

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **BERKLEY CE VA FIRST SCHOOL**

Berkley, Frome

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123743

Headteacher: Mr R Packer

Lead inspector: Mr D J Curtis

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> February – 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2005

Inspection number: 266416

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	90
School address:	Berkley Frome Somerset
Postcode:	BA11 5JH
Telephone number:	01373 830455
Fax number:	01373 830455
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr L Stather
Date of previous inspection:	May 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Berkley Church of England Voluntary Aided First School is situated close to the town of Frome in Somerset. It is a small school with 90 pupils on roll who are in three classes. At the age of nine, pupils transfer to one of two middle schools in Frome. Because of parental choice the majority of children come from outside of the school's catchment area. Children start school with standards expected for their age. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic families and all pupils have English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (21 per cent) is close to the national average and two pupils have a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals (11 per cent) is below the national average, although the local education authority does not provide a school meals service.

The school achieved Investor in People status in 2002 and it is part of the Frome Community Learning Partnership.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20893	Mr D J Curtis	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Science, Information and communication technology, Geography, History, Physical education, Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, Special educational needs
9487	Mrs F Hurd	Lay inspector	
22578	Mr G Jones	Team inspector	English, Art and design, Design and technology, Music

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school which gives good value for money. High quality teaching is a significant aid to pupils' very good achievement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- In Year 4 standards exceed expectations for nine-year-olds in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good.
- Teaching is very good, with teaching assistants making an effective contribution to pupils' learning.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The use of assessment to plan pupils' future learning is very good.
- Pupils' cultural development is underdeveloped and there is no whole-school scheme of work for personal, social, health and citizenship (PHSCE).
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory, especially the school still having outside toilets.

The school has made good progress overall since the previous inspection. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is now very good. The school improvement plan is a much stronger document aimed at school development. Day-to-day monitoring of teaching and learning is much improved. Despite much hard work on the part of the governing body, there are still weaknesses in the accommodation, especially pupils still having to use outside toilets.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement in the school is very good overall, especially in English, mathematics and science. Achievement in the reception class is good and children exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they start Year 1. In Years 1 and 2 achievement is very good. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average, with those in science above average. In information and communication technology (ICT) standards meet expectations. Achievement in English, mathematics and science is very good in Years 3 and 4. In Year 4 standards in English, mathematics and science exceed expectations. Standards in ICT meet expectations. Across the school the achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good. In addition, more able pupils are challenged and extended in their learning and they achieve very high standards.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
Reading	A	A	A	A*
Writing	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	C	D	A*	A*

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals*

The grade A\* places the school in the top five per cent of schools. The school has successfully addressed the decline in standards in mathematics in 2002 and 2003. Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils' attitudes to school and behaviour are very good. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although in

cultural and multicultural it is underdeveloped. Attendance is satisfactory. Punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning throughout the school are very good. Very good teaching is having a positive impact on the standards achieved. Teachers' planning is of high quality and meets the learning needs of all pupils. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good. Teachers ask challenging questions which motivate pupils to learn. Teachers make very good use of assessment to identify weaknesses in pupils' learning and then set targets which are focused clearly on individual improvement. The curriculum is good. Pupils have good opportunities to use and apply their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects, especially science and history. Opportunities to enrich pupils' learning outside the classroom are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very effectively. Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory, especially the outside toilets. The school makes unsatisfactory provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety mainly with regard to the quality of accommodation (issues have been reported to the governing body). Links with parents are very good and those with the community and other schools are good. Teachers and pupils

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the school are good overall. Governance is very good. There are strengths in the governors' support for the school and financial management and in their knowledge and understanding of standards. The leadership and management of the headteacher is satisfactory, with good features. The leadership and management of subject leaders are good and staff monitor teaching and learning effectively. They have a good understanding of strengths and areas for improvement. Statutory requirements are met with the exception of the performance management of the headteacher and the inclusion of admission procedures in the prospectus.

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

Parents are very supportive of the school as is reflected in the significant number who choose to send their children to the school from out of its catchment area. Pupils like the school and value their teachers and the support they receive from them.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures and produce a scheme of work for PSHCE.
- Continue the ongoing work with outside agencies to secure improvement to the school's accommodation, especially the provision of indoor toilets.

And to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the performance management of the headteacher is carried out annually in order to meet current legislation.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Standards achieved are very good.

