

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WAKEFIELD THE MOUNT JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL**

Wakefield, West Yorkshire

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 108215

Headteacher: Ms S Talbot

Lead inspector: Ian Nelson

Dates of inspection: 17 – 19 May 2004

Inspection number: 265742

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	210
School address:	Thornes Road Thornes Wakefield West Yorkshire
Postcode:	WF2 8QW
Telephone number:	01924 303750
Fax number:	01924 303751
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Green
Date of previous inspection:	2 February 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Number on roll	210 (average size)
Pupils entitled to free school meals	8.1% (below average)
Pupils whose mother tongue is not English	0.0%
Pupils on the register of special educational needs	10.5% (well below average)

This is an average-sized primary school serving an area of mainly private housing with very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and none whose home language does not include English. The pupils with special educational needs have mainly moderate learning difficulties or physical disabilities. None of the pupils have statements of special educational need. Very few pupils enter or leave the school other than at the start of a year. The headteacher has been in post for around a year. In the last two years, two teachers have left the school and two have joined. The staff includes long-serving, experienced and newly qualified teachers. One class is being taken by a temporary teacher covering a long-term absence. Attainment on entry is above average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2220	Ian Nelson	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Science Music Physical education
9092	Ron Elam	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
14842	Stephanie Cook	<i>Team inspector</i>	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
19765	Pauleen Shannon	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics Geography History Religious education The Foundation Stage Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory.** The headteacher provides very good leadership with the support of a good governing body. Management is satisfactory as many of the new systems and procedures have not been in place long enough to be thoroughly embedded yet. Teaching and learning are broadly satisfactory, leading to above average standards and satisfactory achievement for most pupils. Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The headteacher has a very clear sense of direction for the school.
- Standards in English and mathematics are well above average by Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning and behave very well in lessons and around the school; provision for their social and moral development is very good.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is good and ensures that they achieve well.
- Children in the Foundation Stage (Reception class) achieve well because of the good provision they get.
- Teaching, while satisfactory overall, is inconsistent and therefore does not always enable all pupils to achieve as much as they could.
- Senior staff are not fully effective in their management and leadership roles.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school has tackled the key issues, although little appears to have been done about them until the current headteacher arrived. A lot of new systems have been introduced. These have not yet had long enough to impact fully on standards and achievement. Since the last inspection there has been some underachievement of the junior-aged pupils. This has been identified by the current headteacher who has taken steps to address the issue. Support for pupils with special educational needs has improved recently so that they make good progress and are fully included in the life of the school.

### 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	B	B	D
mathematics	A	B	D	E
science	C	B	E	E*

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E\* - very low.*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Overall achievement is satisfactory.** This table shows that the results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2003 were significantly worse than the previous year in mathematics and science when compared with all schools. Standards in English remained above the national average. When compared to the results of similar schools, standards in English were below average, those in mathematics were well below average and in science the results were very poor, indicating that pupils' achievement and progress were not good enough. Although standards over recent years have exceeded the national average, pupils have not always achieved as much as they could have done by Year 6. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2003, standards were well above average in mathematics compared with all schools and with similar schools. Standards were above average in reading, and average in writing compared with all schools and with similar schools.

The school has begun to address the underachievement of pupils by Year 6 and standards seen in pupils' work during the inspection indicate mainly satisfactory achievement at Year 2 and Year 6, with standards in English and mathematics well above the national average and those in science above average. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, although evidence shows that they did not do as well as they could have done in the national tests at Year 6 in 2003. Although the most able pupils achieve satisfactorily, they could be challenged to achieve more. Standards in religious education (RE) are beyond the expectations of the agreed syllabus and in information and communication technology (ICT) they are broadly average by Year 6. Children achieve well in the Reception class in all areas of learning, and very well in their personal, social and emotional development and in English and mathematics, so that by the time they enter Year 1 standards are well above average for many of them.

**Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good.** Pupils have very good attitudes towards their learning, and their behaviour in classes and around the school is very good. The school supports their moral and social development very well so that relationships in school are very good. It makes satisfactory provision for their spiritual and cultural development. Attendance is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The overall quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory,** but inconsistent so that pupils have not always made enough progress and achieved as much as they could have done. The school is now improving systems for checking how well pupils are doing and is beginning to use that information to set work that is appropriately challenging. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum and RE. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has very good links with the parents.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good overall.** The work of the governing body is good. Governors have taken steps to ensure that all statutory requirements are met. The headteacher provides very good leadership with a clear vision of how to improve the school. Staff, governors and parents appreciate her strong leadership. Management is satisfactory. Many of the systems and procedures introduced over the last year have not had time to become fully embedded yet and the staff have not yet received training to equip them for their new roles and responsibilities.

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

Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. They appreciate the improvements being made by the headteacher since she took over. One or two parents expressed concerns over the support given to pupils with special educational needs, but the inspectors found this to be good so that their achievement is better than in the past.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- To ensure that the new systems for checking how well the school is doing and for improving the management of the school are thoroughly embedded.
- To make more effective use of those systems to improve further the quality of teaching and learning so that it consistently matches the best in the school.

- To improve the management skills of senior staff so that they can become more effective in their leadership and management roles.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall achievement is **satisfactory**. Standards in English and mathematics are well above average by Year 6 and standards in science are above average. Although standards are good, some pupils do not always achieve as much as they could. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The quality of pupils' singing and instrumental work in music is well above average.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain well above average standards in English and mathematics by Year 2 and Year 6.
- Standards in science are above average at Year 2 and Year 6.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs has improved and they now achieve well.
- Standards in music performance are well above average.
- Some pupils do not achieve as much as they could.
- Achievement of children in Reception is good and many attain well above average standards.

