Sound assessment procedures have been implemented in the Nursery along with the national assessment profile for children in Reception. The assessment procedures are manageable and helpful. The co-ordinator is well aware of the need to further improve the provision in Reception classes and provide more access to outdoor learning when funding is available.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Effective daily routines in the Nursery promote children's personal and social skills well.
- Sensitive support from adults and the good role models help to develop the children's self-esteem.

- There are currently insufficient adults in the Reception classes and the good provision in the nursery cannot be followed through.

### **Commentary**

39. In the Nursery, the children's personal development has a high priority, which helps them to settle in quickly and take full advantage of the learning opportunities. The children are actively encouraged to try new experiences and learn to trust the adults. Each child is treated as a valued member of the class, taking their turn to be the special helper of the day. Children's efforts are rewarded and this motivates them to do their best and achieve well in the Nursery. Any conflicts are managed well and the children are helped to understand why it is not acceptable behaviour. In the Reception classes, the children begin to develop self-discipline, but they are sometimes left to work on their own for too long and any conflict is resolved by adults, without involving the children in resolving the situation. The children's attitudes to school are good; they learn to work with others and most develop good concentration spans.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching of letter sounds and many practical activities to practise letter formation.
- Many good opportunities are provided to develop early writing skills through play activities.
- Early writing skills develop well in the Nursery, but this is not followed through as effectively in Reception classes.

### **Commentary**

40. As soon as the children are settled in the Nursery they are encouraged to recognise and collect their name to register their attendance. The children show interest and quickly learn to recognise the names of others, using the initial letter sounds. Interesting activities such as 'feely bags' filled with objects beginning with the letter of the week promote the children's understanding well. Other practical activities such as sorting objects by their initial sound or practising letter formation in shaving foam or sand trays help the children to form letters correctly. The development of putting letters together to form words is slower and children's books in Reception classes showed some underachievement in writing skills. Only more able children are beginning to write a few of the most commonly used words. Because of the wide range of attainment among the children, they are taught in small groups in Reception, while other children are engaged in purposeful play activities. Some children find it hard to concentrate in this situation and the noise level can become distracting and hinder the learning, especially of hearing impaired children. This organisation is not effective in helping the children move towards full literacy hours in preparation for moving into Year 1. Reading skills develop satisfactorily. Children show interest in books in the Nursery and handle them correctly when choosing a library book to take home. Average and more able children are reading books from the early stages of a reading scheme and are supported by parents at home in most cases. Speaking and listening skills are developed successfully through many activities, with strong emphasis placed on listening skills, as these are weaker.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good range of practical activities.

- Too many worksheets are used in Reception classes.
- Good use of computers to support learning in number.

### Commentary

41. The teaching of mathematics through practical activities is a strength in the Nursery planning. The staff also take any opportunity that arises to develop the children's counting and number skills, such as when counting the number of people present or deciding how many pegs they need to hang washing on the line. In the Nursery, children count up to ten teddies and place them next to the numeral in the cot with support from an adult. They show interest in numbers and begin to recognise some of them. In Reception, the children put ducks on a duck pond and work out how many are on the pond each time. More able children are beginning to understand one more or one less, but most need to count the ducks each time. The Reception children's books show that many of their experiences are formally recorded using work sheets, in some cases before the children fully understand what is expected of them. A high level of adult support is needed for the worksheets to be completed successfully and learning is slower during these activities. Reception children reinforce their recognition of shapes when nailing wooden shapes on a board to make objects such as a spaceship. They can name basic shapes and count the number of shapes used. Singing of number rhymes and songs helps to promote understanding of numbers to ten. In Nursery and Reception, the children have access to computer programs to consolidate their learning, for example to practise counting and number recognition.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of opportunities for investigation and exploration is provided both indoors and out.
- There are good links to other areas of learning.
- The staff are deployed effectively to make the most of the resources available.
- The Reception classes do not have direct access to the outdoor area.