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

- Pupils make very good use of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects.
- The achievement of children in reception is good.
- The achievement of more able pupils is very good because they are challenged and extended in their learning.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children start school with standards that meet expectations for four-year-olds. As the result of very good teaching, the achievement of children is good and by the time they start Year 1, the majority exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	18.1 (17.0)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	16.3 (15.9)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	19.1 (15.4)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. Results of the 2004 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 were in the top five per cent of all schools in mathematics and were well above the national average in reading and writing. Whilst the high standards of previous years were maintained in reading and writing, there was a significant improvement in mathematics over the results in the previous two years. In 2004, when compared to similar schools nationally, the school was in the top five per cent in reading and mathematics. Results in writing were well above average. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 3 placed the school in the top five per cent of both all and similar schools. Trends show no significant difference in standards achieved by boys and girls. The school has good systems for monitoring pupils' standards by gender.

3. Current inspection findings are that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average and that pupils' achievement is very good. The proportion of pupils who are working within the higher level 3 is well above expectations. The school is sustaining the high standards achieved in previous years. Standards in science are above average. In ICT standards meet national expectations. Insufficient evidence was available in order to judge standards in other subjects<sup>1</sup>.

4. Standards in Year 4 exceed expectations for nine-year-olds in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement is very good. A significant proportion of more able pupils are working close to the standards expected for eleven-year-olds, especially in English and

<sup>1</sup> Standards in religious education are subject to a separate inspection carried out on behalf of the governors by the Diocese of Bath and Wells.

mathematics. In ICT standards meet expectations for nine-year-olds. Insufficient evidence was available in order to judge standards in other subjects.

5. Across the school pupils make very good use of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects and this is a strength of pupils' work. Pupils' use and application of key skills is particularly good in science and history.

6. Across the school pupils with special educational needs make good progress as measured against the targets set in their individual education plans. Their achievement is good because of high quality teaching and support from teaching assistants. As a result many pupils reach the standards expected for their age.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good overall. Attendance is satisfactory. Punctuality is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has excellent expectations of pupils' conduct and works hard to achieve them.
- The promotion of good relationships is excellent.
- The school's management of all forms of harassment is excellent.
- Provision for pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own and other cultures is underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

7. Attendance is in line with national averages, slightly lower than at the time of the last inspection, principally because of illness. Attendance procedures are very good, with any unexplained absences being followed up on the first day. This, however, is hardly ever necessary as parents are very conscientious in informing the school. The importance of attendance and punctuality is regularly promoted and data is monitored electronically.

#### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

#### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	73	18	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0

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

8. The exclusions recorded above relate to a single pupil, whose behaviour has now markedly improved. This represents an atypical situation in a school where previously only two exclusions had taken place in twenty years.

9. The behaviour and attitudes of all pupils during the inspection were never less than good and often much better, both in and out of the classroom. Pupils are friendly, confident, and very caring towards each other. In class they listen attentively and try their best to do what is asked of them. The outstanding quality of the relationships between them, their teachers and the teaching assistants is very noticeable and a considerable aid to learning. The small size and family ethos of the school mean that older pupils automatically expect to play with, and look after, younger ones: all pupils help in the classroom. A school council has been established this year: councillors are keen to make their school better, although as yet they are unsure exactly how this should be done.

10. Staff provide very good moral and social role models by their mutual support and the courtesy and respect they show towards their pupils and each other. Pupils are made aware that they are part of the school community and beyond that, part of the local church community. They raised money for the Asian tsunami disaster, and tried to empathise with the sufferers by writing prayers for them. Regular class circle times provide an opportunity for pupils to discuss emotions and problems like bullying. Assemblies make a satisfactory, and sometimes good, contribution to pupils' social and moral development. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory as at the time of the last inspection. However, it is not sufficiently well planned for in comparison with spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils learn about a few artists and musicians, and have opportunities to create their own art works in response. Cultural visits are undertaken and visitors come in to school from time to time, to support the curriculum including some reflecting non-Western cultures. The library stock is regularly refreshed by the county library service and includes a satisfactory proportion on cultural topics.

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

The quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning are very good. The curriculum is good. Provision for pupils' health, welfare and safety are unsatisfactory. Links with parents are very good.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are very good and make a significant contribution to the high standards achieved. Assessment is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- Teachers' planning is of very high quality.
- Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to teach new skills and ideas.
- Pupils are motivated and enthusiastic learners.
- The quality and use of assessment to plan pupils' future learning are very good.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 13 lessons***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
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0	5	8	0	0	0	0
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*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

11. A significant strength of lessons is the very effective deployment and contribution made by highly skilled and dedicated teaching assistants. A particularly impressive feature is their use during lesson introductions, for example in Year 4 where a teaching assistant works with more able pupils in the mental/oral starter in numeracy lessons. As a result more able pupils are challenged and extended in their mathematical thinking. During the group work part of lessons teaching assistants provide caring, sensitive yet challenging support for pupils with special educational needs. Such support makes a significant contribution to the good progress made by these pupils.

