

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **WOBURN LOWER SCHOOL**

Woburn, Milton Keynes

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109493

Headteacher: Mrs C Woodstock

Reporting inspector: Mr M Lester  
20596

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> May 2003

Inspection number: 246914

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bedford Street Woburn Milton Keynes Bedfordshire
Postcode:	MK17 9QL
Telephone number:	01525 290207
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Hay
Date of previous inspection:	12 <sup>th</sup> January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20596	Martin Lester	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
15181	Meg Hackney	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20350	Vivien Davies	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs English Art Design and technology Music Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a very small lower school that enjoys a considerable sense of history within the village of Woburn. Some parts of the buildings in which it is housed have been in continuous use as a school since 1582. They have very recently been restored to provide two floors of attractive accommodation. There are 52 pupils on roll comprising 32 boys and 20 girls. They come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The school has long established links with the Bedford estate and the farming community, but in recent years has also drawn an increasing number of pupils from the nearby city of Milton Keynes. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of white ethnic origin and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (33%) and those with a statement of special educational needs (3.8%) has increased in recent years and is currently above average. The percentage of pupils (7.7%) entitled to free school meals is broadly average. The pupils' attainment on entry covers the full range, but taken overall is generally average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school is doing a better job than at the time of the previous inspection and has improved its effectiveness to a good level. The quality of education provided is good, standards are rising and the children achieve well in the basic skills of speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and scientific investigation. The school successfully promotes positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour. The management has developed effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and shows a good awareness of its strengths and the areas in need of improvement. The school offers sound value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Standards in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science are usually above average.
- Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well.
- The provision for the pupils' personal development is good and leads to positive attitudes to learning, good behaviour and very good relationships.
- The improved accommodation is organised effectively so that pupils of all ages benefit from good quality teaching, frequently in small groups.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. Interesting extra curricular activities and enriching links with the community enhance this provision.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work well as a team and are committed to continuing school improvement.

#### **What could be improved**

- The standards in writing throughout the school.
- The presentation of written work across the curriculum.
- The marking of work to support further improvements in standards.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good progress and the issues raised in the last inspection report of January 1998 have been assiduously addressed. For example, effective systems have been introduced to co-ordinate, monitor, evaluate and develop the work of the staff. This has improved the quality of the education provided; for example the proportion of good and very good teaching has increased and a broader curriculum securely meets the requirements for both the Foundation Stage and Years 1-4. The governing body plays a far more significant role in the strategic planning and has a good understanding of the action that is required to sustain school improvement. In addition, good progress has been made concerning the provision for the pupils' personal development and the learning environment. Consequently, their behaviour and achievements and the standards they reach have also improved. The school is well placed to sustain further improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. This data relates to small year groups containing no more than 11 pupils. The effect of one additional pupil on a school percentage measure can be considerable.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools	Similar schools		
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	A*	E*	A	A
Writing	A	E	C	D
Mathematics	A	E	B	C

**Key**

Excellent	A*
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E
Very low	E*

The children start school in the year they become five. The teachers' assessments show that on entry the children's attainment is generally average. The inspection findings confirm that throughout the Foundation Stage the children make good progress. The vast majority is on course to meet the national targets for five-year-olds and a good number will exceed them. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged as below the expected levels in half of the areas of learning.

An analysis of the Year 2 data for the past three years shows that the results were above the national average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Fluctuations in results from year to year are explained by differences in the sizes and characteristics of the cohorts. The evidence over time indicates that the pupils maintain good progress throughout Key Stage 1 and usually attain above average standards by the end of Year 2. The inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 2 are once again above average in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science, but remain average in writing.

The pupils in Years 3 and 4 generally maintain good progress and their attainment by the age of nine usually exceeds the expected levels in English, mathematics and science. The inspection findings confirm that the standards attained by the current Year 4 are in line with the expected levels in English and mathematics, but exceed them in science. This represents very good progress in comparison with their very low results in 2001.

Across the school, the standards of the pupils' work in design and technology and information and communication technology exceed the expected levels. Standards are also good in music at the end of Key Stage 1, and in art and religious education in Year 4. In addition, the pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards their clearly identified targets. Although standards in English have risen since the last inspection, the rate of progress in writing has been slower than in other areas. Moreover, the presentation of written work across the curriculum, particularly in books, is often untidy and in need of improvement. **These are key issues for action.**



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils have positive attitudes to learning and apply themselves keenly to a range of activities both within and outside the lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. From an early age, the children are polite and considerate in their dealings with each other, adults and visitors to the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils are very tolerant and caring of each other. Relationships throughout the school are very harmonious.
Attendance	There are low levels of unauthorised absence. However, absence due to holidays taken in term-time lowers the attendance figures to an unsatisfactory level. This is a matter that needs further action.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Very Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Since the last inspection, the teaching has improved throughout the school and is now consistently good and often very good. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching has been eradicated and the proportion of good and very good teaching has increased.

The teaching of the Reception children gives the youngest pupils a good start and enables them to achieve well across most areas of learning. The adults successfully provide the full breadth of the Foundation Stage curriculum and offer the children a good insight into the kind of lessons they will experience in Key Stage 1. This is also a significant improvement since the previous inspection when the teaching was constrained by the lack of a properly structured curriculum and the limitations of space.

Across Years 1-4, the teaching successfully maintains a good quality of education and enables all pupils to achieve well. The skills of speaking and listening, reading, numeracy and scientific investigation are well taught. The evidence over time indicates that the pupils have generally made good strides in their learning across these aspects, but their progress has been slower in writing.

A key feature of the successful learning across a range of subjects lies in the widespread use of practical activities that motivate the pupils to work hard and improve their skills. The teachers have established clear routines and working practices that are underpinned by very good relationships and have a positive effect on the children's attitudes and commitment to learning. The teachers set work that matches the range of individual learning needs in each class. Furthermore, the effective deployment of additional well-qualified and experienced adults enables pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to make good progress in their studies. Good use is also made of homework to reinforce and extend what is learned in school. The school has implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy effectively. However, the issue of how best to support the pupils' to develop a broader range of writing skills is still being addressed. The teachers mark the pupils' work regularly and write encouraging remarks. However, their commentary seldom makes clear how the pupils should improve their work. **These are key issues for action.**

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The curriculum now offers a fuller coverage of the requirements for pupils of all ages, particularly for those in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. These pupils are accurately and sensitively identified and provided with very good levels of additional support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The all-round strength of this provision is reflected in the positive attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development displayed by the children.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The teachers know their pupils well, recognise their needs and respond effectively. The arrangements for child protection and for ensuring the health and safety of the pupils are good.