### Commentary

42. Children entering the Nursery have different levels of knowledge of the world around them, but all achieve well because the staff plan an interesting range of activities to develop their knowledge and interact with them to foster their awareness. Such interactions effectively develop the children's vocabulary as well as their knowledge and investigative and observational skills. Some children were reluctant to engage in tactile experiences, such as feeling cornflour mixed with water. Through sensitive encouragement, the children became involved and talked about how it felt. Reception children learn much about seasonal changes through first-hand observations of the plants and trees in the courtyard garden. The adults, including voluntary helpers, were deployed well to ensure the children had opportunities to discuss what they observed in small groups. These good learning experiences could be provided more often if the Reception classes had immediate access to the secure outdoor area. Staff ensure good links are made with literacy, for example when nursery children made their own books about different materials with different textures. Reception children have learned about different types of homes and drawn them.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- No access to secure outdoor area from the Reception classrooms.
- The outdoor area is well resourced and planned activities are interesting and imaginative.
- The high quality of staff interaction takes learning forward for Nursery children.

### Commentary

43. In the Nursery, the children's physical skills develop well due to the daily access to a good range of resources in a stimulating outdoor area. Outdoor provision has been the focus for improvement in the Nursery in the last year and significant developments have been made which have increased the range of physical activities on offer. As part of their topic on 'people who help us', the children pretended to be policemen and firemen dealing with an emergency, riding the tricycles or pedalling scooters to get to the scene of the fire quickly. The good quality interaction of an adult fostered the children's awareness of space and of others around them. The children pedal tricycles, push themselves along on scooters and run and climb and gain in confidence. They practise throwing and batting skills, but these are at early stages of development. The children in Reception classes use the secure outdoor area at lunchtimes, but do not have such frequent opportunities to develop their skills as part of other activities. All children begin to develop their gymnastic skills satisfactorily through indoor lessons. The children show increasing manual control of paintbrushes, glue spreaders and pencils, but their skills in cutting are weaker.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of experiences and opportunities are planned to develop the children's creativity.
- Effective use is made of the outdoor provision in the Nursery.

### Commentary

44. Through a wide range of role-play activities, when children pretend to be who they want to be, their play is enriched. In the Nursery the children gained great pleasure in pretending to bath their baby and then wash the clothes, as part of their outdoor activities. The children love the opportunities to explore paint, colours and texture and use rollers or brushes to create their patterns and pictures. The spring pictures painted by Reception children show their observation skills are developing well and they are confident in painting what they see. They enjoy singing songs and rhymes. Some of the resources for use in Reception classes as part of role-play activities are well worn and unattractive.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' good knowledge of the subject and the National Literacy Strategy.
- There are good links with other curriculum subjects, particularly through opportunities for writing.
- Reading skills are taught well in guided reading sessions.
- The co-ordinator has no opportunities to monitor teaching.

#### Commentary

45. Current standards of work are above average in Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement is good. By the time pupils leave the school, standards in speaking, listening and reading are above those expected nationally. Writing is in line with national expectations because of the attainment profile of the current Year 6. Especially good gains are made by the end of Year 6, and the recent improvements in teaching and learning are having a positive effect on pupils' achievements. In 2003, the results of national tests at the end of Year 6 show 97 per cent of pupils attained the expected Level 4 and over half attained the higher Level 5. Year 2 results were the best to date for boys and girls, with 89 per cent gaining level 2 or above in reading and 87 per cent in writing.
46. The above average standards are a consequence of the very hard work by staff, the good teaching and learning and effective strategies the school has in place for teaching English. The National Literacy Strategy has been thoughtfully implemented. The school has begun to develop systems for assessing pupils' work. They use these to set clear group and individual targets for improvement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Advice from the local education authority's special educational needs support service is used when setting appropriate targets, particularly for pupils with hearing or sight impairment. The overall quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and is improving further in the teaching of writing skills, which is enabling an increased proportion of Year 2 pupils to work at the higher level than expected for their age. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good with some very good teaching seen.
47. Standards in speaking and listening are above those expected for pupils in Years 2 and 6. This is helped because teachers listen carefully to what pupils have to say and provide many opportunities in English and other subjects for pupils to express themselves. As they mature, most pupils learn to speak with confidence, organise their ideas carefully and extend their vocabulary in conversations and discussions. For example, pupils in Year 5 are learning the effects of persuasive arguments. Year 2 pupils confidently sequenced ideas and expressed opinions in their consideration of different points of view. Most pupils listen attentively so that their responses are based on previous learning. Drama lessons make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' speaking skills. For pupils with hearing impairment, there are no additional resources such as microphones for teachers to use to make it easier for these pupils to hear, but teachers or teaching assistants check frequently to ensure these pupils have heard their instructions or questions and know what they have to do.
48. Standards in reading are high throughout the school. Most pupils read fluently, accurately and enjoy reading by Year 2. This is due to very good teaching and is enhanced by the teachers' very good understanding of the basic skills of reading. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are reminded to continue reading a sentence to help their understanding of a difficult word. Teachers ensure that less able pupils have a good grasp of letter sounds. Teachers ensure that pupils' reading is suitably matched to their abilities. For example, more able Year 6 pupils

