

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NETHER GREEN INFANT SCHOOL**

Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107029

Headteacher: Ms Bridget Ball

Lead inspector: Mrs R J Andrew

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 267374

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 4 – 7  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 223

School address: Stumperlowe Park Road  
Sheffield  
Postcode: S10 3QP

Telephone number: 0114 2304094  
Fax number: 0114 2309814

Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of Mr Gareth Wroe  
governors:

Date of previous April 1999  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is an average size compared to other primary schools. The backgrounds of the majority of pupils are advantaged both materially and socially. This is reflected in the well-below average free school meal eligibility. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs is well below average but the proportion of those with statements outlining specific special educational needs is broadly average. The needs of these children are wide-ranging and are related to learning, speech and language, hearing, physical, autism and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is higher than average (these pupils speak Chinese or Arabic at home) but only three are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is above average.

The school is involved in the Shared Learning Network and Primary Leadership Programme. It had its Basic Skills Quality Mark endorsed in 2003 and was given a School Achievement Award in 2001.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21460	Rachael Andrew	Lead inspector	Science Religious education Geography History The Foundation Stage
19443	Nancy Walker	Lay inspector	
32646	Yolande Hugo	Team inspector	English Art and design Music Physical education
10144	Mary Marriott	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Personal, social and health education

The inspection contractor was:

peakschoolhaus  
BPS Business Centre  
Brake Lane  
Boughton  
Nottinghamshire  
NG22 9HQ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>10</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>12</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>30</b>



## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school with some very good features.** Leadership and management are very good overall. Teaching and learning are good overall and there is much that is very good so pupils achieve well and standards are high. Pupils' behaviour, attitudes and their personal development are all very good. The school gives good value for money.

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

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the future and is strongly supported by the senior team and governors.
- Pupils' achieve well, very well in English, because of skilful teaching and careful checking of their progress but there are occasions when higher-attaining pupils could do even better in mathematics and science.
- This is a happy and harmonious school where pupils work very well independently and co-operatively.
- The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs and so they make good progress.
- The school makes sure that all pupils, whatever their aptitude, background, race or ability are treated according to their needs and included in all it provides.
- Careful planning ensures that visits and visitors enliven what is taught.
- Teachers tend to be too prescriptive when they show pupils how to record their work instead of encouraging a range of different ways.

Improvement since the last inspection in 1999 has been good. The school has maintained high standards. There have been several significant improvements where weaknesses were identified in the last report especially the development of the Foundation Stage curriculum for reception age children and the presentation of pupils' work.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The table below shows that standards compare favourably with all schools and with those in similar circumstances. The apparent dip in standards in mathematics results from the way in which children were assessed in 2004. In that year the school's own assessments were given greater weight than tests. The school felt that one or two pupils who gained the above average level 3 in mathematics tests were not really secure at this level and this explains the difference. The results in 2005 are equally good but national comparisons are not yet available.

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	A	A	A	B

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

**Pupils achieve well. They achieve very well in English**, which has been the focus for school improvement this year. There is no significant difference in the achievement of different ability groups, classes, boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs and those whose home language is not English. All do well, although higher-attaining pupils could sometimes make even better progress in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence shows standards for pupils in Year 2 are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards in information and communication technology and religious education are also above those achieved by pupils of similar age in other schools. High standards were observed in aspects of art and design, design and technology, music, history and physical education although these subjects were not inspected in depth.

Children in the reception classes, in the Foundation Stage, achieve well in language, communication and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. They achieve very well in personal, social and emotional development. Most children are on course to reach the goals set for the end of reception and more than half are on course to go beyond them. No judgements were made about children's physical development because of insufficient evidence.

**Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good overall**, with particular strengths in moral and social development. Pupils' attitudes to school, to their teachers and to each other, their attendance and behaviour are all very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.** Teaching is good and there is much that is very good throughout the school. Teaching is skilful and lessons capture pupils' interest. Teachers have a good grasp of the subjects of the curriculum and teach new learning effectively. First-hand learning, investigations, well-chosen visits and visitors bring the good curriculum to life. Carefully planned work for higher-attaining pupils is not always introduced soon enough in mathematics and science. When this happens pupils spend too long doing work that they find easy. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to record their work in a way that encourages them to be creative and to find out more. The school is able to guide and support its pupils very well because it keeps a careful check on individual pupil's academic and personal progress. In this way, when pupils face problems or are in danger of falling behind, action is taken quickly. Teaching assistants are effective, particularly in their support of pupils' learning. Encouraged by the school, parents play a vital role in the success of their children's learning. The school works very well with other schools to improve the way it works and to ensure a smooth transition between different stages of education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are very good.** Leadership is the stronger element with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders all playing a successful part in upholding standards. The headteacher's clarity of vision and sense of purpose are widely shared and give a strong steer to the work of the school. Although management is good, some aspects of the school's evaluation and the checks it makes on its work are not as rigorous as they might be and leaders are not always clear how the success of their plans are to be measured. This prevents them from making the best possible use of this work. The governance of the school is good. All statutory requirements are met. Governors are committed to supporting the school and do so very well. They are

becoming more involved in contributing to checking how successful the school is but there is further to go.

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

Most parents are very pleased with the work of the school and their children's progress but a minority has reservations on a range of issues including uniform, homework, handwriting and the allocation of children to the mixed-age class. Parents have strongly held but differing views on these issues. The inspection team found no evidence for concern in any of these areas. Almost all pupils like school and show it in their enthusiasm for learning and very good attendance.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- encourage independence and provide further challenges, especially for higher-attaining pupils, by introducing harder work sooner and asking pupils to organise and record work in their own way when appropriate.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils achieve well overall and very well in English. Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. They are above average in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education and some aspects of art and design, design and technology, music, history and physical education. Children in the Foundation Stage do well from an above average starting point and the majority exceed the goals set for their age by the end of reception. They make very good gains in personal, social and emotional development.

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

- Good achievement in the core subjects of mathematics, science, ICT and religious education and very good in English, springs from knowledgeable and effective teaching but higher-attaining pupils could sometimes do even better in mathematics and science.
- Pupils of different ability, boys and girls, those with special educational needs and those whose home language is not English, all do well because the school takes good account of individual needs and tracks progress very well.
- Although foundation subjects (non-core subjects) were not inspected in depth, there is evidence of some high standards and good achievement in art and design, design and technology, history, singing, recorder playing and gymnastics.