#### Commentary

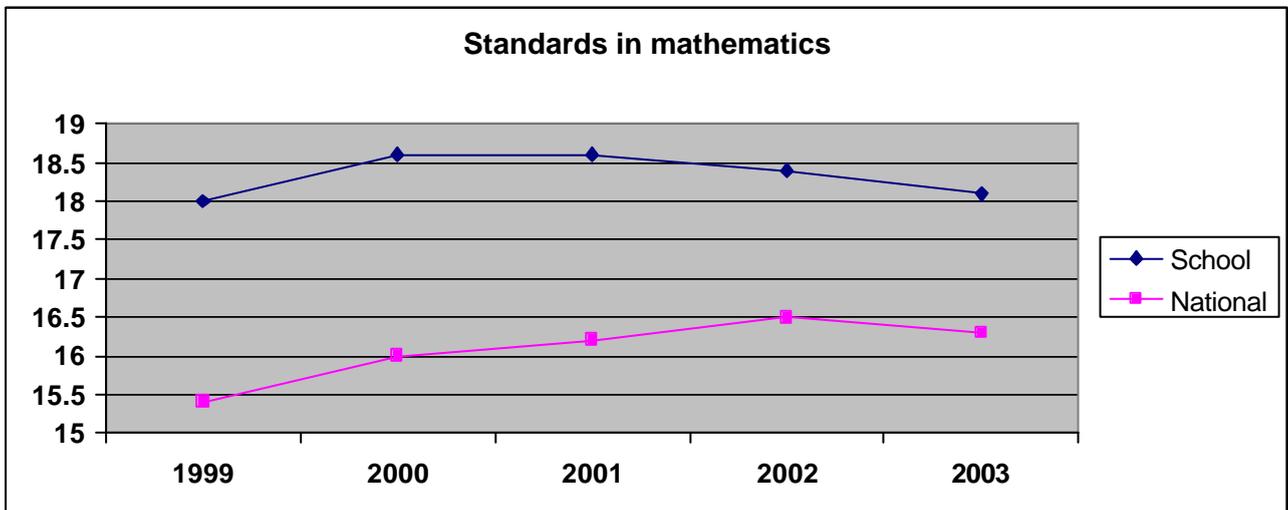
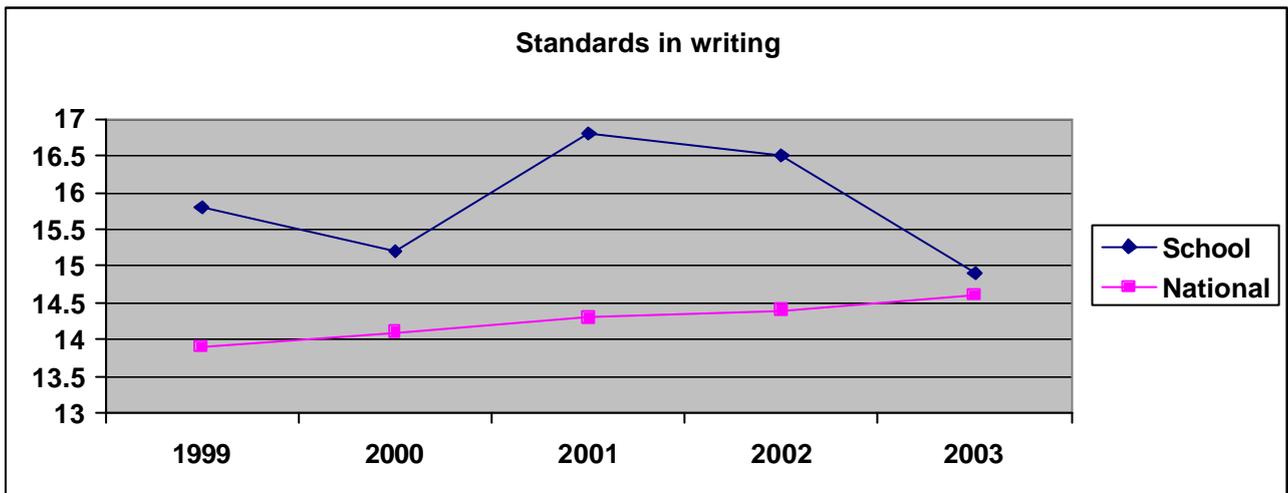
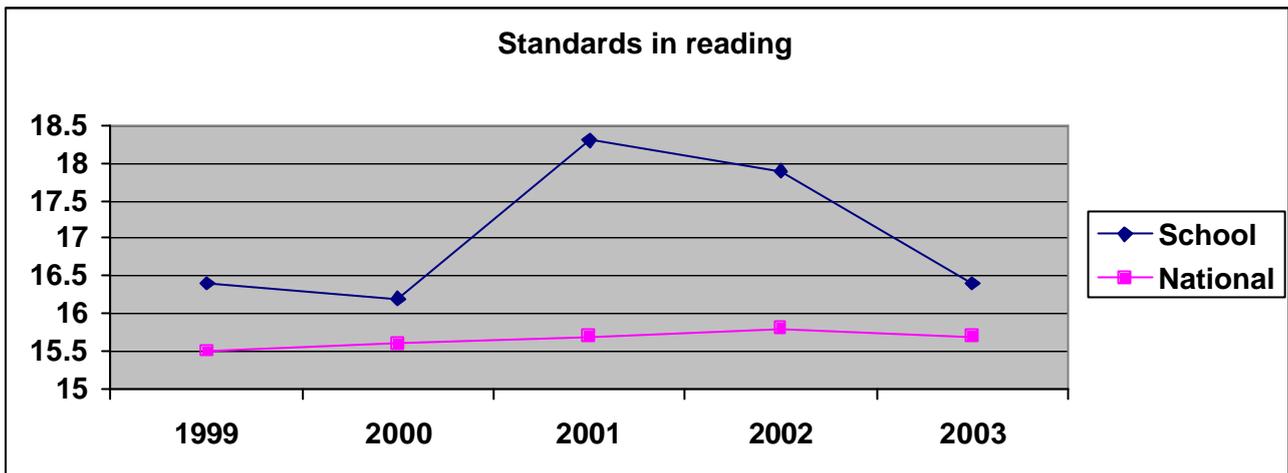
1. Children enter the Reception class with above average attainment for their age. They make good progress so that many enter Year 1 with well above average attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy and in personal, social and emotional development. In the Reception class, children show good levels of independence and personal responsibility. They work well together in pairs or small groups, take turns when sharing equipment or talking about issues, and show good levels of self-reliance when choosing activities, materials or equipment and when tidying away at the end of an activity. They have positive attitudes towards reading, writing and number work and progress well in these areas because of the practical nature of the activities they are given.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.4(17.9)	15.7(15.8)
writing	14.9 (16.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.1(18.4)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2003, standards were above average in reading, average in writing and well above average in mathematics compared with all schools and with similar schools. Given that children enter the Reception class with above average standards and make good progress to be well above average by the time they enter Year 1, these results indicate satisfactory achievement in mathematics, but unsatisfactory achievement in reading and writing. Although standards have been above or well above the national average over the years, they have in fact declined over the last two years in all three subjects from their peak in 2001. Consequently, standards in reading and mathematics in 2003 were about the same as in 1999 while standards in writing were lower than four years ago. This is shown in the graphs below.



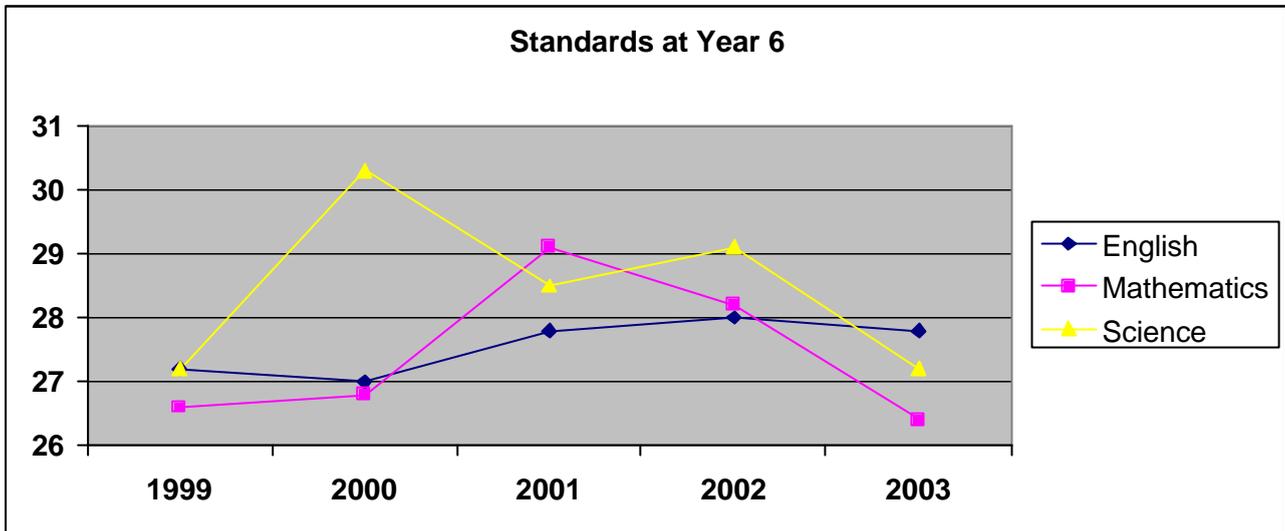
**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8 (28)	26.8 (27)
mathematics	26.4 (28.2)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.2 (29.1)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2003, standards were above average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science compared with all schools. Compared with similar schools, standards were below average in English, well below average in mathematics and very poor in science. This indicates significant underachievement by these pupils

in all three subjects. In three of the last four years standards in English have been well below average compared with similar schools. Mathematics has been well below average in two of the last four years compared with similar schools and standards in science have dropped from being well above those of similar schools in 1999 to well below in 2003. This indicates a pattern of underachievement over recent years, although in 2002 standards in all three subjects were above those of similar schools. Standards in English in 2003 were slightly better than in 1999. In science they were at the same level in 2003 as in 1999 and in mathematics they were below the 1999 level. This is shown in the graph below.