can confidently compare the work of different authors. The school is awaiting the arrival of additional resources to support pupils with visual impairment.

49. Current standards in writing in Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. Teachers provide pupils with many opportunities for writing in Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, this ranges from, for example, story openings in Year 3 to poetry in Year 6. As they move through the school, pupils increase their skills in bringing compound words and adjectives to their writing and they use more complex sentences. Pupils extend their vocabularies and show a growing awareness of how to use words imaginatively, which impacts on their stories. The good example the teachers set in their own choice of words enhances this. By the end of Year 3, most pupils can spell difficult words accurately and writing is clear and fluent. Most pupils show a firm grasp of the uses of punctuation. For example, in Year 5, pupils write dialogue using speech marks and connectives to increase the effect of their writing. Pupils with hearing or sight impairment sit close to the teachers and the whiteboards being used to ensure they can see or hear clearly and so take a full part in the lessons.
50. Attitudes and behaviour in class are very good and contribute to the good atmosphere for learning. Relationships are very good and teachers encourage and value pupils' contributions. This gives a Year 4 pupil, for example, confidence to take part in a mock interview. Pupils work very well together in groups and pairs, and increase their understanding of the advantages of learning together.
51. Teachers manage pupils very well and present work in lively and interesting ways. Pupils show interest, are very well behaved and work hard and lessons generally move at an appropriate pace. In Year 3, pupils moved smoothly from whole-class to group work and settled to their activities quickly. As part of the very good teaching in this class, the teacher used humour and challenging questions to encourage pupils.
52. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator works very hard, supporting staff in raising attainment and organises the subject very well. An effective system for assessing teaching and learning has recently been set up. This could be enhanced by first-hand observations of lessons to monitor the quality of teaching. The co-ordinator ensures that any assessments of pupils' attainments are analysed carefully so that planning builds on strengths and weaknesses. The co-ordinator has a very clear understanding of the direction to be taken by the subject in order to maintain and improve the school's good standards. The school has made improvements in English and is well placed to make further improvements in standards in the future.

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

53. Literacy is developed very well through links with other subjects. There are good opportunities for pupils to extend reading and writing skills in other subjects. In religious education, junior pupils write extensively about the Bible and the Torah; in history, they retell stories and write accounts. Specific vocabulary in Year 2 is promoted well in other subjects such as physical education and science.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**. This represents satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

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

- Standards are rising consistently each year.
- The grouping of pupils for lessons is effective, particularly in Years 4 and 6.
- Some good and very good teaching but also some lessons which were rather dull.
- Monitoring of the subject is not effective enough.

- Regular assessments are made of pupils' attainment but recording systems do not give a clear enough overview of their attainment year on year.