#### **Commentary**

1. Results in reading, writing and mathematics have been well above average for many years. The school has done well to ensure that there is an improving trend that keeps pace with the majority of schools. Early indications from tests and teacher assessments for 2005 show that results in reading and writing were similar to 2004 but those for mathematics were slightly lower. Teacher assessments in science were well above average last year and pupils have done slightly better this year. Inspection evidence indicates well above average standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics and science. Within this positive picture of achievement, there are times when higher-attaining pupils could do even better in mathematics and science lessons. There are no significant differences in the achievement of different ability groups, classes, pupils with special educational needs and pupils whose home language is not English. There are often slight differences in the results that boys and girls attain in different years but no discernible pattern. Inspection evidence indicates that boys and girls do equally well. The school keeps a careful check on pupils' progress so that those making slower than expected progress can be supported quickly. However, the school's overview of the achievement of different groups in Year 1 is not as clear as in Year 2 although the school has a secure picture of individual progress.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.3 (18.2)	15.8 (15.7)

writing	16.7 (17.1)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.7 (18.2)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 75 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- In ICT and religious education, standards are above average and pupils achieve well. In ICT pupils are competent in presenting information, using computer programs to support work in other subjects and controlling robotic toys. In religious education pupils have a good grasp of facts about the major faiths, including celebrations, and they understand how religion affects people's actions and daily lives. Above average standards were also noted in aspects of other subjects. Pupils sing well and those in Year 2 all read standard musical notation and play the recorder. Pupils are knowledgeable about history especially relating to visits to local heritage sites. Pupils in Year 2 have a good grasp of historical enquiry skills. Their work in design and technology, for example of wheeled vehicles, is of a high standard and there are examples of high standards in art, for example pastel work in Year 1. Effective subject leadership contributes strongly to high standards.
- Children in the reception classes in the Foundation Stage get a good start to their school lives and achieve well. Good teaching that takes account of individual needs and well-planned activities underpin their progress. Their learning builds successfully from an above average start and more than half of them are on course to exceed the goals set for the end of reception in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. They make particularly good gains in personal, social and emotional development. No judgements were made about physical development because it was not possible to gain sufficient evidence during the days of the inspection.
- Pupils with special educational needs, in all year groups, make good progress because of the attention given to assessing and planning for their needs. Pupils with English as an additional language also do well. Those with little or no English on arrival make steady gains in language learning and good gains in mathematics and subjects where a lack of English is not such a barrier to learning. Pupils whose mother tongue is not English but who are more fluent in English make the same good progress as other pupils. These pupils are well represented in higher-attaining groups.

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

Attendance is very good. Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to school. The school promotes pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, very well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school places a strong and effective emphasis on pupils' personal development.
- Pupils work with concentration and are keen to learn because learning is interesting and teachers have high expectations.
- Pupils work very well independently and co-operatively.
- There are very good relationships throughout the school.

### **Commentary**

5. High standards in all these aspects have been maintained since the last inspection. The school's programme of personal and social education, the daily act of worship and the status given to 'circle time' when pupils sit around their teachers to share ideas and feelings, contribute very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Carefully planned sessions enable children to explore themes such as bullying, caring and working together. The planning of experiences in the curriculum to broaden pupils' knowledge of different cultures is also effective. Although good overall, opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual insights, for example through the lives of famous people in the past and through music, are made but not planned into the curriculum from the outset with spiritual development in mind. Some teachers seize chances as they arise but this is not consistently so. This was noted at the time of the last inspection.
6. Classrooms are purposeful places and teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Lively teaching and interesting activities contribute strongly to pupils' very good attitudes to work. From an early stage in their reception year, children are expected to persevere with activities and to co-operate with others and they do so. Very good progress is made in these aspects so that, by the time pupils leave the school, they can be relied upon to work for long periods without direct supervision, to work closely with others, often in pairs, to find things out for themselves and to clarify their thinking. In this way individual and group work, away from the direct guidance of the teacher, produces further gains in learning.
7. Relationships between staff and between staff and pupils are very good and form the basis for a harmonious and happy school. The aims of the school with reference to the respect and value to be shown to pupils are explicit and evident in all its work. Warm and friendly relationships between pupils of different backgrounds, races and ages are the norm and there is no evidence of persistent oppressive behaviour of any kind. There have been no exclusions. Pupils with special educational needs, pupils from ethnic minorities and those new to the school benefit from the support of their classmates as well as adults so that they make friends quickly and are very well integrated into the school.
8. Attendance is well above average and pupils are punctual.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	3.6
National data	5.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good and there is much that is very good. Well-planned visits and carefully chosen visitors help to bring what is taught to life. The school tracks pupils' progress frequently and thoroughly and is able to identify individual pupils in danger of falling behind and provide appropriate support. Parents are strong partners in the learning process and support the school's endeavours very well.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good. There is much that is very good in all years. Assessment systems are very good and are used well by teachers to plan the next steps for their classes.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been improvements in teaching and learning in the reception classes where the successful introduction of the Foundation Stage curriculum is more suited to the needs of young children.
- Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn and plan interesting work that makes lessons successful.
- The wide range of effective teaching methods contributes to very good achievement in all aspects of English.
- Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs and those with English as their second or additional language very well through precise, workable individual education plans.
- Teachers use the information available from checks on pupils' learning well to plan the next steps, although extension work, especially for higher attaining pupils in mathematics and science, is not always introduced soon enough.
- There is a strong and successful emphasis on investigative work in science and mathematics that brings lessons to life.
- Pupils use their skills in reading, writing and speaking very well in many lessons to learn and report about many subjects. Too often, however, teachers tell children exactly how the work is to be written up and this tends to hinder creativity and challenge and occasionally impedes progress.

### Commentary

9. The quality of teaching is much the same as at the time of the last inspection. The school has maintained strong points well. Teaching and learning for the youngest children, judged as satisfactory last time, are now good. Much work by senior managers and the early years leader has gone into bringing this about through the successful introduction of the Foundation Stage curriculum. There is now a stronger emphasis on first-hand learning and a good balance of teacher-led work and children choosing from good quality activities.
10. During the inspection most of the teaching observed was good or better. This compares favourably with what is seen in most other schools. There was much that was very good, mostly in English and mathematics, and this is reflected in pupils' work over the year. It supports good progress and enables pupils of different ability, pupils with special educational needs and those who do not speak English at home to achieve well overall. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching in English and science, although impeding progress in the lessons seen, is not typical of the work in pupils' books, where good progress has been maintained over the year.