The educational partnership between home and school is good and benefits the pupils' learning. Interesting extra-curricular activities and enriching links with the community enhance the curriculum. The staff value all pupils equally as individuals and work hard to make sure they get the best from their time in school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads the school well. The members of staff with subject responsibilities contribute effectively to the management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors provide good support for the headteacher and staff. They have a good overview of the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good use is made of performance data to accurately identify areas for development and as a basis for further improvement planning.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its available resources. For example, funds have been carefully allocated to improve the building and are currently being accumulated for the purpose of curriculum enrichment.

The leadership and management have improved since the last inspection when most of the issues identified for improvement concerned this aspect of the school's work. These matters have all been assiduously addressed and result in the school doing a better job than at the time of the previous inspection. The governors apply the principles of Best Value as they strive to support the continued development of the school. For example, the budget is well managed to provide good levels of staffing, accommodation and learning resources. This provision supports the school in being effective for all pupils, whatever their educational needs or personal circumstances.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children enjoy coming to school.</li><li>• The teaching is good and motivates the children to work hard and do their best both at school and in their homework.</li><li>• The school helps the children become mature and responsible.</li><li>• The children are polite and behave well.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some aspects of communication between school and home.</li></ul>

N.B. The number of questionnaire returns (7) was small. Eleven parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with the Registered inspector.

The inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by the parents. They also find that the present arrangements for communication with parents are satisfactory. Nevertheless, the school is aware of the need to regularly review these arrangements in order to ensure that they are fully effective.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, the achievements of the pupils and the standards they attain have improved since the last inspection. This is particularly evident in the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage and in reading, mathematics and science in Years 1-4.
2. The children start school in the year they become five. The teachers' assessments show that on entry the children's attainment is generally average. The inspection findings confirm that throughout the Foundation stage the children make good progress. The vast majority is on course to meet the national targets for five-year-olds and a good number will exceed them. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged as below the expected levels in half of the areas of learning.
3. An analysis of the Year 2 data for the past three years shows that the results were above the national average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Fluctuations in results from year to year are explained by differences in the sizes and characteristics of the cohorts. For example, the high attaining 2002 cohort (11 pupils) performed well at the higher Level 3 in all areas. The evidence over time indicates that the pupils maintain good progress throughout Key Stage 1 and usually attain above average standards by the end of Year 2. Inspection findings indicate that the current cohort is attaining above average standards in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science. However, their attainment in writing remains broadly average. Nevertheless, there have been good gains overall since the last inspection when standards were judged as average in English, mathematics and science.
4. The gains in the Year 4 points score over the last three years indicate that all cohorts improved at a pace at least in line with the national expectations. For example, last years cohort maintained their high performance recorded in the Year 2 tests to attain well above average results. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 generally maintain good progress, and their attainment by the age of nine usually exceeds the expected levels in English, mathematics and science. The inspection findings confirm that the standards attained by the current Year 4 are in line with the expected levels in English and mathematics, and exceed them in science. This represents very good progress since the very low results recorded in 2001.
5. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well overall: those with special educational needs make very good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when progress was judged as sound overall. There is no significant difference in the progress made by boys and girls. However, there are variations in the rate of progress by all pupils in different aspects of English. For example, progress throughout the school is very good in speaking and listening and reading. Progress in writing is improving, particularly in Key Stage 2, but it is slower. Consequently, pupils throughout the school achieve broadly average standards in writing, including handwriting, spelling and punctuation. Moreover, the presentation of their written work across the curriculum, particularly in books, is often untidy and in need of improvement. **The school has identified writing as a key issue for development in its improvement plan.**
6. Conversations with the children and scrutiny of their books provided good evidence of their work in most other subjects of the curriculum (Foundation Subjects) including art and design, design and technology (DT), geography, history, information and communication technology

(ICT), music, religious education (RE). This evidence clearly shows that in art, DT, ICT and RE the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are generally above the levels expected of nine-year-olds. Standards in all other relevant subjects are in line with expectations. There was insufficient evidence to support a judgement about physical education.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

7. The positive outcomes reported in the previous inspection report have been strengthened. The provision made by the school results in good outcomes, particularly concerning personal development.
8. Pupils of all ages and backgrounds, including those with special educational needs, show positive attitudes and enthusiasm for learning. This is a significant feature of the school that makes a strong contribution to the pupils' progress and achievements. The children are happy and proud of their school. It is a very pleasant, interesting and orderly establishment where the pupils are very caring and supportive of each other. During lessons and in the playground, there were frequent examples of pupils spontaneously helping each other to overcome minor difficulties. The parents feel confident that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible through high expectations of self-discipline and social development. Most pupils concentrate well on their work and try hard to do their best. They listen attentively and eagerly respond to questions and practical tasks. Pupils throughout the school, including the very youngest children, work well together in groups and share resources sensibly and co-operatively. They are friendly and polite to each other and adults and also helpful and courteous towards visitors. On starting school, children settle quickly into the well-organised routines.
9. The inspection findings confirm the parental opinion that the children behave well in school. This is a more positive picture than that reported at the time of the previous inspection when behaviour was judged as generally satisfactory. The recent improvements to the building have also had a beneficial effect on the pupils' behaviour by allowing them to move around more freely and purposefully. The pupils respond enthusiastically to the positive system of reward, encouragement and celebration of success. They look forward to the Friday morning celebration assemblies and enjoy winning merits, certificates, house points and "Pupil of the week" awards. The very good role models of the adults give the pupils a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Consequently, their behaviour is good at lunchtime and they play together very harmoniously in the playground. Incidents of bullying or harassment are rare, and pupils and their parents are confident that staff will deal with any problems promptly and sensitively. There have been no exclusions during the past year.
10. Relationships throughout the school are very harmonious and have improved further since the previous inspection when they were reported as good. The pupils have a close and happy relationship with the teachers and learning support assistants. The children with special educational needs are very well included and supported by everyone. This is also true for the increasing number of pupils who attend the school from outside Woburn. All the pupils are respectful and often respond to each other's success with spontaneous applause. These very good relationships throughout school make a strong contribution to pupils' personal and academic progress.
11. The pupils' personal development is very good. It is closely linked to the school's ethos, high expectations and the opportunity to take on special responsibilities. For instance, in both classes, the pupils regularly help as monitors or operate the OHP during assemblies. In Year 4, most pupils take part in a residential adventure weekend. They respond well to 'Circle Time' and

share their ideas and feelings confidently with each other. Some pupils are elected as representatives of their year group on the School Council and they take their responsibilities very seriously. Others also have the opportunity to suggest improvements to the life of the school, such as the current competition for re-designing the playground and suggesting play activities.