12. An impressive feature of teaching is the quality of planning. Teachers are very successful in meeting the challenge of teaching pupils in mixed age classes and in meeting the wide range of learning needs within them. Planning addresses most carefully the needs of individual pupils with the result that achievement in lessons is good, or very good. The level of challenge to extend more able pupils in their learning and thinking is outstanding. Equally, planning meets fully the needs of pupils with special educational needs so enabling them to make good progress in lessons. Teaching shows improvement since the last inspection.

13. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are highly skilled in demonstrating and explaining new skills and ideas. Very effective use is made of interactive whiteboards to capture pupils' attention and to teach new skills. In a numeracy lesson in Years 3 and 4 on problem solving, the teacher had written on the whiteboard separate problems for Year 3 and Year 4, plus an extension problem for more able pupils in Year 4. In this way, she was able to address the learning needs of each year group and enable pupils to make good progress in a key area of mathematics.

14. Pupils enjoy lessons and are keen to learn. In question and answer sessions they often 'burst' to contribute ideas and they do not hesitate to ask questions about something they do not understand. They work well in groups, pairs and independently. An impressive feature of most lessons is the level of concentration and application shown by pupils in group work and their ability to work independently without needing direct adult supervision. Because they enjoy learning, pupils take great pride and care in their work and this contributes to the high standards achieved.

15. Teachers are very effective in assessing pupils' learning. Marking is of high quality and a notable strength is the way in which teachers amend their lesson plans based on what happened the previous day and/or through their marking of pupils' work. If pupils have not understood a skill or area of learning then it is revisited and consolidated before moving on. Pupils' understanding of their own progress is being developed successfully through the use of 'I can' statements which show them the step-by-step skills required to reach the levels within the National Curriculum. A strong feature of this is the honesty of pupils in assessing where they are in their learning.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good. Opportunities for enrichment are satisfactory. Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- The overall curriculum is good, especially in English, mathematics and science.
- The curriculum for those children who are under five has been improved since the last inspection, and is now good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school's curriculum is very inclusive allowing all pupils to achieve very well.
- Whilst accommodation is unsatisfactory, all staff work extremely hard to stop this adversely affecting standards.
- Although the school teaches aspects of personal, social and health education and citizenship, it is not co-ordinated throughout the school.

## **Commentary**

16. The good curriculum is an improvement on the situation noted at the last inspection. It enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are noted as being gifted and talented, to achieve very well in the key areas of English, mathematics and science. The successful appointment of a new teacher for those children who are under five has ensured that the curriculum for this group of children has been improved since the last inspection, and is now good.

17. Pupils with special educational needs are provided for very well. The school complies fully with the Code of Practice. Teaching assistants are well trained and provide high quality support for those pupils who require individual support as well as those who benefit from support in small groups. The effective partnership between teachers and teaching assistants in planning pupils' work is a strength.

18. The school rightly prides itself on being very inclusive in its approach to teaching and learning. All pupils are regularly challenged in lessons no matter what their ability might be. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 2, the teaching assistant started the lesson working with a lower ability group, providing them with appropriate and challenging mental work. Later in the lesson she was in the ICT suite working with the more able pupils challenging them with mathematics work on the computers.

19. The school provides very well for both literacy and numeracy, with standards being regularly well above or at least above national expectations. At the same time the school has tried to enrich the curriculum with visits and visitors in order to give pupils first-hand experiences in a number of curriculum areas.

20. In areas such as aspects of physical education, music, design and technology, the limits of the unsatisfactory accommodation tend to restrict pupils' opportunities. However, it is thanks to the hard work and ingenuity of the headteacher and staff, that it does not adversely affect standards. The school has appointed specialists in music and gymnastics in order to help maintain the standards in these subjects. However, the fact that pupils, especially children in reception, still use outside toilets is unsatisfactory.

21. Activities which allow pupils to sit in a circle and discuss aspects of their lives, whilst being in a supportive group, are well used and support pupils' personal and social development. Aspects of sex education are often noted in science lessons where teachers try to answer pupils' questions honestly and at an appropriate level. At the same time, pupils have sound opportunities to look at aspects of citizenship, which includes local issues, such as the school car park. Other wider issues, such as care for the environment and the tsunami disaster, give pupils ideas for wider citizenship of the world and its inhabitants. However, there is no overarching scheme which draws all of these threads

together in order that pupils might more fully understand how these issues interact with each other.

22. As very many pupils travel to school by car and often live some distance from the school, after school activities are somewhat limited, although good use is made of lunchtime for extra activities. These include sport, music, mathematics and craft activities.

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

The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is very good. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is satisfactory. The arrangements for ensuring pupils' care, guidance and support are unsatisfactory because of issues relating to the accommodation.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have excellent relationships with one or more adults within the school.
- Pupils have very good support, advice and guidance.
- Induction arrangements are good in the Foundation Stage, and very good in the rest of the school.
- Procedures to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are unsatisfactory overall, for reasons discussed with the governing body.