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	10 (32%)	15 (48%)	4 (13%)	2 (6%)	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.*

11. Teachers use a wide range of effective teaching methods, especially in English. They know their subjects well and teach new learning skilfully, choosing activities that build well on whole-class teaching. They make sure through careful questioning that they draw in all pupils, not just those who volunteer information and ideas. They are clear about what pupils should learn during the lesson and share this with pupils, providing a strong sense of purpose. In English, in particular, the wide range of teaching methods supports very good achievement in reading, writing, speaking and listening.
12. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards targets set for them because of the carefully focused teaching. Teaching assistants are well trained, receive good guidance and are involved in planning so they know how to support pupils' learning very effectively in lessons. Pupils who do not speak English as a first language at home are supported well because teachers and teaching assistants work closely with the specialist teaching assistant who visits weekly. Together they help children to gain a working vocabulary and to understand the key words necessary to make progress in other subjects. In the initial stages of English language learning pupils make steady gains while making much better progress, sometimes exceptional, in mathematics. This indicates that the school strives hard to ensure that pupils do as well as they can where English is not such a barrier to learning.
13. Teachers have a good deal of useful information at their fingertips about what pupils know, understand and can do because of the school's highly efficient systems for collecting and collating this information. Information is nearly always used well to provide challenging next steps that move the learning on for pupils of different ability. This does not always work well enough, however, for the most able pupils because extension activities are not introduced quickly enough. Sometimes in mathematics and science in particular the most able pupils do work that is easy for them before embarking on more demanding tasks. On occasions there is no time for pupils to get to grips with the work planned specifically for them and this hinders progress. Some most able pupils say that they find "sums easy but problems difficult" and are keen to get onto this work. The marking of work highlights what pupils do well and so encourages them. It does not often indicate how to improve or what the next steps are.
14. Pupils find investigative work interesting and exciting and enjoy the first-hand experiences it brings. Excellent resources often support investigative work. For example pupils learned much from their study of plants and the life-cycle of butterflies in science because of the quality of the natural resources and supporting reference material. In mathematics and science investigative work enlivens teaching and learning and extends pupils' thinking and understanding. The recording of work, especially of investigative work, tends to be narrow in range and over-directed by the teachers. This sometimes restricts pupils' creativity, dampens their enthusiasm and limits progress because it prevents higher-attaining pupils in particular from taking charge of their learning.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a good curriculum for its pupils and provides everything that it should. There is very good enrichment through visits and visitors. The school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

- Pupils are very well prepared academically and socially for transfer to junior school.
- A very good range of visits and visitors successfully extends pupils' learning.
- Opportunities are missed for pupils to extend their numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects.

## Commentary

15. Since the last inspection the good provision has been maintained and further improvements have been made, especially to the provision for the youngest children. Throughout the school pupils benefit from a wide range of good quality learning opportunities to ensure that they achieve well. The curriculum is well managed with all subjects of the National Curriculum being taught. The literacy curriculum is particularly good because it has been a focus for school action, especially to improve writing. This is reflected in the steady increase in the number of high achievers. The Foundation Stage curriculum national guidance that has been introduced since the last inspection has been developed well. Planning ensures that activities match children's needs well and this helps them gain in confidence and make good progress. The learning environment is organised to provide purposeful activities, although some aspects of the accommodation limit the range of activities, such as painting that can be provided on a continuous basis. Remodelling of this area begins shortly.
16. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and is firmly based on the assessment of needs. These pupils make good progress towards targets set for them because of the carefully focused teaching. Good support is provided for children whose home language is not English so that they can benefit from all the school has to offer. Teachers and teaching assistants plan and adapt the work so that it is accessible to all.
17. The school provides a very good range of visits to places of interest linked to work in subjects like history and geography. These do much to broaden pupils' awareness and understanding of life in other times. Opportunities to take part in music festivals and events develop pupils' musical and social skills well. Pupils also have opportunities to lead the act of worship where their confidence and expertise develop well. Visits from individuals who are experts in their field or who can offer something of particular interest that supports pupils' learning, and groups of skilled performers such as the African Drummers, contribute much to the curriculum and provide a window on the world beyond the classroom. The arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education are good. Special weeks are set aside to promote pupils' awareness of health and well-being. Overall the school's curriculum prepares pupils very well, both academically and socially, for junior school.
18. Opportunities for pupils to extend their language and literacy skills are plentiful and developmental. Pupils' competency in English contributes to high standards in other subjects. Although adequate, opportunities for pupils to use and develop their numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects are sometimes missed because they are not always clearly identified in planning to guide teaching.
19. The school's resources are satisfactory overall. Whilst the school has a computer suite, it is frequently unoccupied. As computers in classrooms are scarce this leads to missed opportunities for pupils to use their competent computer skills to support other subjects. The potential for learning in the wildlife area is not fully realised although on the whole the school grounds and outdoor play areas are used effectively.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The school continues to provide a good standard of care for its pupils. Parents are especially pleased with this aspect of the school's work. The quality of the support and guidance for pupils has improved even further from the positive picture found when the school was last inspected and it is now very good. Despite the young age of the pupils here, the school listens to their views and involves them well in its work and future development.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The extent to which each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with adults and each other in school is very good indeed
- The thorough way in which the school tracks progress in learning contributes to a picture of all groups of pupils achieving well.
- The school ensures the personal and emotional needs of every child are very well provided for.
- Even though policies to ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment both in and out of school are very thorough, the practice of these policies sometimes lacks rigour.

## **Commentary**

20. Right from the start, the school does whatever it reasonably can to get to know its pupils and make them feel at ease. Induction arrangements are very good, enabling children to meet staff and peers before they start school and providing opportunities for them to experience different aspects of school to suit their emotional needs. The school recognised that a recent over-subscribed induction session was not ideal for all and so immediately made alterations for future events. The school is a very welcoming, calm and orderly environment where pupils feel secure in themselves. Staff are very skilled at joining in with pupils during recreation activities and they are vigilant in ensuring they know the whereabouts of every pupil throughout the day. Parents are particularly appreciative of this. Pupils clearly enjoy very good relationships with adults and their peers in school and feel reassured that they can always ask someone for help when they need it.
21. In addition to staff knowing pupils very well and taking an interest in them, they keep very thorough records of pupils' personal development. As a result, they, and subsequent teachers, know the likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses, of each pupil. Again, the vast majority of parents cite this as the key reason why they are so highly satisfied with this school. Academic progress is tracked rigorously so that class teachers can see those making the gains expected, those whose progress is even better and those who are in danger of falling behind. This enables them to investigate why this is so and to give the necessary support and guidance. The school provides a very good level of care for pupils with special educational needs and those at the early stages of English language learning. It has a very good level of contact with a range of support agencies and uses advice and guidance given very effectively to promote pupils' progress.
22. Written procedures to ensure pupils work and play in a healthy and safe environment are very thorough. The headteacher has a very good understanding of all aspects of these, including child protection procedures, and she has high expectations of her staff. First aid arrangements, criticised at the last inspection, have been improved to

include a rota of trained first aid staff on duty at all break times. Site inspections are very regular and adequately done but a few potential hazards have been overlooked or not acted upon as promptly as they should have been. Risk assessments on visits out of school are adequate but do not take sufficient account of exceptional circumstances such as coach breakdown or extreme weather conditions.