12. The pupils come to school eagerly and punctually. Registration and lessons begin on time, enabling a purposeful and well-ordered start to the day. This has a positive effect on the pupils' attitude towards school and on their progress and personal development. The rate of unauthorised absence is low, but the attendance levels overall are below the national average. This situation arises as a result of a significant number of pupils taking holidays during term time.  
**This is an issue for improvement.**

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

13. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved and is now consistently good and often very good. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching has been eradicated and the proportion of good and very good teaching has increased. Across the school, the teachers and other adults use their very good all-round knowledge of the pupils to manage them well and to provide interesting learning opportunities that promote both their educational and personal development.
14. The teaching of the Reception children by well-qualified and experienced adults within an attractive and spacious learning environment gives the youngest pupils a good start. The adults successfully provide the full breadth of the Foundation Stage curriculum and enable the children to reach and frequently exceed the levels expected for pupils of this age. In addition, the children are given a good insight into the kind of lessons they will experience in Key Stage 1. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when the teaching was constrained by the lack of a properly structured curriculum and the limitations of space.
15. Across Years 1-4, the teaching successfully maintains a good quality of education and enables all pupils to achieve well. The skills of speaking and listening, reading, numeracy and scientific investigation are well taught. The evidence over time indicates that the pupils have generally made good strides in their learning across these aspects, but their progress in writing has been slower.
16. Very good teaching was observed across the full age range. The teachers have established clear routines and working practices that are underpinned by very good relationships and have a positive effect on the children's attitudes and commitment to learning. A key feature of much of the best teaching is the widespread use of meaningful practical activities that motivate the pupils to work hard and improve their skills. Taken together, these factors result in the pupils taking full advantage of the interesting learning opportunities provided. The pupils in Years 2 and 4, for instance, talk with considerable enthusiasm, knowledge and understanding about their work in drama, science, ICT, DT and music. The teachers also make good use of homework to reinforce and extend what is learned in school.
17. The school has implemented well the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The teachers are particularly effective in developing the pupils' ability to speak clearly and confidently, and to read fluently, expressively and with understanding. Similarly, they enable the pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in mathematics and science and most importantly provide regular opportunities to apply these attributes to problem solving, investigations and experiments. However, the school is still deciding how best it can enable the

pupils to develop a broader range of writing skills. Currently, there are limited opportunities for the pupils to use their writing skills across the curriculum. The teachers' expectations concerning the presentation of written work across all subjects are not high enough. Consequently, a majority of the pupils' work is untidy in appearance. The teachers mark the work regularly and write encouraging remarks, but commentary seldom makes clear how the pupils should improve their output. **These are key issues for action.**

18. In line with the school's aim to offer equality of opportunity for all pupils the teachers set work that matches the range of individual learning needs in each class. Furthermore, the effective deployment of additional well-qualified and experienced adults helps pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to make good progress in their studies. This process is also facilitated through the good staffing levels that enable the children to frequently work in small groups. The pupils with special educational needs are carefully taught. Their individual education plans contain precisely described targets and evidence of their regular and careful review. Consequently, these pupils are given very good levels of support enabling them to make very good progress.
19. Following pertinent evaluation of the quality of teaching throughout the school, changes to the deployment of staff are to be introduced for Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils. The present organisation for English and mathematics, particularly for lesson introductions, usually includes all pupils from across the year groups. The school now plans to provide more regular opportunities for the youngest pupils to be taught as a separate group so that the teachers can promote the progress of Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils even more effectively in smaller and more focussed groups.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

20. The school has made a very good improvement in its curricular provision since the last inspection. At that time, the provision for the under fives was unsatisfactory and there were few subject policies and completed schemes of work for pupils in years one to four. The quality and range of the learning opportunities are now good. The curriculum offers fuller coverage of the requirements for pupils of all ages, particularly for those in the Foundation Stage. Interesting extra-curricular activities and enriching links with the community enhance the curriculum. The recently completed building work has improved the learning environment considerably so that it no longer restricts the curriculum. Following thoughtful self-evaluation the school is set to change the way in which the curriculum is organised. It is intended to achieve more coherence for younger children through a topic approach and for older pupils through the blocking of time. The aims are for all pupils to see connections between their learning in different areas and to pursue topics in more depth.
21. The school is very committed to meeting the diverse learning needs of all pupils. For example, the arrangements for the pupils with special educational needs are very good. Their individual education plans include precise targets based on careful diagnosis of their needs. They receive lots of individual support that provides them with full access to the curriculum. The school is sensitive to gender and ethnicity issues and the curriculum reflects the care with which the teachers select materials, books and artefacts. There is good provision for the high attaining pupils; for example, in the junior class they work in a focus group for an hour each week.
22. The school makes effective use of computer technology, particularly in Key Stage 2. It also shows strength in its arts provision including design and technology, drama and music.

However, there are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to use their writing skills across the curriculum. **This is a key issue for action.**

23. The school offers good extra curricular provision. This includes ocarina tuition, and disco, computer and gardening clubs. The pupils may also attend an after school care club located at another lower school within the local cluster and are collected by mini bus. The oldest pupils are able to spend a weekend in Shropshire with other pupils from nearby village schools. They meet other children who are also about to move to the local middle school and gain new friendships. At present, however, they have few opportunities to engage in sporting activities because the school lacks a field. Nevertheless, all pupils go swimming each week and achieve high standards. They also benefit from easy access to their historic village and the teachers make good use of visits to enhance the curriculum. The school's links with the community are very strong and it takes part in the village "Oyster Festival" and Christmas celebrations. Its links with other local schools, including the middle school, are strong. Activities are shared so all attend a music and sports festival. The school also draws upon outside expertise to enhance the curriculum. Recently, the pupils participated in a project run by the Philharmonia Orchestra that developed their musical and design and technology skills.
24. The provision for the pupils' personal development is good. They have regular personal, social and health education lessons, which include sex and drugs education. The school recently received awards for this aspect of its provision and for promoting healthy eating. The arrangements for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are also good. The teachers are aware of the importance of alerting pupils to special moments. In an inspiring assembly, for example, the pupils were helped to reflect on the special place that pets have in their lives. The school has an ongoing programme that highlights a particular moral value for reflection, which combines with clearly displayed and agreed class rules to create a strong moral ethos. The school is a very friendly place and social skills are well developed. From the reception class onwards, the children are expected to work together and care for each other. In many lessons, they work very effectively either with partners or in small groups, for example in science lessons. The good support they give each other was clearly shown in a music lesson when a pupil who took the role of pianist was applauded for her effort. The pupils' cultural development is well promoted through the activities in music and drama lessons. The children encounter music, stories and art from other parts of the world and the arrangements for studying religions other than Christianity are good. The effect of these various initiatives is that the school draws positively on the increasingly broad social and cultural backgrounds of the pupils to enhance the curriculum.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