## Commentary

54. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are broadly in line with national averages. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Overall standards in the subject have risen steadily since 1999, as has the proportion of pupils attaining an above average level. However, standards are still too far below those achieved in English and science. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are competent in calculating with numbers up to 100. They identify simple fractions and name three-dimensional shapes. Higher-attaining pupils match these shapes to their nets. Pupils record tallies correctly and use the information to construct a simple graph. There is a wider range of ability in Year 6. Higher-attaining pupils explain how they solve problems relating to finding the areas of compound shapes. In other groups, many pupils lack sharpness in mental calculation. Their knowledge of shapes and measure is better, as seen in their work on angles.
55. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers are very thorough in their approach. They are well prepared and have very clear learning objectives, which are shared with the pupils. However, a number of lessons seen lacked sparkle and in parts, pace. Some of the oral work at the beginning of lessons was unimaginative and failed to generate any excitement in the pupils. Overall teaching is satisfactory, although some good and very good teaching was also seen. Lively counting in which emphasis was placed on multiples of five prepared Year 2 pupils well for recording tallies. In another pacy lesson, Year 5 pupils worked against the clock, checking their speed and accuracy. A small group of Year 4 pupils buzzed with enthusiasm throughout their lesson. The teacher and teaching assistant worked in tandem as a very effective team and the methods and resources employed held the pupils' attention well. They showed an eagerness to learn, behaved very well indeed and gained a great deal from the lesson. Particularly good learning takes place in those lessons where the teachers make very effective use of the teaching assistants.
56. The grouping of pupils according to their ability is beneficial and work is well matched to pupils' learning needs generally. Pupils are taught in three different groups in some years, for example the current Years 6 and 4, in order to cater effectively for the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. However, on occasions there is insufficient awareness of the range of ability within the groups and more able pupils could be challenged further or moved on more quickly. Pupils enjoy it when they are challenged. Year 6 pupils bubbled with enthusiasm when telling about the investigations that they are sometimes asked to make. When seen engaged in such tasks, they apply themselves well and are very helpful to each other. Some good examples are seen, such as Year 3 pupils' writing about the rules they 'discover' regarding equivalent fractions. Year 6 pupils sometimes write down the purpose of their investigation and what they find out. Pupils' work does not show enough opportunities of this nature.
57. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The school has a fixed cycle for the monitoring of subjects. Because of this, the subject co-ordinator has not been given time recently to carry out this aspect of her role effectively. Records have been maintained, planning is in place and training attended but observation of teaching has not been carried out with any rigour. The inconsistencies in teachers' expectations of how pupils present work and how it is marked have not been addressed. For example, some Year 4 pupils construct graphs with the axes unlabelled, and misspellings of key words such as 'polygon' and 'perimeter' are unchecked. Marking rarely guides pupils' progress although some good examples are seen. IT does not refer to the learning aims for the lesson or to pupils' targets for improvement often enough. Questions are posed to higher attaining pupils in Year 3 through the marking, which make them re-think and correct their work.



58. Pupils' attainment is assessed regularly and progress is noted. However, systems are not yet refined sufficiently so that the information obtained can be used effectively to highlight different groups of pupils. Although individual targets are not apparent, Year 6 pupils are very clear about the levels at which they are working and what they need to do to improve. This is good.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

59. Good use is made of pupils' skills when comparing temperature graphs of Calcutta and London. Year 6 pupils learn to draw to scale and calculate the amount of discharge into a river's drainage basin in geography. Opportunities are missed, however, in some information and communication technology lessons, when pupils do not collect and use their own data when learning to create spreadsheets.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching.
- Pupils are continually involved in scientific investigations.
- Too little use is made of computer programs to support science, which has already been identified by the subject co-ordinator.
- Assessment procedures are accurate and effective.
- Standards have risen since the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

60. Standards of work are well above average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. In the national tests in 2003, almost all the Year 6 pupils achieved the national standard and almost half reached the higher level. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2003 judged that the vast majority of pupils attained the national standard, with more than half of them achieving the higher level. Year 6 pupils are currently working towards attaining the expected standards by the end of the year. This is because the present Year 6 has larger numbers of lower-attaining pupils, although a good proportion are likely to exceed the expected level as there are very few average-attaining pupils. Good teaching that recognises the importance of the correct use of vocabulary and involves pupils in scientific investigations where they analyse scientific concepts and ideas ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs and the more able, achieve well. Teaching assistants, where they are available, are often deployed to support visually or hearing impaired pupils, and ensure they understand what they have to do. No differences were observed between boys and girls.
61. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was good and sometimes very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and their planning has a sharp focus. Teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve and include experiments where children predict possible outcomes, organise fair tests and collect and record information which they often analyse through the use of data-handling to produce Venn diagrams, bar charts and line graphs. However, this application of information and communication technology was not always incorporated into the teaching and learning. Practical work is carefully explained to ensure that pupils are fully aware of what is expected of them and questioning is used very effectively to help pupils clarify their thoughts and this helps the teacher to assess their levels of understanding.
62. Where teaching is very good, for example in Year 2, pupils were learning about how to keep healthy and stay alive, by exploring the question 'Why do we eat?'. The teacher's explanation was supported very effectively by the use of National Literacy strategies including 'Big Book'

