

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **RUDYARD KIPLING PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Woodingdean, Brighton

LEA area: Brighton and Hove

Unique reference number: 114486

Headteacher: Ms B Shackell

Reporting inspector: Mr P Kemble  
7269

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2003

Inspection number: 247469

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Chalkland Rise  
Woodingdean  
Brighton

Postcode: BN2 6RH

Telephone number: 01273 303328

Fax number: 01273 304597

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr T Harris

Date of previous inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> March 2001

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7269	Mr P Kemble	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Science Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
19322	Ms J Bedawi	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion, including race equality	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?
18498	Ms D Morris	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Geography History	
11227	Mr J Moles	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23300	Ms L Evans	Team inspector	Special educational needs Art and design Design and technology Religious education	
32336	Mrs A Meek	Team inspector	English Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

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<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Rudyard Kipling Primary School is a larger than average primary school. There are 374 pupils on roll, with almost equal numbers of boys and girls. Numbers are slightly higher than at the time of the previous inspection. The vast majority of pupils are drawn from privately owned and local authority housing within the school's catchment area. The social and economic background of pupils is broad, but is below average overall. Pupils' level of attainment on entry into the nursery varies from year to year but is typically below average. There are 89 pupils (23.7 per cent) on the register of pupils with special educational needs, a figure which is broadly in line with the national average. Eleven pupils have statements of special educational needs, an above average figure. Seven of these pupils attend the attached autistic spectrum disorder facility. Almost all pupils are from white backgrounds. Just under five per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Four pupils (1.06 per cent) speak English as an additional language, a figure broadly in line with the national average. Seventy-eight pupils (20.8 per cent) are eligible for free school meals, a figure above the national average. The amount of staff turnover has been high in recent times; 15 members of staff have left the school and been replaced since the last inspection in 2001. There is a significant amount of pupil mobility (12.6 per cent). This has had a significant impact on the work of the headteacher and governors in managing and organising school improvement.

## HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Rudyard Kipling Primary School is an improving school. Levels of effectiveness are satisfactory, and there are some significant strengths in provision. Standards are average in science and are below average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress when compared with their levels of attainment on entry into school. Pupils benefit from a caring, supportive environment, a strong emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills and a commitment amongst all staff to raise standards further. The headteacher provides effective leadership. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

### What the school does well

- Children receive a good start to school life in the Foundation Stage, make good progress and achieve well.
- By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, spelling, mathematics, information and communication technology and music.
- By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in information and communication technology and music.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2; it is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6.
- Teamwork amongst all teaching and non-teaching staff is very good.
- Provision for autistic pupils is good.
- Provision for the promotion of pupils' personal development, especially their spiritual and moral development, is good; pupils have good attitudes towards school and their work.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher is good and governors are very involved in the life and work of the school; financial planning is very effective.

### What could be improved

- Not enough use is made of other curriculum subjects to promote and extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
- Assessment information, in subjects other than English and mathematics, is not always used well enough to match tasks closely to pupils' needs.
- Lesson plans, in subjects other than English and mathematics, are recorded in several different ways, and so the purpose of lessons and the way tasks are organised for pupils of differing capabilities are not always clear.
- Senior staff and co-ordinators are not sufficiently critical in the way they monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- A small number of pupils have poor rates of attendance.

*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 a satisfactory improvement overall since the previous inspection in March 2001. As a result of the headteacher's effective leadership, improvements have been made to curriculum provision and teachers' expectations of pupils' academic and social achievements. The rate of school improvement has not been as rapid as the headteacher and governors had planned for after the last inspection. This is because of the unusually high turnover in the number of staff leaving and being replaced since then, hindering progress in several areas of school improvement. Nevertheless, weaknesses identified in the previous report have been dealt with, mainly successfully. Senior staff and co-ordinators now take an active role in the formulation and implementation of the school improvement plan, although there is still work to be done in analysing more critically their colleagues' lesson plans and the quality of teaching. There is significantly less underachievement throughout the school, especially in Years 1 to 5. The match of work to pupils' needs is better than at the time of the previous inspection, but it is inconsistent, particularly in Years 3 to 6. There have been other significant improvements. Co-ordination of special educational needs work and the effectiveness of teaching special educational needs pupils individually or in groups withdrawn from the classroom has improved well. Standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 have continued to rise in line with the national trend. Standards in information and communication technology and music are now above expectations. Pupils' attitudes to school have improved and are now good.

### STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	C	E	E
mathematics	E	D	D	E
science	E	D	B	B

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average   E

Results in the above table show that, when they are compared with those of similar schools, pupils attain above average standards in science. Standards in English and mathematics are well below average. However, school test and assessment data shows that the level of attainment on entry of the 2002 Year 6 pupils was lower than usual, particularly in language and literacy skills, and that progress has been satisfactory overall. Targets for pupils' achievements set by the school were met.

Standards of pupils in Year 6 in science are average, and in English and mathematics they are below average. Standards are above average in information and communication technology and music, average in physical education and religious education and below average in art and design, design and technology, geography and history. The school has focused a significant amount of resources on this year group over time in order to reduce the impact on standards of weaknesses in provision identified during the school's 1999 inspection. However, despite the success of these arrangements, it is likely that pupils will not achieve the targets set by the school in the 2003 national tests. Standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, spelling, mathematics, information and communication technology and music. They are average in writing, science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education. There are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs or pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and achieve well in all areas of their development. By the time they enter Year 1, standards are above expectations in personal, social and emotional development, in line with expectations in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development and below expectations in communication, language and literacy.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils tackle their work with interest and enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to all adults. However, a small number of older pupils sometimes behave poorly in lessons and in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils generally co-operate well in lessons and assemblies. A significant number of older pupils are immature and find difficulty in forming positive relationships.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance rates are improving but remain below the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory

*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.*

The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. It is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6, mainly because of inconsistencies between classes and year groups in teachers' subject knowledge, planning and implementation of behaviour management procedures. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory overall; literacy and numeracy lessons are often good throughout the school and basic skills are generally taught well. However, other subjects of the curriculum are not used as well as they could be to extend pupils' reading, writing and numeracy skills. Pupils achieve particularly well in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 because of a strong emphasis on mental and oral activities. Pupils make good progress in information and communication technology and music in Years 1 to 6 because teachers take advantage of many pupils' preference for practical rather than written tasks. All pupils benefit from very good teamwork amongst teachers and learning support assistants. Teachers sometimes take classes other than their own so that pupils benefit from specialist subject knowledge and expertise, although this aspect of teaching is underdeveloped. In the best lessons in all subjects, work is matched well to pupils' needs, providing them with good levels of challenge, but this is not always the case, particularly in art and design, design and technology, geography and history lessons. Pupils with special educational needs receive well-planned tasks taught by the special needs co-ordinator and learning support assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language receive good support from their class teachers and the quality of their learning is satisfactory overall. Autistic pupils are taught well and are well integrated into the life of the school. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and make a significant contribution to pupils' good attitudes to their work and their achievements.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. There is a strong emphasis on provision for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Planning in other subjects, such as geography and history, is not linked as well as it might be to promoting core subject skills. Pupils benefit from well-planned visits and residential trips and a satisfactory range of clubs and visitors to school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils' individual education plans are of good quality with achievable targets linked to classroom work.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils benefit from teachers' close attention to correct vocabulary, grammar and spelling in literacy lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Promotion of pupils' spiritual and moral development is good. Promotion of pupils' social and cultural development, including awareness of life in a multicultural society, is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Pupils benefit from good levels of care and attention. However, procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory.

Staff and governors have worked hard to establish positive links with parents and the local community. As a result, parents provide significant financial support and attendance is good at school concerts and performances. A small minority of parents do not take advantage of opportunities offered to be more involved in their children's learning and to attend parents' evenings.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by staff. All staff work hard to carry out their responsibilities. Teamwork is very good. However, co-ordinators vary considerably in their experience and time in post and so the leadership and management of several subject areas are at an early stage of development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are developing a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for improvement through their regular involvement in the life of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. All staff and governors are effectively involved in gathering information about the school's effectiveness. However, there is not enough critical analysis of the quality of teaching and learning and lesson plans so that inconsistencies in standards persist, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Staffing, accommodation, resources and available finances are used effectively and efficiently to support priorities in the school improvement plan.