25. This aspect of the school's work has also been strengthened since the previous inspection. Previously, the school was judged to make satisfactory provision for the support, guidance and welfare of the pupils. Currently, this aspect of the school's work is good.
26. Good induction procedures ensure that children settle quickly into the school's routines, and its safe and caring environment enables them to learn well. The parents are confident that their children are looked after well and that any problems will be dealt with promptly. The adults in the school know the pupils and their families very well and they respond very positively to their individual, physical and emotional needs. This helps the children to learn and promotes their understanding of good behaviour and positive attitudes. The school provides good support for the older pupils in preparation for their transfer to the middle school. Furthermore, the school successfully integrates an increasing number of pupils who attend from outside Woburn.



27. The monitoring and evaluation of the pupils' academic performance are good. The teachers keep detailed records of the attainment and progress of individual pupils and use the information gathered to provide work that matches the varied needs and abilities of the pupils. For example, the pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and this enables them to take full advantage of all educational opportunities. Their individual education plans provide additional guidance for the provision in the classrooms. The learning support assistants and the teachers use this information well to plan work that ensures that these pupils make very good progress. In addition, the high attaining pupils are clearly identified and provided with suitably challenging work.
28. The health and safety policy is well implemented through good procedures. With the support of a governor who has health and safety expertise, the site is well monitored and a regular risk assessment is completed. All members of staff are vigilant in ensuring that any safety issues are reported and promptly followed up. The pupils are well supervised during lessons and in the playground. The electrical equipment and PE resources are checked regularly, and fire practices are held at least twice each term. With several qualified first aiders on site, the provision is good. All accidents are clearly recorded and parents are contacted as necessary. Child protection procedures are good and any concerns are well monitored and recorded. All staff, including the lunchtime supervisors, are aware of the procedures they should follow if concerns arise. Good up-to-date personal and medical records are kept for all pupils and these are used appropriately to meet their individual needs.
29. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, including harassment and bullying, are good and are consistently applied in all areas of the school. A good system of rewards for good work and behaviour raises the pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' educational and personal development are good. The various members of staff know the pupils well and their personal achievements are well recorded, both formally and informally. The school has attempted to improve the level of attendance, but it remains below the national average. The completion of registers meets the statutory requirements and most parents support the school well by reporting absences promptly in the morning. This results in below average levels of unauthorised absence. However, a significant number of the parents take their children on holiday during term time, thereby reducing the overall attendance levels. **This is an important area for improvement.**

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

30. The positive educational partnership between home and school reported at the previous inspection has been maintained and continues to benefit the pupils' learning. Many parents help their children to learn at home and assist with the reading and homework topics. Most parents feel welcome in the school and are comfortable to ask questions and discuss concerns. They are very satisfied with their children's progress and feel that the school listens to them and provides a positive response. Following the recent redecoration of the hall, the parents were invited to enjoy a school lunch with their children resulting in a successful and well-attended occasion. A small number of parents and an elderly member of the community help regularly in the classrooms by listening to reading, supporting arts and crafts activities and assisting with swimming. Many more parents help when pupils go out on visits. Those with children who have special educational needs are involved well and are invited to attend regular assessment and review meetings. Generally, the parents are satisfied with the arrangements for homework. All pupils have either home/school books or homework diaries and some parents use these as an additional means of communication with the teachers. Although there is no formal parent

teacher association, a parent support group organises regular successful fund-raising events that have provided the school with additional learning resources, such as a playhouse and tricycles for the youngest children.

31. Since the last inspection, the school has consulted parents on a range of issues before drawing up new policies, for example, on sex and drugs education and homework. Subsequently, the school's work in sex, drug, and healthy living education has been rewarded externally, and most unusually all parents responding to the questionnaire were satisfied with the homework arrangements. Overall, the quality of information provided for the parents is satisfactory, but the school recognises the need to monitor, evaluate and develop its arrangements for communicating with parents in order to ensure their effectiveness. The headteacher produces regular newsletters for parents that are informative in content friendly in tone. Clear guidance is provided about events and organisation and positively encourages the parents to be involved. Although the parents receive a simple list of topics which pupils will be studying each term, insufficient helpful suggestions are included to assist them in supporting the work of the school at home. Consultation evenings are held twice a year and these are very well attended. The parents are also invited to curriculum evenings throughout the year on topics such as sex and drugs education, reading support and numeracy.
32. The annual written reports to parents are satisfactory, though there are some inconsistencies in the amount of clear information provided about progress and targets for improvement. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents have improved since the last inspection and now contain the required information about the organisation of the school and the curriculum.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

33. The leadership and management have improved since the last inspection when most of the key issues for improvement concerned these aspects of the school's work. The issues have all been addressed to good effect resulting in improvement to both the pupils' achievements and the standards they attain, in particular in the Foundation Stage. For example, pupils of all ages, abilities and backgrounds now achieve well. In addition, there has been improvement in other areas, most significantly in the provision for the pupils' personal development and the learning environment. These improvements have also helped to enhance the pupils' behaviour. Consequently, the school is doing a better job than at the time of the previous inspection and has improved its effectiveness to a good level.
34. The headteacher leads the school well. At the time of the previous inspection, the current headteacher had only been in post for one term, but was nevertheless giving clear educational direction to the school. After a further five years in post, the effects of her leadership and management are evident in the all-round improvement made by the school during this period. The headteacher, staff and governors work well as a team committed to continuing school and professional improvement. Almost all members of the staff have subject and management responsibilities and they contribute effectively to the development of the school. They openly and honestly assess their own performance and identify strengths and areas in need of development. This is a considerable improvement since the time of the previous inspection when the role of co-ordinators was not well established. Although the size of the school allows for informal systems to work effectively, the leadership is also well aware of the importance of shared, negotiated and rigorous systems for self-evaluation. Accordingly, there are effective procedures to co-ordinate, monitor, evaluate and develop the work of the staff, including arrangements for performance management. These procedures have contributed significantly

to the improvements in the quality of both the education provided and the standards achieved. This is a good advance since the last inspection when the monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning were very limited.