reference material and 'shared text' procedures that were skilfully incorporated into the whole-class activities. This helped the pupils to gain new knowledge and make connections between the food they ate and the need to keep healthy, grow and obtain energy. The lesson was well resourced and photographs of various foods were available to enable pupils to sort and classify them into three categories using mathematical techniques. The learning support assistant played a key role, for example helping a child to deduce where the photograph of cheese should be placed by questioning to help her make the connection between cheese and milk. The plenary session was used effectively by the teacher to make the connection between the three distinct sets of foods and the need for vitamins, proteins and carbohydrates.

63. In another good lesson, Year 5 pupils worked in groups, effectively collaborating to examine the phenomenon of evaporation and condensation, rapidly learning about the process of fair testing as they set up various investigations. As the lesson progressed, many pupils made the connection between the effect of rising and lowering temperature on the change of state of water and that this was a reversible change. They also gained good insights into the geographical phenomenon of the water cycle. Whilst many pupils were writing independently using correct and accurate vocabulary, those with special educational needs were also achieving well in their recordings because they had suitable support.
64. There have been many improvements since the last inspection. These include:
- improvements in standards and the quality of teaching;
  - regular planning of investigations and the development of practical work;
  - regular assessments of attainment, although tracking of pupils' attainment is not embedded into current practice;
  - many examples of the use of mathematics to support work in science and the use of charts, graphs and tables to help recording;
  - very good use made of fair tests in design and technology in Year 2; and
  - many pupils having accurate and mature styles of report writing.
65. Areas for further development include the introduction of tracking to ensure that pupils make acceptable progress year on year. Although there are some good examples of the use of ICT to support learning in lessons, this is not consistent throughout all year groups. Science is effectively led and managed, with the co-ordinator positively influencing standards and provision.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a good improvement since the last inspection.
- Standards throughout the school are now at the expected levels.
- Direct teaching of information and communication technology skills is good.
- Good use is made of the computer suite and the mini-suite in the entrance hall.
- Procedures for monitoring and evaluating provision and standards in ICT are not fully established.
- The number of computers in classrooms is low.

### Commentary

66. In Years 2 and 6, pupils' skills are at the expected level. In most direct teaching sessions seen in Years 1, 2 and 5, good or better teaching enabled pupils to make rapid progress and achieve well. In other years, teaching is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, national funding has meant that the resources for the subject have improved and staff confidence and expertise

have developed through training. Historically, lack of equipment and problems with reliability of machines have restricted the use of ICT. The acquisition of a computer suite, computer banks, Internet access and whole class teaching means that the school is well placed to move forward. There remain issues relating to the environment of the computer suite, which quickly becomes hot and uncomfortable when a whole class of older pupils are occupying it, and the fact that the practice of organising the older pupils to share one computer between two slows down their rate of progress. An area for development is the need to increase the number of machines in each classroom.

