

# INSPECTION REPORT

**HARWOOD HILL JUNIOR MIXED, INFANT AND  
NURSERY SCHOOL**

Welwyn Garden City

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117227

Headteacher: Mrs S Cousins

Lead inspector: Mr N Hardy

Dates of inspection: 27-30 September 2004

Inspection number: 266965

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	170
School address:	Harwood Close Welwyn Garden City
Postcode:	AL8 7AG
Telephone number:	01707 322855
Fax number:	01707 331245
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Godbold

Date of previous inspection: May 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Harwood Hill Primary School serves part of the community of Welwyn Garden City. Although the school is smaller than other primary schools this hides the expansion it has undergone over the last three years. The school received an achievement award in 2001 and the Investors in People award for the quality of the training it provided for its staff in 2002. The school is also involved in the Healthy Schools programme. Although most pupils are from a white British heritage, some from Black and Asian cultures also attend the school. An increasing number of pupils are from minority cultures and many of these new pupils speak English as an additional language. An average number of pupils are eligible to receive free school meals. More boys than girls attend the school. An above average number of pupils are on the schools special educational needs list. Of these a majority have learning difficulties with some experiencing speech and communication difficulties with a smaller number having behavioural problems. The number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is a little above the average. The proportion of pupils who change schools at times other than normal transfer is greater than in many schools. Attainment on entry to the school is at broadly average overall although the range of ability is sometimes very wide.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
29262	Mr N Hardy	Lead inspector	Mathematics History Geography Art and design Design and technology
11414	Mrs A Bennett	Lay inspector	
19774	Mrs M Docherty	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Special educational needs English as an additional language Music
30506	Mr R Bowers	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education Religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This **very good** school provides **very good** value for money. The standards attained by Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science and pupils achieve very well compared to their attainment on entry. The teaching and the curriculum are consistently effective throughout the school. The headteacher provides very clear leadership and she is fully supported by her staff.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- by Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average;
- pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language and those who are gifted and talented achieve well;
- pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards work and each other are very good;
- the quality of teaching is uniformly good across the school;
- information and communication technology is not yet used sufficiently in lessons to extend pupils' learning;
- pupils receive very good support and guidance on their educational and personal development based on the regular monitoring of their performance and the detailed knowledge of the teachers;
- not all parents are sufficiently supportive of the school's efforts to improve attendance;
- pupils do not yet have sufficient opportunities to learn about other faiths and cultures;
- links with parents are very good overall;
- the leadership and management provided by the headteacher and senior staff is strongly focused on the improvement of standards across the school;
- governors play a very important role in helping the school to develop.

### 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	D	A	A*
Mathematics	A	D	A	A
Science	B	D	A	A*

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average*

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

Note: A\* is in the top five per cent of results in the country.

**Achievement is very good overall.** From an average start on entry to school, current standards in Year 6 have risen to well above average in English, mathematics and science. Results of the tests in Year 6 in 2003, the last with national figures, show that a well above average percentage of pupils achieved the more difficult Level 5 in both English and science. The early indications of the results for 2004 are that they are as high as those in 2003. The pupils do very well compared to those in similar schools. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are very well supported and achieve well, making similar progress to other pupils.

The results in Year 2 in 2003 were well above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Current standards in Year 2 are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Standards in other subjects including Information and communication technology, history, geography, art and design, and design and technology are all above average throughout the school. Those in physical education and religious education are average; no judgement was reached on standards in music.

**The pupils' personal qualities, including their moral and social development are very good overall.** The pupils' spiritual and cultural developments are satisfactory but they do not know enough about other faiths and religions. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance, however, is below average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided is **good**. Standards of teaching are uniformly good across the whole school. Teachers and support staff have high expectations of the way pupils will behave and what they will achieve. This produces a very good ethos for learning, ensuring that pupils are well focused on the interesting and enjoyable tasks they are given. Pupils, regardless of their ability, are well supported by skilled teachers and learning support staff and receive a good level of challenge, well designed to extend their learning. Considerable effort is made to ensure that all pupils are given opportunities to achieve their best. Assessment procedures are used well, especially in English, mathematics and science to set targets for the improvement of pupils work. The broad and balanced curriculum provides well for the development of pupils' educational and personal skills.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership provided by the headteacher and senior staff is very good. A rigorous analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the school has been conducted and priorities for improvement identified. Many of these have been systematically tackled and improvements made. Those that remain are contained in the school improvement plan to be addressed in the near future. The headteacher and governors have created a very effective team of teachers and support staff and this is helping to improve provision. The governors play a very important role in the school and have a very clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are very supportive of the school but where there are issues provide good level of challenge to ensure that decisions are the best solution for the school. All relevant statutory requirements are met including those for racial equality.

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

Parents are very supportive of the school. They correctly believe that the quality of teaching is good and that their children are making very good progress. Most agree that behaviour is good and that their children are expected to work hard. A small minority of parents say that there is insufficient information about the progress their children are making. The inspection team can find no evidence that this is correct; levels of information are very good. Pupils enjoy attending the school. They enjoy their lessons and most find them interesting. They say that bullying is not an issue at the school. Both parents and pupils say that they are happy to attend the school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- to increase the extent to which information and communication technology is included in the planning and teaching of lessons across the school;
- to increase opportunities for pupils to develop a greater understanding of the faiths and cultures of other people;
- to raise the levels of attendance of pupils to at least the national average.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Standards currently being attained by pupils in English, mathematics and science are **well above** the average in Year 6 and pupils are **achieving very well** in these subjects. Standards are above average in information and communication technology, history, geography, art and design and design and technology and at expected levels in physical education and religious education. It was not possible to make judgements on standards in music. Pupils in Year 2 are achieving standards that are above expected levels in reading and writing and are well above average in speaking and listening. The standards achieved in other subjects are currently average. Pupils in this age group achieve well.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 achieved well above average results in English, mathematics and science in 2003. The results achieved in these subjects in 2004 indicate that standards will remain at similar high levels.
- The results attained by pupils in Year 2 in 2003 were well above average levels in reading and writing.
- Pupils who have special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and those who are gifted and talented achieve well.
- Standards in history, geography, art and design and design and technology have all risen since the last inspection.