### **Commentary**

23. The high quality of pupils' annual reports reveals how well teachers know their pupils, how carefully they monitor progress, and ensure that teaching is closely matched both to age and ability. Parents were confident that both more able pupils and those with special educational needs were equally well supported, whilst those whose children were of average ability felt they were never overlooked and were recognised as individuals. The Foundation Stage teacher makes a careful assessment of children when they first join the school, in consultation with teachers and pre-school providers, and there is a well established induction programme to help children settle in, although some aspects of this are currently under review. The school makes great efforts to help pupils joining other classes settle quickly, tailoring their approach to the child concerned. Parents were amazed and delighted by how welcome their children had been made to feel. The key to the high standard of support and guidance given to pupils is the very high quality of the relationships between pupils and adults in the school community. The staff are very committed to their work and their pupils.

24. Although the school council has only been established this year, it is intended steadily to increase its involvement with the management of the school. As pupils have such good relationships with staff, they are already confidently putting forward any suggestions or ideas.

25. A daily check for any safety hazards is followed up by a full site inspection every term by the governing body. Risk assessments are carried out before offsite visits and appropriate attention is paid to health and safety issues in physical education and other lessons. There is a designated child protection liaison officer, and all staff are regularly briefed. The school holds regular fire drills, and there are appropriate numbers of qualified first aiders. Considerable efforts are made to alleviate the problems caused by the inadequate parking facilities.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Information for parents, particularly pupils' annual reports, is very good.
- Procedures to ensure satisfaction and deal with any concerns or complaints are very good.

### **Commentary**

26. Three-quarters of the parents returned Ofsted questionnaires before the inspection, a high number, and responses were very positive. All parents believe that their children make good progress with good teachers, who have high expectations of behaviour, treat children fairly and encourage them to become more mature. These views are confirmed by the inspection. Parents are well served by the information the school provides: fortnightly newsletters are supplemented by a well designed website and various displays. The governors' report and prospectus are well designed and informative. However, the prospectus does not include information on admission procedures, which is a statutory requirement. Pupils' annual reports are concise while providing a clear picture of effort and achievement in each curriculum area. It is easy to see whether pupils are achieving at, above, or below, the appropriate levels for their age groups. Termly curriculum information is sent out and displayed on notice boards. Some parents would like information on homework to be sent home in written rather than verbal form.

27. The school has kept parents well informed about its plans for the future and they in turn are quick to give support whenever it is needed. A high proportion of the governors are parents and others provide expert advice and assistance in many different areas. Parents help with the grounds and maintenance as well as in class and on offsite visits. The energetic Friends' Association raised £3,500 last year and its social activities are a focus of local life.

28. The school's close links with the church (and the parish council) ensure that it participates in all events organised in Berkley and its neighbourhood. Pupils attend assembly in the church twice a week and organise the family service every other month. Local businesses in Frome have donated materials for school use. Until recently the school had a close link with a retirement home (now closed). The scattered nature of the locality precludes the formation of many local links, but the school regularly supports local charities, and participates fully in joint activities with the Frome School Federation. The Federation allows the school to provide a full curriculum by giving it access to better equipped accommodation elsewhere, and staff work closely with their colleagues at other schools to share expertise and best practice, as well as plan shared events.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. Governance is very good. The leadership of the headteacher is satisfactory. The leadership of other key staff is good. The effectiveness of management is good.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Following recent support, the leadership and management of the headteacher have improved and are overall satisfactory, with some good elements.
- The co-ordination of English, mathematics and science is very good.
- Governors are very supportive of the school and know its strengths and weaknesses
- Parents are very happy with the leadership and management of the headteacher.
- Performance management is not rigorous enough.

## Commentary

29. At the previous inspection some concerns were expressed about aspects of leadership and management, although overall they were judged as satisfactory. Since that time, the headteacher has been very heavily involved in issues of school closure and at times has been deflected from other, and important, issues of day-to-day school management. However, recent support for the headteacher has helped him improve his management of time and prioritising work, so that his skills are once again satisfactory, with one or two good features.

30. The governors have improved the quality of their governance of the school since the last inspection. They take a very active part in the strategic planning of the school's work, have a clear vision of the future, and are working hard to resolve issues regarding the school's lease, inextricably linked with problems of accommodation. The chairman leads governors very well. He ensures that governors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school through visits and the receipt of information from the headteacher and subject leaders.

31. The co-ordination of English, mathematics and science has been very effective in producing standards which are very high in relation to national expectations. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage of learning has been very effective since the appointment of a new leader in this area of the school's work. The work of the special educational needs co-ordinator is very good and ensures that the needs of pupils with special educational needs, including those who are gifted and talented, are fully met in all aspects of the curriculum. The headteacher is fully committed to an inclusive school and this is shown in all lessons.