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

The positive picture found when the school was last inspected has improved even further. The school now enjoys a very good partnership with parents and other schools and has good links with the community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school welcomes and involves all parents very well in their child's development and keeps them well informed.
- There is very good support from the vast majority of parents in all that the school does.
- Very good links with pre-school settings and junior schools contribute to pupils' achievements.

### **Commentary**

23. The school values its partnership with parents highly and works hard to make the school an open and welcoming place for them. For example, every morning before school starts, parents are invited into classes to join in activities with their children, to look at work or to chat to staff. Very many parents take full advantage of this opportunity to get involved in their children's learning and to exchange relevant information. As a result, the start of the day is a very pleasant, relaxed and very supportive time for all concerned.
24. Parental opinion is regularly sought on aspects of school life and the headteacher does all she can to ensure any concerns or complaints are fully resolved. Even so, a few parents do not feel their views are listened to. Parents are kept well informed about the school, about methods to enhance learning at home, and about pupils' standards and progress. Workshops, for example to show parents how mathematics and science are taught, are particularly successful. Information on what is being taught is not always readily accessible to all parents, in particular those who are not able to come into the classrooms. There is a very good level of communication with parents of pupils who have special educational needs, so that parents know exactly how the school is helping their child to meet individual targets and how they can help at home.
25. The support that nearly all parents give to the school and their children is very significant and contributes substantially to the high standards that pupils achieve, both academically and personally. For example, they consistently achieve very high levels of attendance and punctuality. Very many parents take a keen interest in their children's work and development and knowledgeable support and enhance the work of the school, for example through the loan of books and objects to use in lessons and by keenly attending information and workshop sessions held by the school. In addition, parents raise considerable funds each year through the very active parent/teacher association.

26. The school has very good links with many of the pre-school settings from which pupils transfer. As a result, most children move into full-time education smoothly and happily settle down to learning right from the start. The school works very well with a number of junior schools, sharing best practice. This has contributed to rising standards, especially in the content of pupils' writing in English and prepares pupils very well for their next stage of learning both academically and personally.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall leadership and management of the school are **very good**. Leadership is very good. The headteacher provides a clear lead and is very well supported by a strong senior team. The school is well managed. It is very well supported by a hard-working governing body that provides effective governance for the school.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides strong leadership rooted in a concern for high standards so pupils achieve well.
- The school has clarity of vision, which enables it to improve systematically.
- The school is very committed to inclusion and concern for the needs of individuals.
- A relatively new governing body has established effective governance in a very short time but does not always have the depth of knowledge needed to be critical.
- Strategic planning identifies the right priorities and goals for the future development of the school but it is not always clear how success can be measured.
- The school is managed effectively and financial management of the school is very good.

## Commentary

27. The headteacher's leadership is a clear strength of the school. She has very clear ideas about how the school can make further progress, leads the school very well and has created a very committed and mutually supportive team. She successfully involves others in planning for progress and has created very good unity of purpose among her colleagues. As a result the school has maintained academic standards where they were already high, whilst improving achievement elsewhere, for example in the reception classes. She leads by example and her daily presence throughout the school, checking on and encouraging individual children, is influential. The school has a very good ethos for learning underpinned by highly efficient systems for assessing individual pupils' attainment and progress. These contribute strongly to pupils' good achievement and high standards. Staff are fully committed to providing the best that they can for all the pupils. Despite being a popular school, with well above average results, there is no complacency. The headteacher is ambitious for pupils' success and keen to learn from good practice elsewhere. Very good links with other schools demonstrate her commitment to ensuring this happens.
28. The headteacher, governors and members of the senior leadership team have a shared view of where they want the school to go. Good steps have been taken to enlist the support of colleagues as the school strives to realise its vision founded on the principle of 'Everyone Teaches and Everyone Learns'. The school improvement plan clearly identifies the right priorities for the future development of the school, although it is sometimes difficult for it to evaluate its success and the success of subject action plans in terms of impact on learning. This is because of the lack of measures by which improvement can be judged. Performance management is used effectively to promote school improvement and successfully underpins the good quality of education. The headteacher rightly places a strong emphasis on the professional development of her colleagues and this links directly to the school's priorities.
29. The commitment to the inclusion of all pupils is very good. This contributes strongly to the ethos of the school. All pupils are valued and have full access to all that the school offers so pupils with special educational needs invariably make good progress in their learning and personal development. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils who are new to learning English are also supported effectively so that they achieve at the same rate as other pupils. Planned improvements to the accommodation to secure better access for the disabled are well underway.

30. The headteacher receives very good support from the senior leadership team, particularly through their roles in taking charge of the school's assessment systems and responsibility for special educational needs. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and all subjects are managed effectively. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together and all have a clear understanding of their roles.
31. The day-to-day management of the school is very good. Its routines are straightforward and understood by all. A programme of monitoring and evaluation is established and is effective in identifying strengths and weaknesses, although the monitoring of teaching and learning is not always rigorous enough in identifying and communicating areas for improvement. The tracking of each pupil's progress is very well established and evaluated very well in terms of individual progress. Analysis and comparison of achievement for different groups of children are developing but not yet secure. Overall the school has developed a healthy culture of self-review and has very good potential to develop this further.
32. Many governors are relatively new to their role. Very good induction and access to training has helped to establish effective governance in a relatively short time. Governors are very well organised, fulfil all of their statutory duties and make a good contribution to the strategic leadership of the school. For example, each of their committees has a three-year action plan linked to the priorities in the school improvement plan. They meet regularly and have a good working knowledge of the school. The headteacher receives very good support from governors. The governing body is developing a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development but is not yet in a strong enough position to always ask the right questions of the school.
33. The headteacher and governors have a very good understanding of how to manage finances to help the school achieve its educational priorities. The relatively high balance in the table below is earmarked for improvements to the building. Governors make every effort to get the best possible value for spending decisions made. The school provides good value for money.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	591,038
Total expenditure	558,127
Expenditure per pupil	2,525