#### Commentary

1. Results in Year 6 have been maintained at above and well above average levels with the exception of 2002 when the results in English, mathematics and science fell in the national tests because of the higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs in the cohort of pupils and several new pupils entering the school in Year 6. The 2003 results in Year 6 show that a well above average number of pupils achieved the more difficult Level 5 in English and science. An above average number achieved this higher level in mathematics. The recently published results for 2004 show that all of the pupils attained the expected Level 4 and that an above average proportion attained Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. In English, a well above average proportion of pupils attained Level 4 with many attaining Level 5. During the inspection there were no significant differences in the performance of girls and boys although it is fair to note that girls usually achieve higher results than boys in English. However, boys regularly reach higher levels than girls in mathematics and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.8 (25.8)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.6 (26.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	31.4 (27.8)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. Although these results in Year 6 are very creditable it is only when the schools results are compared with those of schools taking their pupils from similar home backgrounds that the true scale of the achievements of the school and its pupils can be realised. In 2003, pupils were within the top five per cent of similar schools in English and science and the top twenty per cent in mathematics. When their prior attainment as Year 2 pupils is included, the progress pupils make throughout Years 3 to 6 is very high in English and science and very good in mathematics. Of particular note is the progress being made by pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language; although there were several pupils in these categories in 2004, all of them achieved Level 4 in mathematics and science and the great majority achieved Level 4 in English. This is a reflection of the quality of help and support these pupils receive. Pupils who are particularly gifted and talented in English, mathematics and science also receive an additional challenge that ensures that they achieve well and reach their full potential.
3. Results in 2003 for pupils in Year 2 were well above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Overall, the rate of improvement over the last five years has been more rapid in Year 2 than that seen in other schools. Almost twice the average number of pupils in this age group achieved the more difficult Level 3 in reading and writing, indicating that pupils receive a good level of challenge in their work.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.6 (16.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.0 (14.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.7 (15.8)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well. Although the current standards of their work are average, good quality teaching and levels of challenge ensure that children have every opportunity to learn the necessary skills in all areas of the curriculum. The development of personal and social skills has particular priority and they are very well taught.

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

Pupils’ attitudes towards school and their behaviour are **very good**. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and that for moral and social development is very good. Levels of attendance are unsatisfactory. Punctuality is satisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The great majority of pupils are keen to learn and join in activities with enthusiasm.
- The school promotes very good relationships between pupils and instances of bullying or harassment are very rare.
- Levels of attendance are below national averages.
- The quality of pupils’ behaviour is very good.
- Pupils’ moral and social development is very good.

**Commentary**

5. The great majority of pupils are interested in their lessons, show very good concentration and work hard. Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour are almost always very good and this enables teachers to work effectively and to suffer little disruption. This helps to raise standards. Pupils

have a wide range of opportunities to join in after school activities and this they do with enthusiasm.

6. Relationships between pupils are very good. A buddy scheme operates and pupils take their responsibilities in this seriously. There are opportunities for pupils to take on further responsibilities for the day-to-day running of the school but sometimes opportunities are missed, for example, in the organisation of assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to develop respect for each other and incidents of bullying, harassment or racism are very rare. Should an unpleasant incident occur the pupils are very clear as to what to do and are confident that the incident will be dealt with promptly and effectively. One pupil was excluded for a short period during the last school year. No pupil has been excluded during the present school year. Pupils have very good levels of self-esteem and confidence and their achievements are regularly celebrated in school. They talk confidently to adults and express their views maturely in classroom discussions.
7. Although levels of attendance have improved over the last three years, attendance remains below the national average. The school has in place effective methods to monitor pupil absence and regularly involves the education welfare service to follow up on habitual absentees. An analysis of pupil absence and punctuality is kept. There is an effective system to contact parents on the second day of unexplained absence although it is clear that the great majority of parents ensure that they contact the school if their child is absent. A small minority of parents fail to respond to requests from the school to explain absence. Absence for holidays taken during term time is also counted as unauthorised absence by the school.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	6.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3
National data	0.4

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
152
1
5
1
5
1
3
1
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
1	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

8. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and it is very good for their moral and social development. There is a strong moral dimension to the ethos of the school, which shows very positively in the way pupils respond to adults and to each other.

There is a clear focus on treating others with respect and consideration, resulting in very good relationships between pupils and adults. Pupils receive a wide range of opportunities to develop social skills through additional activities after school, through a residential educational visit and other educational visits and through their interaction with visitors. Cultural development is satisfactorily developed through musical, artistic and literacy enrichment but currently there are limited opportunities for pupils to increase their understanding of different faiths. Limited use is made of the cultures and faiths of the pupils from a wide range of backgrounds who are now entering the school. This is recognised by the school that is exploring opportunities to increase pupils' awareness.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is consistently **good** across the whole school. Pupils benefit from **good** quality teaching. A broad curriculum ensures that pupils make quick progress and achieve very well overall. Personal and social skills are well developed and this helps pupils to become caring and considerate individuals. There is a very positive ethos based on hard work and a desire to learn.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** in all year groups. Assessment is good overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school.
- Pupils engage very well in their tasks.
- The learning support assistants are very effective and contribute very well towards the quality of learning.
- Assessment is good overall and very good in some subjects.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1(3%)	1 (3 %)	25(78%)	5(16%)	0%	0%	0%

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

9. The consistency in the quality of teaching is a significant feature of the school and is a key factor of why pupils achieve well. Teachers' planning is good and great care is taken to match what pupils must learn to the needs of the pupils. Teachers are clear about what they want the pupils to learn and they communicate this well to the pupils. The teachers' good questioning skills cause the pupils to think about what they are learning and help them to extend their understanding. Good class management strategies ensure that pupils remain on task throughout the lessons and learn well. The learning support assistants add significantly to pupils' learning, especially for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. They communicate well with the teachers and know exactly what is expected of them. Relationships between the adults and the children are very good. Teachers expect the pupils to behave well and to work hard, and the pupils respond accordingly. In a few literacy lessons with younger pupils, however, greater use could have been made of

books with larger text and pictures, so that all pupils could see the words and follow the story through clues from the pictures.

10. The wide range of assessments procedures are used very well in English, mathematics and science. The test results for all the pupils are analysed effectively and teachers use this information to plan for pupils' needs. There are also regular assessments of what the pupils' have learned, helping teachers to know the extent to which their teaching has been effective. Where necessary, lessons and the curriculum can be modified. Pupils are also told by the teachers how well they are doing and how to improve. Pupils are given targets for improvement and these targets are communicated to parents. The assessments in other subjects are at different stages of development. Assessments in information and communication technology, physical education and religious education, for example, use their specific schemes of work to provide teachers with an effective way of tracking pupils' progress. The headteacher is committed to the development of assessing pupils' progress in all other subjects and has made a positive start to this development that will contribute to raising standards throughout the curriculum.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **good** overall. Subjects have an appropriate balance, but with a strong emphasis on English and mathematics. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is good overall.
- Good opportunities for speaking and listening are provided across the curriculum.
- Good planning generally, and particularly in English and mathematics, helps teachers present lessons in a highly structured and cohesive manner.
- A strong commitment to educational inclusion<sup>1</sup>, so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language, more able, and gifted and talented are well supported.
- There is very good provision for personal, social and health education.
- Accommodation is generally good, but with some important shortcomings.