4. Part of the reason for the underachievement is that the school has not had effective enough systems for analysing and interpreting test results or for tracking the progress of pupils through the school. Consequently, staff have not been as aware as they should have been of the levels of achievement of pupils. Another reason for the underachievement, particularly at Year 6, is that above average numbers of pupils did not attain the levels expected for their age. This suggests that support for lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs was not as good as it should have been.

5. The underachievement has been identified since the current headteacher arrived and took steps to rectify it. Consequently, standards in English and mathematics seen during the inspection were well above average at Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in science were above average. Although standards are now at these levels, there are still indications that some pupils could achieve more. Too often in lessons, work is not pitched at different levels to accommodate the different abilities in a class and challenge the most able. This is particularly the case in science where lessons are too often too tightly controlled by the teacher and do not allow the most able to apply their scientific knowledge through devising and conducting their own investigations. In English, the lessons focus too much on exercises to teach pupils the mechanics of language, even though many are very proficient writers. In mathematics, pupils are very good at mental calculations and know their number facts well, but do not get enough chances to use them to solve problems.

6. Support for pupils with special educational needs has improved and they now achieve well. Well-briefed support staff help these pupils in normal lessons, rather than taking them out for extra help, so that they are fully included in class work. The school's predictions for the results of the 2004 tests indicate that most of these pupils should attain the expected levels for their age. The very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds make good progress in their learning.

7. Analysis of the school's information on pupils' achievement shows that achievement overall is satisfactory currently. Most of the current Year 6 pupils are on track to have gained two National Curriculum levels from Years 3 to 6. The challenge for the school now is to raise achievement beyond its current satisfactory level.

8. Standards in ICT are average at Year 2 and Year 6 and standards in RE are above the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus at Year 6. Music was sampled and, on the evidence of the work seen, standards in singing and playing are well above average. This is partly because of the skills and confidence of the teaching staff at the school and the support of peripatetic music teachers.

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

Overall, pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour and their attendance are **very good**. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is **good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils behave very well, have very positive attitudes to work and enjoy being at school. This shows an improvement since the last inspection.
- The level of attendance is very high compared with that of similar schools around the country.
- The school's provision for social and moral development leads to very good relationships around the school.

### **Commentary**

9. Pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils behave very well in the classroom, at play and lunchtimes. They are aware of how their behaviour affects others and many are developing self-discipline. They are open, well mannered and welcoming to visitors. Even the youngest wait patiently for other classes to come in to assemblies. The school uses a variety of positive strategies to encourage good behaviour and all the staff use them consistently. Pupils confirm that any aggressive behaviour is very rare, but dealt with quickly and effectively if it does occur. No pupils were excluded last year.

10. Pupils are interested in what happens in school and they enjoy their work. They listen attentively and follow instructions well. They are eager to answer questions and are prepared to contribute their ideas. They settle quickly to group work in lessons and maintain their interest even when not being directly supported by adults in the classroom. These very positive attitudes reflect the quality of teaching and the variety of interesting activities built into the lessons. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy coming to school and settle quickly into school routines. They show good levels of independence and self-reliance. Pupils who have special educational needs have very positive attitudes to their learning. They respond particularly well to the learning support assistants during their targeted group time within lessons. Pupils with either medical or emotional needs mix well with others. They work hard and respond very well to their teachers.

11. The table below shows the attendance figures for the school. The level of attendance has improved since the last inspection. Absences are mainly due to medical reasons, but a number of families insist on taking holidays during term-time. Punctuality is generally satisfactory. A few pupils are late in the mornings, but usually by only a few minutes. Good attendance is rewarded with certificates and book tokens. Any unexplained absence results in a telephone call home on the same day. Nevertheless, the school does not calculate the attendance level during the year for each class to have early warning of any problems that may be developing.

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2002/03

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	2.7	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.*

12. Pupils' social development is very good. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to interact with classmates in group work, paired discussions and responsibilities within each class. The pupils in Year 6 show maturity when carrying out a range of responsibilities around the school. The school council enables pupils of different ages to work together. Their awareness of the wider world is enhanced by singing carols in the town centre, taking Harvest gifts to older people, and talks by representatives of charities. Pupils' relationships with their peers and with adults contribute very well to the quality of work in lessons and to the progress they make, especially by giving them the confidence to ask and to answer questions. Pupils willingly demonstrate they can act responsibly, taking care when moving round the school and when carrying out tasks in the classroom.

13. The opportunities for pupils to gain insight into values and beliefs in order to develop their spiritual awareness are satisfactory. As well as providing time for reflection, school assemblies help pupils to develop a sense of belonging to a whole-school community. Classroom discussions enable pupils to start to appreciate their own worth and to raise their self-esteem. They accept that others may have a different view or belief from their own.

14. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall. Lessons help pupils to appreciate different western artists. Western cultural background is extended with work on, for example, the Greeks and Tudors in history. Geography lessons help the pupils to learn about the lives of people around the world. Overall, pupils have little experience of non-western culture and too few opportunities to gain an understanding of life in multi-cultural Britain.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but inconsistent so that pupils have not always made enough progress and achieved as much as they could have done. The school is now improving systems for checking how well pupils are doing and beginning to use that information to set work that is appropriately challenging. The curriculum is satisfactory overall and covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum and RE. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has very good links with the parents.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. Teaching is inconsistent and ranges from unsatisfactory to very good. Assessment arrangements are **satisfactory**. There are thorough assessments of English and mathematics. Not enough use is made of day-to-day assessments to plan for the most able pupils, who could achieve more.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reception children are taught well and consequently achieve well.
- Pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils are taught well and so achieve well.
- While the teaching of skills is thorough, pupils do not have enough opportunity to learn independently or to acquire information for themselves.
- The support assistants give very good support.
- There is not enough challenge for some very able pupils who could achieve more.

- There are some inconsistencies in the quality of marking.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	2	10	14	2	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

15. Teaching is good for Reception children, most of whom achieve well. It is imaginative, fun and practical. Learning is good. Children make good gains in the early skills of reading, writing and number. A few exceptionally able children could be challenged more. They enjoy learning and have very positive attitudes. A particular strength is the development of children's independence. As a result they show very good levels of self-reliance when making choices and work well both in groups and on their own.

16. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall. While it is usually thorough and competent, it often lacks excitement. When lessons are more innovative, pupils respond well and are very motivated. Too often the pace of lessons is steady rather than brisk and they lack real challenge for the highest-attainers. The school does not have a register of gifted and talented pupils and planning does not sufficiently take into account the very able pupils who could do more. Consequently, although pupils' application and productivity are good, most make satisfactory rather than good gains in their learning. The most able pupils, particularly, could achieve more if the pace of teaching were faster and if more were consistently expected of them. There is a satisfactory range of homework to consolidate learning and occasional opportunities for research

17. This development of independent learning, which is so well promoted in the Reception class, is not built on sufficiently throughout the school, with the exception of Year 5. The emphasis is mainly on the acquisition of knowledge. As a result, while pupils make good gains in their factual knowledge in all subjects, they do not have enough opportunities to research information for themselves. In contrast, pupils have these opportunities consistently in Year 5. For example, in a very well taught lesson, pupils searched the Internet for information about different religions and shared their findings with the class.