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	35,672
Balance carried forward to the next	68,583

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

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

34. Children get a good start in the reception classes. Induction arrangements ensure a smooth transition from home and a range of pre-school settings. A strong and successful emphasis is placed on children's personal development so they settle quickly into school life and routines. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The co-ordinator is new to her post and is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. A clear vision for the future is unfolding. The staff work closely together to ensure a consistent approach and this is generally successful. Good emphasis is given to encouraging talk and extending what children say by all adults although there is some difference in the skill with which this is done. There is effective planning for all areas of learning both indoors and out, including a good balance between activities that teachers lead and those that children select. Well-chosen topics and themes add relevance and purpose to the work. Outdoor learning has improved substantially since the last inspection, as has the contribution that first-hand learning makes to children's understanding. There is much to interest and inspire the children. Very good links have been established with parents who work closely with staff to support children's well-being and learning. Parent volunteers in classrooms extend the learning further by sharing additional talents. Children's attainment on entry is above average overall. Teachers and teaching assistants check progress from starting points by careful observations while children work and play. These form the basis for planning the next steps to meet individual needs. The somewhat cramped accommodation and design of classrooms means that there is constant traffic through many of them. Continuous provision of activities like water, sand and paint is impossible but these are provided outside in good weather and inside on a rolling programme. Remodelling of the building, starting soon, is planned to overcome these difficulties.

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

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

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

- The start of the day is a happy occasion shared by parents and younger siblings.
- Teachers gain a good understanding of children's needs before they start.
- Children are encouraged to be independent of adults and to co-operate with other children.

#### **Commentary**

35. Parents bring their children into school in the morning as they arrive and are encouraged to join the first activities of the day. Younger siblings also enjoy this experience, which prepares them well for school. There is a happy and relaxed atmosphere as children register themselves. Parents leave as the bell goes for the start of school and children settle quickly to listen to the teacher.
36. The care taken to assess children before they are admitted, where possible, helps teachers plan very well for individual needs, including special educational needs and the specific needs of those children learning English as an additional language.

Teaching responds very well to different levels of social maturity, for example especially to the minority of children who find it difficult to share, take turns and do as they are asked. Children's achievement and progress in this area are very good. They soon learn to work in small groups without interrupting the teacher, to concentrate on tasks and to persevere. Routines are learned quickly and many children are completely independent of adults for their personal needs. Circle time gives children good opportunities to learn about the needs of others and to share their feelings. Teaching is very good and most children are on course to exceed the targets for their age by the end of reception.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good use is made of stories as starting points across the areas of learning.
- Children benefit from good opportunities to talk about their work.
- There are many opportunities for children to write in a range of situations.
- Although there is a good range of books of different kinds, there is nowhere conducive to settling down quietly to share books or read away from the bustle of other activities.
- Teachers do not always use the text in the big books as well as they might when developing reading skills although this is often done very well.

### **Commentary**

37. Teaching is good and contributes strongly to good achievement and high standards. Most children are on course to exceed the goals set for their age by the time they start in Year 1. Many children are beginning to read and write and a significant proportion do so with confidence. Well-chosen stories provide very good starting points for work in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Teachers frequently refer to stories to extend ideas, introduce new vocabulary and engage children's interest. Stories provide a relevant context for much group work that builds successfully on whole-class teaching and contributes to good achievement.
38. Children develop a love of books but there are too few occasions when children read alone or look at books for pleasure because of a lack of somewhere quiet or free from distraction. The design of classrooms, most used as thoroughfares, makes this difficult.
39. Teachers make sure that children talk about their work and contribute ideas to whole-class sessions and group work. For example, children in one class showed others the books they had made while they retold the story of 'The Hungry Caterpillar'. In another, children suggested alternative describing words when the teacher covered the adjectives in the story of 'Handa's Surprise'. In the third class observed children suggested how they might order the activities in 'Jasper's Beanstalk'. On many occasions very good use is made of the 'big book' to point out key words, to show punctuation, to consolidate letter sounds and to indicate where characters are talking but in some sessions opportunities were missed to move the learning on in this way.
40. Good opportunities are made for children to write; on the whiteboard when the whole class works together, in books during group work led by teachers and teaching

assistants, and more informally in a range of ways in play situations which provide a relevant context, for example in the 'Nether Green Surgery'.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good range of activities to support number work and mathematical activities.
- Mathematical language is developed well.
- There are missed opportunities to solve everyday number problems in the classroom.

### **Commentary**

41. Teaching is good and leads to good achievement and above average standards. More than half of the children are on course to exceed the goals for this age group and almost all are on course to achieve them. Whole-class teaching, mental activities and group work ensure that children make good progress. Mental activities sharpen children's thinking. Most count confidently in double digits and many already know numbers that together make ten. Skilful teaching at the start of sessions and activities that are planned carefully to build on the work, underpin progress. Teachers find ways of incorporating mathematical language and activities in other areas of the curriculum, for example when considering how tall the beanstalk is, how long it will be before the chrysalides hatch and estimating how much gold the giant has in his chest, so that counting becomes an integral part of the day.
42. During some very good group work, children helped their teacher to investigate who had the biggest feet and to order their findings. This led to high achievement when some of the most able children were led to discover that the tallest children had the biggest feet. However, there are some missed opportunities for work of this kind and for posing problems for children to solve in the context of everyday activities.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's knowledge of the natural world is developed very well.
- There are very good opportunities for first-hand observation and activities.

### **Commentary**

43. Teaching is good. Children achieve well and many are on course to exceed them. The current theme is 'Growth' and children's understanding of the growth of plants and animals is building rapidly because of the way the work is planned and resourced. There is a strong emphasis on first-hand observation and teachers have gone to a lot of trouble to set up a habitat within the classroom where children can observe caterpillars changing into chrysalides. These are being transferred to a 'butterfly pavilion' where children can watch the butterflies hatch. The work is well supported by simple reference books and well-focused class talk. Children are enthralled and

explain what is happening in some detail. Work of this kind is inspirational and contributes strongly to a sense of wonder. Further work within this theme involves children in planting seeds and plants and observing plant growth over time. There are good opportunities for them to work in the 'garden centre' and learn many words associated with plants and gardening.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

44. It is not possible to make overall judgements about provision for physical development because insufficient evidence was gained during the inspection. There is good planning for different elements. Children use the hall for gymnastic activities and games with small apparatus and the outdoor area for playing with wheeled vehicles. There are many opportunities for children to improve manual dexterity in using tools, computers and small construction equipment and they achieve well in this area.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well in music and sing very tunefully.
- Children develop their imagination well in role-play.
- The use of taped lessons for dance sometimes restricts children's creativity.