## **Commentary**

11. The school provides a good curriculum overall, though in Foundation Stage children have only limited opportunities for spontaneous and physically challenging activities in the outdoor environment. Provision for English language and literacy skills, mathematics, and science is very good, and contributes to pupils' very good achievement in these subjects. Planning is amended when appropriate to meet the particular priorities of the school. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators check on the balance and coverage of the curriculum rigorously.
12. Good opportunities for speaking and listening are provided across the curriculum. Pupils talk together in pairs and small groups about what they are learning, which they do with great enthusiasm. In this way all pupils are fully involved in the lesson, and less experienced and less confident pupils are given more time to talk about new learning as the lessons unfold.

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<sup>1</sup> Inclusion refers to the procedures for meeting the educational needs of all pupils, whatever their gender, ability or background.

13. There is a strong commitment to educational inclusion. Curriculum planning ensures that pupils with different experience of English and the wide range of attainments are given full access to the curriculum and all other aspects of school life. Because of this, all groups of pupils, including those from ethnic groups and those learning English as an additional language achieve well. Those with special educational needs are well supported by very good learning support assistants, who are highly skilled and enjoy warm relationships with the pupils. The school is supported well by a specialist language teacher who works with the growing numbers of pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition. She ensures that the pupils achieve the lesson's objectives by helping them understand unfamiliar vocabulary.
14. Provision for personal, social, and health education is very good. Pupils are taught the importance of a strong moral code and the value of working together and supporting each other. These values are supported further by the very good examples set by every member of staff. Assemblies often focus on a moral theme, and older pupils write on moral issues in literacy lessons, for example "Should animals be used in circuses?" In every class, from the Nursery to Year 6, pupils are expected to behave well, show consideration to others in the class, and work alongside each other harmoniously in many of the planned activities. Good examples of this were seen in many lessons, with pupils building on each other's ideas and acknowledging each other's achievements in their class work.
15. There is a satisfactory number of clubs, visits, visitors, and special curriculum events, for example "science week" and "creative arts' day", which are planned to enrich the general curriculum. These are well attended and they contribute much to pupils' personal, social, physical and creative development. The school does not yet draw sufficiently on its multi-cultural community to broaden pupils' view of the world and to celebrate its own cultural and linguistic diversity.
16. The school has enough teachers to cover all classes and to give the special education needs coordinator opportunities to complete her tasks. The curriculum plan supports less experienced teachers well, including one newly qualified teacher. The school has a very good team of learning support assistants who greatly enhance the provision in classrooms in allowing focused pupils to achieve the lesson's objectives.
17. The school benefits from good accommodation. Increases in pupil numbers have led to the loss of the information and communication technology suite and library. These resources are now provided in classrooms or in corridors but provide a more limited quality of accommodation. A major shortcoming of the schools accommodation is the access to the upper levels. There is only one internal staircase and in bad weather this causes a problem of congestion, with four classes using the same stairwell. There is no access to the upper floors for pupils, parents of staff with disabilities.
18. High quality resources improve pupils' learning experiences in most subjects. A good number and range of books are available to pupils, which helps maintain high levels of interest in lessons. All aspects of the English curriculum, including guided reading, poetry, drama, fiction and non-fiction, are available to support the curriculum plan.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The school maintains its strength in this area. Teachers and support staff know pupils very well and make good provision for those with medical needs. There is an active school council. Pupils are consulted each year and they know that their opinions matter. They set and review their own targets and are helped to manage their learning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils manage their own learning targets.
- Teachers know pupils really well and offer very good support and guidance.
- Pupils are listened to.
- There are very good arrangements made for pupils when they start at school.
- School council could be further developed to integrate aspects of citizenship.

### **Commentary**

19. The school takes good care of its pupils, and gets to know them really well. The headteacher prioritises pupil welfare, close contact is maintained with parents and care is good for those with specific medical conditions and for those who are injured during the day. Accidents are analysed for health and safety implications and governors, contributing an external perspective, are involved in termly walkabouts. Sufficient members of staff are trained in first aid and all of them have had training in child protection matters. Arrangements comply with those agreed locally.
20. Teachers offer their pupils very good support and guidance. They work well with their classroom assistants and there is an expectation that pupils will work hard. Pupils are very well motivated by the systems in place, and they take responsibility for their own work, manage their homework and update their targets, helped by consistent messages, reminder posters and their pupil planners. The planners match those used at the local secondary school, and this familiarity helps give pupils confidence when they transfer.
21. There is a very good induction<sup>2</sup> system into the Nursery, and from the Nursery to the Reception year, so that these young children settle quickly. Parents value this and are encouraged to attend reading sessions and to ask questions. Continuity of care and personnel occurs for the children attending the private afternoon day-care because it is run in the Nursery by one of the classroom assistants. All of the children transfer to the Nursery, and this benefits particularly those with special educational needs.
22. Pupils have good relationships with midday supervisors, who encourage active play. Pupils are encouraged to look after each other. Their opinions are sought each year through a questionnaire, and the school council is active. Its role could be further developed to include strands of citizenship, with pupils taking more responsibility for running and taking minutes of their meetings, and through contested elections.

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

The school has very effective links with its parents. They are very supportive of its work, and consulted each year. Visits and visitors are used well to help pupils learn and develop. The pre-school afternoon care provision held in the Nursery is a valuable contribution for the community. The school is planning to make more use of its local secondary school.

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<sup>2</sup> Induction refers to the arrangements for receiving pupils who are new to the school, helping them to settle into school routines and make friends.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good communication between school and home.
- Parents are kept very well informed about how their child's is getting on.

## Commentary

23. Parents are very supportive of the school. There was a good response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, which raised no significant concerns. Almost all parents are confident that their children enjoy school; that they are expected to do their best; that teaching is good; and that pupils behave well.
24. Links with parents are very good. The school keeps them well informed through regular letters, termly curriculum letters and meetings that help them support their child at home. The pupil planner is an asset because it allows parents to support their child effectively. Annual reports are very good, showing how well teachers know their pupils. They give honest and forthright opinions, with reasons, so that parents are completely in the picture.
25. Parents are consulted each year as part of the school's annual planning exercise, and the results of this consultation are reported back. Parents make use of the easy, open access to class teachers and senior staff, and are confident that they will respond quickly to any issues raised.
26. There is a desire to use and to contribute to the local community, and the school does this well. Visits and visitors play an important part in enlivening the curriculum. A local church group took a very effective assembly during the inspection, contributing to pupils' personal development. The afternoon day-care for young children also acts as a gentle introduction to full-time schooling. The school makes good use of a range of external services.
27. Pupils are well prepared for transfer to secondary school. Links with local universities and other schools are satisfactory, with pupils already making use of expertise and the equipment. The local secondary school's recent specialist status will be a further asset.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher and the key staff is **very good** and focuses very clearly on the improvement of standards across the whole school. The management of the school is **very good** with a high priority placed on analysis of comparative data and the rigorous assessment of pupils' progress across a range of subjects, especially English, mathematics and science. The governance of the school is also **very good**. Governors are very well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide considerable support to the strategic planning designed to take the school forward.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and key staff have very high expectations for the continued improvement of the school.
- The quality of planning to achieve these aims is very good and based on a rigorous and systematic analysis of the needs of all pupils.
- The headteacher has created a very strong team approach involving all the members of staff that work in the school.
- The financial management of the school is arranged to maximise the use of resources, improve provision for all pupils, and raise attainment.