32. The leadership of the curriculum, by the deputy headteacher, is good and her ideas for development are well supported by the headteacher and staff. At the same time, individual staff are encouraged to put forward ideas, such as in the Foundation Stage and the development of Emotional Intelligence.

33. The school's strategic planning is now much clearer, showing plans for improvement and development, which are noted in both the short and long term. These plans are written with success criteria and are nearly all clearly costed.

34. The school is now looking more closely at performance data in order to compare its results with similar schools. It uses the data well, for instance in the need for improvements in mathematics and science and aspects of speaking in English. All of these have now shown improvements.

35. The performance management of teachers and support staff is satisfactory, but could be improved by more rigour being applied, with targets being more clearly related to improvements in standards in all subjects and not just the key areas of English, mathematics and science. Governors missed an opportunity to review the headteacher's performance last year on the advice of the local education authority, but have re-instated the process for this year. The Ofsted parents' questionnaire, answered by over two-thirds of parents, showed that they were very happy with the leadership and management of the headteacher.

36. Financial management is satisfactory. The most recent audit of the school's finances found a number of issues to be addressed. The school has action plans for these improvements to be made. The headteacher makes good use of existing funding for the

benefit of all staff and pupils. This is noted in time for teachers to spend planning each week, and the satisfactory level of resourcing throughout the school. All things considered the school gives good value for money.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	281,359
Total expenditure	276,962
Expenditure per pupil	3,077

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	5,382
Balance carried forward to the next	9,788

## 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 **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher's planning is of high quality.
- Teaching assistants support children's learning effectively.
- The assessment of children's learning is very good.

#### Commentary

37. Children start school at the beginning of the school year in which they become five and join a class with the youngest pupils from Year 1. Standards on entry meet expectations for four-year-olds. As the result of very good teaching, children's achievement is good and by the end of reception, children exceed the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. Strengths in teaching, include very high quality planning for a mixed age class and ensuring that it is effective in meeting the learning needs of reception children. Teaching assistants work successfully with individuals, pairs or groups of children to develop key skills. The teaching of key skills is very good. Assessment of children's learning is of high quality and enables the teacher and parents to see the progress children make along the 'stepping stones' of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Leadership and management are very good and have made a significant contribution to the very good improvement in provision for children in reception since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory and a key issue. The only remaining unsatisfactory feature is that young children have to go outside in all winds and weather to use outside toilets.

38. Achievement in **personal, social and emotional development** is good. Children settle quickly into the day-to-day routines of school life. In lessons they work and play happily together, including boys and girls. They make good progress in learning to work independently and show good levels of concentration when working on their own. Children form good relationships with each other, older pupils in the school, and all adults.

39. In **communication, language and literacy**, achievement is good. Children make good progress in learning how to read and have a good knowledge of letter sounds (phonics) because of very good teaching. By the end of reception children are established on the school's reading scheme. Good progress is made in writing from the early stage of making marks on paper to represent writing to writing their own names correctly and writing simple sentences by themselves. Children form letter shapes correctly. They listen carefully and are confident in asking and answering questions.

40. Because the teaching of key skills is very good, achievement in **mathematical development** is good. Children read, write and order numbers to 10, with many confident to 20 and beyond. They understand 'one more than' and 'one less than' and are confident in recognising and naming correctly common two-dimensional shapes. They enjoy familiar number songs and rhymes.

41. Achievement in **knowledge and understanding of the world** is good. Through effective role play, such as hospitals, children develop a good understanding of the world

around them and of the main parts of the human body. Children are confident in using the computers, especially the mouse to 'click and drag'. Through working with pupils in Year 1, they develop an understanding of the past when they look at the life of Florence Nightingale.

42. In **creative development**, achievement is good. Children enjoy singing and are successful in learning and remembering the words of familiar songs and rhymes. They take great delight in performing accompanying actions. Children enjoy role play activities and this makes a strong contribution to their social interaction with others. They are successful and imaginative in using paint, pastels and crayons in creating colourful and imaginative pictures.

43. There has been significant improvement in children's **physical development** since the previous inspection and achievement is good. Children now have regular access to outdoor play, including an outside play trail which provides good opportunities to develop skills in climbing, jumping, landing and balancing. They have access to an improved range of large wheeled toys which they can ride or pedal. Children enjoy the opportunities to develop throwing and catching skills through a good range of large and small balls.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- The standards pupils reached in the 2004 National Curriculum assessments were very good.
- Almost all pupils achieve very well.
- Teaching is very good and is supported well by pupils' good attitudes.
- The leadership and management of the subject are both very good.
- Amongst many very good features, the use of ICT by pupils is not good enough.