### **Commentary**

45. Children achieve well because of good teaching. Many will exceed the goals for their age. Planning takes account of a wide range of creative activity including music, dance, role-play and art work.
46. There are opportunities for children to develop interest and skills in music both informally in the classroom and in taught lessons in the hall. The quality of the taught lessons is very high and children gain much by singing together, clapping and tapping rhythms and using instruments. They practise and refine their singing, under the skilful guidance of their teacher, and are encouraged to listen carefully to recorded music for short periods and then express their ideas about it. The range of music is carefully chosen to broaden children's knowledge of different cultures, including those of children new to the school. Children sing very well and with enjoyment.
47. Role-play is well established in each class. A changing setting outside, currently a 'garden centre', reflects the topic being undertaken. Staff and some work experience students from local schools are skilled at joining in and developing children's imagination and in extending the language they use through careful questions. In the 'playroom' children gain much from working with adults in the 'Nether Green Surgery' and use an extensive medical terminology.
48. Children enjoy the taped dance lessons and these provide good physical exercise. However, because of their nature there is little room for responding to children's individual needs. Teachers do stop the tape and try to do this but it is not entirely successful in developing children's imaginative qualities as well as their physical skills.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and reach well above average standards because the quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Very good links with other schools have made a significant contribution to improvements in pupils' writing.
- High quality teaching for pupils with special needs helps them to make very good progress.
- The very good systems for tracking individual progress help the school maintain high standards.
- Literacy skills are developed very well in other subjects.

#### Commentary

49. Most pupils are on course to reach standards well above those expected for their ages by the end of Year 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and pupils from ethnic minority groups achieve very well because they are well supported and every effort is made by staff to raise their attainment by carefully planned work, support and encouragement. Improvement since the last inspection is good. The school has worked hard to raise achievement in writing and maintain the well above average standards in reading as reported in the last inspection.
50. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well above the standards expected nationally and they achieve very well in this area. In Year 1, teachers make sure that pupils speak clearly when they share ideas. This increases their knowledge of sentence structure and their ability to listen to each other. In Year 2, pupils increase their knowledge, understanding and vocabulary and are able to apply this in their writing. For example, in Year 2 one pupil wrote, "I spotted two paddles drifting near the shore." The introduction of talking partners provides valuable daily opportunities for all children to engage in discussion during lessons and learn from each other.
51. In reading, just over half of the pupils in Year 2 are at a higher level than expected nationally. Pupils are quick to talk about their love of books and how they enjoy taking their books home and reading to their parents. Pupils in Year 1 read texts aloud and recognise familiar words easily and accurately, while more able pupils are reading more difficult materials. Pupils in Year 2 read with fluency, meaning and intonation and recognise most words in their books. Higher-attaining pupils respond to direct speech by changing their voices.
52. Writing is a great strength of the school, mainly because of the structured approach used by all teachers. Pupils' have very good attitudes towards their work and they try hard. The quality of pupils' written work, including handwriting, has improved since the last inspection. Pupils begin to join their handwriting in Year 1 and, by the time they move into Year 2, they write clearly and fluently. The majority of pupils spell accurately and produce interesting pieces of work.

53. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and has a significant, positive effect on pupils' achievement. During the inspection a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was observed. However, this is not reflected in the year's work in children's books. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are very good and supported by effective planning. Teachers use questions very carefully to check what pupils know and to move their learning forward. Teachers maintain a crisp pace in lessons and use a very good range of teaching methods. This keeps pupils interested in their work and makes them keen to do well. Teachers use a range of resources effectively in order to encourage pupils to learn. For example, in Year 2, a sandwich is used to develop pupils' understanding of story structure. The teacher skilfully explained that the middle of a story is like the 'juicy part', where problems are identified. Pupils behave very well in lessons because the teachers have high expectations of behaviour and achievement. Pupils work very well together and are developing good independence, although opportunities for pupils to make decisions about how to record and organise their work are limited.
54. Links with other schools provide very good opportunities for collaboration and sharing good practice. As a result criteria for assessing children's writing are clear and the school has made a good start in involving pupils in assessing their own work and setting targets.
55. The subject is led very well and managed effectively. This has resulted in improvements in standards in writing because it has been a whole-school focus. The senior leadership team gives very effective support to the subject leader. There are very good systems for assessing pupils' work and their attainment. Very good support is given by the deputy headteacher through her role as assessment co-ordinator. The results of national tests are analysed to identify possible areas of weaknesses so these can be addressed. Tracking is used very well to identify individual pupils' progress but analysis of tracking to compare achievement of different groups of pupils and cohorts across the school is less well developed. Plans identify the right priorities. For example weaknesses in pupils' understanding of what they read, because they found it difficult to infer or 'read between the lines', were identified from analysing test data. It was evident during the inspection that the school is taking effective action to resolve pupils' difficulties. Although improvement plans are evaluated regularly, it is not always clear how the school assesses the impact on pupils' learning.

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

56. Teachers develop pupils' speaking skills very well in other subjects through the use of talking partners and the introduction of specialist vocabulary. Pupils have very good opportunities to practise their writing skills for different purposes in other subjects. For instance, in science pupils make lists in geography, record investigations, retell stories from history and keep diaries to record plant growth. Although there are good examples of books pupils have made, the recording of their work lacks variety and sometimes limits choice, creativity and challenge. For example, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use computers to combine text and graphics to present their work, to use tape recorders to recount experiences or demonstrate skills, and to make illustrated posters. Very good opportunities are made for pupils to develop their reading skills, for example by using reference books. The oldest pupils do so competently, gaining information quickly because they use the contents and index pages and are developing scanning skills.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good relationships within classrooms mean that pupils are eager to succeed.
- There is a strong and effective emphasis on investigation and number.
- Teaching assistants support learning very well.
- More challenging work is often provided but the most able pupils do not always start at this point and often do what other children are doing first.