- The governors are very knowledgeable and strongly supportive of the school, sharing the high aspirations of the headteacher, staff and parents.

## Commentary

28. The governing body is very supportive of the school and is fully committed to its further improvement. It fulfils its statutory duties effectively and contributes significantly to setting the tone for the school. The well-developed committee structure enables the governors to carry out their duties very effectively and ensures that they develop a wide range of knowledge and understanding of the key features of the school. Governors make regular visits to the school, working in classrooms and discussing curriculum development with teachers. Regular training has contributed very positively to their knowledge of their role and they are able to access a wide range of information provided by the school. Governors take a very positive role in shaping the direction the school is to take and this reflects their detailed knowledge of the strengths and areas for future development.
29. The headteacher and senior teaching staff have developed a very clear vision of the current strengths of the school and those areas where improvement is needed. This vision is shared with all the staff and is a significant factor in the strong teamwork approach evident in the school. A detailed analysis of the current standing of the school is regularly undertaken and areas for improvement prioritised. Both governors and subject leaders play an important role in this development and help to create the strong work ethic and desire to improve. Examples of this can be found in the work of the subject leaders, especially those responsible for English, mathematics and science, but also those with an over-view of other subjects in the curriculum. The quality of teaching is regularly monitored, the standard of pupils work checked and the progress they make reviewed. The result has been the maintenance, and in some cases the improvement of already high standards in English, mathematics and science as well as standards in, for example, history, geography and art and design. The headteacher, through her detailed knowledge of the performance of individual pupils and the school as a whole maintains a careful eye on progress towards achieving the schools aspirations. The headteacher is very well respected by pupils, parents, staff and governors.
30. Financial planning to achieve identified improvements is very good. The governors and headteacher work closely together to identify priorities and to find solutions. A good example of this has been the work done on the improvement of information and communication technology resources and how pupils' skills can be more effectively and regularly taught. Considerable care is taken by the governors and headteacher in ensuring that the school receives the best value from the services it receives.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April2003 to March2004*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	536,831
Total expenditure	522,876
Expenditure per pupil	2,826

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	84,111
Balance carried forward to the next	98,066

31. The budget is managed very well by the headteacher, governors and office staff. The identified educational priorities have been underpinned by effective financial planning and the school improvement plan indicates that careful thought has been given to accurate costing. Teaching staff are deployed efficiently and care has been taken by both the headteacher and governors to ensure that the members of staff employed have the appropriate strengths. Support staffs are well qualified and deployed and make a very good contribution to the quality of teaching and provision. A high priority is given to the training needs of all staff at the school and this helps to raise standards of teaching and provision.

## **COMMUNITY PROVISION**

Provision is **satisfactory** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pre-school provision makes a valuable contribution to the community.
- Parents have had opportunities to develop information and communication technology skills using the schools resources.
- The school provide a good range of out-of-school activities and local groups such as a Tae Kwando, chess and lacrosse use the schools facilities.

### **Commentary**

32. There are good links between the pre-school group and the schools Foundation Stage that result in children happily transferring into the Nursery and settling into the school's routines. Regular consultations between the respective teachers ensure that children are provided with a suitable curriculum and that comprehensive records are passed on to the school. The school has made available some of its information and communication technology resources and organised a course for parents to give them the opportunity brush up their skills so that they can support their children at home. Parents say that this has helped them to work with their children and given them a greater understanding of the curriculum. The school has also organised a series of meetings to inform parents about the literacy and numeracy frameworks and sessions on teaching children to read. A good range of out-of-school activities is provided for pupils. Several of these provide coaching from outside the school's resources and make a useful addition to local provision.

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

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

Provision is good. Children achieve well and make good progress. Teaching and learning are good throughout Nursery and the Reception class, and the pace of learning is good. Leadership is effective.

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

- Children settle quickly, gain confidence, and make friends easily because of very good induction arrangements.
- Good emphasis on speaking and listening allows all children, including those who are newcomers to English, to achieve well in communication, language, and literacy.
- Attitudes and behaviour are very good, and children are keen to learn.
- The curriculum is well planned and taught and is effectively meeting the learning needs of all children.
- Limited use of the very good outdoor play provision reduces the opportunity for spontaneous and adventurous play.
- Leadership is effective.

#### **Commentary**

33. The school's Foundation Stage consists of a single-unit Nursery and the Reception class, which children move into in the September or January of each year. Children separate from parents and carers confidently and happily take part in the many activities planned. The very good induction programme helps children start their schooling successfully.
34. Standards are average and achievements good. There is an appropriately strong emphasis on personal, social, and emotional development and communication, language, and literacy, and children achieve well in these areas. Children with special educational needs are quickly identified and supported through good curriculum planning and the effective use of additional staff. The small, though increasing numbers of bi-lingual children are given good support that allows them to achieve as well as their classmates. Children's attitudes are very good and they are keen to learn. They work well together on collaborative activities. Behaviour is very good. Members of staff have very high expectations and children respond very well to the adults' support and guidance.
35. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, including planning within each area of learning. Learning objectives are clear and achievable, with a good mix of small steps in lesson plans. Children make good progress. Good opportunities for assessment are built into the planning, allowing staff to focus on whole-class evaluations or more targeted assessment of particular children's achievements. This information is used well to set targets. The curriculum in both Nursery and Reception classes is well planned. An appropriate range of teacher-directed activities is made available in each session, along with opportunities for self-chosen and independent activities. Parents are involved and consulted very well about their children's education. Parents and carers of children with special educational need are involved in the assessment procedures. The part-time Nursery teacher is an effective leader of the Foundation Stage and works closely with the rest of the staff to ensure that planning and assessment arrangements allow children to make progress along the "stepping stones" towards the goals of each area of learning. Members of staff in the two classes plan together

and children are given the opportunity to work in either classroom and in the outdoor play area for part of each day. Common assessment systems ensure that all members of staff contribute to the detailed record of achievement.