67. Much has been achieved by the school through innovative development in setting up the current provision, and resources are used well. The provision of interactive whiteboards has enabled whole classes to be taught ICT skills effectively. There are plans to install this technology in the ICT suite. However, each year group does not have immediate access to these resources and consequently, on occasions, whole classes are limited by the size of the screen they are watching.
68. The use of national guidance as the base for planning ensures that all pupils experience the full National Curriculum programme of study. Examples of pupils' work show that they are learning to use ICT for word-processing, graphics, the Internet and data-handling, as well as for control and monitoring. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and are good in Years 1 and 2, where more use was made of computers in lessons. In the lessons seen, the teachers' own specialist knowledge was often used well to give clear and succinct explanations and demonstrations using the interactive whiteboard. Good use of questioning maximised pupils' contributions and a brisk pace to the learning meant that most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, achieved well.
69. Occasionally, tasks are not sufficiently challenging to ensure that pupils achieve well; for example, the oldest pupils used spreadsheet systems to total lists of numbers, whereas other pupils typed information into a database to record changes in temperature over time and then produce a line graph. This activity held their attention and challenged them to be accurate and follow procedures. The youngest pupils successfully demonstrated their skills in lifting and dragging images of animals onto a screen. They then selected the relevant words from a word bank to produce a language game for children in the Foundation Stage to match the animal with its correct name. Much fun was experienced as pupils made choices of size, colour and style of font, and the more advanced pupils included a greater range of animals, carefully arranged and displayed.
70. Pupils are enthusiastic about the use of ICT, clearly enjoy their lessons and work well with partners or groups to generally achieve well. There is good take-up of computer clubs and lunchtime sessions where pupils elect to play games, use the Internet or continue with current projects.
71. The subject is effectively led and managed. Current initiatives, for example, to develop a whole-school assessment procedure are being worked on, but as yet, the existing assessment systems are not helping teachers to identify the next steps in learning or the pupils who require extra support. Monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject is not developed to ensure that best use is made of resources. The school has not developed a clear view of how the computer suite can best be used. The school currently has additional sensing equipment on order so pupils can have further experience in its use. There are appropriate screening procedures in place to ensure that pupils do not gain access to inappropriate websites.

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

72. During the inspection, there was no systematic use of ICT outside direct teaching sessions. Year 5 made particularly good use of the bank of machines in the entrance hall to link ICT with science and mathematics. The displays around the school indicate that word-processing is used regularly. There are some strong links with history, geography, science and mathematics. However, the application of data-handling is not consistently used to analyse tables of results through graphical analysis. Teachers often use interactive whiteboards effectively to introduce lessons in many subjects. Most planning is generated using computers and there is a good range of software to support all subjects.

## **HUMANITIES**

73. Only one lesson was seen in history and geography and so no secure judgements can be made on the quality of provision. Pupils' books were scrutinised and discussions held with pupils about work covered previously. It is clear that standards are above those expected of pupils in Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
74. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are very enthusiastic about both subjects and can talk at length about their experiences. This is because the school provides an interesting and practical curriculum. Geography fieldwork is a regular activity in all years. The pupils explained how they carried out work testing the rate of flow of water in a stream. When Year 3 pupils learned about India, the teacher used costumes and photographs effectively, so pupils were able to consider the evidence. This is a good feature of both subjects. Pupils learn about different types and sources of evidence and make use of them. Maps and aerial photographs are studied when looking at the possibility of developments to the local airfield, for example. Displays of artefacts relating to World War II enhance studies, as do special lessons as provided by a 'wartime eye-witness' and pupils' participation in music and dance of the period. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils sat in the 'hot seat' to talk about their experiences as 'settlers in the New World'. Teachers plan imaginative first-hand experiences which greatly enhance learning as pupils are interested.
75. Pupils' books show that topics are studied and recorded in depth. A variety of methods are used and pupils make good use of their writing skills in diaries, letters and eye-witness accounts. They research information from books and through the computer, also using their skills to word-process and to import pictures. Mathematics is used, for example, to compare the weather statistics of London and Calcutta. Work in both subjects is supported well by some most attractive displays.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good** and has improved since the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above those expected in Years 2 and 6.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- The subject supports literacy and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- Opportunities for reflection could be enhanced.

### **Commentary**

76. All areas of the locally agreed syllabus are covered thoroughly, in particular the parts relating to Christianity and other faiths such as Judaism and Hinduism, and pupils have good knowledge. Lessons are often taught through general discussions which provide good opportunities for pupils to use and further develop their literacy skills.

77. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Effective learning was noted in a Year 6 lesson that was well structured and suitably planned. The teacher made very good use of her own subject knowledge and good relationships to enhance pupils' learning about 'changes', a lesson on baptism. Very good references were made to everyday judgements and the importance of changed attitudes, which made the lesson come alive. Pupils behave well and respond to questions with confidence. Most pupils show a willingness to talk about and share personal experiences.
78. An inspiring lesson in Year 1 related the biblical story of blind Bartimaeus. The children were asked to consider the reality of going through life without sight. This resulted in pupils exploring their own emotions and participating actively in the discussions. There is, therefore, some understanding of the deeper meaning of the religious stories. By the time Year 6 pupils leave, they have good knowledge of festivals of three different religions, the key people or the holy books, and some understanding of the way people's beliefs influence their daily lives.
79. The subject co-ordinator has continued to build on and develop excellent practices and improve resources. There has been some monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject which found that the amount of work covered varied between classes. Action has been taken to remedy this. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and standards have risen as a consequence. The provision would be further improved with more opportunities for reflection in lessons.

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

80. Only one lesson was seen in design and technology and three each in art and design and physical education. It is not possible, therefore, to make secure judgements about overall provision. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors spoke to co-ordinators about their work, spoke to pupils about what they had learnt previously and looked through pupils' sketchbooks and design and technology books.
81. It is evident from teachers' planning, the work on display and discussions with pupils that work in art and design is very well planned, varied and interesting. This shows good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in Year 6 are now well above those expected of pupils of their age and achievement is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The consistent use of good quality sketchbooks throughout successfully encourages pupils to explore different skills, techniques and designs and to develop their creativity. Pupils' skills in designing are a particular strength, evident in their headwear designs in Year 6 based on a 'carnival' theme. Pupils explore basic shapes and structures using newspaper, before embarking on their designs, which show good attention to detail. Pupils' observational skills are very well developed and support their drawings and diagrams in other subjects such as science. Three-dimensional work is another strong feature, for example, containers made from slabs of clay were finished to a high standard when pupils used slip to join the pieces together. Some chose to make decorative lids, which fitted well, to complete their containers. The teaching is good, and sometimes very good when clear succinct introductions and feedback from the previous lesson inform pupils how to improve their work and enables them to get started quickly and work productively. Prompt-sheets challenge pupils in their work and help them to remain totally focused on their task. The pupils' work is most attractively displayed around the school and adds much to the learning environment.
82. In design and technology, pupils in Years 1 to 6 are developing much higher than expected skills through designing and making a variety of products. Year 2 pupils have carefully followed their detailed plan and side view designs to assemble moving vehicles that were finished to a very high standard. They carefully evaluated their finished products by using scientific principles of 'fair testing'. By rolling each vehicle down a slope of the same gradient to travel over the same texture of floor surface, they identified vehicles that travelled the furthest, together with those that swerve or skidded because one wheel was not turning or the axles

were not parallel. Year 6 pupils completed detailed and labelled designs of slippers that included measurements and lists of the materials required. The slippers were completed to a very high standard, which entailed accurate cutting, sewing and gluing. They were evaluated against criteria of 'being comfortable and hard-wearing'. A full list of criteria had been drawn up in respect of 'what makes a good slipper?'. The subject is expertly led and managed and the programmes of work are carefully designed to promote increased levels of attainment year on year.

83. In the aspects of physical education seen, standards exceed those expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. Records show standards in swimming also exceed those expected as all pupils are able to swim 25 metres unaided by Year 6 and many can swim further. The pupils experience a very wide range of activities, especially in games and extra-curricular activities and achieve well, including those with special educational needs. The teaching seen was good overall. Good subject knowledge and detailed planning combine to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding well. Activities are well supervised and teachers pay attention to safety issues. All lessons begin with well-structured warm-up sessions. One lesson in Year 2 was quite inspirational in the way it moved pupils to a state of high physical activity ready for the next aspect of the lesson, circuit training. Discussions with Year 6 pupils reveal that they enjoy the subject. Pupils have a very secure understanding of important aspects, such as health, safety and the significance of warm-up and cool-down activities within lessons. Pupils are aware of the equal part boys and girls can play in a range of physical activities, such as cricket or football, and they work well in pairs and in small teams. There are good explicit links with other subjects such as science. In a Year 5 lesson, the pupils received clear instructions and knew the lesson objectives and thus they made good use of the time available to them. Allowing more time for reflection would enhance the pupils' understanding of the importance of sport in later life. Teachers demonstrate activities well or use examples of good practice by pupils. This enhances the standards attained, motivating and involving pupils. Occasionally, some pupils are too enthusiastic and do not listen well to instructions, not making best use of the teacher's instructional points. The subject co-ordinator is very knowledgeable about strengths and weaknesses within the subject and draws on the expertise of the staff.