35. The governors provide good support for the headteacher and staff. They are well informed, have a good overview of the work of the school and play an increasing role in moving it forward. For example, they contribute to and discuss the school improvement plan on a regular basis and in addition have a plan for their own development. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when the leadership role of the governing body was judged as under-developed. The governors have also introduced several interesting initiatives in order to improve their knowledge and understanding of the daily work of the school. These initiatives include regular, clearly planned and well-documented visits that focus upon either a subject or a child. The governor concerned then provides a report to both the staff and to his / her governor colleagues. Good use is also made of performance data to accurately identify areas for development and as a basis for the school improvement planning. In addition, the governors fulfil their responsibilities to good effect for example, in agreeing the required policies and publishing all the required information in the prospectus and annual report to parents. This was not the case at the time of the previous inspection.
36. The school makes good use of its available resources. For example, funds have been carefully allocated to improve the staffing levels and the learning environment and are currently being accumulated for the purpose of curriculum enrichment. This good provision supports the school in being effective for all pupils, whatever their educational needs or personal circumstances. The governors apply the four basic principles of Best Value to good effect. Competition was used in recent negotiations concerning the provision of new furnishings and most significantly when the governors were agreeing the specification and price for the new building programme. The school thoughtfully compares the pupils' results with those of similar schools and all schools nationally. Challenge is accepted when monitoring and evaluating teaching and bringing about improvement. Finally, consultation with parents took place before drawing up the school policy on homework.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

37. The governors, headteacher and staff should ensure that the priority in the School Improvement Plan concerning standards and progress in writing is achieved. In particular they should
- Foster the pupil's willingness to write by providing purposeful contexts and activities
  - Provide regular opportunities to write across a range of subjects
  - Ensure that the skills of drafting and redrafting are given suitable prominence
  - Model good writing and provide opportunities for the pupils to undertake shared writing
  - Ensure that the basic skills of spelling and punctuation are applied consistently in written work

In addition the school should improve both the presentation and the marking of written work. Although these two issues are linked to the improvement of writing, they also apply across the curriculum. In the case of the presentation of work the staff should

- Raise the pupils' expectations of what is acceptable
- Provide regular opportunities for the pupils to practise basic skills such as handwriting, accurate use of rulers and the dating of work
- Ensure that these skills once mastered are applied consistently in all written work
- Model good practice

In the case of marking, the staff should

- Ensure that the marking of work consistently provides the pupils with pertinent feedback concerning their progress towards clearly identified objectives
- Endeavour to use marking as a means of succinctly identifying for the pupils how they might improve their work
- Increase the pupils' involvement in self-assessment of their work and progress

Other issues that should be considered by the school

- The improvement of attendance levels

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed

13

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

7

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	5	1	0	0	0
Percentage	0	54	38	8	0	0	0

*The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than seven percentage points.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	52
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	4

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	17

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	6.6%

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.1%

National comparative data	5.4%
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National comparative data	0.5%
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	7	4	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	10	8	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (50)	73 (63)	100 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	10	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (63)	100 (63)	100 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest 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
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background

No of pupils on roll
38
4

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions

Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded



*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

#### **Teachers and classes**

##### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.6
Average class size	26

##### **Education support staff: YR– Y4**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	85

##### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Financial information**

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	248,973
Total expenditure	252,029
Expenditure per pupil	4,847
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,756
Balance carried forward to next year	19,700

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	49
Number of questionnaires returned	7

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	86	14			
My child is making good progress in school.	86		14		
Behaviour in the school is good.	72	28			
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	72	28			
The teaching is good.	72	28			
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	28	14		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	14	14		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	86	14			
The school works closely with parents.	72	14	14		
The school is well led and managed.	86	14			
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	28			
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	42	14		14

N.B. This data relates to a small number of parental questionnaire returns (7). Care should be taken when interpreting the data as 1 return equates to 14% of the total sample.



## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

38. The quality of education for children under five was a cause for concern during the last inspection and was a key issue for improvement. These concerns were based on an unsuitable curriculum for the youngest children who also had to work in a small space with six and seven year old pupils. These matters have been addressed effectively through:
- A building programme that provides a more appropriate learning environment;
  - Increased opportunity to pursue the Foundation Stage curriculum in a reception group.
39. The children still work with Year 1 and 2 pupils for part of the day. They share drama, music and physical education lessons and the introductory parts of English and mathematics lessons. However, from September 2003 they will spend more of their time as a separate group. This initiative is intended to enhance further the quality of education offered and the standards achieved for all pupils in both the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
40. When the children enter the reception group, their attainment is broadly average. Only about half have received pre-school education because there is no local playgroup, for example. Nevertheless, pupils of all abilities make good progress. The children with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and are given extra support to help them make similar progress to all other children. The teachers are also aware of the needs of the more able children and set sufficiently challenging work so that they make also good progress.

### **Main strengths of the provision**

- The teaching is consistently good in the reception group and the pupils learn quickly. The members of staff are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and have high expectations of the children.
- The classroom is well organised to provide a range of purposeful first-hand experiences
- Priority is given to the teaching of basic skills enabling children to read, write and count confidently.
- The children enjoy a very good range of experiences in art, drama, music, story and science and respond by producing high quality work.
- Relationships are very good, and as a result the children feel very secure, work hard, are proud of their achievements and behave well.