18. There are elements of good teaching in most year groups. These include good behaviour management in most classes, which results in little time-wasting because children work hard. The very capable teaching assistants are used very well to support children with special educational needs and other pupils who are targeted for extra help. These pupils achieve well and make good gains in their learning. This is because the support staff explain ideas which pupils find difficult and ensure they understand before moving on. Pupils with medical or emotional needs are well catered for. Teachers take into account the guidance and recommendations of specialist outside agencies when planning their work. Teaching is at its best and is consistently good in Year 5. Here there are consistently high expectations of pupils and the pace is good so that learning is rapid.

19. Two lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. In one RE lesson, behaviour management was weak and the teacher had insufficient knowledge of the curriculum related to Islam. As a result limited learning took place. In a science lesson the teaching was over-prescribed. The pace was lacking and pupils had no opportunities for independent learning.

20. Assessment systems are good in the Reception class. Regular assessments are used well to plan the next steps of children's learning. The school has a good range of assessments to check how well pupils are learning in English and mathematics. Good use is made of this information and of the new tracking system to identify and target different groups of pupils, who consequently achieve well with their learning. More use could be made of day-to-day assessments to plan work for the most able. Currently they often have extension activities when they complete their work rather than more challenging work from the start of the lesson. This is not the best use of their time. While

there are examples of detailed marking, with useful points to help pupils improve, the marking policy is not consistently applied in all classes.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum, accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall. Enrichment activities are **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The indoor curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is rich and exciting.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- The curriculum for ICT has improved since the last inspection, although the use of sensors in control technology is not as good as it should be.
- After-school activities enhance pupils' learning.
- Resources and accommodation are good in the Reception class, but there are still shortcomings in the resources for ICT.

### **Commentary**

21. The school makes good provision for the Foundation Stage. Children in the Reception class enjoy a good balance between teacher-directed and self-chosen activities. This helps the children to become independent and self-reliant. The learning activities include a strong focus on developing children's personal, social and emotional growth so that they settle quickly into school routines. There is also a good emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills through interesting practical activities. As a consequence, children build upon their learning effectively throughout the Foundation Stage. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is good. Children benefit from a very spacious, well-equipped classroom. The outside area is small, but securely separated from the main playground and there is a good range of wheeled vehicles to encourage physical development and co-operative play.

22. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall. It includes an appropriate balance between the subjects and meets statutory requirements. Planning generally ensures that pupils build satisfactorily on earlier learning. The school has recently improved the way it targets groups of pupils for extra support to ensure they achieve well. However, work is not always planned to challenge all the ability levels within a lesson so that some pupils are not given hard enough work at times. The school is currently addressing this weakness and is fully committed to providing equality of opportunity for all pupils. The revised systems for supporting pupils with special educational needs ensure that all pupils are fully included in the whole life of the school.

23. The school provides intervention programmes in literacy and additional support for numeracy skills. Most of the provision is now within classes. Pupils are making better progress and achieve well because they do not miss out on any aspects of the curriculum. As a result their standards have improved and more of them attain the national average. Resources are satisfactory. However, not enough use is made of computers to support pupils' learning.

24. The planning and teaching of all the requirements of the ICT curriculum was a key issue in the last report. The school has improved the planning for the subject and now provides a suitable curriculum covering all the required strands. Pupils now have regular opportunities to learn new skills, although the aspect of data logging is still a relative weakness as there are insufficient resources for the teaching of this aspect, and staff are not as confident in this area.

25. Pupils benefit greatly from a range of activities which support and enrich their learning. The school offers good artistic and sporting opportunities to pupils, including inter-school football, netball and cricket, a swimming gala, and after-school clubs for gymnastics. Additionally, art and drama clubs, visits to the local sculpture park, participation in a music festival and visits by specialist speakers are provided. Several visits are made to nearby museums and a Tudor house where

pupils role-play the Tudor life-style, and older pupils attend residential trips. These visits and activities make a valuable contribution to the development of pupils' confidence and self-esteem.

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

The arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **satisfactory** overall and support pupils' learning appropriately. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is **satisfactory**. The involvement of pupils in the school's work through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils trust the teachers and other staff and know there is always someone to whom they can turn.
- The school effectively enables pupils to express opinions about life in the school.
- The school has good arrangements to enable new pupils to settle in.

### **Commentary**

26. The governors are actively involved in ensuring a safe school, touring the school each year to identify any potential hazards. A safety officer from the local authority has visited the school to provide advice on the school's overall procedures and risk assessments. Teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons, such as science, and design and technology. The school follows the local procedures for child protection and a member of staff has the role of the designated person. The arrangements for first aid are good with all staff having either full or emergency training and records kept of treatment.

27. As at the time of the previous inspection, staff show good concern for the needs of the pupils and provide good role models to encourage development. Parents are pleased with the level of support in the school, seeing it as a caring community where staff are approachable if there are any problems. In particular, parents agreed that their children were well supported when they first come into the school either into Reception or if they arrive in other years. This is because of the visits made by the Reception staff to see pupils, the meetings with new parents before they arrive and the provision of 'buddies' to help new arrivals in other years. Pupils consider that they are supported very well by the staff and know who they would go to if they needed help. They also consider that the teachers listen to their ideas, particularly in the school council which builds upon contributions from all pupils in suggestion boxes.

28. The school has increasingly effective and consistent systems for assessing pupils' academic progress. These enable the staff to target support to particular pupils, enabling them to group pupils and set appropriate targets for each group. Nevertheless, the work set is not always sufficiently different for each group, although the amount of support is appropriate and additional work is provided for the more able pupils. The recording of pupils' personal development is informal, relying on the teachers' own knowledge of the pupils. Nevertheless, the staff use a variety of strategies to raise pupils' self-esteem, such as praise and charts for smiley faces or star awards. There are good systems for identifying pupils with special educational needs. The targets in their individual plans are precise and helpful, and reviewed regularly. These are used to plan their work within lessons. There are good arrangements in place when these pupils enter or leave the school. The co-ordinator for special educational needs meets with external agencies as necessary.

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

Links with parents are **very good** overall. Links with the local community and other schools are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents hold the school in high regard.
- The involvement of parents and their support at home and in school make a very good contribution to pupils' achievement.
- The school provides a good range of information about what happens in school.

### **Commentary**

29. In the good response to the Ofsted questionnaire and at the meeting with the inspectors, parents indicated they are pleased with what the school provides. Their children like school and the staff expect their children to work hard. They consider that the staff are approachable and they feel well informed about their children's progress. The school sends home monthly news and other letters about general matters and what the pupils are doing. The termly learning bulletins provide an excellent summary of what the children will be learning with extremely helpful guidance on what parents can do to help their child's learning. The quality of the annual reports on pupils' progress in the summer term varies from class to class. Most of them provide a good summary of what pupils know and can do, but there is little indication of how the child's progress compares with national expectations, and targets for improvement are often missing or not explicit. At the end of the school day, teachers usually come to the classroom door and, from the informal conversations seen to take place at that time, parents feel comfortable speaking to the teachers.

30. The school works well in partnership with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. Information is shared at regular review meetings. The general information sent home to all parents has recently improved so that parents are now clear about the way special educational needs is organised and delivered. There are also informal meetings as necessary to discuss individual pupils' needs.

31. A good number of parents help regularly in school and more help on school trips. Others come to talk to pupils about, for example, their own childhood toys. Pupils confirm that their parents ensure that they do their homework. The school association successfully organises both fund-raising and social events. Parents have extensive opportunities to influence what happens in the school. An inclusion working party led to governors seeking the views of parents in the playground, together with a questionnaire and the establishment of a parents' forum.