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

Provision is very good, including good teaching. Strong emphasis is placed on this area of learning to ensure that achievement is good. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.

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

- Achievement is very good.
- Good opportunities are provided to help children develop their independence.
- Children are encouraged to work together in small groups to explore ideas.
- Children are given clear guidelines on acceptable behaviour.

### **Commentary**

36. Standards are broadly typical on entry to school. Some children benefit from the pre-school provision on the same site, and familiarity with the Nursery contributes to the very successful induction of these children. Most children make good progress and achievement is good. By the time they enter Year 1 of the National Curriculum children are confident learners. Children with special educational need are identified quickly and achieve well because of the good support they are given. Children new to English work alongside more experienced classmates and quickly acquire English as a second language.
37. Children are given good opportunities to develop independence. Through group activities they learn to take turns and build on each other's ideas as they play. Children are well supported by all members of staff, and are constantly praised and encouraged for their good efforts and achievements and this builds confidence and self-esteem. Ethnic minority children are well supported.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision is good, and this is a similar picture to the last inspection. Achievement is good. Standards are broadly typical on entry, but quickly rise to above average by the end of the Reception year.

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

- Achievement is good.
- Almost all teaching is good.
- Strong emphasis is placed on early literary skills in all areas of learning.
- Very good opportunities for speaking and listening are provided in all areas of learning.
- Members of staff do not always exploit the use of enlarged text at story time to support early literacy skills.

### **Commentary**

38. Achievement is good and almost all children increase their knowledge and skills confidently. The school's data indicates that most Reception children attain the national goals as they come to the end of Foundation Stage, and a significant number exceed them. Teaching is generally good, with a strong emphasis on speaking and listening. All members of staff exploit every opportunity to help children talk about what they are doing and raise questions. This is an important development for all children, particularly for those learning English as an additional language and special educational needs children, who often need additional time and support to understand the meaning of tasks.
39. Teachers place good emphasis on early literacy skills, promoting them through an interesting range of activities that develop early understanding of written communication. Children in the Nursery retold the story of "Jim and the Beanstalk", which the teacher wrote up in their own words, while keeping to the story's structure and orderly sequence of events. Learning is planned around a number of core books, carefully chosen to develop particular skills and ideas in each half term. Work is planned to explore key ideas from the stories and to extend children's use of language to describe the imaginary and often fantastic events of the stories. The majority of children are aware of how stories are organised, with older children recognising some of the sounds at the beginning of words. Most Reception children know that text carries meaning and some recognise letters and familiar words in the books they read.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision is good. Achievement is good. Standards are average. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.

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

- Achievement is good.
- Activities and tasks are well planned to help children make good progress.
- Speaking and listening activities are built in to help children use appropriate mathematical language.

### **Commentary**

40. Children enter Nursery with broadly typical skills, and achieve well because of the good teaching they experience. This includes children with special educational need and the growing numbers of children who are newcomers to English. Achievement is supported by the very practical and visual activities that teachers plan in this area of learning. Members of staff, including the very good learning support assistants, have a very good understanding of how to develop early mathematical skills.
41. Children receive valuable support to help them count, recognise numbers, and develop an understanding of shape. Members of staff use a good range of mathematical language. In a classification activity children confidently used appropriate mathematical language. Adults encourage counting, matching objects, and number recognition in all aspects of independent play. Children also develop good numeracy skills in the many action songs and rhymes they sing.

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

Provision is good. Achievement is good. Standards are average. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection.

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

- Teaching is good.
- Children show interest in information and communication technology.

### **Commentary**

42. Most children enter the Nursery with broadly typical skills, including general knowledge. The consistently good teaching results in good achievement and knowledgeable children.
43. Teaching is good. Planning includes a good range of activities and experiences to enhance children's knowledge. Role-play offers good opportunity for children to learn about their community, and curriculum planning indicates that imaginative role-play is built into each half-term topic.
44. Children talk enthusiastically about their discoveries and experiences as they work with a good range of materials and respond well to challenges to test out properties of materials. Children develop good scientific skills as they observe and record cross-sections of fruit, for example painting a watermelon with carefully observed seeds throughout the fleshy part of the fruit. Children are keen users of technology. They operate simple computer programs to support their learning, particularly mathematics, literacy, and creative development.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision is good. Achievement is good. Standards are average. Teaching is good. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.

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

- There are many good opportunities for children to use equipment and toys to support hand-and-eye co-ordination and physical developments.
- Children have limited access to the very good outdoor provision.

### **Commentary**

45. Children enter Nursery with broadly typical physical development. The consistently good teaching results in good achievement, particularly in eye-and-hand co-ordination and the small physical skills required to cut, stick, glue, sew and paint. Members of staff have a very clear understanding of the children's learning needs, helping them use tools and equipment well without interfering with their creativity. The good provision includes dexterity with small apparatus across all areas of the curriculum, including physical education equipment, musical instruments, earphones, and the mouse in information and communication technology.
46. Children have limited opportunities to develop larger movements, for example climbing, rolling, balancing, and riding wheeled toys. The very good outdoor play provision is limited to a fixed half-hour daily session. There is no opportunity, therefore, for more

spontaneous adventurous play, allowing children to initiate more energetic activities. Children have timetabled opportunity in the single hall, but, since this is a resource shared with the rest of the school, such times are also very limited. This lack of continuous use of the outdoor play area affects other areas of learning too, particularly exploration of the natural world.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Achievement is good. Standards are average. Teaching is good.

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

- A good range of enjoyable activities is planned to help children develop creative skills.
- Good opportunities are provided for children to sing and dance a range of action songs.

### **Commentary**

47. Children enter the Nursery with average skills in most areas of creative development. They make good progress because of the broad range of activities that are planned to rouse children's interest and invite creative responses. Teacher-initiated activities draw children to particular areas of learning, and good achievement is evident. Children used cross-sections of fruit to print a design in paint, developing a sense of pattern by choosing a particular sequence of colours. They made personal decisions about which colour to choose in these printing activities, anticipating a particular effect and appraising the result of their efforts with good judgement.
48. Creative work is often planned around particular books, which, during the inspection, were "Jim and the Beanstalk" and "Handa's Surprise". Opportunities to explore the main ideas of the story through painting, model making, and collage help support children's creative development, but also, by talking about the key elements of the story, they are able to practise the language they need to retell it. This is particularly supportive for children learning English as an additional language and also for those other children for whom the vocabulary and ideas presented in the story may be unfamiliar.
49. Singing skills are developed well through a range of songs and rhymes, some involving high levels of co-operation and teamwork. For example, in "Dusty Bluebells", children moved in and out of the circle, creating an ever extending chain of bluebells as the song unfolded. Children enjoy playing musical instruments, coming to understand that a single instrument can be played in different ways. They listen carefully to the sounds made and follow a particular beat with confidence.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision is very good, and pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2, and very well in Years 3 to 6. All aspects of English are taught well, and pupils make good progress, achieving well above average standards by Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are consistently good.
- Standards in Year 2 are good, and very good in Year 6.
- Achievement is good.
- Strong, highly focused leadership ensures all staff work to clear priorities.
- Very good use of assessment data has raised standards and improved achievement.
- Speaking and listening skills are well developed and contribute to pupils' learning.