### **Commentary**

57. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and high standards have been maintained. Standards at the end of Year 2 are well above average. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good and there is little difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the high quality support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants.
58. Teaching is good and has a number of strong features. Pupils have good number skills because they are given plenty of opportunities to solve problems. They have a good facility with number because of the precise teaching of basic skills. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and pupils' interest is sustained through thoughtfully planned activities. In a Year 2 class, for example, to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of flat shapes, the teacher provided a range of different resources so that pupils could investigate, make and describe shapes. Pertinent questions helped pupils think about what they were doing and good discussion developed their reasoning. The teacher, together with the teaching assistant, maintained a very good balance between intervention and promoting independence by giving closer support to lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and providing challenging work for more able pupils. This very good teaching fully engaged pupils so that they were keen and eager to learn. In the mixed Year 1 and 2 class, pupils, together with their parents, investigated a very good range of different mathematical problems. This very good session helped parents to see how their children learn and enabled them to take part in their mathematical learning, giving them first-hand experiences.
59. Although assessments are used well to plan challenging work for pupils, sometimes the most able pupils are asked to complete the same task as others in the class before moving on. Extension activities that provide further levels of challenge are planned well but are not introduced soon enough. Occasionally pupils lose the opportunity to do the more challenging work because there is not enough time left at the end of the lesson. Teachers' marking is often good in highlighting what pupils do well but it does not always help pupils to understand how they can improve.
60. The leadership and management of the subject are very good overall. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to develop a system of assessing pupils' work against National Curriculum levels. This not only helps teachers to plan the next steps in their learning but also measures pupils' progress more accurately. She has a very good knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and what needs to be done when mathematics becomes a focus of the school's improvement plan next

year. Pupils' progress in mathematics is tracked very well so that all teachers have a clear view of achievement in their classes.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

61. Pupils use their mathematical skills satisfactorily to support work in other subjects. There are some good examples of pupils using measurements to record the results of their investigations in science but opportunities are sometime missed in other subjects such as design and technology.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The strong emphasis on challenging investigative work and first-hand experiences contributes strongly to pupils' good achievement.
- Good resources including natural material and reference books support the work very well but insufficient use is made of the wild area.
- The way pupils record their work sometimes hinders independence and achievement.
- The subject is well led and there is clear plan for its further development.

### **Commentary**

62. Pupils achieve well and reach well above average standards by the time they leave because teaching is good. Pupils undertake a good deal of investigative work, which is frequently challenging. This enables many pupils to reach high standards. For example higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 can not only name the main parts of the plant but also those of the flower so that they describe the pollination process and seed dispersal in some detail. This is work normally undertaken by pupils in Years 3 and 4 and shows that teachers have high expectations and are prepared to go beyond the boundaries of planning for the age group. Pupils gain much from first-hand observation and good resources so that, for example, they can watch caterpillars pupate in the classroom and observe the chrysalis transform into a butterfly in the school's 'butterfly pavilion'. Hand lenses are readily accessible so that pupils can see in more detail and good reference books support the work further. This enabled Year 2 pupils to compare stems and leaf shape although the lack of a 'key' hindered the learning of botanical vocabulary. On the whole however, scientific words are promoted well so that pupils talk about the need for a 'control' when carrying out a 'fair test'. The school has a wonderful resource in the wild area but this is not used to advantage to promote regular observations.
63. Sometimes when the recording of work is pre-determined by the teacher, it becomes restricting rather providing an opportunity for further gains in learning. Pupils said they found this frustrating although they conform to what is required. There are too few opportunities for pupils to make decisions about how to organise and record their findings. This limits creativity and occasionally achievement. The way that science work is mixed up with other work in exercise books does not help pupils to refer to what they did earlier and learn from it. Teachers miss opportunities to identify the next steps in written comments on pupils' work.
64. The leadership and management of science are good. The subject leader makes sure that the subject continues to develop. Improvements since the last inspection have been good in that high standards have been maintained and further developments, for

example the strong focus on investigative work, have been undertaken. A successful workshop has been held for parents to involve them in the increasing emphasis on investigative work. Checks on pupils' learning have been improved so that teachers have a better knowledge of the skills pupils need to become 'scientists'. There are plans afoot to improve planning for the wild area.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils make good progress, gaining skills that are above average by the time they reach the end of Year 2.
- Very effective leadership ensures that high standards have been maintained and learning is checked thoroughly.
- There are some missed opportunities for teachers to use the ICT suite to support work in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

65. By the time pupils leave the school, standards in ICT are better than expected for Year 2 pupils. Standards are better than at the time of the last inspection because pupils' breadth of experience is wider. There has been good improvement. Teaching is good and so pupils of different ability make good gains in learning and achieve well.
66. The school's provision is very well led and managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who leads by example and makes thorough checks on teachers' planning and pupils' learning. Improvements include a broader range of work that has kept pace with technical developments in the subject. The school has good support from a visiting technician who ensures that equipment works.
67. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching supports learning sensitively; there is a fine balance of teaching direct skills and allowing pupils to find out for themselves. Pupils use computers confidently because their keyboard and mouse skills are good. Pupils in Year 2 worked in pairs in the ICT suite and were ready to share their ideas and expertise with others and think and evaluate as they worked, writing a list of things they would take on holiday. Decisions were taken about which font to use. Discussion centred around "this looks sensible" and "this stands out" demonstrating thinking and evaluation skills very well. In Year1/2 pupils develop good skills in giving logical instructions to make things happen and know what to do if things go wrong. Year 1 pupils have gathered information from a variety of sources and used text and images to develop their ideas when they generated a page for a 'Living Things' class encyclopaedia. Pupils compared their handwritten page to their computer-generated page and most decided that the computer page was the better one to use.

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

68. The use of ICT to support work across the curriculum is satisfactory. Whilst the school has the advantage of a computer suite and each class uses it at least once a week, there are missed opportunities to use it on a more regular basis. A lack of suitable resources in classrooms limits the opportunities pupils have there to use their increasing skills to support work linked to other subjects. The use of ICT is not yet firmly embedded in curriculum planning for other subjects

## **HUMANITIES**

69. Two lessons were observed in **religious education** and this is reported in full below. No overall judgements about the overall provision and quality of teaching and learning in **history** or **geography** can be made because no lessons were seen. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 say how much they enjoy **history** and have gained much from visits to Elsecar Centre and the Heritage Museum. They could recall what they had learnt in great detail and how life in the area in former times compares with today. Higher-attaining pupils could give reasons for the changes and those in Year 2 were able to describe many ways in which we can find out about the past, including from first-hand accounts of people living at the time and from archaeology. These discussions with pupils indicate that standards in **history** are above average. The work in **geography** in pupils' books and on display indicates broadly average standards. Talking with pupils reflects this judgement. Pupils have a good knowledge of how maps work. The work with "Barnaby Bear" has familiarised pupils with a range of holiday destinations but more could have been done to draw out the geographical differences.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject is well led and continues to develop.
- The major faiths are well represented in the work.
- Starting points are often rooted in pupils' own experiences.
- More could be done to encourage pupils to express their own ideas and beliefs.