32. The school's satisfactory links with other schools and the community at large help to broaden the experiences for pupils' personal, social and academic development. The pupils have good opportunities to meet others in the various inter-school sports matches and competitions. Staff and students from local high schools and colleges provide support in the classroom. Links do not yet provide opportunities for curriculum co-ordinators to meet to share good practice with those in other schools. Pupils' understanding of society is enhanced by the contact with visitors connected with charitable organisations and staff from public bodies, such as the police and fire brigade. The mainstream curriculum is enhanced by the trips out to places in the local area and further afield. The good links with local pre-school providers smooth children's arrival into the Reception class. Contacts at the secondary level also help the transfer of pupils at the end of Year 6.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership and a clear sense of direction for the school. Governance is good. Management is satisfactory and improving with many new systems and procedures being introduced to increase the school's efficiency and effectiveness.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher and governors have a very clear understanding of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve.
- The headteacher has effectively shared her vision for school improvement with staff, governors and parents.

- Staff are keen to accept leadership responsibility, but do not all have the management skills to be fully effective yet.

## Commentary

33. The work of the governing body is good. The last inspection criticised the governors for their lack of involvement in evaluating the school's performance and setting the agenda for improvement. The current governing body has addressed that criticism and made great improvements in its effectiveness. Governors are well informed and now have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing. They have identified and rectified some breaches in statutory requirements. They understand the information they receive about the school's performance in the national tests and that, although standards have been above average, too many pupils have not done as well as they might have done in recent years. They have appointed a headteacher with whom they can work effectively to rectify the underachievement through improving the overall leadership and management of the school. They are fully committed to giving all pupils equal access to good quality teaching and learning by including all pupils in the whole life of the school. They have a committee system to ensure that they use their time efficiently and effectively. Governors are fully involved in school improvement planning. They work closely with the headteacher to identify the most important priorities for improvement and set a budget to meet them. They have a very clear understanding of the need to get the best value out of their budget, rather than simply going for the cheapest option each time. They understand that good value for money can be judged by the impact of spending decisions on the standards pupils achieve. The governors keep a close eye on the budget and do not shirk from making hard decisions to ensure that it balances. They try to carry forward an appropriate amount, although this sometimes proves difficult given the below average funding the school receives. Given the level of funding the school receives and the satisfactory quality of education it provides, it gives satisfactory value for money.

34. The headteacher's very good leadership is recognised by staff, governors and parents. Since taking up her post around a year ago, she has identified the school's strengths and weaknesses and taken vigorous action to address the underachievement of recent years. She has a very clear picture of what the school needs to do to improve and has worked closely with governors to bring that improvement about. The school improvement plan shows that the headteacher has a clear focus on what needs to be addressed, and how to tackle it, in order to make the school more effective. The last report was very critical of the then headteacher's leadership and it is much improved since then. Leadership by other key staff has not been effective enough to identify and address the main priorities for school improvement. The headteacher has reviewed and revised leadership roles and responsibilities, and staff are growing into them. Although staff are increasingly committed to their new roles, they do not all have the leadership and management skills yet to be fully effective in them. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is good.

35. The headteacher has introduced a wide range of new systems and procedures for improving management, but some are too new to have shown their full impact yet. The school now has rigorous systems for checking how well pupils do in the national tests at seven and eleven. It has very clear systems for tracking the performance of pupils in English and mathematics so that individuals and groups can be targeted for extra help if it is needed. This has resulted in an accurate evaluation of how well the school is doing. The changes to the way pupils with special educational needs are supported have improved their achievement and ensured they are fully included in the whole life of the school. The management of special educational needs provision is now good. The headteacher has effectively challenged the ways in which the school has been managed over recent years and encouraged staff to reflect on how things might be improved. She has managed this in such a way that staff have not felt overly threatened by the prospect of the inevitable changes. She has made good appointments and inducted new staff well so that they have made an effective contribution to the development of the school. Day-to-day management is good with the office staff, lunchtime supervisors and premises staff making a significant contribution to the calm and orderly atmosphere that prevails.

## Financial information

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

<b>Income and expenditure (£)</b>	
Total income	474,020
Total expenditure	493,805
Expenditure per pupil	2,286

<b>Balances (£)</b>	
Balance from previous year	29,223
Balance carried forward to the next	9,438

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

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

36. Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**. Children are taught well and, as a result, achieve well with their learning. Admission arrangements are effective and ensure the children settle easily. The staff liaise with the wide range of pre-school placements. Children make visits before they start and parents complete a home booklet. This helps staff know pupils' needs before they start. There is a very good relationship between parents and staff. Parents make a very good contribution to children's learning by hearing them read and helping them learn new words or sounds.

37. Teaching is good overall. The teaching of pupils' social skills and physical development is very good. Both the teacher and nursery nurse have high expectations of the children. They use attractive resources to stimulate children's learning through a range of practical experiences. Teaching is often interesting and fun. The teamwork between the teacher and nursery nurse is very good. The planned activities cater well for the needs of the children. Staff make thorough ongoing assessments of children's learning and share the results with parents. Records show that most children make good progress and achieve well. A few exceptionally able pupils could be challenged more.

38. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The two staff work effectively together. The inside accommodation is good, with a good range of resources to cover all aspects of the curriculum. There is a good balance between adult-directed activities and times when children choose what they want to do. The staff provide an interesting range of activities indoors. The school has recently acquired a grant to further develop the outside area. Good use is made of equipment. Provision for the Foundation Stage has improved well since the last inspection.

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

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

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

- Achievement is good because teaching is focused on promoting children's confidence and independence.

#### **Commentary**

39. Children enter Reception with a range of ability and experience. Most are above average. By the time they leave Reception their skills are well above average. Organised visits for children with their parents are effective in helping new children feel safe and confident. Staff establish secure routines and encourage children to be independent. Pupils are expected to take responsibility for any equipment they use. For example, after choosing to paint a picture, children put their paintings on a drying rack and wash their brushes ready for the next children to use. Both staff are very caring and use every opportunity to praise children's independence. As a result, children work successfully both alone and in small groups. Staff have very high expectations of children's behaviour. Children understand the reward system. When children do not do as expected, they are dealt with firmly and fairly. Most children respond very well to this and their behaviour and attitudes to school are very good. They share equipment and play and work very well together. Reception children enjoy school. They mix very well with older pupils in break times. They are eager to start the day and learn.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's reading and writing skills through interesting activities.
- The reading area does not have attractive seating to encourage children to read books.
- A few exceptionally able children could write more if they had further challenging activities.

### **Commentary**

40. Teaching is good and, as a result, most children make good progress and achieve well. There is a sustained focus on developing children's language skills. This has a positive effect on their ability to express their ideas in other areas of learning. Children enter Reception with a range of ability in communication skills. Most are above average. By the time they leave Reception their skills are well above average.

41. A few children have immature speech, but many are confident and eager to share their ideas. Both staff encourage children to listen and provide many informal opportunities to talk about what they are learning. The imaginative play areas are used well to encourage talk that is meaningful and relevant. For example, children spent a great deal of time chatting and exchanging ideas in the *Mount Campsite*. All staff encourage less confident children to talk in sentences and more fluent communicators to extend their vocabulary. Children know that the adults are genuinely interested in what they say.

42. Teachers consistently establish good reading habits. As a result the children know how to handle books. They recognise many simple words and the letters of the alphabet. Most use this knowledge successfully to help them with their reading. Very able pupils are well catered for. Imaginative teaching, such as the use of the *Word Wizard* puppet, captures children's attention and makes learning interesting. Staff encourage an enjoyment of books through regularly using good quality story and information books. Stories are told in an interesting and appealing way. While children are enthusiastic during story times, few children actively choose to read or browse when they have a choice. The reading area, while spacious, does not have attractive seating to encourage children to just sit and look through books.

43. Daily opportunities are provided for children to write for a range of purposes. Children are encouraged to record ideas. While most Reception children form their letters correctly and fluently, a few have less fluid letter formation. A few exceptionally able children could have even more opportunities to write for more extended periods in preparation for Year 1.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's mathematical skills through practical activities.
- There is a good balance between structured activities and learning through play and informal experiences.