#### **Commentary**

44. Pupils enter the school showing average ability in language and communication skills. However, when they reach the end of Year 2 and are subject to National Curriculum assessments, they score well above the national average compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools they score very highly in both reading and writing. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is therefore very good. This shows a very good improvement on the situation described at the last inspection.

45. By Year 4 most pupils have been able to maintain this success due to continuing very good teaching. Standards in Year 4 were high at the last inspection and remain so.

46. Pupils' reading throughout the school is usually very good. Pupils enjoy reading, have access to a good range of books, and many are now beginning to use their reading skills for research purposes, an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. Previously completed work by pupils in Year 4 shows that they have written instructional texts, characterisations, informative writing, poetry, and have used a storyboard technique to sequence the writing of imaginative

stories. As a result of this, vocabulary, use of grammar, spelling and punctuation have all improved.

47. The school identified that there was a need to improve speaking and listening skills. Evidence in many observations, in a number of different subjects, showed that teachers give pupils very good opportunities to improve these skills through careful questioning.

48. Overall teaching is very good. The improvement in teaching in Years 1 and 2 has been significant since the last inspection. This profile of teaching is a significant feature in raising standards. Strengths in teaching were many, but most significant were the very good planning of lessons, the effective use of support adults, the management of lessons, and the recent use of interactive whiteboards to enrich and enliven the work. Amongst such good features, the use pupils make of ICT is underdeveloped. Although there are limited numbers of computers in classrooms, they were not seen being used enough to support work in literacy.

49. The leadership and management of the subject are of a very high standard and show an improvement since the last inspection. The subject leader has ensured that planning is of a high quality, enabling teachers to teach the subject in a step by step way, providing pupils with the opportunity to make significant progress in lessons. She has looked closely at data collected through tests and has fine tuned work in order to improve such areas as reading and speaking skills. She has instigated a simple but effective form of self evaluation for pupils to follow. Pupils score their work against a series of criteria for various elements of their writing. Once they have done this, the teacher will score the work so that pupils can compare the results.

50. The school is not complacent as a result of its very good results, but is regularly seeking to continue to improve pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in English.

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

51. Literacy and language skills are reinforced effectively through almost all lessons. In all subjects teachers expect pupils to form letters well in well punctuated and expressed sentences. In Year 2 pupils have written their observations of the streets of London from paintings they have seen. They have written letters to fire fighters who came to their school to demonstrate their work. In Year 4, pupils wrote a prayer for the tsunami victims, whilst in science they wrote about an experiment investigating light and dark. The only criticism is that occasionally worksheets used in some subjects can limit the opportunities pupils have to write as there is often a limit of space on the sheets to write their answers.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' mental arithmetic and problem solving skills are very good.
- Teachers' planning is of high quality.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

52. Results of the 2004 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 placed the school in the top five per cent of all and similar schools nationally. In addition, the school was in the top five per cent of all and similar schools for the proportion achieving the higher level 3. These results show a dramatic improvement over those achieved in 2002 and 2003 and reflect the school's commitment to raise standards after a period of decline.

53. Current inspection findings are that standards in Year 2 are well above the national average. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, standards are well above expectations. Pupils' achievement throughout the school is very good, including pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good.

54. Pupils are particularly strong in their knowledge and use of multiplication facts, together with their ability to solve problems. In Year 2, pupils are confident in using addition and subtraction with numbers as large as 999, and by Year 4 more able pupils solve money problems which involve discounts on prices. Pupils show good skills in interpreting data from graphs and have a very good understanding of how to give mathematical instructions to follow a planned route. Pupils' use of correct mathematical vocabulary is particularly good.

55. Teaching and learning are very good and have a positive impact on the standards achieved. Teachers plan most successfully to meet the learning needs of individual pupils within lessons, including ensuring that work is matched carefully and based on each year group within the mixed age classes. As a result, all pupils are challenged and extended in their learning, particularly the more able. Teaching assistants are used effectively by teachers to support pupils. A strength is that in the mental/oral starter a teaching assistant works with one of the two year groups in the class with the teacher supporting the other. In this way, the level of challenge and pace is demanding and appropriate to the needs of pupils. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons and work hard with good levels of concentration. More able pupils thrive on the challenges set them.

56. Leadership and management are very good and make a significant contribution to the standards achieved. The subject leader has a detailed understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and he has had a positive impact on the significant improvement in standards. Assessment is very good and identifies thoroughly those aspects of mathematics where there are gaps in pupils' learning, which are then quickly remedied.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

57. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is very good. Pupils use their skills very effectively, especially in science when carrying out measurements in experiments. They show good knowledge and understanding in being able to understand and interpret data. Pupils make good use of their ICT skills when programming instructions either on screen or for a floor robot to follow a planned route.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils thoroughly enjoy being 'scientists'.
- Pupils' use and application of literacy and numeracy skills are very good.