## 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>Children like school and make good progress.</li> <li>Teachers have high expectations and help pupils to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>The school deals effectively with questions and problems.</li> <li>The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small number of older pupils have poor behaviour.</li> <li>The amount of homework is not appropriate.</li> <li>The school does not work closely enough with parents and does not keep them well enough informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>There are not enough activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the aspects that please parents. Inspectors judge that behaviour has improved overall since the last inspection but agree that the behaviour of a small number of older pupils requires further attention. Inspectors judge that the way the school works with parents, and the opportunities it provides for parents to find out about their children's progress, are satisfactory and similar to those found in most other primary schools nationally.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

##### Strengths

- There has been a satisfactory improvement in standards overall since the previous inspection.
- Pupils generally make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science from their level of attainment on entry into the nursery.
- Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage.
- Autistic pupils achieve well.
- Pupils achieve particularly well in reading, spelling, mathematics, information and communication technology and music in Years 1 and 2, and in information and communication technology and music in Years 3 to 6.

##### Areas for improvement

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not make as much progress as might be expected in art and design, design and technology, geography and history.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always challenged by their tasks.
- Opportunities are missed to extend pupils' literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum.

1. The level of attainment of children entering the nursery and reception classes at Rudyard Kipling Primary School varies from year to year but is typically below average, particularly in social and literacy skills. This is reflected in the variation in the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. Although, overall, the percentage of special educational needs pupils in the school is broadly in line with the national average, it is higher than usual in the present Year 6 class and is lower than usual in Years 1 and 2. School and national test and assessment information shows that pupils typically make satisfactory progress from their level of attainment on entry into school in English, mathematics and science.
2. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and make good progress overall. They benefit from well-planned activities and good levels of care. They receive a positive start to their school career. During Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in reading, spelling and mathematics, and satisfactory progress in writing and science. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and activities planned are interesting and motivating. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve above average standards in reading, spelling and mathematics.
3. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress overall in English, mathematics and science. Expectations of pupils' achievements are not as consistent as they are in Years 1 and 2, especially in the way other subjects of the curriculum are used to support pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy. However, Year 6 pupils gain particular benefit from effective use of additional teaching staff and learning support assistants to teach small groups of pupils in English, mathematics and science. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 are taught basic skills of literacy and numeracy well in English and mathematics lessons. By the end of Year 6, standards are average in science and below average in English and mathematics.

4. Pupils benefit from good levels of educational inclusion. Pupils of all capabilities, gender and background have equal access to all aspects of school life. This is reflected in the improvement in pupils' attitudes to school and the steady rise in standards in English, mathematics and science since the previous inspection. Levels of challenge for pupils of different capabilities are satisfactory overall. They are good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, especially for lower and average attaining pupils. Levels of challenge are more variable in Years 3 to 6, and tend to be better in English, mathematics and science than in other subjects such as art and design, design and technology, geography and history. Higher attaining pupils in Years 1 to 6 are not always challenged enough by their tasks, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics, when lessons are predominantly whole-class, for example in some science, geography and history lessons.
5. Pupils with special educational needs receive satisfactory levels of challenge from class teachers in lessons; more is demanded of them when they work on a one-to-one basis or in small groups with the special needs co-ordinator or learning support assistants, either in classrooms or in the special educational needs support room. These members of staff make effective use of special support programmes for pupils identified as needing the support of School Action Plus and of further learning support for the literacy and numeracy strategies. Pupils now make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Autistic pupils achieve well because of good teaching and satisfactory integration into the life and work of the school.
6. Foundation Stage children settle quickly into classroom routines in the nursery and reception classes because of the high levels of concern for their welfare and effective assessment of their particular needs. As a result, they make good progress in all the required areas of learning and, by the time they enter Year 1, most children have achieved above the expected standards in personal, social and emotional development. Their achievements are in line with those expected in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. Standards of communication, language and literacy are just below expected standards, but progress is good.
7. The results of national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 show that pupils' achievements over time have risen at the same rate as the national trend. Results at the end of Year 2 in mathematics have made a significant improvement from below the national average in 2000 to well above average in 2002. Forty-two per cent of pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in reading and 49 per cent achieved this level in mathematics, figures above the national average. Nine per cent of pupils achieved Level 3 in writing, broadly in line with the national average. Results at the end of Year 6 show an upward trend, but with more variation in English and mathematics results from year to year, reflecting the differences in the levels of attainment on entry into school of each year group. In 2002, eight per cent of pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in English, and 13 per cent achieved this level in mathematics, figures below the national average. Standards in science have risen significantly from well below average in 2000 to above average in 2002. In 2002, 35 per cent of pupils achieved the higher Level 5, broadly in line with the national average. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls, pupils for whom English is an additional language or minority ethnic pupils.

8. The school's 2002 national test results compare favourably with those of schools with a similar percentage of free school meals in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2, and in science by the end of Year 6. Standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 are well below the average of similar schools. However, school data shows that pupils made satisfactory progress in mathematics when compared with their level of attainment on entry, but progress in English was unsatisfactory.
9. Improvement by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in mathematics and science is partly due to the preference many pupils have for practical activities rather than written tasks. Teachers have rightly taken advantage of this to plan a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn by 'doing', but this has led to pupils, particularly those in Years 3 to 6, developing practical skills at a faster rate than skills associated with writing.
10. There has been a good improvement in some other subjects since the previous inspection. Standards in information and communication technology have risen from just below average to above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, largely due to effective teacher training and improved resources. Standards in music are above those expected of pupils of their age at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, especially in the quality of singing. Improvement is partly because of the headteacher's own subject expertise and enthusiasm for the subject and partly because of teachers' increased confidence in teaching it. Reading, spelling and mathematics standards at the end of Year 2 are better than those reported at the time of the previous inspection and are now above average. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 are making good use of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve.
11. Inspection findings are that, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, spelling, mathematics, information and communication technology and music are above those expected for pupils of their age. Standards in writing, science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education are in line with expected standards. By the end of Year 6, standards in information and communication technology and music are above those expected of pupils of their age. Standards in science, physical education and religious education are in line with expectations. Standards in English, mathematics, art and design, design and technology, geography and history are below expectations.
12. The standards achieved by the present Year 6 pupils are not typical of those achieved by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. There are several reasons for the generally low achievement in Year 6. Firstly, the level of attainment on entry into school of this group of pupils was lower than usual. Secondly, this group went through a critical period of their education when the school was judged to be failing to provide an acceptable level of education for its pupils in 1999. Thirdly, staff have rightly focused time and resources, particularly since the appointment of the present headteacher, on promoting the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The latter strategy has been successful in helping pupils make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics from a low base, but has not taken advantage of other curriculum subjects to support this work and so, for example, standards in geography and history are lower than might be expected. Lastly, the behaviour of a small number of pupils has not been managed well over time since 1999 and this has led to these pupils underachieving.
13. Overall, pupils in all parts of the school benefit from committed, caring teaching and non-teaching staff who plan conscientiously and carefully to provide interesting and

motivating activities. Teachers' enthusiasm is successfully conveyed to pupils and this leads to most pupils working hard to meet the challenges set. As a result, standards have risen steadily over time. In information and communication technology and music lessons, teachers take advantage of pupils' especial interest in, and enjoyment of, these subjects to set high standards of academic and social achievement and pupils achieve well as a result.

14. Pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory overall. Teachers have used the national guidelines for these areas of learning well to raise standards. Numeracy guidelines have been implemented more effectively than literacy guidelines, largely because pupils respond considerably better to practical activities than other tasks and enjoy using mathematical equipment to solve problems. Pupils write mainly well-punctuated sentences with satisfactory standards of spelling. Handwriting standards are satisfactory. Pupils join in whole-class discussions well, and often listen attentively to each other or to adults. However, many pupils find difficulty in putting their thoughts and ideas into words when they speak. This affects pupils' progress to some extent in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
15. In their use of the literacy and numeracy guidelines, teachers have tended to follow the suggested methods closely because of the need to raise standards since 1999. However, the guidelines are national and are written for all schools. Teachers have not had sufficient confidence to be more adventurous in the way that they interpret the advice and guidance to suit the particular characteristics and needs of the pupils they teach. This is one of the main reasons why pupils' progress in several areas of the curriculum is no better than satisfactory, or is sometimes unsatisfactory, for example in Year 6.

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

#### Strengths

- Pupils have good attitudes to school.
- Behaviour in lessons and at play is mainly good.
- Pupils' personal development is satisfactory.

#### Areas for improvement

- Attendance is unsatisfactory, being below that of most other primary schools nationally.
- A small number of older pupils do not always behave well and act with immaturity.

16. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development were reported to be at least satisfactory, and usually good. There was a weakness with pupils' behaviour and attitudes in Year 3. Since then, there has been a satisfactory improvement. Pupils' attitudes to school and to their work are now good overall. The behaviour of the Year 3 pupils, now in Year 5, is much improved, although there are occasions when a small number of these pupils, and some in Year 6, are inattentive and do not settle to their work.
17. Nursery and reception children settle happily into school routines. Their attitudes and behaviour are good and, due to the very good, consistent behaviour management by staff, disputes are rare. Children listen carefully and follow instructions well. They enjoy the well-planned activities available, for instance delighting in playing with a tray of warm, cooked spaghetti. They remain involved for a considerable time, persevering

until they succeed. For example, a boy worked out how to put food scales together and could then weigh real vegetables in the role-play area. Children have very good relationships with the adults who teach them and are building their own relationships well, sharing or taking turns without fuss. The good quality care and attention they receive gives them the confidence to become independent, curious learners, excited by the discoveries they make. They are prepared well for work in Year 1.

18. Older pupils continue to have good attitudes to school and work. The majority like being at school, and know they have to learn. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 work hard. They are enthusiastic learners, asking questions eagerly in order to improve their skills. Pupils follow the teachers' directions independently, asking for help if they have a problem. Pupils work together with good co-operation: this is seen when pupils from the autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) facility join a few selected classes and lessons. Minority ethnic pupils are well involved by their teachers and fellow pupils and are treated equally.
19. The majority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 want to do well at school, working hard in lessons, for example when finding out about different materials in a Year 4 science lesson. However, there are a small number of pupils in Years 3 to 6 who have poor attitudes. They are sometimes unwilling to co-operate, often when there is insufficient challenge in lessons, or if pupils have to sit listening to teachers for too long. This impacts on the learning of other pupils, who are doing their best to learn. Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils in the ASD facility persevere in lessons and value their achievements.
20. Pupil behaviour and relationships at work and play, apart from a small number of older pupils, are satisfactory. The behaviour of pupils in the ASD facility is very good. Most pupils throughout the school are polite and helpful. They are generally sensible when moving around. Pupils reported that they are aware of, and appreciate, the school rules, doing their best to follow them. They like the Golden Time reward system and the Special Mention Stars. In the majority of lessons, pupils behave appropriately, so that learning is maintained well. In Years 3 to 6, a small number of pupils, predominately boys but including some girls, do not behave appropriately in lessons or at play. The behaviour management strategies that work effectively for the vast majority of pupils have little sustained impact on managing the disruptive behaviour of this group of pupils. These pupils do not set a good example for younger pupils to follow. However, all other pupils happily help and support younger pupils.
21. Pupils report that there is some bullying in the playground, but that staff usually deal with it effectively. There are also a few instances of name-calling. Some parents expressed concern about playground behaviour at the pre-inspection parents' meeting. During the inspection, however, playground behaviour was satisfactory. There have been a small number of fixed-term exclusions caused by extreme behaviour in the last 12 months. The school celebrates 'special mention' assemblies very well, with all pupils showing very good behaviour.
22. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Formal timetabled lessons take place, including whole-class discussions, called circle time, when issues such as respect or bullying and issues raised by the school council, are reported. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 go on different residential visits during the year, providing good opportunities for social development.
23. Pupils undertake a range of duties such as returning registers and putting their work away; Year 2 pupils enjoy being library monitors. However, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to make decisions in lessons, use initiative or develop responsibility for independent learning skills than might be expected. School council

members take their duties seriously and reported that they would like to be given increased responsibility. Other pupils have many good ideas; they would like, for example, to have more choice in the activities provided by teachers for Golden Time.

24. Attendance rates have improved since the last inspection but are below average. Unauthorised absence is much higher than is usual because too many parents keep their children off school without genuine cause. A good number of parents take family holidays in term time, some for over two weeks, but virtually none are due to seasonal employment. In addition, some parents do not ensure that their children arrive in time for lessons. This, together with the unauthorised absence and holidays, has a detrimental impact on pupils' learning and overall progress. The school itself does not always ensure that lessons and assemblies start and end on time, so learning or recreational time is sometimes lost.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

### Strengths

- The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is good overall.
- Teachers in Years 1 to 6 make effective use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to raise pupils' standards.
- Teamwork amongst teachers and learning support assistants is very good.
- Teachers develop very good relationships with their pupils, helping them to have good attitudes to their work.

### Areas for improvement

- Lesson plans, in subjects other than English and mathematics, are recorded in several different ways, and so the purpose of lessons and the way tasks are organised for pupils of differing capabilities are not always clear.
- Opportunities are missed to link pupils' learning in English, mathematics and information and communication technology lessons to other curriculum subjects, especially in Years 3 to 6.
- The management of the behaviour of a small number of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is not always effective enough and other pupils' learning is affected.

25. At the time of the previous inspection, the quality of teaching and learning was reported to be at least satisfactory, with mostly good or very good teaching in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. Much of the teaching in Years 3 to 6 was reported to be good or very good, but with weaknesses in Year 3 classes. There has been a satisfactory improvement since then and this is reflected in the steady rise over time in pupils' English, mathematics and science standards, in line with the national trend, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of teaching and learning is still consistently better in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 than it is in Years 3 to 6, as it was at the time of the last inspection. However, teaching is now much improved in Year 3; more lessons in Years 3 to 6 are good or very good than at the time of the previous inspection.
26. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in science, information and communication technology and music. It is satisfactory overall in English, mathematics, physical education and religious education. It is unsatisfactory overall in history. Not enough lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology and geography to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning.

27. Improvements in teaching are due to higher expectations of what pupils can achieve, a strong emphasis on training to extend teachers' subject knowledge, for example in information and communication technology, and effective use of national strategies to focus on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy standards. There are two main reasons why the quality of teaching and learning is less effective overall in Years 3 to 6 than it is in Years 1 and 2. Firstly, the establishment of consistent standards of planning, assessment and behaviour management have been significantly affected by the high turnover of staff. Secondly, in their drive to improve pupils' English and mathematics standards in Years 3 to 6, teachers have not used other subjects of the curriculum, such as art and design, design and technology, geography and history, well enough to extend pupils' learning.
28. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the nursery and the two reception classes. Teachers plan with a good understanding of the value of play and children's active involvement in purposeful tasks. When teaching is very good, for example in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development lessons, children are given many opportunities to express their ideas and opinions, work co-operatively in pairs or in larger groups and benefit from good quality resources. Teachers have high expectations of what children can achieve and successfully encourage high levels of concentration and effort.
29. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Of the 21 lessons seen, 16 were good or better, including six very good and one excellent lesson. The remaining five lessons were satisfactory.
30. The best teaching is characterised by good management of pupils, effective teaching of basic skills and high expectations of pupils' academic and social achievements. In all the lessons seen during the inspection, it was rare for pupils not be busy and active because teachers sustained a good pace to learning. Teachers maintain regular contact with individuals and groups of pupils, making sure that they have the resources and information necessary to complete their tasks. Independent group activities in literacy and numeracy lessons, for example, are well managed and organised in this way, so that pupils not under direct supervision by their teacher at any one time work hard and achieve well.
31. Pupils benefit from enthusiastic teaching because teachers have good subject knowledge, which helps them to teach with confidence. Whole-class sessions at the start of lessons are successful in motivating and stimulating pupils to tackle subsequent work well. In a very good Year 1 literacy lesson, the teaching was lively and imaginative and the teacher used good facial expressions and variations in voice and vocabulary. This meant that pupils were constantly engaged in learning and achieved well as a result. The teacher used questions very effectively to prompt pupils' thinking and teacher and pupils shared successes together with evident pleasure. Teachers have a good understanding of the different capabilities of pupils in their classes and, through very good teamwork with learning support assistants and other adults, teach basic skills well. Pupils' behaviour is invariably good in Years 1 and 2 because of the interesting range of well-planned activities.
32. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory, the purpose of lessons is not always clear and this makes it difficult for pupils to be sure about the relevance of what they are doing. Challenge for higher attaining pupils is not sufficiently demanding. This was characteristic of some art and design, history and physical education lessons.

33. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Of the 49 lessons seen, 25 were good or better, including six which were very good. Of the remaining 24 lessons, 20 were satisfactory and four were less than satisfactory.
34. The good or very good lessons were mainly seen in English, mathematics and science, reflecting the tendency for teachers to focus particularly on raising standards in these subjects. In these lessons, pupils were challenged by their tasks and the pace of learning was good. For example, in numeracy lessons for Year 6 pupils, the teachers communicated the purpose of the lessons well to the pupils, resources were appropriate and readily available and teachers gave clear, helpful instructions. As a result, progress was good and pupils achieved well as they worked hard to meet the challenges set. Another reason why these lessons were particularly effective is that pupils were taught in ability groups or sets. Pupils benefited from tasks well matched to their capabilities and teachers were able to teach to a narrow, specific purpose so that it was possible to accurately assess gains in pupils' knowledge and understanding.
35. In Years 1 to 6, the start of lessons is often used very successfully to review pupils' previous learning and establish what new learning is to be covered. Teachers make good use of these whole-class introductions to promote pupils' speaking skills, and levels of discussion are good. Group activities vary in their effectiveness. When tasks are well matched to pupils' capabilities, for instance in most literacy and numeracy lessons, lower attaining and special educational needs pupils, in particular, make good progress. Higher attaining pupils sometimes have to work through the same activities as the rest of the class before tackling more challenging tasks. This was evident in some mathematics, science, geography and history lessons. These pupils are not given enough opportunities to follow their own lines of enquiry or carry out independent research.
36. Teachers do not always give enough importance to the last part of lessons, called plenaries, when whole-class sessions are used to review what has been learned, to consolidate learning and help teachers and pupils evaluate the success of lessons. Teachers rarely use such questions as: 'What have you learned in this lesson?' or 'What do you know now that you did not know at the start of the lesson?' so that pupils can reflect on what they have achieved. Good examples were seen in a Year 4 science lesson and a Year 5 music lesson when pupils presented their findings to the rest of the class and talked about what they had learned.
37. Where lessons are satisfactory, or on a few occasions, less than satisfactory, pupils' learning is interrupted by unnecessary calling out and disrespectful behaviour by a small number of pupils, particularly in Years 3, 5 and 6. One of the main reasons for this is that activities planned are not sufficiently motivating or challenging, for example in geography and history lessons.
38. One significant reason for the variations in the effectiveness of lessons throughout the school is that teachers use different ways of recording their lesson plans in subjects other than English and mathematics. The lack of a common format means that it is more difficult for senior staff and co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate the content and quality of lesson plans before they are taught. Consequently, this reduces the influence that key staff have on how lessons are managed and organised, the appropriateness of activities for pupils of differing capabilities and how lessons might be assessed for their effectiveness once they have been taught.
39. Teachers plan lessons for special educational needs pupils well, using the knowledge of individual education plan targets that they have drawn up for each pupil. Work is

usually suitably levelled to match the skills of pupils with special educational needs, although at times tasks are too difficult or not sufficiently demanding, for instance texts that are above their reading level. In consequence, they become dispirited which, in turn, can lead to poor behaviour. Pupils made good progress when they were well supported by learning support assistants. 'Nurture' groups meet the needs of selected pupils well because they provide good opportunities for social interaction within a small group.

40. Satisfactory use is made of homework to extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Regular reading, spelling and number activities have had a positive impact on standards since the previous inspection. Parents give good support by helping their children at home and teachers have developed positive links between home and school as a result.
41. Overall, teachers promote the school's aims and values well. There is a strong commitment to raise standards, although there are variations in teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, especially in Years 3 to 6. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Pupils' contributions are valued in lessons and assemblies and the vast majority of pupils respond well to the respectful and caring way that they are treated.

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

##### **Strengths**

- Provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is good.
- There is effective provision for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- Pupils' spiritual and moral development is promoted particularly well.

Areas for improvement

- Other subjects of the curriculum are not used well enough to promote pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills.
- Levels of challenge for higher attaining pupils are not always high enough.
- Opportunities are missed to prepare pupils more fully for life in a multicultural society.

42. The curriculum has satisfactory breadth and balance and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. All pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum, including pupils with English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and pupils in the ASD facility. The quality of provision is similar to that reported at the time of the previous inspection.
43. A large proportion of time has been appropriately allocated to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Teachers make satisfactory use of the National Literacy Strategy to plan lessons. They make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy to improve achievement in mathematics. Currently, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum in subjects such as science, geography, history and religious education. As a result of an improvement in teachers' confidence and expertise, pupils are now developing satisfactory computer skills in the computer suite and on computers in the classrooms, but these skills are not used as effectively as might be expected across the curriculum.
44. Children in the nursery and reception classes benefit from a good variety of relevant and interesting practical activities and experiences. Provision is good because all members of staff share a good understanding of how children learn. This means that children remain interested, co-operative and active throughout the day, even when they are very new to school. There are good opportunities for outside activities throughout the year.
45. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Pupils gain most benefit when they are directly involved with specialist staff and, on these occasions, provision is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides effective specialist support, and learning support assistants provide good support in the classrooms and with groups of pupils such as the 'nurture' group. They are innovative in the strategies used, for example using a simulation package to help pupils learn about how people interact as they begin to form friendships. Individual education and personal education plans are in place and identify appropriate activities and measurable targets.
46. The school has a strict policy for withdrawal teaching of pupils identified as needing the support of School Action Plus and this only takes place if there is a severe need for intervention programmes to build basic literacy skills. Whilst the activities for small groups and individual withdrawal are worthwhile, the content of learning is not always sufficiently matched to that of their peers in main classrooms. The needs of pupils with statements of special educational needs are met effectively. The provision fulfils statutory obligations.
47. High priority is given to provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education and lessons are a regular part of the weekly timetable. Sex education is satisfactory and taught to older pupils through a well-planned programme of lessons

and discussions. The dangers of drug misuse are explained and discussed as part of the health education programme. Citizenship is addressed appropriately through information and communication technology programs and discussion groups such as those challenging social stereotypes.

48. The curriculum is successfully extended by visits, related to classroom projects, such as to the British Museum or a local Tudor house, where pupils experience life in the time of Elizabeth I. The school welcomes visitors, such as a member of the Hindu faith, to broaden pupils' understanding of the world around them. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, which are well supported by pupils. These activities promote pupils' learning in many aspects of the curriculum, including sport, singing, art and environmental studies. Residential visits successfully develop the outdoor and adventurous aspects of the curriculum.
49. Positive links have been established with the local community. Links with the partner secondary school are particularly effective. They include joint planning of physical education lessons, and a teacher from the secondary school is a governor of Rudyard Kipling Primary School. Transfer between the schools is carefully discussed and pupils in Year 6 look forward to moving to the secondary school, secure in these strong links. There is a positive association with Brighton University and many student teachers train at the school and find they are well prepared for their career by the school.
50. The school makes good provision for the spiritual and moral development of its pupils. Provision for their social and cultural development is satisfactory. These aspects of the school's provision make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.
51. Provision for spiritual development is good. Well-planned acts of worship address the theme for the week and, through interesting presentations and stories, encourage pupils to reflect on many human conditions such as common sense and personal achievement. Pupils are frequently enthralled by the presentations. For example, pupils enjoyed and learned from 'monkeys' digging up trees in a garden to see how long the roots were so that water was not wasted in watering them. 'special mention' assemblies celebrate the wide range of achievements of individual pupils, and the caring attitudes of pupils aid moral and social development well. Opportunities are missed to extend the very good work in collective acts of worship to lessons, for example in literacy, science, art and music in order to consolidate and extend pupils' learning.
52. Provision for pupils' moral development is promoted well by the consistent application by staff of school and class rules. There is a strong emphasis on positive aspects of behaviour, with reward systems and codes of conduct established in conjunction with pupils. A high level of care and concern for the individual pervades school life. Pupils are taught clearly the difference between right and wrong and have a good understanding of the need for rules to promote an orderly community.

53. The promotion of pupils' social development is satisfactory. Staff successfully promote equal rights and responsibilities throughout the school. There is a strong sense of community and most pupils are proud of their school. Some pupils have had several teachers during their time in particular years and have found this difficult to cope with. The headteacher and governors have sought to address this and the school community is more stable and settled now. However, a minority of pupils do not always follow school and class rules and their social skills are less well developed than most other pupils. Residential visits for pupils give them the opportunity to experience life away from home and to socialise with their teachers and peers in a new situation and this has positively helped many pupils who find relationships difficult.
54. Provision for the promotion of pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' knowledge of their own culture is satisfactory, but knowledge of the rich cultural diversity in modern Britain is weaker. In-depth studies of the geography and history typical of other countries and cultures are restricted. In music and art, the work of composers and artists from western heritage are predominately studied.

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

### Strengths

- Staff work together successfully to ensure that all pupils know that they are well cared for and valued as individuals.
- Activities in personal, social, health and citizenship lessons are regularly used to help pupils develop better social skills.
- Procedures for assessment have made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection.
- Use of assessment data to establish booster groups in English, mathematics and science to raise attainment for pupils in Year 6 is good.

### Area for improvement

- Assessment information is not always used well enough, in subjects other than English and mathematics, to match work closely to pupils' needs.

55. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are largely informal, but satisfactory. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the individual personal circumstances of each pupil in their class. Consequently, they are often able to give advice, support and special attention to pupils when, for example, pupils are experiencing difficult circumstances at home. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are satisfactory. Activities in personal, social, health and citizenship lessons are regularly used to help pupils develop better social skills or help them to develop better attitudes to work and play and to each other and people in the wider community. The headteacher is particularly aware of pupils' personal development and gives much of her time to helping and supporting pupils with particular personal difficulties. Learning support assistants are employed to work with particular pupils in groups such as the 'nurture' group.
56. At the time of the previous inspection, procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress were identified for continued development. There has been a satisfactory improvement since then. Appropriate procedures are now in place in English, mathematics and science, with a wide range of test and assessment data gathered at the end of each unit of study. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 take optional national

tests, and the information gained is used well to assess strengths and areas for improvement in standards, as well as allowing staff to monitor pupils' progress.

57. The school has used this information successfully to stream pupils into booster classes in literacy, numeracy and science in Year 6, but does not use it well enough to make adjustments to curricular planning across the school. Opportunities are missed to use assessment information to set targets for individual or groups of pupils that are measurable on a day-to-day basis and to help teachers plan challenging activities for each individual lesson. Insufficient use is made of whole-class sessions at the end of lessons, called plenaries, to guide teachers' lesson planning for the next day.
58. All staff mark pupils' work conscientiously and consistently. Marking is often supplemented with positive and supportive comments which are helpful in developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Some teachers require pupils to set out the learning intentions for the lesson at the top of their work and then comment on how well the pupils have achieved them. However, not all marking is used as effectively as this to highlight pupils' weaknesses and suggest further learning goals, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The headteacher and staff are aware of the areas for improvement in the present assessment procedures and there are useful plans to develop a more consistent, whole-school approach.
59. Nursery and reception class teachers have good systems for recording what children know, understand and can do and how they achieve in literacy and numeracy. All members of staff know the children well and strive to meet their individual needs.
60. Support staff work well to ensure that special educational needs pupils and pupils identified as requiring additional help make steady and sometimes good progress in lessons, keeping up with their peers. The positive rapport between pupils and support staff enables pupils to accept the guidance provided. This is particularly evident in the ASD facility. The small number of pupils with English as an additional language have a reasonable command of the English language and need no specific support. Help is readily given to them if it is needed. Pupils selected for various booster classes in literacy, numeracy and science receive good focused attention, helping them to make good progress in readiness for national tests.
61. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from improved involvement with outside professionals and other educational establishments since the last inspection. The school purchases their services and these links are very good. The learning support service, speech and language therapy, educational psychologist, Alternative Centre for Education and a parental partnership service, all provide valuable expertise and advice to the school for supporting pupils with special educational needs.
62. Pupils' progress towards individual education plan targets is reviewed three times a year. Targets are kept under review at all times and new ones set if necessary. Procedures for assessing pupils in numeracy and literacy are satisfactory and improving. Pupils on special spelling and reading programmes are continually

assessed and consolidation work is extended for pupils as long as necessary. The use of assessment data to follow, or track, pupils' progress towards National Curriculum targets is at an early stage of development.

63. The monitoring and promotion of behaviour and prevention of bullying is satisfactory. The behaviour policy is largely based on the use of Golden Time and Special Mention Stars. The majority of pupils accept and follow this system appropriately, especially the younger children and pupils, and those in the ASD facility. However, for the small number of pupils with continued poor behaviour, it is ineffective in bringing about sustained improvement. Parents are informed of any inappropriate behaviour and a number of pupils in Years 3 to 6 have behaviour plans, which have been successful in some cases. The headteacher monitors class behaviour books, maintaining an overview of the most difficult cases. There is good support from outside agencies. The school does not have a ratified physical restraint policy and only one member of staff is currently trained to handle pupils who show extreme behaviours. Exclusion procedure is properly followed. However, the school finds the official exclusion form unhelpful in its format, hindering the school's own monitoring procedures.
64. Monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. Registers do not meet requirements because some individual marks are missed, there are pencil entries and daily totals of authorised and unauthorised absence are not usually recorded. The school is aware of the need to improve attendance. It has introduced a 'same day' phoning system, together with a written record of the outcome. Parents are reminded about the importance of good attendance in newsletters. These strategies are starting to have an impact. For instance, last year nine pupils received 100 per cent attendance certificates.
65. The rate of unauthorised absence is above average, despite the school's efforts to encourage parents not to keep their children at home without good reason or take them on holiday during term time. A small minority of pupils regularly arrive 30 minutes or more after the start of lessons. Too many parents are not supporting the school enough in its efforts to improve attendance, nor are some parents meeting their legal responsibilities regarding attendance.
66. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils benefit from the good provision for personal, social and health education. The informal guidance provided by staff is effective in reinforcing expectations of personal development for the majority, who try to do better. Opportunities are missed to raise the profile of multicultural education to reflect the school's own minority ethnic groups and to prevent outdated stereotypes and prejudices from being continued.
67. Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. The designated person is trained and knows procedures well. Staff, even if they have had no formal training, know how to follow procedures. The school policy requires updating to reflect the school's own practice and to provide more explicit guidance.
68. Health and safety arrangements are satisfactory. There are qualified first-aiders who care for pupils well when they are ill. There is a governor committee for health and safety, and required records and checks are undertaken. However, the school policy needs updating. Risk assessment is at a very early stage of development.

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

#### Strengths

- The school has a good partnership with its parents and continues to seek ways to build relationships between home and school.
- Parental views of the school are generally good and their involvement has a positive impact on the school's work.
- The quality of information provided is satisfactory, as is the contribution parents make to their children's learning.

#### Area for improvement

- Annual reports are often too impersonal.

69. An effective 'open door' policy operates, with parents receiving a warm welcome. The headteacher and staff see any parent as soon as is possible. Parents appreciate this openness, which they report has improved since the appointment of the present headteacher. Many parents attend school events and particularly the 'special mention' assemblies, a regular feature of school life. Events organised by the well-established, hardworking Parent Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA) are always very well attended, with events at Christmas and in the summer being very successful fundraisers. The PTFA works with the school council to fundraise, sometimes matching the money raised by the school council, for instance for small games equipment. Annually, around £4,000 is raised to buy much needed resources and equipment for the school. A small number of volunteers and parents help with reading, or in classes, generally with the younger pupils.
70. The quality of information provided by the school is satisfactory overall. There are now regular informative newsletters and much other helpful information sent to parents, including letters about the curriculum in different years. The school prospectus and annual governors' report to parents, although informative for parents, have some required items missing and so do not meet statutory requirements. Pupils' annual reports meet requirements, and some written reviews of progress made by pupils are of good quality, but this is not common to all classes. In some reports, statements about pupils' achievements and targets for improvement are exactly the same for pupils of different abilities and aptitudes. There is a tendency for teachers to report more on what was taught or what pupils can do rather than focusing on how pupils might improve. Parents say that they are unhappy with the way reports are written; inspectors agree that reports are too impersonal. Parents have three formal meetings with teachers to discuss progress each year, but have access to staff informally should they wish to discuss progress at other times. A minority of parents is unhappy about how well informed they are kept about how their children are getting on, and whether the school works closely enough with them. A small number of parents interviewed during the inspection were concerned that information about their children's lack of progress was not conveyed to them early enough.
71. The school has suitable involvement with parents of pupils who have special educational needs. They are kept informed of progress three times a year. Parents have open access to the special educational needs co-ordinator and class teachers and are involved in discussing draft individual education plans. Parents and pupils

are not included in target setting as a way of involving them more closely in decisions made about the next steps to be taken, although the draft targets are discussed with them.

72. The contribution made by parents to their children's learning is satisfactory. Homework is set regularly with a focus on literacy and numeracy and most parents encourage their children to complete the work set. Meetings about the curriculum are not as well attended by parents as events involving their children. Most parents are pleased with their children's progress.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

### Strengths

- The headteacher provides good leadership and a clear educational direction to the life and work of the school.
- There is a shared commitment by the headteacher and other key staff to school improvement; teamwork is very good.
- Pupils benefit from effective use of staffing, accommodation, resources and available finances.

### Area for improvement

- Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and teachers' planning do not have sufficient impact on standards.

73. Since her appointment, the headteacher has worked hard to establish effective procedures for school improvement. As a result, the school is maintaining the satisfactory progress reported at the time of the last inspection.
74. The headteacher provides good leadership. She has a good understanding of the needs of the school and the direction in which she wishes it to proceed. The key issues in leadership and management from the last inspection have been addressed but have been critically impeded by high staff turnover. However, with the helpful assistance of the local education authority, procedures for school self-evaluation and preparation of the school improvement plan have been successfully established.
75. Teaching and non-teaching staff are becoming increasingly more involved in the establishment of priorities for further development and, as a result, the commitment to raising standards is good. The senior management team has been strengthened and co-ordinators for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are now in place with a brief to raise standards. Governors are much more aware of their role in school improvement, and question decisions with confidence. They are a strength of the school management. Satisfactory procedures for performance management are in place and are used as a vehicle for professional development, with all staff acting as team leaders.
76. Staff, and the deputy headteacher in particular, are very supportive of the headteacher, and appreciate her involvement with the pupils, her consistent approach and her constant encouragement. For example, during the inspection, the headteacher was frequently seen around the school, talking to parents, pupils or

staff, and taking assemblies which pupils thoroughly enjoyed. Pupils report that they like the headteacher and consider her to be effective. They appreciate her positive approach to them.