## Commentary

44. Teaching is good and, as a result, most children make good progress and achieve well. There is a sustained focus on developing children's mathematical skills. Children enter Reception with a range of ability in mathematical skills. Most are above average. By the time they leave Reception their skills are well above average.

45. Staff take every opportunity to reinforce and extend children's mathematical skills. Number awareness is promoted through counting games, the use of puppets and familiar number rhymes. Care is taken to make learning relevant and fun. For example, children love to help *Prickles* the puppet with his numbers. Children use a good range of equipment before they are expected to record their learning. They squealed with delight as they handled their dice and dominoes when playing counting and addition games. As a result, many children show real interest and pleasure and work for long periods. There is a good balance between structured learning, informal exploration and recording of work. Children are encouraged to talk about their activities. As a result most can explain what they are learning. A few children have difficulty recording their work and reverse some of their numbers. Regular use is made of computer programs to reinforce learning.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

This area of learning was sampled.

46. Reception children develop the use of their senses and understanding through activities such as growing plants and observing tadpoles. Good use is made of social times when they learn about healthy foods. Curriculum plans show that staff provide an interesting range of experiences and visits. A range of topics, such as light and colour, water, plants and animals, help children to build up their picture of the world. The class has no permanent investigation table with objects such as magnifying glasses for children to handle informally. This is a missed opportunity for children to discover and learn independently. Staff extend children's knowledge of different cultures through books and toys and an in-depth project on Africa. Computer skills are well taught. As a result, boys and girls use computers independently. They have positive attitudes and display equally good skills.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good because teaching and learning are focused on developing to a high level children's physical skills and creative response.

## Commentary

47. Children enter Reception with a range of ability in their physical skills. Most are above average. By the time they leave Reception their skills are well above average. Teaching is very good and, as a result, most children make very good progress and achieve very well. There is a sustained focus on developing children's physical skills and their creative response. For example, in a highly effective lesson, achievement was high for both boys and girls as they moved enthusiastically to the music of *Peer Gynt*. The teachers' sheer enthusiasm, energy and sense of fun made all children keen to participate and demonstrate individually what they could do.

48. Children have daily sessions to help them develop their physical skills and to learn to respond to music. The Reception class also has a large climbing frame which is in daily use. Although the outside area is small, children have access to three-wheeled vehicles and a range of small games equipment. Reception children have very good manipulative skills. They are provided with regular opportunities to handle dough, scissors and small construction equipment.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good opportunities for children to develop their creativity.

### **Commentary**

49. Teaching is good and, as a result, most children make good progress and achieve well. There is a sustained focus on developing children's creative response. Children enter Reception with a range of ability in their creative skills. Most are above average. By the time they leave Reception, their skills are well above average.

50. There are daily opportunities for children to develop their creativity and skills. There is access to a good range of materials, with many planned opportunities to paint, draw and make models. As a result, children handle scissors and paintbrushes well, enjoy being creative and produce pleasing results. The Reception class has some attractive examples of children's drawings. Children have many opportunities to learn nursery rhymes, sing songs, listen to music tapes and act out simple stories. They join in celebration singing, during assemblies, with gusto and enthusiasm. There is no permanent music area where children can explore and handle musical instruments informally, which is a missed opportunity. There is a good range of imaginative play experiences available, matched to each topic. Children showed real pleasure and confidence as they used the *Mount Campsite* imaginative play area.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching, though satisfactory and generally thorough, has some shortcomings.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their work.
- The headteacher is providing vision and leadership for the subject.

#### Commentary

51. Pupils' standards in the 2003 national tests in English were above average in reading and average in writing in Year 2, and above average in English by the end of Year 6. However, although these results appear good, they represent underachievement by the end of Year 6 as these pupils performed unsatisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment at the age of seven. Currently, standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, which represents satisfactory achievement given that most pupils exceed the goals expected of them at the end of the Reception class. Standards are above those found at the last inspection. Boys and girls make similar progress, and pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the targeted support they receive. The few ethnic minority pupils make good progress and achieve well.

52. Standards are rising as a direct result of the assessment team's action in introducing good tracking and assessment records of pupils' progress. The system is successfully used to identify pupils requiring extra support, including those with special educational needs. Both staff and pupils are enthusiastic about the faster rate of improvement in pupils' achievement as a result of this targeted group teaching. This is because the work is usually well matched to pupils' needs in these groups and the teaching is good. However, work in pupils' books shows that in some classes pupils spend too long in completing exercises when they could be using what they have learnt in their own writing. The chances to write expressively or figuratively are too limited. Occasionally, the highest-attaining pupils are congratulated for their efforts when they are capable of being more intellectually challenged.

53. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good and they are keen to write stories, and poems particularly. Several Year 6 pupils say they like to read, and write poems and stories at home, often using the computer. The high standards of presentation and handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar, from Year 2 upwards, are testimony to pupils' level of commitment and application to their work.

54. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The teaching of English is at its best and is consistently good in Year 5. The lesson in Year 4 was good and elements of good teaching are evident in most other year groups, but most lessons reach a satisfactory standard. Strengths in the teaching lie in the behaviour management in nearly all classes, which results in little time being wasted on gaining and keeping pupils' attention. Teaching assistants are well briefed and often provide very good support for the groups of pupils they work with. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils who feel confident about asking for help and show respect for the staff. In those lessons judged satisfactory, the main weaknesses relate to the lack of pace of the lesson, the level of challenge for the highest-attainers and the lack of encouragement for pupils to be independent.

55. The staff place a strong emphasis on the teaching of basic skills in reading and the technical elements of writing such as handwriting, punctuation, spelling and grammar. Pupils' writing is well structured and coherent. When Year 6 pupils had the chance to write a poem, their language was expressive:

- *My magical box is decorated with cool ice cubes, glimmering silver and stone-cold steel,*
- *The pale face of the moon as it spies on our heavy sleep...*

56. Although standards are high in reading they could be higher. Pupils are fluent, accurate and expressive readers, but infant pupils have limited strategies to work out unfamiliar words because they have not been taught alternative methods other than sounding them out. The National Literacy Strategy is not being used as well as it could be in all classes and pupils in Year 2 do not have enough time to read to themselves. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to research for information, but the opportunities they have for doing so are limited.

57. The marking of pupils' work is improving, but is not yet consistently good across all classes. Where it is very good, for example, in one lesson in Year 2, it has a notable effect on pupils' learning. In this lesson the teacher had marked the previous day's work with adhesive notes highlighting particular features pupils needed to improve and where pupils had been successful. This motivated pupils to consider and act upon the teacher's comments and praise, with the result that their story-writing improved.

58. Staff appreciate the headteacher's strong leadership and she has put in place new systems that are leading to improvement in the teaching and assessment of the subject. She has identified the underachievement of pupils, has taken firm steps to rectify the situation and has a clear understanding of what else needs doing to build upon the improvements made.

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

59. Teachers ensure that pupils have a good variety of opportunities to practise many forms of writing in different subjects. Pupils record their understanding in subjects such as RE, history, geography and science. Their competence in spoken language is developed effectively when they are encouraged to voice their opinions in clear vocabulary, talk about their work and read it aloud in lessons and assemblies.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average at Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and, as a result, achieve well.
- There is a strong focus on developing pupils' number skills.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop thinking skills to solve problems.
- Marking is inconsistent across the school.
- A few pupils who are very able could achieve more.

### **Commentary**

60. The standards of work in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are well above average. This represents satisfactory achievement for most pupils over time, although a few pupils could achieve more. Standards have improved since the time of the previous inspection. The results of the national tests for Year 6 in 2003 were below average and showed underachievement by a significant minority of those pupils. The results of the tests at Year 2 in 2003 were well above

average. Pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils achieve well. The few ethnic minority pupils make good progress and achieve well. The underachievement in Years 3 to 6 was identified when the current headteacher arrived and took steps to rectify the situation.

61. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There is a clear focus on basic skills in Years 1 and 2. As a result, pupils have a solid understanding of number patterns. Most can work independently and calculate without the use of practical equipment. For example, in a good lesson in Year 2, pupils achieved well because the teacher encouraged them to share strategies and to use their mental skills. Very good use was made of the support assistant. Good pace was maintained for most pupils who clearly enjoyed the level of challenge. Some younger pupils reverse their numbers. This habit is not systematically corrected. Marking, while regular and positive, could be sharper and more focused.

62. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build up their numeracy skills because the teachers have a secure knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy. The introductions to lessons are used well to tell pupils what they will learn. All teachers encourage pupils to use mathematical language and most lessons provide sufficient time for pupils to explain their thinking. The use of support staff to help lower-attainers and pupils with special educational needs within lessons is very effective. Learning for these pupils has improved. As a result, the numbers of pupils attaining the levels expected of their age has increased and standards have risen.

63. Pupils are confident in number calculations and rapid recall of number facts. They acquire a solid understanding of addition, subtraction, division and multiplication. Teaching is, however, mainly focused on basic numeracy skills. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their number skills by working out their own solutions to number problems. Teaching, while competent and thorough, often lacks inspiration. Where teaching is particularly effective it is lively and relevant and captures the pupils' imagination. For example, in a well-taught lesson, Year 3 pupils made good gains in their understanding of co-ordinates because of the imaginative and lively way they were taught.

64. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and written work. As a result, work is neat and carefully presented. Pupils respond well in lessons and work hard. While there are examples of detailed marking, which includes useful points to help pupils' understanding, the marking policy is not consistently applied in all classes. For example, in some classes work is regularly marked, but there are few suggestions for improvements. The pace of teaching and learning is good in Year 2 and Year 5. In all other classes it is steady rather than brisk. As a result, most pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress. The most able pupils, particularly, could achieve more if the pace of teaching were faster and if more were consistently expected of them.

65. Assessments are regularly undertaken and good use is made of this information to identify and target different groups of pupils. These identified pupils achieve well because teachers make very good use of the support staff within classes to work either with pupils with special educational needs or targeted pupils. More use could be made of day-to-day assessments to plan work for the most able. Not all teachers take sufficient account of the range of ability of pupils. Consequently they do not always plan closely enough for the most able other than to add extension activities when they complete their work. This is not the best use of their time as it slows down the amount of time they have to get on to more challenging activities.

66. Leadership of the subject has not been good enough to identify the underachievement of pupils until the current headteacher took office. The new management structures now in place are beginning to have a beneficial effect. They include feedback to staff following monitoring of planning, observations of teaching, and scrutiny of work by the subject leader, headteacher and LEA link adviser.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Satisfactory use is made of mathematical skills in most subjects, except science where its use is limited. There are opportunities to measure and calculate accurately in geography, design and technology, RE and history.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching, though generally satisfactory, is uninspiring.

### Commentary

68. Given that pupils generally enter the school with above average attainment, and reach above average standards by the time they leave at eleven, overall achievement is satisfactory. However, the results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2003 were well below average, and well below those of similar schools, showing significant underachievement by those pupils. Standards in the 2003 tests were lower than at the time of the previous inspection. The recent innovations in leadership and management by the headteacher have identified and begun to rectify the underachievement, but some pupils could still achieve more. The few ethnic minority pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and most are on track to attain the expected level in the Year 6 national tests. Some of the most able pupils do not make as much as progress as they could.

69. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers spend too long giving pupils information to increase their factual knowledge rather than giving them the skills and the opportunity to find information for themselves, or to apply their scientific knowledge to solve problems. Pupils like science and behave very well in lessons, but some in Year 6 say that they do too much writing and not enough practical work. Because teaching focuses very heavily on passing on factual information, pupils have a good grasp of scientific facts. They also learn how to undertake investigations and how to ensure testing is fair. However, the work in pupils' books and the lessons seen during the inspection confirm that pupils rarely get the opportunity to devise, conduct and evaluate their own investigations or to undertake their own research. Teachers tell the pupils precisely what they will investigate, what equipment to use, how to carry out the investigation and how to record what they have done and what they have learned. This deprives pupils of opportunities to develop their scientific thinking and problem-solving skills and, according to some of them in Year 6, confuses them. Although teaching is generally thorough and competent, it is not very inspiring and on occasions is unsatisfactory. For example, a Year 6 class investigated what happens when a flame is put to various materials. Many of the pupils already knew that burning was an example of an irreversible change anyway. All the pupils had to do the same things at the same time at the pace set by the teacher, and the learning was not pitched at different levels to reflect the different abilities and aptitudes of pupils in the class. The teaching assistant did a good job in helping to supervise pupils and in making sure they handled matches safely, but she could have been used much more effectively to work with a small group on their own investigation or in helping pupils to consider the implications of their findings.

70. The work in pupils' books shows that they cover all the aspects of the National Curriculum in a logical and systematic way and revisit topics to ensure a thorough understanding of them. They make little use of ICT in their work and only rarely do they use their mathematical skills. Their progress is assessed on a regular basis, but marking in books rarely tells them how to make their work better. There is little indication of effective use being made of assessment information to plan

work to match individual needs and build on what pupils have learned previously. Consequently, although pupils attain above average standards and achieve satisfactorily, they could achieve even more if teaching were improved beyond its current satisfactory level to become more imaginative and challenging.

71. Leadership and management have not been satisfactory or effective enough to identify the underachievement of pupils until the current headteacher took office. The new management structures are beginning to have an impact, but need time to become firmly established and adopted by all staff before their full benefit is felt.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards attained by pupils, the quality of teaching and resources have improved since the last inspection, although there are still shortages in equipment for control technology and a lack of teacher expertise in this aspect.
- Pupils enjoy using computers and are keen to learn new skills, but do not get regular opportunities to use the computers in the classrooms.

### **Commentary**

72. The standards reached by most pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are typical of those expected and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average and pupils underachieved. Planning for the subject is now satisfactory and includes all elements of the National Curriculum. Staff have received training and increased their expertise, although some still lack confidence in the teaching of control technology. To some extent, this is compensated for by expertise provided by a parent, but there is not enough equipment or sufficient chances for pupils to participate in this aspect.

73. Only two lessons were observed, but the pupils' work indicates that teaching throughout the school is at least satisfactory. Good teaching took place in a lesson in Year 5 when pupils learned to design multi-media presentations based on research of the Tudor period. The teacher put a strong emphasis on pupils improving their ideas and presentations, and used the interactive whiteboard to good effect to demonstrate how pupils could do this. As a result, pupils became more skilful in their use of the program and the presentations showed an improvement in their clarity and understanding of how they would look to an audience. In the other lesson in Year 3, pupils made good gains in their learning initially, because of the lively introduction and the skilled way the teacher used the whiteboard, but the pace slowed and the teacher missed the chance to refocus the pupils' attention by calling the class together to explain a technique.

74. Pupils enjoy using computers and are very positive about acquiring new skills. They are keen to demonstrate their competence in using spreadsheets, word-processing skills, researching for information from the Internet and sending e-mails. They are confident and highly motivated when working independently. The way teachers encourage pupils to work together makes a good contribution to their personal and social development.

75. Since the last inspection the school has invested in a mini-suite of computers and enough laptops for a class to be taught together. Additionally, there are computers in classrooms and a mostly adequate range of software and hardware to cover the curriculum, apart from data logging. The mini-suite and laptops are used regularly and have helped the school to raise standards.