### **The standards attained**

	<b>Above Expectations</b>	<b>As Expected</b>	<b>Below Expectations</b>
<b>Previous Inspection</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Personal and social development</li><li>❖ Mathematical development</li><li>❖ Physical development</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Language and literacy</li><li>❖ Knowledge and understanding of the world</li><li>❖ Creative development</li></ul>
<b>This Inspection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Personal, social and emotional development</li><li>❖ Mathematical development</li><li>❖ Creative development</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Physical development</li></ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Communication, language and literacy</li> <li>❖ Knowledge &amp; understanding of the world</li> </ul>		
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41. By the end of the Reception year most children are achieving the early learning goals for pupils of this age with a good number working successfully on more advanced work in the National Curriculum. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when the pupils were judged to meet the expected levels in only half of the relevant areas of learning.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

42. Attention is paid to this aspect at all times. The children are well behaved, enthusiastic and concentrate well on the task in hand. They are kind, very well mannered and thank each other for small courtesies, like opening doors. They learn to take turns and co-operate well, for example, when building a railway. They enjoy conversation and while working with play-dough, for instance, listened well to each other. On this occasion, they were discussing what changes to their lives parenthood would entail. They have opportunities for role-play both in the “Home Corner” and in their own free play. The teacher provides a careful induction and creates a caring environment and atmosphere where each child is made to feel special and relaxed. Her expectations in regard to their work and behaviour are high, and the children are cheerful and want to please. The reception children show high levels of confidence and are happy to demonstrate and take a full part when working in the infant class with year 1 and 2 pupils. Most are able to undress and dress themselves and cope well with their personal needs.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

43. Many of the children are able to read and write simple words and are beginning to understand sentences. Most can write their names and copy the teacher’s writing with few mistakes. The potentially higher attaining children begin to write on their own and make good attempts at spelling ‘new’ words. Most of them really enjoy books. They understand the stories and can predict what might happen next. They like to talk about the stories and they know what an author and a title page are. They also refer to books to help with their work, for example when building a bridge or designing the roof for a train. Some read simple text accurately. They recognise many simple words and phonic sounds at the beginning and end of words. They are confident talkers and enjoy working in the small reception group in their own room where talking is encouraged. They respond to their teacher’s questions and remember instructions well. In all sessions, the children are encouraged to develop their vocabulary, use accurate language and articulate clearly. A lively and rich range of activities is provided to encourage listening, reading and writing.
44. Some aspects of provision were previously judged as unsatisfactory including opportunities for role-play and book skills. Now the children have daily access to a role-play area and also take part in very good drama sessions with older children in the infant class. They borrow books frequently and share their stories with a range of adults, on some occasions as a group, at others on an individual basis.

### **Mathematical development**

45. The children learn to count confidently to ten and beyond. They count forwards and back in fives and tens from a hundred and can recognise simple number patterns.. In one lesson, the children showed enjoyment and skill in addition and subtraction. Some can use arbitrary

measures, estimate and find missing numbers. Their knowledge of geometric shapes is also they can name many three-dimensional shapes including the sphere. They are also acquiring and using mathematical vocabulary appropriately in many activities. For example, when building a train, some boys could describe the shapes and pieces using correct terminology. The tasks provided for the children match their needs, and enhance their interest in learning.

46. Some aspects of mathematics for the under fives were previously judged as unsatisfactory. This occurred when they worked solely with the infant class. Now their curriculum is broader and there are more opportunities for them to use and apply mathematics in real and imaginary situations.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

47. The children's knowledge and understanding increase rapidly. They have worked hard on a growing project by planting a range of seeds and observing the changes. They are able to name parts of plants and can use some of the technical vocabulary associated with growth. The children know that some things are old. For instance, they can describe the features that show that a teddy bear is old and they understand that their school is very old. They use problem-solving skills to construct a carriage for a toy train, and with their teachers help they employ split pins to locate wheels and sticky tape to attach a concertina roof. They are developing some atlas skills and with their teachers help can find India. They use computers with confidence. The teachers have high expectations, and through their very good use of discussion they encourage the children to reflect upon and explain their experiences.
48. During the last inspection, opportunities for first hand experience and for developing questioning and observational skills were lacking. This is no longer the case. The children make good use of the environment, particularly that around the school, for these purposes.

### **Physical development**

49. The children make good use of space as they travel by hopping, skipping and running and are aware of each other. They are confident when balancing on and jumping from apparatus. They have daily access to outdoor play and make very good use of tricycles. They are considerate; for example, one girl was observed voluntarily giving a boy a push when he became lodged against a wall. Their manipulative skills are developed well, enabling them use scissors carefully and hold pencils and brushes appropriately. However, the lack of pre-school facilities means that some children lack of confidence and are still finding it difficult to use scissors effectively.
50. Some aspects of provision for physical development were previously judged as unsatisfactory because there were no facilities for outdoor play and no large toys. This is no longer the case.

### **Creative development**

51. The children thoroughly enjoy participating in very good music lessons and use a range of percussion instruments most appropriately. The teacher's expectations are high. The children engage in good range of art activities, such as drawing, painting, modelling and printing, using a range of techniques. Their pictures of daffodils from observation showed they paint confidently, often making bold use of colour. They also respond imaginatively to very good opportunities for using drama. They can use facial and body language to suggest a range of emotions and can apply their skills to role playing a dragon very effectively.

52. During the last inspection, the children had few opportunities to choose from a range of materials and to use their imagination through art, dance and play. This is no longer the case.

## **THE CORE SUBJECTS: ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **Standards**

53. The inspection findings confirm that the current standards in English and mathematics are above average at the end of Year 2 and in line with the expected levels at the end of Year 4. Standards in science are above average at the end of Year 2 and exceed the expected levels at the end of Year 4. These judgements reflect an overall improvement since the previous inspection when standards at the end of Years 2 and 4 were merely sound in all three subjects.

## **ENGLISH**

### **Standards**

54. The strength of the pupils' performance lies in their good speaking and listening and their confident reading. The quality of the speaking and listening has been maintained since the last inspection. However, standards in reading have improved from a sound level and are now good. Pupils of all ages are careful listeners, who are able to understand and consider the ideas of others. They speak confidently about their work, opinions and feelings. This was evident in many lessons observed and in a school council meeting. Throughout the school, the pupils read fluently and expressively. They display a real love of books and the ability to understand and respond to what they read. They enjoy sharing and discussing their reading with each other and with adults and increase their vocabulary in the process. Standards are improving in some areas of writing. For example, the pupils' ability to compose a story and their choice of vocabulary are good. However, the standards of work across all aspects of writing including handwriting, spelling and punctuation are simply in line with the expectations for pupils of their age, and therefore not as strong as in other aspects of English. The standards in writing are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection.

### **Progress**

**Progress throughout the school is very good in speaking and listening and reading. However, the pupils' writing is improving at a slower rate.**

55. The good start that children make in the Foundation Stage in the development of their ability to speak and listen and read is maintained throughout the school. In Key Stage 1, the pupils are skilfully helped to develop their reading skills. In Year 4, the picture is equally encouraging. Starting from a low base two years ago the pupils are now achieving average standards. Skilful teaching encourages them to appreciate a variety of reading matter, and as a result they are developing a broader set of tastes. The pupils' skills in speaking and listening develop well throughout the school and are central to most lessons in all subjects. As they move through the school, the pupils demonstrate an increasing ability to speak clearly and confidently in a broad range of contexts, using relevant vocabulary. Although the standards of writing in Year 4 are broadly average, the pupils have nevertheless made good gains since the very low results recorded in the national tests two years ago.