## Commentary

50. Teaching and learning are consistently good, which ensures that pupils achieve well in all lessons. Planning identifies what pupils of different ability need to do to achieve their target. Planning for older pupils, particularly in Year 6, is often open enough to allow pupils to take ideas presented in a lesson to a higher level. Work in books indicates good opportunities for pupils to construct longer pieces of writing, to develop the skill of composition, to achieve effective structure in their writing, and to edit their own work to improve the overall impression. Teachers set a good pace in lessons and also respond well to pupils' contributions to class sessions. They raise open questions to develop pupils' thinking and encourage them to talk together in small groups before feeding back to the rest of the class. This is a particularly important strategy for involving all pupils, but particularly for those with special educational need and those learning English as an additional language, who particularly benefit from small group discussions and further explanation of the new ideas. Teachers use strategies such as "guided reading" and "guided writing" to help pupils read with comprehension and understand how to produce writing of high standards. Very clear explanations help pupils understand how texts are structured, how punctuation and the careful choice of vocabulary bring additional meaning to writing, and how there are conventional ways of writing for particular purposes. For example, in a good Year 4 lesson the teacher used the story "The BFG" to demonstrate how an author builds up drama and characterisation through the careful choice of vocabulary. In this way pupils are beginning to understand that much meaning needs to be inferred as they read. Good guided reading opportunities also direct attention to such detail and to a range of literary devices that pupils can then build into their own writing.
51. Standards have improved since the last inspection with the steady upward trend leading to well above average attainment, particularly in Year 6. Achievement is good in most classes, and this is because of the consistently good teaching and the very effective deployment of well-briefed learning support assistants, who contribute well in lessons. Planning takes account of pupils' attainment and all members of staff use pupils' personal targets to focus teaching at the appropriate levels.
52. Standards in speaking and listening are very good. Pupils listen well in lessons, answering questions and contributing ideas from their own experience and knowledge. Such personal contributions are well received by all members of staff and are incorporated into the lesson. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to talk together and discuss ideas before feeding back to the rest of the class. This good practice allows fuller involvement by all pupils. Newcomers to English were well supported by a specialist English language teacher and helped pupils to achieve well and contribute to discussions.
53. Reading standards are good. By Year 6 pupils demonstrate standards that are well above average, confidently using punctuation and authorial technique to bring additional



meaning to their reading. In writing, the majority have developed a good fluent handwriting style, strong spelling and punctuation skills, and an awareness of the importance of style for different purposes. For example, in a good Year 6 lesson pupils were learning the conventional style of newspaper reporting, recognising that an article needs to grab the reader's attention with striking headlines and in a short space of time answer key questions about the news item described. This kind of teaching helps build up pupils' writing repertoires, on which they can draw for a broad range of writing tasks. Teachers' marking is good overall, but some teachers encourage a real dialogue with pupils, linking marking to their personal targets and giving pointers for improvement. For example, a target set to improve speech punctuation was acknowledged in later marking. This is good practice and highly motivating.

54. The school has a strong co-ordinator who has a very clear vision of how the school can improve all aspects of the subject. She takes the lead in monitoring teaching and learning and overall achievement through classroom observation and regular checking of pupils' work in books. She analyses the end-of-year tests from Years 2 to 5 and uses this information to plan teaching priorities in each year group and for the general development of the subject. She is very responsive to national initiatives, which has resulted in recent developments in guided reading and writing. Current development is focusing on speaking and listening, and the implication for literacy across all other subjects identified by the new primary strategy "Excellence and Enjoyment". These priorities for a stronger emphasis on speaking and listening were evident in most lessons, and pupils practised and transferred their writing skills to other areas of the curriculum, for example, writing non-narrative accounts of historical events and reports of science investigations.

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

55. The skills learned in English are used very well in other areas of the curriculum. Extended pieces of writing and writing in different styles and for different reasons are a common feature of work in history, geography, art and design and science. High expectations in presentation and spelling are features of pupils' written work.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6 standards are well above average with an above average number of pupils achieving the more difficult Level 5.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well.
- The particularly strong features of the mathematics teaching are the attention paid to the development of mental skills and extending pupils mathematical vocabulary.
- The teaching of mathematics is consistently good across the school.
- The systems the school has in place to monitor pupils progress in mathematics are very good and contribute very well to the high standards pupils attain.

### Commentary

56. The standards achieved in mathematics by pupils in both 2003 and 2004 in Year 2 were at average levels. However given the overall ability of these pupils and the number who have special educational needs, their achievement was good and they were achieving their full potential. Current standards in Year 2 are average. Pupils in Year 6 in 2003 attained standards well above average levels and achieved well. An above average number of pupils achieved the more difficult Level 5. All pupils attained the expected Level 4 in the national tests in 2004 with a well above average number reaching Level 5. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is well above average. Pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are very well supported and this enables them to achieve well.
57. The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. Lessons are well planned and the teaching builds well on what pupils already know and have learned. Good attention is paid to providing a broad and balanced mathematical curriculum and this ensures that pupils make good progress in all areas of their mathematics work. Teachers have high expectations of the standards of work pupils will produce, behaviour is good and pupils focus well on their tasks. Good questioning skills help teachers probe pupils understanding and they are regularly asked to explain the methods they are using. A regular feature of the work is the solving of problems through applying their knowledge. Most pupils are eager to learn and have very good attitudes. Particular emphasis is placed on the development of mental mathematics skills so that by Year 6 most pupils are able to demonstrate very rapid recall of, for example, a range of multiplication tables. Pupils use mathematical vocabulary accurately in discussions. The quality of support for pupils is very good. The use of learning support assistants is very good, they are well trained and briefed and work hard. More able pupils are fully extended with suitable challenges and additional mathematics materials have been acquired to ensure that these pupils are fully stretched. Pupils work is regularly marked and pupils are expected to finish their work and where necessary complete corrections. The quality of teachers' comments is a little more variable. Where it is good it provides guidance to pupils on the areas where improvement can be made but in some classes there is little indication on how improvements can be made. Homework is used well to extend pupils learning.
58. The systems used to assess and record pupils' progress are very good. Regular assessments are made of how well pupils understand what they have been taught. Teachers' planning often records in a more informal way how well pupils have understood

the content of the lesson and future plans are often modified to ensure that all pupils are given every opportunity to understand often complex mathematical concepts. Where problems are identified remedial action is promptly taken. Records of pupils' results and the progress they are making are carefully completed and used in developing targets for pupils to improve their work.