However, the computers in classrooms, apart from in the Reception class, are infrequently used which is a missed opportunity to develop pupils' knowledge and skills. Leadership is satisfactory overall. Assessment arrangements are unsatisfactory, as information on pupils' progress is not used effectively to match tasks to specific needs.

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

76. Information and communication technology is used in the teaching of English, mathematics, science, art, history and geography. However, it is not utilised as much as it could be to support these subjects because classroom computers are not used effectively to encourage pupils to apply and consolidate the skills acquired in the computer suite.

## **HUMANITIES**

In humanities, work was sampled in history and geography and inspected in detail in religious education (RE).

77. One lesson was seen in **geography**. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their geographical understanding through studying the features of the local area and contrasting them with the fictional island of Struay. They learn about the wider world through trips to the local area and the travels of Barnaby Bear. Basic map skills are well developed through simple plans of classrooms and the school. Older pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of geographical features. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue to build up their mapping skills through projects on the local area. For example, in the only lesson observed, Year 4 pupils identified the impact of new housing on the local area. They extend their knowledge and understanding of the wider environment through studying projects related to litter, pollution and the rainforest. For some pupils, these could be in more depth. In contrast, the work in Year 5 on India is good for pupils of all abilities. A strong feature is the opportunity the Year 5 pupils have to undertake their own research. For example, good use is made of computers when pupils are building up their own fact-files related to contrasting features in Britain and India. A residential experience at Malham in Year 6 provides opportunities to further develop map and orienteering skills. Pupils also study in depth land features such as volcanoes and glaciers. From a short observation of pupils preparing for the visit, many had a good knowledge base to draw on.

78. No **history** lessons were seen. Younger pupils begin to develop an understanding of time through learning about homes and toys in the past. A trip to Dewsbury toy museum, and discussions with parents about toys in the past, help to bring the subject to life. Pupils learn about events from history such as the Fire of London, the plague, and life in Victorian times. Pupils in Year 3 learn about settlements through their work on the Romans, Celts and Vikings. Visits from a 'Roman soldier' help to add interest. Good use is made of pupils' drawing skills, for example, when drawing Roman soldiers. Pupils in Year 4 develop an understanding of life in Victorian times. Very good use is made of trips, such as to the Yorkshire mining museum. These help pupils appreciate the lives of children in the past. Work in Years 3 and 4 could be in even more depth for some very able pupils. Pupils in Year 5 study the Second World War in real depth. They write moving accounts describing their feelings:

- *'Dear nanny, I heard on the radio we are going to war, I feel worried and sad.'*

They learn to consider points of view when researching the life of Henry VIII. While Year 6 pupils study the Ancient Greeks in depth, more emphasis is placed on their gaining knowledge than on developing their research skills.

## Religious education

Provision in RE is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by Year 6.
- Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of different faiths.
- Teaching is inconsistent. It ranges from unsatisfactory to very good.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to use their writing and art skills.
- Not enough use is made of computer skills to research RE and to extend the most able pupils.

### Commentary

79. Achievement overall is broadly satisfactory. Pupils' work and discussion with pupils indicate that most make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 2 standards are average. By the end of Year 6 they are above average. This is an improvement from the previous inspection when standards by Year 6 were average. While achievement is satisfactory for most, a few very able pupils could achieve more.

80. The school follows the locally Agreed Syllabus. The planned curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and cultural development. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about aspects of Christianity. For example, they learn about Christian festivals and parables such as the Good Samaritan. They learn a few customs and beliefs related to Judaism and Islam. Occasionally, work is too hard for some of the youngest pupils. For example, some of the Year 1 pupils struggled when learning about the Creation story. In Years 3 and 4, pupils extend their knowledge of Judaism and study a range of festivals. The work, while adequate, could at times have more depth. In Years 5 and 6, pupils compare and contrast aspects of most major religions. From discussion with older pupils, they have a good understanding of aspects of Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism and Buddhism. School assemblies add to pupils' religious understanding. Pupils visit Christian churches, but do not have the opportunity to visit non-Christian places of worship, although they study them. Work shows that there are regular opportunities to discuss moral issues and reflect on personal beliefs.

81. Teaching is inconsistent, ranging from unsatisfactory to very good. In the very well taught lesson, Year 5 pupils had the opportunity to find out about different religions through their own research and to present their findings. As a result, their interest, knowledge and enthusiasm were high and pupils of different abilities all made good progress. The teacher had a very good knowledge of each faith. In contrast, in another lesson with younger pupils, the teacher had unsatisfactory knowledge of the syllabus related to Islam and used resources that were too difficult for the children. Throughout the school, effective use is made of pupils' writing and drawing skills to record their work.

82. While pupils develop secure knowledge as they progress through the school, not enough opportunities are provided for them to undertake their own research independently, or to use computers on a regular basis. Very able pupils would benefit from more challenging work. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory and the monitoring of teaching and learning has not been effective enough to identify and address the inconsistency in teaching.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology (DT), music and physical education (PE) were sampled. No lessons were seen in art or DT. One lesson was seen in PE and parts of two lessons were seen in music.

83. Although no lessons were observed in **art and design**, it is evident that standards and pupils' achievement are at least satisfactory. Examples of very good work are seen in several displays around the school. For example, Year 6 work in the style of Picasso is eye-catching and the pictures in pastels of flowers are very well executed.

84. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to use a wide variety of materials to develop their skills in different artistic techniques that include work in three dimensions. Pupils take great care with their work. The school values pupils' work highly, as demonstrated by the good quality of the mounting of displays. One of the governors, who is also an artist, helps regularly in lessons and his expertise is valued by the staff and pupils. Year 5 pupils working on portraits of themselves from photographs benefited from his and the teacher's expertise, producing work of a good quality and likeness.

85. There is not enough evidence to make a judgement about standards or the quality of teaching and learning in **design and technology** as no lessons were observed and little work in some classes was produced.

86. Curriculum plans provide adequate opportunities for pupils to use a reasonable range of materials to develop their skills in the subject. Staff have recently undergone training in teaching the design process and work in Years 3 and 5 shows this to have been successful in these classes. In Year 5, pupils' plans for their 'moon buggies' are good, showing consideration for the materials to be used and how their 'buggy' will work. The vehicles are finished to a high standard and pupils' evaluations of how well they worked are honest and insightful. A similar good standard of work is seen in Year 3 where pupils show care and appreciation of the processes involved in making packages. However, teachers' planning indicates that occasionally too long is spent on a particular project and some work is not challenging enough for the age group.

87. No full **music** lessons were seen, but inspectors did see parts of two lessons and also saw pupils singing in assemblies. On the evidence seen, standards of performance are well above average. In the parts of lessons seen, all pupils played tuned or untuned instruments with great confidence, keeping time accurately and coming in at the correct moment each time. Singing is tuneful and enthusiastic. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 showed great enthusiasm and enjoyment in assembly when singing songs of African origin. Many pupils play instruments and receive good quality tuition from peripatetic music teachers.

88. Only one **PE** lesson was observed. The teaching and learning were satisfactory overall though the pace was lacking. Pupils tended to spend too long listening and not enough time being active. The standards displayed were broadly average and pupils showed plenty of enthusiasm and enjoyment. All elements of the National Curriculum for PE are covered.

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

Personal, social and health education was sampled.

89. The school has a warm and friendly ethos with attention being given to ensuring that each pupil is cared for well. Teachers develop good relationships with pupils and lessons are orderly, with pupils showing very good attitudes to their learning. They develop a sense of responsibility and carry out a wide range of duties very conscientiously. Throughout the school, pupils relate very well to their peers and to teachers and develop a mature and sensible attitude to school life.

90. Pupils take their duties on the school council seriously and enjoy the opportunity to represent the views of other pupils throughout the school. The school has no formal programmes in place for personal, social, and health education (PSHE), but covers these areas through other subjects like science and RE.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
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	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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