### **Teaching**

**Overall, the teaching of English is good. It is particularly effective in the development of speaking, listening and reading skills. However, the teaching of writing, although satisfactory and improving, requires strengthening.**

## **Strengths in teaching and learning**

- The skills of speaking and listening are regularly practised and applied in all lessons.
- Reading is well taught in Key Stage 1 and the pupils' enthusiasm is raised and their tastes broadened in Key Stage 2.
- Drama is used very well to build confidence and to aid understanding and empathy.
- The available resources are used well to capture the pupils' imagination.
- Homework is used effectively and the parents support reading well.

## **The main reasons why standards are lower in writing**

- The pupils have insufficient opportunity to practice writing. They frequently use worksheets that require very short written answers often of only a few words.
- Modelling and shared writing are not used effectively enough.
- Insufficient attention is given to handwriting and the presentation of work.
- The pupils do not consistently apply their knowledge of punctuation and spelling.

**The school has identified writing as a key issue for development in its improvement plan.**

## **MATHEMATICS**

### **Standards**

56. The current inspection findings indicate that standards at the end of Year 4 are in line with those reported last time. However, standards at the end of Year 2 have improved from a sound level and are now good. Across the school, the pupils discuss their work using appropriate mathematical language. They have good mental recall of relevant facts and employ written methods appropriate for their age when solving problems. For example, the pupils in Year 2 have a secure grasp of place value to three figures and a few are happy working in thousands. When solving money problems, several recall addition facts to 20 in order to complete the task accurately. They experience a broad and balanced curriculum and show a good understanding of aspects of shape, space and measures. For example, the pupils in Year 4 confidently classify two-dimensional shapes with regard to properties such as edges, vertices and reflective symmetry. They also calculate the perimeter of regular quadrilaterals and solve problems such as "The perimeter of a square is 28 cm. How long are the sides?"

### **Progress**

**Throughout the school, progress is good across all aspects of mathematics, including mental arithmetic.**

57. The inspection findings confirm that the children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their mathematical development. This is maintained in Years 1-4. For example, as the pupils move through the school they show an increasing ability to record their work using appropriate mathematical symbols, signs and terminology. Encouragingly, in year 4, the pupils are now achieving average standards from the low base achieved two years ago. They particularly enjoy discussing mathematical concepts and learning from each other. All pupils, whatever their ability are set work that matches their learning needs. For example, the high attaining pupils are challenged sufficiently and make good progress. Moreover, the children who have special educational needs benefit from effective support and guidance as they work towards specific targets.

## **Teaching**

**The teaching of mathematics is good.**

### **Strengths in teaching and learning**

- The teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use well in the lessons.
- Basic numeracy skills are well taught in Key Stage 1 and further developed and applied in interesting investigations and challenges in Key Stage 2.
- Meaningful opportunities to apply numeracy skills are provided in other subjects.
- ICT is used effectively to support the development of data handling skills.
- Homework is used effectively to consolidate and extend the pupils' learning.

## **SCIENCE**

### **Standards**

58. The good standards currently being achieved show an improvement since the last inspection when they were judged as sound. A particular feature of the pupils' attainment is their ability to discuss their observations and findings and to understand the basic principles of scientific enquiry, including the concept of fair testing. In addition, throughout the school, the pupils confidently apply their scientific knowledge to support their learning in other subjects. For example, in both classes the pupils solved practical problems in design and technology lessons through recall of basic scientific principles concerning sound and force. Pupils of all ages are also able to observe, explore and ask questions about living things, such as plants.

### **Progress**

**Progress throughout the school is good particularly in the important skill of scientific enquiry.**

59. The good start that children make in the Foundation Stage in the development of their understanding of the scientific aspects of the world around them is maintained throughout the school. For example, as they move through the school they develop their basic ability to observe and record their findings so that they use increasingly complex equipment to measure accurately and then display their findings in a variety of ways. By the end of Year 4, most pupils have a good understanding of a fair test. The more able pupils are challenged sufficiently and make good progress, and the children who have special educational needs benefit from effective additional support and guidance. This results in all pupils receiving work and guidance that matches their learning needs and supports good progress.

## **Teaching**

**The teaching of science is good.**

### **Strengths in teaching and learning**

- The teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to provide lessons that are interesting and challenging.
- The skills of scientific enquiry are well taught in Key Stage 1 and extended through their application in purposeful investigations in Key Stage 2.

- Meaningful links are made with learning in other subjects, for example in DT.



## STRENGTHS IN PROVISION IN ALL THREE SUBJECTS

- The quality of teaching is good.
- The teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and encourage them effectively to work together and to share their knowledge and understanding, so that they learn from each other.
- Practical activities are thoughtfully organised by the teachers and enjoyed by the pupils.
- Additional adults are deployed effectively to enable all pupils to remain on task, concentrate hard and achieve well. For example, pupils with special needs are given very good support. The higher attaining pupils are given very good support in the junior class.
- The pupils' behaviour is well managed. They are keen to succeed, interested in their work and try hard.
- Good quality resources are used well to support the intended learning.

## AREAS TO DEVELOP FOR ALL THREE SUBJECTS

- Insufficient attention is given to the presentation of written work
- The marking of the work does not consistently help the pupils to know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.

**These are key issues for action.**

**THE OTHER SUBJECTS OF THE CURRICULUM (Foundation Subjects)** including art and design, design and technology (DT), geography, history, information and communication technology (ICT), music, physical education (PE), religious education (RE)

### Standards

**It was not possible to directly observe lessons in subjects other than music and design and technology. However, the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects was observed on several occasions. Additional evidence was collected from talking to pupils and by scrutinising their work and the teachers' records. There are no judgements for PE in either key stage or for music in Key Stage 2 because of insufficient evidence.**

Year Group	Above Average	Average	No Judgement
Year 2	DT, ICT, Music,	Geography, History, RE, Art	PE
Year 4	DT, ICT, RE, Art	Geography, History,	PE, Music

60. In DT and ICT in both key stages, in music in Key Stage 1 and in art and RE in Key Stage 2, the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are generally above the levels expected. Standards in all other relevant subjects are in line with expectations. This is a broadly similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection. However, standards have improved in ICT throughout the school and in RE in Key Stage 2.

### Attainment by the end of Year 2

- In **art**, the pupils know that colours can be mixed and light and dark shades produced. They use textures from the school building to produce attractive prints and link this with work in mathematics about symmetry.