59. The subject co-ordinator is very organised and knowledgeable. She has a clear overview of what is being taught and regularly sees colleagues planning. There is a well-considered action plan for the further development of the subject and a rigorous scrutiny of pupils work is completed. The results of the regular assessments are analysed so that attention can be re-focused on different aspects of the curriculum. The regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and the co-ordinators ability to offer good quality professional advice has enabled the school to raise the overall quality of teaching of mathematics.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

60. Pupils' mathematics skills and knowledge are used well in other subjects. They gain a good understanding of the passage of time in history through the use of increasingly complex timelines. Teachers used this well in the limited number of history lessons seen. Pupils use co-ordinates in geography to locate features on a map and understand negative numbers when measuring temperature in science. Suitable use is made of information and communication technology in the practice of mathematics skills and was a regular feature of some lessons. There was however little evidence of the pupils using databases and spreadsheets in mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- By the time pupils reach the age of eleven, standards are well above average.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning, engage very well with their tasks and display enthusiasm for their investigations.
- The skills of scientific enquiry are taught well.
- Very good assessment procedures enable teachers to monitor pupils' achievements and set targets.

### **Commentary**

61. Standards of work are currently average in Year 2 and well above average by Year 6. Overall, pupils achieve very well. The emphasis placed by all the teachers in developing the pupils' skills of investigation enables pupils to gain a good understanding of scientific enquiry. Pupils throughout the juniors have well-developed skills of observing, predicting, constructing a fair test and controlling variables. Pupils also gain a good understanding of the subject knowledge, which they then apply to their investigations. Those pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by the learning support assistants. As a result, these pupils, as well as those from ethnic minority backgrounds, achieve very well.
62. Learning and teaching are good throughout the school. This consistently good teaching, combined with some instances of very good teaching, accounts for the very good

standards. Planning is good and provides a good level of challenge for most of the pupils. All teachers have high expectations of pupils and consequently behaviour is very good. Pupils listen attentively to what their teachers say and do as they are asked. During their investigations, pupils work well together, helping each other as required. In one very good Year 6 lesson, all the pupils were fully engaged in their experiment investigating the effects of mixing a variety of solids with water and vinegar, discussing the results in their groups and recording the outcomes. The teachers' skills of questioning are well developed and they effectively promote the pupils' thinking about scientific knowledge and investigation. Teachers sometimes extend pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy through work in science. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, very good links were made with maths through measuring, ordering data, making graphs and developing pupils' mathematical vocabulary. Computers are used to support some aspects of the pupils' learning, but opportunities are not always taken to use the computers to help pupils learn.

63. The co-ordinator is recently appointed to the post and is enthusiastic to continue to develop the subject to an even higher standard. The system of monitoring achievements through testing and assessments is very good and allows the school to set targets for the pupils and to ensure that they achieve as well as they can. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and the provision of constructive feedback has also been an important factor in establishing the quality of learning and teaching presently throughout the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average.
- There is a good curriculum structure in place for the development and monitoring of pupils' computer skills.
- The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and is committed to raising standards.
- Opportunities are not always taken to use computers in other areas of the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

64. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from ethnic minority backgrounds, achieve well and by the time the pupils leave the school, standards are above average. In Year 2, standards are average. It is not however, entirely clear as to the extent to which computer skills have been acquired outside the school.
65. Seven-year-old pupils have a satisfactory understanding of many of the uses of the computer and show confident use of the keyboard and mouse. Most pupils of this age can also save and load their work, type words and sentences, change font size, insert capital letters and begin to present their information in charts. They also use their work on computers to draw and colour pictures, such as creating a calendar based on the artwork of Mondrian and designing Joseph's 'coat of many colours'. At the age of nine, many pupils can develop images using repeating patterns and many are also able to evaluate information from data entered into the computer. By the time they leave the school they are able to produce their own power point presentations to include movement, sound and imported graphics. They can also use spreadsheets to carry out calculations and to

explore the effects of changing the data. Pupils also confidently use the internet to search for information and to research a variety of topics. Pupils have little experience, however, of using their computers to control and monitor.

66. During the past three years the development of the use of computers has been very good and the school is now in a position where pupils can achieve even higher standards. The improvements over this period of time have been brought about through several factors. The headteacher's and the coordinator's clear vision for development of the subject has resulted in the school investing finances into the purchase of several computers which are networked within each classroom. The members of staff have also engaged in training activities which have raised the level of their skills. The school has adopted a scheme of work that provides a well-balanced structure for teaching and provides the staff with a very useful method of assessing pupils' achievements and tracking their progress. This enables teachers to ensure that pupils' skills of using the computer are monitored and that pupils are taught the range of computer skills. An appropriate system is in place to monitor pupils' access to the internet.
67. The coordinator is very enthusiastic to continue to improve upon standards and has developed her skills in the subject to a very good level. She now monitors the quality of pupils' work throughout the school and has helped the staff to develop their own skills. She has produced a clear improvement plan which priorities issues for development. These priorities include the purchase and use of portable laptop computers and the development of interactive white boards. She is aware, however, that the continued improvement of staff skills and the full integration of the scheme of work and assessment procedures are still aspects for development. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work on computers and actively take part in the computer club organised by the co-ordinator.

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

68. Information and communication technology is used to support the learning of pupils in a variety of other subjects and is sometimes used very well. Year 6 pupils design and produce their own 'homework folders' and use the computers to research different religious faiths. Even the youngest pupils use their computers to help their understanding of aspects of numeracy and literacy. Not all teachers, however, always take opportunities to promote pupils' learning through information and communication technology.

### **HUMANITIES**

69. In both **history** and **geography**, pupils are able to demonstrate a good depth of knowledge. In history, for example, they are able to describe the life of children in Victorian times and talk eloquently about the conditions in the workhouse, comparing this with life in a rich household. They know a range of reasons why the Romans invaded this country and why their occupation of this country ended. Pupils' geographical knowledge is good. They are able to describe the symbols on an ordnance survey map and say what each meant. In a good link between the two subjects pupils could not only discuss aspects of life in Ancient Egypt but also knew about the importance of the annual flooding of the River Nile. This was linked well to pupils understanding of the water cycle and the development of rivers. Their knowledge of their own local area is good and they discuss the similarities and differences between their own town and towns and villages in the Peak district of Derbyshire. This involved the collection and interpretation of a variety of evidence.
70. Pupils' historical and geographical vocabulary is developed well and they use a good range of accurate terminology to describe events and locations. Particular emphasis is placed on the development of writing skills. Opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces are regularly

provided and this helps to raise standards in writing. Pupils in several classes use information and communication technology to find information on different aspects of the subjects and are beginning to use this more imaginatively to present their work. The use of information and communication technology is however, not consistent across the school. Pupils have a good range of well-organised reference material in the library but facilities are not conducive to independent learning and study, despite the best efforts of the school.