## **Commentary**

70. Pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment is above the expectations of the syllabus agreed for Sheffield schools. This is because the teaching is good. Subject leadership is very good and ensures that teachers have a good grasp of the planning and ongoing training contributes to their skills. Weaknesses in methods to assess pupils' progress, reported at the last inspection, have been put right and teachers now have a clear view of what pupils, know, understand and can do to assist future planning so improvement has been good. Good work about the major faiths helps pupils to understand those things that believers have in common as well as the differences. Pupils know for example that the concept of 'guardianship' of the natural world promoted by the Jewish faith is one that is shared by many faiths. They know about and share in aspects of the major festivals such as Diwali, Christmas, Eid and Succoth. Visits to the parish church contribute to an understanding of the local Christian heritage. The school ensures that representatives of other faiths, often parents of pupils in the school, contribute to the learning. Pupils talk knowledgeably about their learning and show respect for the beliefs of others. These aspects of the work contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual and cultural understanding.
71. The chosen themes often begin with pupils' own experiences. This helps younger pupils in particular to begin to understand the links between the everyday and the religious. Pupils' own special places and books, as starting points, are examples of how teaching introduces pupils to sacred places and writing. Good opportunities are made for pupils to talk and write about their ideas and learning in these contexts. These promote language and literacy skills well. In the lessons seen, for example, very good use was made of reference books so that pupils could find out for themselves

some 'amazing facts' about the natural world. This and other work contributes strongly to pupils' spiritual development. Many pupils are knowledgeable and confident. Opportunities are sometimes missed to encourage them, especially the most able and articulate, to express their own ideas and beliefs more fully.

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

### **Commentary**

72. One gymnastics lesson was sampled in **physical education**; one lesson was seen in **art and design**, one was sampled and one observed in **design and technology** and one lesson was observed and one sampled in **music**. It is not, therefore, possible to make a firm judgement about the overall quality of provision in these subjects. Discussions were held with pupils about all these subjects and pupils' work was scrutinised in order to make some assessment of standards in art and design, physical education and music. A short discussion with the subject leader for physical education explored planning and the range of enrichment activities offered to pupils.

## **Physical education**

73. The pupils enjoy physical education and in the lesson sampled in the Year1/2 class they joined in activities enthusiastically and worked together sensibly. The lesson was very well planned with clear learning intentions. Pupils practised and developed their skills in linking a sequence of movements. The standards attained in this lesson were above those expected for the age of the pupils.
74. A very good range of enrichment activities is provided which supports pupils in developing their physical skills and knowledge about a wide range of sports. Pupils are also given the opportunity to use small apparatus during the lunchtime session. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' physical development. The school's 'Eat Fit, Keep Fit' focus week provides opportunities for children to participate in aerobics, ballet, skipping, football, basketball and athletics. In addition pupils have the opportunity to visit Don Valley Stadium and Sheffield Wednesday Football Club where they develop their understanding of teamwork.
75. The subject leader has a clear vision for the future of the subject and has established very good links with local schools. She regularly scrutinises planning to ensure that all statutory duties are met. She has not yet had the opportunity to observe teaching throughout the school although this is planned for the near future.

## **Art and design**

76. Although there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on teaching and learning, other evidence, including displays and discussion with pupils, indicates that standards achieved by pupils are above average.
77. Accommodation in school includes a designated specialist room for art that supports learning well because materials and equipment are readily to hand. Pupils are given the opportunity to use a wide range of materials to develop their skills in different artistic techniques. Pupils have experience of working with paint, pastels, crayons, clay, fabrics and a range of papers. A good range of work was seen which included collage, painting, line drawing, observational drawing and weaving. Good use is made of a study of famous artists as a stimulus for pupils' work. For example, pupils in Year 1 used the work of Georgia O'Keefe as a basis for making their own pastel drawings of flowers. Art makes a good contribution to cultural development. For example, boomerangs were decorated in the style of aboriginal art, and flour batik pictures were made with an African artist.
78. In the one lesson observed in Year 2, the teacher's planning was good and a very good range of resources used to interest and engage the pupils. Pupils developed their observational skills well and used these to represent detailed drawings of flowers.

## **Design and technology**

79. Pupils design and make things using a good range of materials and techniques. They experience a good range of work and all aspects of the design process are in place. Work of good quality was observed in pupils' completed wheeled vehicles. Teachers' planning and lessons indicate that the school provides everything that it should for the design and technology curriculum. Pupils in Year 1 use their evaluation skills appropriately as they design clothes for a range of sports that they have taken part in earlier in the day when they visited the English Institute of Sport, focusing on the

different body positions used in different sporting activities. Opportunities to work in groups make a good contribution to their personal and social development. The subject plan is closely aligned to national guidance, giving pupils consistency and progression in their learning as they move through the school.

## **Music**

80. The school places a high priority on the development of music and pupils sing very well. Singing is very tuneful and successfully maintains a steady pulse either by clapping or by beating an untuned percussion instrument. Pupils start and finish together and sing with a good sense of rhythm. Pupils also have a good appreciation of what they are singing. Pupils are able to hear a melody played on the piano and sing this accurately. Pupils attain higher standards than those expected in playing the recorder, reading standard musical notation and their use of technical vocabulary.
81. Music-making contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, cultural and social development. A number of opportunities are provided for pupils to sing in public and with other schools. For example, pupils have recently performed at the Broomhill Festival. Pupils sing in concerts and celebration assemblies for parents and visitors throughout the year. Pupils develop their knowledge and appreciation of a range of music through the daily act of worship. During the inspection pupils listened to classical music from China, as they entered and left the school hall. There were good opportunities for them to consider the mood of the music.

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

82. The school places a significant emphasis on pupils' personal, social and health education, and although only one lesson was observed, this is a very positive part of school life. There is a planned programme of work, which is taught regularly through lessons and circle time. It is evident that pupils have many opportunities to discuss, listen to others and express their views. Much of the teaching is aimed at promoting pupils' understanding of the importance of getting on with different people, helping each other and thinking about what they are doing. The school's success is seen in pupils' very positive attitudes to their school community and the pride they take when rewarded for their contribution to it, because of effort or achievement in work or behaviour. The school is currently developing a joint policy together with the local junior school, with a view to promoting greater consistency between the schools and a clearer progression in pupils' learning.

## 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>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
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	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
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).*