- In **music**, the pupils' skills are well developed. The children know the names of untuned percussion instruments and can recognise their sounds. They play with very good attention to rhythm and time and are able to recognise differences in pitch. The pupils use their voices in different ways to chant, sing and speak and they can repeat short patterns using variation in pitch.
- In **design and technology**, the pupils used their skills well to make simple musical instruments, such as rain sticks and shakers, following the exciting visit of an orchestra to the school. Their success in this task was based on a good scientific understanding of the nature of sound. The children were able to select appropriate materials, and join them carefully in order to produce finished products that met their intended purpose. The pupils are good problem solvers and enjoy discussing possible methods of sticking two plates together without gaps. They also understand the importance of producing an initial design that is evaluated and amended as an item is produced.
- In **history and geography** the pupils have recorded some of the places they pass on their way to school. They can also relate to places further afield and can sort things that Barnaby the Bear saw on a trip from Chester to Plymouth. They know that some geographical features are man-made and others are natural to the landscape. They show knowledge of the Fire of London and can order the events.
- In **information and communication technology** the pupils talk knowledgeably about their experiences and the use of ICT. They work confidently with a variety of information that they present effectively using a broad range of skills. For example, they are adept at word processing and confidently change font size as appropriate. They use instructions such as with Logo to accurately navigate around a simple course.
- In **religious education**, the pupils know a few stories from the Old Testament and are also able to retell the story of the nativity and the Good Samaritan. They know about some aspects of Islam and the Hindu religion. However they are not very clear about the religious aspects of these stories.

#### **Attainment by the end of Year 4**

- In **art**, the pupils' sketches of chairs are good and frames are well used to present them attractively. The pupils' paintings of daffodils show good attention to detail, good use of paint and well-controlled brushwork. When working with clay, the pupils produce well-made coil pots that they decorate with colourful motifs. These products effectively reproduced Saxon pottery that the children learned about through historical enquiry.
- In **design and technology**, the pupils use their skills to produce attractive well-made photograph frames. The work is planned in detail and includes accurate scale drawings showing the model from various viewpoints. The accompanying evaluation includes a comment about the needs and tastes of the recipient. For example, one child wrote, "My Mum likes trophies and she likes thinking I've made it." When designing and making a Jack in the Box, the pupils applied their scientific knowledge to good effect by using, for example, their understanding of the force produced by a syringe.
- In **history and geography** the pupils are aware of different historical periods such as the Roman and Saxon and show a secure understanding of the major events and people of these times. They have a developing sense of chronology and compare the past and the present through the use of a range of information sources, including artefacts, video and the Internet. When discussing the local environment, they are aware of different physical and human features and can compare

these with other localities, for example, in India. They draw upon their learning in other subjects, such as science, to describe different aspects of weather and can compare our climate with that in other countries. The pupils communicate their historical and geographical knowledge using suitable terminology.

- In **information technology**, the pupils show good levels of basic skill and can apply these to good effect. For example, they work in pairs to produce a 'Powerpoint' presentation about their chosen aspect of life in Roman times. This demonstrated the pupils' ability to present information in different forms at a high level of quality that was appropriate for an adult audience. Similarly, when handling data in mathematics, the pupils' learning was supported by the good use of a range of computer generated graphical representations.
- In **religious education**, the pupils are interested and knowledgeable. They have studied in depth aspects of food and fasting. They know about Moses and can relate their knowledge to Judaism. They understand about the symbolic nature of the food and can link it to the seven plagues of Egypt. They understand about the significance of bread and wine and the importance of sharing food in the Sikh religion. They are also aware that food distribution across the world is not equitable and they are able to explain this using vivid symbolism. "People in the USA have a hundred raisins, in China and Russia they have twenty-five and in the third world two only." The pupils puzzle over these differences in the light of religious belief.

### **Strengths in the teaching of Foundation Subjects**

- The teachers' subject knowledge in music and design and technology is very good. They work hard to improve their skills, for example, by attending a training day at the Royal College of Music conducted by the Professor of Percussion. Their knowledge and understanding enable them to offer very good lessons in these subjects.
- The teaching motivates the pupils so they are keen to learn. A very good introduction to a science/design and technology lesson in Key Stage 2 captured the pupils' interest as the teacher used the air power of a balloon to send an object on a string across the classroom. Similar excitement was generated in a Key Stage 1 music lesson. In both these lessons, time was well used, there was very good pace and challenging practical activities were thoughtfully managed.
- The teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and encourage them effectively to work together and to share their knowledge and understanding so that they learn from each other. For example, when trying to solve a designing and making problem, Key Stage 1 pupils offered a wide range of suggestions all of which were valued by the teacher and then tested by the children. No pupil was frightened to offer an opinion.
- The classrooms are well managed and the pupils' behaviour is good. For example, in an exciting music lesson for the younger pupils, the children still waited their turn and helped and encouraged each other.
- The teachers are good at helping the pupils to acquire specialist vocabulary. In a very good science lesson, the teacher provided very thorough teaching of the word pneumatic so that the pupils learned to say it, to spell it and to use it in their discussions. The classroom assistants give the pupils with special educational needs very good support. For instance, in a junior class, a pupil was able to take a full part in the lesson because a very good classroom assistant helped him to understand the instructions he was given. In consequence, he was able to conduct an experiment prior to building a Jack in the Box.

### **Areas for development in the Teaching of Foundation Subjects**

- There is insufficient use of written English in most subjects. Work sheets are carefully chosen, but too often the pupils written responses are limited to a few words. They need more opportunity to utilise independent writing to record work.
- Higher expectations concerning the presentation of work are required so that the pupils develop and sustain a pride in attractive work.

**These are key issues for action.**

### **Strengths in the leadership and management of these subjects**

- The staff work closely together as an effective team committed to school improvement. For example, they develop, implement and evaluate policies and schemes of work collaboratively and individuals only take a more formal, designated lead when required to do so, for example when ordering resources or at meetings with other schools. This is a realistic approach that works well in practice.
- There are effective procedures to co-ordinate, monitor, evaluate and develop the work of the staff. Following thoughtful self-evaluation, the school is set to change the way in which the curriculum is organised in order to meet the needs of all pupils even more effectively. It is intended to achieve more coherence for younger children through a topic approach and for older pupils through the blocking of time. The aim is for all pupils to see connections between their learning in different areas and to pursue topics in more depth.
- The resources for most subjects are good and for music they are very good.