77. The present temporary deputy headteacher, seconded from the local education authority, works hard to support the headteacher in her aims and values for the school, and has assisted the headteacher very well in team building, particularly in the induction of the many staff new to the school. She has organised social events, involving both teaching and non-teaching staff and, as part of a local education authority initiative, celebrated the school's book week by taking a portfolio of photographs to Moscow to share with Russian children. She has also been responsible for introducing assessment procedures, assisting key staff to analyse data and follow, or track, pupils' progress. The deputy headteacher is aware that effective use of assessment information requires improvement, and has useful plans for identifying more rigorous targets, meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils and developing consistent ways of sharing information between staff.
78. The impact of procedures by senior staff and subject co-ordinators for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning on standards is not as effective as might be expected. There is insufficient critical analysis of teaching methods and planning, mainly because several subject co-ordinators are new to their posts or are inexperienced. However, effective use is made of the local education authority training programme to develop the roles of subject co-ordinators, and they, as well as the headteacher, monitor lessons and feed back advice to teachers.
79. The work of the Foundation Stage staff is well managed and led. There are effective systems in place to make sure that children have a positive start to their school life. Teachers and learning support assistants work very well together to provide a secure environment where children achieve well and make good progress.
80. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages provision well and has made significant improvements in developing this area since coming into post after the last inspection. Teachers are now fully involved in identifying, setting and reviewing individual education plan targets. The number of learning support assistants available to her has had to be curtailed because governors have prioritised their deployment to booster groups for Year 6 as pupils prepare for national end of Key Stage 2 tests. Co-operation between the special educational needs co-ordinator and the ASD facility teacher is good.
81. The teacher in charge of the ASD facility is co-ordinating its work well. Although new to the post, she has already had an impact on the way staff and pupils are more involved in the life and work of the school and she has useful plans to extend this involvement further.
82. Governors are led by a knowledgeable and hardworking chair of governors. He manages an effective programme of meetings and governor visits to school. As a result, governors are developing a good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement so that decisions about priorities, action to be taken and budget allocations are well informed. School improvement is very well documented in the school improvement plan, which clearly identifies responsibilities, targets, success criteria and costs and is a helpful working document.
83. The strategic use of resources is satisfactory. Day-to-day monitoring of expenditure and budget management are good and the administration staff provide an effective overview of the financial position on a regular basis. In conjunction with the

headteacher, they keep the governors well informed, and there are good monitoring procedures in place. Financial planning is very good and is linked closely to the priorities in the school improvement plan. The principles of best value are applied well. Staff and governors compare standards with those of other schools to help them set appropriate targets, and resources are purchased only after careful consideration of value for money.

84. Serious measures are being taken to address the concern of the deficit budget the school has faced for the last two years. For example, the chair of the finance committee has taken up the issue of special educational needs funding with the local education authority and this is now being satisfactorily addressed. However, staffing costs account for a greater proportion of the overall budget than governors would like, and plans to employ additional support staff, for example, to help raise standards of the present Year 6 pupils, have had to be postponed.
85. Taking account of the relatively high unit costs per pupil, the low attainment of pupils on entry and the satisfactory progress they make, the school provides satisfactory value for money.
86. There is a committed staff team at the school which feels highly valued and the staff support each other well. Staffing has improved since the last inspection, when roles and responsibilities were underdeveloped. This has been addressed and there is now an appropriate link between subject co-ordinators' roles and their expertise, as well as an improvement in the responsibilities of middle and senior managers. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. However, many staff are new, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and, although there has been a high level of training since the last inspection, there is still a weakness in teachers' knowledge and understanding of some aspects of the non-core subjects such as history, geography and design and technology. This is having a negative impact on standards in these subjects.
87. Induction procedures for staff new to the school are effective. Newly qualified staff have access to a mentor and good quality training to consolidate their skills. Other new staff are well supported by senior managers so that they quickly feel an important part of the staff team.
88. Appraisal and performance management are now in place, and are helping to set targets for staff and senior managers, which are then appropriately monitored by the governing body. However, turbulence in staffing has been an issue for the school for the past few years, and this has hindered improvements in standards. This is now being rightly addressed and the more settled staff this year is beginning to have an impact in lessons.
89. The standard of accommodation is good overall and is used effectively and efficiently to support pupils' learning. Foundation Stage accommodation is very good. All classrooms are spacious and suitable for effective delivery of the curriculum. Accommodation for the autistic unit is satisfactory. Pupils benefit from two large halls and a dining area, as well as spacious grounds, because the building was originally separate junior and infant schools. The halls are used effectively for a wide range of activities and make a significant contribution to the standards achieved in music and physical education. The interior of the school is cleaned to a high standard, with pupils' work displayed effectively in classrooms and corridors. The nursery is bright and spacious, and the recently opened library makes very good use of a classroom to provide an additional opportunity for pupils to extend their learning.

90. The large building is expensive to maintain and governors work hard, with the enthusiastic assistance of the site manager, to deploy resources when they are available to improve the quality of the environment. However, not enough has been spent on the upkeep of the building in the past and the appearance of some areas of the school, despite governors' best efforts, runs contrary to their desire to establish a high quality learning environment. Exterior peeling paint and ill-fitting windows, as well as tattered window blinds in some classrooms and chipped paint on staircase railings, present a poor example to pupils. Several steps and stairs inside and outside mean that the school is not accessible to wheelchair users.
91. Overall, learning resources are satisfactory. The headteacher and governors have been constrained in their spending on replacing and adding to the stock of learning resources because of the need to reduce the deficit budget. However, there is a satisfactory quantity and quality of fiction and non-fiction books in the library and in classrooms. Resources for the Foundation Stage are very good. The information and communication technology suite contains a good number of computers and there is at least one computer in each classroom. Some equipment for physical education is in need of replacement, particularly the agility mats, but is satisfactory overall. The environmental area is developing into a valuable resource to support learning in several areas of the curriculum. The school makes good use of visits to places of interest and visitors to school to extend pupils' learning.

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

92. In order to improve the pupils' quality of education further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Raise standards in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 by making more effective use of other subjects of the curriculum, such as science, geography, history, information and communication technology and religious education, to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.  
*(Paragraphs: 3, 4, 12, 15, 27, 43, 128, 134, 145, 153, 174, 181)*
  - (2) Make more effective use of the information gathered about pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects of the curriculum by:
    - i) developing a common format throughout the school for recording assessment details so that information can be accessed and analysed more easily;
    - ii) making sure that activities planned are matched closely to pupils' needs, particularly those of higher attaining pupils;
    - iii) providing more challenging and demanding tasks for all pupils, particularly in art and design, design and technology, geography and history.  
*(Paragraphs: 4, 32, 35, 37, 38, 57, 58, 77, 144, 152, 162, 168, 170, 174, 182, 187, 209)*
  - (3) Establish, in subjects other than English and mathematics, a common format throughout the school for the way teachers record their lesson plans so that:
    - i) what pupils are expected to know or be able to do by the end of a lesson is clearly stated;
    - ii) activities for pupils of different capabilities are identified;

- iii) activities are linked to targets identified through assessment procedures.  
(Paragraphs: 32, 35, 38, 173, 175)
- (4) Improve the impact that procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning by senior staff and subject co-ordinators have on pupils' standards by introducing a more critical analysis of teachers' lesson plans and the way that they are taught.  
(Paragraphs: 78, 154, 170)
- (5) Continue with efforts to raise the level of pupils' attendance.  
(Paragraphs: 64, 65)

### Other point for consideration by the school

Review the way that school staff manage the behaviour of a small number of pupils in Years 3 to 6 during lessons and at lunchtimes.  
(Paragraphs: 12, 16, 19, 20, 21, 37, 53, 63, 151, 168)

## OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

### The work of the autistic spectrum disorder facility

#### Strengths

- The quality of provision is good overall.
- Pupils' behaviour is managed very well which allows them to learn and achieve well.
- Links with parents, especially day to day, are very good.

#### Areas for improvement

- The extent of pupils' involvement in, and teaching and non-teaching staff's links with, the main school are not as strong as they might be.
- Procedures for recording and assessing pupils' progress require further development to make them more effective.