- Teachers' planning is of good quality.

### **Commentary**

58. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average and by the end of Year 4 standards exceed expectations for nine-year-olds. Throughout the school pupils' achievement is good, including pupils with special educational needs and those who are more able. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

59. In lessons pupils are encouraged by teachers to think of themselves as 'scientists' and they respond enthusiastically to this. As a result, pupils are confident in using correct scientific terms and spell key words correctly in their writing. Pupils enjoy carrying out investigations and experiments and show good skills in predicting outcomes and in drawing conclusions from their results. They make very effective use of their literacy skills when writing up results of experiments. Pupils make good use of numeracy skills in measuring and in drawing and interpreting graphs. ICT skills are used effectively when pupils research scientific facts on the Internet or CD-Roms.

60. Teaching and learning are good and make a significant contribution to standards achieved. Teachers plan successfully to meet the learning needs of all pupils within mixed age classes and ensure that pupils are taught to the requirements of the year group they are in. As a result, pupils are challenged in their learning and show great enjoyment in lessons. Pupils work successfully in groups and pairs when carrying out investigations. Teachers use resources imaginatively to stimulate pupils' interest, and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs which contributes to their good achievement.

61. Leadership and management are good and make a strong contribution to standards achieved. The subject leader has a detailed understanding of strengths and weaknesses in science as a result of effective monitoring of teaching and learning. Her report on the subject to governors enables them to have a clear picture of the school's work and pupils' achievement in science.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning.
- When given the opportunity pupils make good use of their literacy skills in the subject.
- The location of the ICT suite restricts access, especially for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

### **Commentary**

62. By the end of Year 2, and Year 4 when pupils leave the school, standards meet national expectations. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, including those with special educational needs and more able pupils.

63. By Year 2, pupils are secure in the key skills of loading, saving and printing their work. They are confident in using the mouse to 'click and drag' and show good skills in using the tools in a graphics program to create imaginative and colourful pictures and patterns. By Year 4, pupils show good skills in using the Internet and CD-Roms to carry out research in

science and history. In Year 4, pupils' word processing skills are linked to very good use of literacy skills when pupils write their own versions of traditional tales. The quality of spelling, grammar and punctuation is impressive. However, pupils' opportunities to use ICT in literacy lessons are not planned for on a consistent basis.

64. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching assistants support pupils effectively in lessons, including small group work in the school's small ICT suite. They are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and assist teachers in recording pupils' progress in the subject as pupils move up through the school. Pupils enjoy using computers and work together successfully in pairs, including using programs which require them to think and solve problems together.

65. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The recent purchase of a set of laptops for pupils in Years 3 and 4 is extending pupils' opportunities to develop their skills in the subject. The location of the ICT suite in a temporary building which serves in addition as the library and staffroom is not ideal and it is a long way from the Years 1 and 2 classroom, which does restrict opportunities for these pupils to use it.

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

66. Pupils make good use of their ICT skills in other subjects. Good use is made of literacy skills when pupils research factual information on the Internet and on CD-Roms. Pupils use their numeracy skills effectively when programming on-screen or floor robots.

## **HUMANITIES**

Insufficient lessons were seen in order for secure judgements to be made about provision in geography and history.

### **Commentary**

67. In **geography**, pupils study the subject in the summer term. In Year 4, they show good skills in locating key features of the locality on maps relating to how they spend their leisure time. Numeracy skills are used effectively when pupils collect data, draw graphs to show this, and then interpret the information gathered on their own use of leisure time. The teaching in the one lesson observed in Years 3 and 4 was good.

68. In **history**, by the end of Year 2, pupils develop a good understanding of the past through studying the 'Great Fire of London'. They enjoy being 'historical detectives' when they study the life of Florence Nightingale. Pupils use their literacy skills effectively when they interpret information from pictures, and in sequencing the events leading up to, and during, the 'Great Fire of London'. In Year 4, pupils show very good use of literacy skills in their study of Ancient Egypt. Their writing up of key facts to show their understanding of the 'Nile, food and farming' is of a high standard. Pupils are confident in carrying out research and have a good understanding of sources of historical evidence. In geography and history, the end-of-unit assessments are good with pupils making a strong contribution to assessing their own work.

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

Insufficient lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education in order for judgements to be made on provision in these subjects.

## Commentary

69. In **art and design** teaching, in the one lesson seen was good. The teacher had prepared a good range of resources to illustrate work of the artist Mackenzie Thorpe. She pointed out the key features of the work and with the close support of her teaching assistant, helped pupils create their own pictures in a similar style using pastels. Pupils responded well to this opportunity, although some reverted to drawing their own figures without emulating Thorpe's particular characteristics of drawing children with big heads, blank faces and oversized feet!