71. There were too few opportunities to observe lessons in history or geography to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching. An examination of the timetable and teachers planning indicates that the subjects are a regular part of the timetable. Good use is made, for example, of historical artefacts and in a good lesson in Year 3, pupils examined a wide range of Roman pottery, focusing on what it was used for and the quality of the items. Teachers are beginning to record the quality of pupils work in these subjects and record their progress.

## **Religious Education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have a good understanding of many aspects of Christianity but their knowledge of other faiths is limited.
- The syllabus used by the school provides a very good structure for planning.
- The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is committed to raising standards.

## **Commentary**

72. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those expected by the local agreed syllabus. Achievement is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from ethnic minority backgrounds. This is similar to the findings at the last inspection.
73. By the time pupils leave the school they have developed a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and have experienced aspects of other religious beliefs. They have a satisfactory knowledge of the stories, special artefacts and symbols of Christianity and some of the pupils can talk very well about how it affects their own lives. Pupils' understanding of other faiths, however, is more limited. This is because the local agreed syllabus has been changed in structure throughout the school and the teaching of other world religions has not been in sufficient depth to help pupils understanding. Although the school uses the services of some parents and other visitors from different cultures, the number and variety of visitors is limited. There are however, good links with representatives of one of the local churches who support the pupils' assemblies very well. Sometimes, pupils visit the local church, but visits to places of worship of other faiths are limited.
74. The syllabus used by the school provides a very good structure for the planning of lessons. The syllabus is now in place in all year groups and the teaching provides pupils with opportunities to learn about faiths other than Christianity. Pupils of Year 6 research Hinduism, Buddhism as well as Christianity. Although their research has recently begun, many have acquired a sound understanding of some of the fundamental aspects of all these faiths and respond confidently to the teacher's questions. They are learning to compare the different

faiths, recognising the differences and the similarities, and show a good understanding of the importance of religious symbols. Younger pupils are also introduced to different faiths. Pupils in the Reception class talk with their teacher about how the world was made and how people of different faiths have different beliefs.

75. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic to improve upon pupils' achievement and has produced a plan for development. She is aware that the syllabus needs to continue to be implemented rigorously and that the pupils would gain a firmer understanding of other faiths through extending the range of visits and visitors.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. **Art and design, design and technology**, and **music** were not a focus of the inspection. It was not possible to reach any judgements on the quality of teaching in these subjects or of provision and standards in music because of the time constraints during the inspection.
77. From the earliest stages in **art and design**, when children are in the Foundation Stage, attention is paid to close observation and the use of paint. This could be seen to very good effect in the paintings of watermelon produced by children of this age. By Year 2, pupils are able to produce carefully observed studies of natural objects using crayon. They use this knowledge well when producing collage and prints following the ideas of William Morris and Andy Goldsworthy. Skills continue to be developed well throughout the school. Discussions with pupils indicate that skills are effectively taught in all their lessons in **art and design** and in **design and technology**. Examples of this appear in the quality of work in printing, sewing, in observational work and in work using clay where good attention is paid to the quality of finish. Pupils are familiar with the work of different famous artists and not only produce work in the style of these but produce critical appraisals of their work, extending their writing skills well. Attention is also paid to larger scale art and pupils are able to describe the three dimensional work they have completed. To extend pupils art experiences useful creative arts days have been held where additional art experiences such as weaving, mosaic work and ink drawing have taken place across the school.
78. Photographic evidence, samples of pupils' work and discussions with pupils provide good levels of evidence of the quantity and quality of pupils work in **design and technology**. Pupils know and understand the process of designing and samples of this work illustrate this well. Care and attention is obviously paid to evaluating the quality of the work. The necessary skills and safe practices are well taught, this being confirmed by pupils. A full range of activities forms the design and technology curriculum and includes food technology. This includes the schools involvement in the healthy schools project and the design of a fruit salad and the design and construction of a pizza with the help of a local firm. Good attention is paid to the quality of products and pupils understand the importance of this. Older pupils are set investigative tasks that test their understanding of design and building. Pupils were asked to make a bridge using a set amount of materials and to test its load bearing capacity. This tested both their ingenuity and their understanding of the principles of making a strong structure and conducting a fair test.
79. There were insufficient opportunities to observe the quality of teaching to make a secure judgement on its quality but an examination of teachers' planning and discussions with pupils were completed.
80. In **physical education**, although only a few lessons were observed during the inspection, the evidence indicates that provision is satisfactory. The school uses a published scheme and this provides a very good structure to the lessons. An assessment process

is part of the scheme and this allows the teachers to monitor effectively the progress of the pupils. Pupils experience gymnastics, games, dance and swimming. Pupils throughout Key Stage 2 attend the residential camps organised by the school and take part in a variety of outdoor activities such as archery and orienteering.

81. During their gymnastics lessons, pupils show a level of body control and a range of stretching, curling, movement and balance skills that are typical for pupils of this age. The pupils work together well and enjoy their lessons. The teaching in the one games lesson with pupils of the Reception class was exemplary and pupils achieved very well. There was an excellent progression of skills as the pupils engaged fully in their throwing activity. Pupils were challenged very effectively and the teacher used praise to encourage and motivate pupils to achieve extremely well.
82. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic to develop the subject further and he and other teachers offer a good range of clubs for pupils to attend. These include football, netball, lacrosse, cross-country, gymnastics, athletics and gymnastics.

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

Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is **very good**. Standards of pupils work are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The schools programme of personal development including sex and drugs mis-use education is effective.
- Pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to develop very good relationships with other children and adults through sporting and creative activities.

### **Commentary**

83. The pupils are provided with a wide range of additional activities that effectively enhance their personal development. A wide range of sporting activities effectively extends their social skills through competition, sometimes against other local schools. Their understanding of the role of citizens is extended well through visits by, for example, a local magistrate. The teaching of the health education programme is supported well by the schools links with the local health service as well as by the schools science curriculum.
84. The school places considerable emphasis on the idea of consideration and care for others. Relationships between children and adults are, as a result very good and firmly based on respect and trust. A good example of this is the help provided for younger children by pupils in Years 5 and 6 both at lunchtime and listening to children read. Pupils report that bullying and harassment are very rare. Displays around the school show that pupils raise considerable sums of money for a range of charities.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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