## Music

Provision in music is **very good**. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and pupils' achievement is high.
- Extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- There is a good range of resources which are used effectively to support learning.

## Commentary

84. The school has several subject specialists who between them teach all classes. The very good teaching enthuses pupils, who want to participate and many develop the confidence to perform solos from a relatively early stage. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Consequently, standards are above those expected of pupils in Year 2 and are now well above expectations in Year 6, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Approximately half the pupils play a musical instrument, some playing more than one. The lessons are well planned to cater for the talented musicians as well as for all other pupils and include a good balance of listening, singing and performing.

## Example of outstanding practice

**In an excellent lesson in Year 5, the planning catered very well for pupils with special educational needs, particularly behavioural difficulties, as well as for the talented musicians and ensured all pupils were fully included in the music-making.** A clear explanation and demonstration of drones and an ostinato together with skilful questioning, enabled pupils to understand the difference between the two. The talented musicians were given a more challenging task and the opportunity to practise in an adjoining room. The teacher used assessment information to ensure all pupils used instruments that provided sufficient challenge and allowed them to explore appropriate drones or an ostinato to accompany the Tudor music. Good pace kept the lesson moving forward as the class performance was gradually built up, accompanied by the teacher on the piano. The pupils evaluated their own performance, decided on the improvements, such as how and when to stop playing the drone and ostinato, and so rose to the teacher's high expectations of their performance. The pupils were engrossed throughout and proud of their very good achievement.

85. There are many extra-curricular activities, such as the choir, orchestra, recorder groups and guitar club. There is a mix of boys and girls in all groups and pupils attend regularly. Other pupils receive instrumental tuition in school, for example in flute, violin and the cello. Music, therefore, has a high profile in the school and contributes significantly to pupils' personal, social and cultural development. Two pupils have successfully reached the final round of a 'Young Musician of the Year' competition, such is their enthusiasm and talent. Parents and pupils appreciate the time given by staff to running these activities as well as writing music or lyrics for school productions.
86. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a good overview of standards and constantly reviews the curricular provision to ensure lessons are interesting and lead to a high level of participation for all pupils. Assessment procedures have been implemented since the previous inspection and show the development of key skills for each pupil. Effective links with other subjects have been built into the planning; for example, Year 6 pupils were involved in a World War II extravaganza where they learned wartime songs and the importance of the lyrics as well as exploring artefacts and talking to a visitor about life at the time. This was a very good learning experience for all the pupils.
87. The instruments are easily accessible in lessons, as they are stored well with glockenspiels and xylophones given a number so they are returned to the correct place each time. The instruments are of good quality and treated with respect by the pupils and so remain in good condition. This has led to good quantities being available so all pupils can have the opportunity to play instruments in lessons and be fully involved.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Regular opportunities for pupils to discuss social and moral issues.
- Effective support and guidance for vulnerable pupils.

### **Commentary**

88. The school's high commitment to developing pupils' personal and social skills is very evident. There is a strong sense of doing one's best and this is evident in lessons and discussions and is developed through high expectations that teachers have of the pupils. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to work together and to discuss moral and social issues, which they do sensibly and collaboratively. Pupils receive appropriate teaching in respect of sex education and the safe use of drugs through science lessons. In whole-class discussions (circle time), there is always a clear focus for discussion and pupils learn to express their views and feelings confidently. Through the school council, pupils learn about the democratic process in making decisions. A particular strength is the way in which pupils who have difficulties in mixing with others on the playground without causing conflict are supported and guided in how

to modify their behaviour. They receive valuable support and the opportunity to work on a project indoors for a period of time, before being reintegrated with other pupils on the playground. The pupils appreciate the support and guidance they receive. Effective links with the local community raise pupils' awareness of becoming good citizens.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### **Grade**

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
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	4
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	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).*