70. There is evidence of the use of ICT to support work in art and design, but this has not been extended sufficiently for the oldest pupils and is part of the subject leader's current action plan.

71. The subject leader has led the subject well and has helped develop pupils' self-assessment skills. Pupils carry this out by noting, on prepared lists, the skills they believe they have learned. The subject leader has delivered a report to governors noting the work that has been produced, so that governors might be able to monitor progress and standards achieved. Resources are satisfactory, although accommodation can limit some work, which requires larger spaces, such as for group or three-dimensional work. Whilst there is evidence of pupils having access to famous painters, this too often relies on European artists and does not focus enough on artists from the wider world. As a result, pupils' multicultural development is not supported well enough by their work in art and design.

72. In **design and technology**, work on display of pupils in Years 1 and 2, shows that these pupils have had experience of cutting and joining elements of paper in a two-dimensional model. They have further used split pins in order to give the models' limbs movement. The quality of the completed models was satisfactory.

73. The school uses the nationally recommended scheme of work for the subject, but has not customised it to the needs of the school and the accommodation available to it. As a result, there is no clear pattern for the development of skills, neither is there detail of how the two year groups in each class will be provided with challenging work to suit their differing ages and aptitudes.

74. There is no clear system of assessment in the subject, although in art and design there is a system which could easily be adapted to suit design and technology.

75. The subject leader is aware of the shortcomings of the subject and previously involved the school in a design and technology week in order to tackle some of the above problems. Photographic evidence of the work during this week showed that standards reached the expected levels and both staff and pupils gained a great deal from the experience. This could set a precedent for future work in order to provide pupils with sufficient time for the subject, together with opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.

76. Resources for the subject are satisfactory, although the accommodation limits the use of tools and large equipment in certain areas of the school. The subject leader is aware that there are still a number of issues to be addressed before standards achieved are high enough.

77. In **music**, in the two acts of collective worship seen, singing was of good quality, as pupils sang a range of songs including, "Kum ba yah", "If I were a butterfly" and "Thank you Lord".

Even the youngest children contributed to the singing, with the whole school showing a good attitude to the music.

78. The part time specialist music teacher, who takes music lessons in all classes, has prepared a good scheme of work and has a sensible action plan for further improvements to the subject. However, the plans do not clearly show that the subject supports pupils' multicultural development by giving them regular opportunities to sample music from the wider world. Her co-ordination of the subject, in the one year since her appointment, has been good. She is seeking to extend pupils' access to playing a musical instrument by creating both class and small group opportunities for pupils in the top class to learn to play the recorder. The school's unsatisfactory accommodation makes aspects of teaching music difficult. The school has no separate hall, making large group work and performances difficult. There are very few spaces in the school in which to carry out group work, the effect of which limits pupils' access to working in small groups creatively. In spite of this the teacher manages to take very small groups in the special educational needs room in order to teach them the recorder.

79. Pupils have good opportunities to take part in performances and to listen to musicians who come to play for them. Pupils take part in performances linked with Harvest, Christmas, the Leavers' Service and regular church services.

80. The school overcomes successfully the severe limitations of its accommodation for the teaching of **physical education**. It does this by taking the whole school to a local leisure centre on a Thursday morning for the teaching of swimming, dance and gymnastics. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching and receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum. Photographic evidence indicates that pupils achieve good standards. The school has a small but adequate field within its grounds for the teaching of outdoor games in the summer. However, playground space is cramped for teaching ball skills.

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

### **Commentary**

81. No judgement is possible on overall provision in work on citizenship. However, good work was noted in a Years 3 and 4 lesson, where pupils were acting out roles as parents, residents and teachers at the school, putting forward arguments against the current problems the school has with car parking. This showed good understanding of a very localised problem.

82. At a national level of understanding, pupils' previously completed work showed that they had an understanding of problems involving environmental issues, which could affect them in the near future. Again on an international level, pupils had examined several aspects relating to the tsunami disaster, showing an understanding of the situation and an appreciation of efforts to send in multi-national help. Whilst all of these showed that teachers had used newsworthy items upon which to base their work on citizenship, there is no overall planning which provides both teachers and pupils with a step-by-step guide to linking these sorts of issues into a scheme of work for this area of the curriculum. At the same time, there are few links to be seen with the larger area of work in pupils' personal and social education.

*Note: Whilst the positives reported under 'Care, Guidance and Support' on Page 12 are recognised, it is because of issues drawn to the governors' attention regarding accommodation overall that the grade for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety in the following table reports unsatisfactory provision.*

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<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	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	5
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	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	2
The leadership of the headteacher	4
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).*