- 93. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. However, evidence from individual education plan targets shows that pupils achieve well in developing their social skills and this enables them to be receptive to teaching and learning, both in the facility and in mainstream classes.
- 94. The quality of teaching and learning is good because the teacher has good knowledge and understanding of the needs of the pupils. Pupils are well managed and, consequently, listen and respond actively in lessons. Learning is suitably planned in short and varied activities with the result that pupils' attention is sustained for considerable periods of time. Learning support assistants led by the class teacher motivate pupils well. They praise their efforts, encouraging pupils in their endeavours and recognising efforts by awarding daily Golden Time, in which pupils may choose an activity, as a reward. When teaching is sometimes less successful, checking of learning in sessions at the end of lessons is limited, so that pupils' self-knowledge of what they have learned is not reinforced.

95. Pupils are well supported by learning support assistants when they work in mainstream classes. They make good progress when work set is matched closely to their capabilities. For example, two Year 4 pupils made good gains in their learning as they worked with a group of pupils during a science lesson. One Year 6 pupil showed evident enjoyment as he joined enthusiastically in a music lesson. In one-to-one sessions in the facility, and in main school classes, learning support assistants routinely record pupils' achievement and difficulties, and this is used to plan following lessons in the unit. Staff and parents use home-school diaries very effectively. Parents often contribute routinely valuable information, which assists both staff and parents to work well together to deal with issues and behaviour sensitively.
96. The curriculum is as broad as the main school, with emphasis on English, mathematics and science. The curriculum is carefully planned so that pupils follow the programmes of study for their year groups. Literacy and numeracy lessons are appropriately targeted to each pupil's capabilities. When pupils work in the main school, they follow the same lessons as the rest of the class where they have appropriate support. All pupils integrate socially for break, lunch and clubs. However, integration opportunities are under review at all times and possibilities, such as joining classes for registration, have yet to be explored. Pupils in the facility have suitable individual personal and social programmes in which they work successfully towards achievable targets.
97. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are in the process of being formalised. Assessment of progress in lessons is used effectively in the teacher's planning. Individual education plans are reviewed regularly and pupils are achieving social targets very well. Academic targets are sometimes too challenging, with the result that steps in progress are not easily identified. Following, or tracking, pupils' achievement over long periods is at the development stage and so targets in line with National Curriculum levels are not set. Annual reviews meet statutory requirements and a good range of professionals, as well as parents and pupils, are involved. At present, parents' and pupils' agreement is sought to support planned targets, rather than contributions and suggestions.
98. In post since September 2002, the co-ordinator manages the ASD facility well and is active in raising its profile within the school in partnership with the special educational needs co-ordinator. For instance, the siting of the facility is central in the school but a little remote. It does not restrict pupils' access to the rest of the school, but is equally not in a part of the school that is passed routinely by staff and pupils. Appropriate targets are set in the school improvement plan. One of these is to develop a policy for the facility in order to formalise and review existing practices such as integration, assessment, behaviour management and restraint.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	82
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	17	35	25	4	0	0
Percentage	1	21	43	30	5	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 one percentage point.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	16	358
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	78

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	87

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.4

National comparative data	5.2
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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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	26	19	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	26
	Girls	17	18	19
	Total	38	41	45
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	84 (85)	91 (85)	100 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	21	25	24
	Girls	16	19	17
	Total	37	44	41
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	82 (80)	98 (89)	91 (82)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	33	15	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	21	23	30
	Girls	8	10	15
	Total	29	33	45
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	63 (76)	69 (64)	94 (90)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	24	28	31
	Girls	14	12	14
	Total	38	40	45
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	79 (78)	83 (74)	94 (90)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	285	7	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	8	0	0

*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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.61
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.1
Average class size	26.2

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	250

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	13.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8.2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1.8
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.7
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	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	909,379
Total expenditure	935,912
Expenditure per pupil	2,418
Balance brought forward from previous year	-5,586
Balance carried forward to next year	-32,119

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	398
Number of questionnaires returned	95

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	34	5	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	45	7	4	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	58	14	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	52	18	10	4
The teaching is good.	32	47	11	5	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	32	29	6	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	38	4	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	54	4	2	1
The school works closely with parents.	21	43	22	7	6
The school is well led and managed.	38	40	9	6	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	53	9	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	27	24	30	7

## 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

#### Strengths

- Children make good progress in all areas of their learning.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- There is a warm and caring atmosphere which helps pupils to explore and learn well.

#### Area for improvement

- The monitoring of children's activity choices each day is not as effective as it might be.

99. Children in the Foundation Stage receive a very good start to their schooling. Good provision for children's learning in the nursery and in the reception classes has been maintained since the last inspection. Children are welcomed into a warm and caring atmosphere which enables them to explore independently, and with others, so that they learn well. The quality of the accommodation and resources is very good, helping children to develop a good range of skills. Outdoor play facilities have improved but are limited in size in the nursery. Good use is made of all the available space to promote learning opportunities.
100. By the time they enter Year 1, children attain the nationally set standards in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development, and personal, social and emotional development. Their development in communication, language and literacy is just below the national standard for their age. Overall, achievement is good for all children, including those with special educational needs and those of higher attainment.
101. Children make good progress in the nursery class. A significant number enter with below average skills, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in their personal development. The good, and often very good, teaching and support that they receive helps them to catch up and make good gains in learning. Children continue to make good progress in the reception classes in all six areas of development. They receive good teaching and benefit from well-organised accommodation that promotes active learning so that they achieve well in their lessons. Just occasionally, time is not used well enough, but overall provision remains good.
102. The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is always good, and sometimes very good. Relationships are strong and children feel secure and confident, showing high levels of interest and excitement in their lessons. Teachers are well supported by the nursery nurse and learning support assistants, who work very skilfully with small groups and with individual children. Lessons have a clear focus and the good resources are well used. Behaviour is very well managed so that children develop good working strategies, are polite and courteous, helping each other to succeed.
103. At times, when children choose activities for themselves, boys almost always choose sand or construction play, whilst girls almost always choose to write or play in the role-play area. During the inspection, one small group of boys in a reception class played in the sand for a long session, almost every day, and did not explore other

areas of learning. This inhibited their experiences. Monitoring of children's choices is not fully secure, and there is not always a clear overview of what each child has chosen each day.

104. The good curriculum is planned well so that all six required learning areas are covered. Regular assessment of how well children achieve, particularly in literacy and numeracy, is a strength and helps to inform about each child's progress in these areas. However, not enough information is available about how well they achieve in the other areas. This limits the amount of knowledge that teachers have about children's gains as they move through the Foundation Stage.

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

105. Children achieve above the standards expected in their personal, social and emotional development. Both in the nursery and in the reception classes, children make good gains in learning about how to get on with others. They co-operate and play very well together, even when undertaking activities that are unsupervised. For example, they were observed playing well together in the playground, helping each other to put on aprons and sharing their toys and games. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers provide good collaborative activities to encourage children's personal development. For example, in the hall during physical education, some reception children were required to work in pairs, sliding a beanbag to each other, catching it and returning it. They showed a mature approach as they worked sensibly and carefully, taking turns to slide and catch.
106. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children show good awareness of the needs of others, and they behave well. They are encouraged to take simple responsibilities. In the nursery, children were observed tidying the play area and putting toys away. In one reception class, two boys commented on the amount of sand that had fallen on the floor during their play; they quickly found the dustpan and brush and swept the floor clean. Teachers use every opportunity to celebrate different cultures and lifestyles. Nursery children have celebrated the Chinese New Year by eating with chopsticks, making dragons and writing in Chinese, whilst in the reception classes, children benefit from a good range of multicultural stories.

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

107. Children's progress in communication, language and literacy is good. When they enter the nursery, many children have underdeveloped skills in this area of learning but, during their time in the Foundation Stage, they make good progress so that, by the time they enter Year 1, they attain standards that are only just below those expected for children of this age.
108. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers make very good use of resources to promote interest and encourage interaction. For example, while making cakes with a group of nursery children, the teacher promoted curiosity and good observation by asking them what might happen to the cakes when they were cooked. Good questioning is also a key feature in the reception classes, where teachers extend children's skills in literacy by asking them about the stories they have heard. In one lesson, children made very good gains in understanding about vocabulary as they discussed the meaning of 'gigantic' in the story of 'The Gigantic Turnip'. Many were able to offer suitable alternatives such as 'enormous', 'large' and 'big'. Teachers read poems and stories fluently and with good phrasing to help children sustain good attentive listening.

109. The very effective programme of teaching letter sounds, or phonics, is helping to improve children's abilities in reading and writing, and many children in the reception classes recognise and write initial sounds in words. In the nursery, children explore many different ways of making marks on paper and creating their own writing. In the older classes, daily writing activities are a key feature of literacy lessons. Just occasionally, not enough attention is paid to consolidating and reinforcing literacy skills in whole-class sessions. This means that children quickly forget what they have learned and reduces the progress that they make.

### **Mathematical development**

110. Children's progress in mathematical development is good. When they enter the nursery, many children have limited numeracy skills, but the good provision and range of exciting activities and games leads to good improvements so that, by the time they enter Year 1, the vast majority achieve standards in line with those expected in this area of learning.
111. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Nursery children count daily and undertake many activities to develop their skills in number, shape, space and measure. They learn to sort things by colour, shape and size, and give out toys and cards one to one. They are beginning to identify groups of numbers accurately. During numeracy lessons in the reception class, children were observed counting along a number line to 15, counting back from 10, and finding missing numbers. They counted and recognised up to five apples on a tree, and knew that one needed to be added to make six and that one needed to be taken away to make four. They enjoyed taking part in a fishing game, where they had to identify the number on the fish that they caught. Children are becoming confident in their use of number. Many recognise simple coins to 10 pence and count out the correct coins to buy things in their class 'shop'. They are beginning to estimate 'how many' sensibly and show good enjoyment of mathematical tasks.

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

112. Children's progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world is good, and they achieve standards in line with those expected by the time they enter Year 1.
113. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children in the nursery were observed making good gains in understanding about mixtures as they mixed ingredients to make cakes. They received positive encouragement to predict what might happen, and showed great pride in their finished cakes. They showed curiosity as they planted beans in pots, wondering what might happen, and using simple tools carefully.

114. In the reception classes, children have regular opportunities to develop their awareness of the world around them. They show independent use of the mouse as they play simple computer games, making choices and building on earlier skills. They enjoy manipulating and moulding playdough to print animals and flowers and to express their own thoughts. They learn about the way shops work as they role-play 'shopkeeper' and 'customers' in their own 'flower and vegetable store'.
115. Across the Foundation Stage, children enjoy investigating construction materials and benefit from the many opportunities provided to use simple tools. Just occasionally, children do not have enough opportunities to gather information through books and other visual materials, and rely too heavily on adults to provide it for them. Good use is made of the school's environment to promote understanding of growing things. Children were observed making bark rubbings to find out about textures; they found many different textures and colours in the garden and showed awareness of things that were living and those that were not living.

### **Physical development**

116. Children make good progress in their physical development and achieve the expected standards by the end of their reception year. This is because of good provision and teaching which enables children to practise their skills on a daily basis.
117. Children in the nursery were observed playing well together as they ran around the outdoor play area. They ride bikes and scooters, pushing and pulling each other around the playground successfully. They use a range of small apparatus regularly and many use scissors, glue and crayons, as well as spoons with which they mix cooking ingredients.
118. During a physical education lesson in the reception classes, children showed good levels of skill in co-operation and awareness of space. They moved safely around the hall, changing direction and stopping quickly on request. They can throw, slide and catch beanbags, run, skip, jump and hop with energy and style. Very good demonstrations by the teacher helped them to improve during the lesson.

### **Creative development**

119. Children make good progress in creative development. The quality of teaching and learning is good. From their earliest days in the nursery, children are successfully encouraged to explore paints and three-dimensional materials. They know their colours and choose appropriately as they paint flowers as part of observational painting. They use chalk and crayons well to create their own pictures. In the reception classes, children have many opportunities to develop their creative style. They explore what happens when they mix colours and make collages by mixing different materials, experimenting with textures. Children enjoy talking about their pictures and describe them thoroughly to adults. They benefit from good questioning, so that they express their feelings and improve their designs. Children in both the nursery and reception classes enjoy singing and making music, and they are beginning to build a good repertoire of songs. They have made their own musical instruments from a range of materials, and are rightly proud of the results.

## ENGLISH

### Strengths

- Standards in spelling and reading at the end of Year 2 are above average.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good.
- The new school library is well resourced and provides a stimulating environment.

### Areas for improvement

- Standards in writing are below average at the end of Year 6 and pupils' comprehension skills are weak.
- Opportunities are missed to use other subjects of the curriculum to extend pupils' literacy skills in exciting and stimulating ways.

120. Pupils enter the school just below average in their language and literacy skills and make good progress through Years 1 and 2 to achieve these standards. Inspection evidence of reading and spelling indicates that the present Year 2 pupils are likely to achieve similar standards. Evidence of writing indicates that this is satisfactory, and that standards at the end of Year 2 are likely to be about average.
121. Standards in English at the end of Year 6 were well below the national average in the 2002 national tests, and well below average when compared to similar schools. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. However, the effective use of national intervention strategies, such as Further Literacy Skills (FLS), is making a difference. The high turnover of staff over the last two years has had a negative impact on standards in Year 6, and evidence during the inspection indicates that they are unlikely to achieve the targets set for them. Evidence during the inspection of work being achieved in Years 4 and 5, however, shows a good improvement with pupils making satisfactory progress and achieving standards close to those expected of pupils of their ages.
122. By the end of Year 2, standards of speaking are average and of listening are good. Plenty of opportunities are given for children to express themselves, and pupils are tolerant of each other's attempts to volunteer answers. They make good progress in their ability to ask relevant and sensible questions and show sensitivity to the needs and ideas of others when making responses. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 1, a visit to a local church had excited the pupils' interest, and they talked animatedly both during the whole-class element of the lesson and individually, remembering words such as font and pew, and their significance in the church. During story sessions and in assemblies, pupils listen attentively, especially when teachers speak with expression and animation.
123. Standards of speaking and listening in Year 6 are average. Some pupils make significant contributions to discussions. For example, in a very good lesson analysing a poem, pupils enthusiastically identified metaphors and similes but, where pupils interrupt, opportunities for giving extended answers to questions are lost. In lessons and assemblies where teachers show enthusiasm and pace, pupils are attentive but, where behaviour is intrusive, pupils' creative thought is interrupted, and chances for extending and broadening vocabulary are lost. Posters encouraging pupils to be

good listeners with specific tactics are displayed around the school, and some pupils in Year 5 demonstrated exceptionally good dramatic skills which were successfully exploited by their teacher.

124. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading are good. The National Literacy Strategy is used effectively to promote an understanding of basic literacy skills such as the sounds of the alphabet, called phonics, and pupils know the component parts of books and understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts. In all lessons observed in Year 1 and Year 2, teachers constantly reinforced letter sounds and blends, the use of punctuation and sentence structure, ensuring effective learning was taking place. Pupils are encouraged to read and do spellings at home and the newly established library is beginning to expand the range of texts available. All pupils confirmed that they enjoyed reading.
125. By the end of Year 6, reading standards are below average, but are closer to expected levels in Year 4 and Year 5. In common with findings nationally, there is a slowing of progress in Year 3. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and with expression, taking account of the punctuation, but a significant number of pupils are still using the sounds of letters, or phonics, to decode words and have not yet developed an adequate sight vocabulary. Pupils have satisfactory abilities to decode words, but their understanding of texts and the ability to infer and deduce what might happen in stories is limited. Few pupils belong to the local town library, but are beginning to use the school library to more effect.
126. By the end of Year 2, standards in writing are average and satisfactory progress is made between Year 1 and Year 2. Pupils have the opportunity to write in a variety of styles and for different purposes. For example, some good poetry writing was seen in the style of a well-known children's author, and some good descriptive writing was displayed. Year 2 pupils had made treasure maps, effectively displaying the components of instructional writing. Pupils use correct punctuation, including full stops, commas and speech marks. Standards of spelling are good because effective use is made of the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils regularly take spellings home to learn and these are tested, usually weekly.
127. By the end of Year 6, standards of writing are below the expected level, with few pupils expected to reach the higher Level 5. Progress in Year 6 has been hampered by changes of staff, but is better in Year 5. Pupils are encouraged to draft work and revise it for presentation. Work seen during the inspection was characterised by simple language and inadequate punctuation. However, students at Brighton University have worked with Year 6 pupils on story writing, producing some very good story openings. Staff have gained a good insight into the benefits of small groups working intensively towards a target as a result.
128. Few opportunities were seen for pupils to extend their writing into other areas of the curriculum, where written work is limited to caption writing or completion of work sheets. The use of information and communication technology in literacy lessons is limited, as is a more creative use of the strategy guidelines in subjects such as science, geography, history and religious education.
129. Standards of handwriting are satisfactory. Much is neat and joined up. The style is effectively taught from Year 1 onwards so that, by Year 6, it is generally well formed.
130. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good and pupil management is very good. The best lessons have pace and excitement, and teachers demonstrate

enthusiasm and joy in the lesson. Tasks are well matched to pupils' capabilities, with constant teacher intervention, and questions are focused and inclusive. No opportunity is lost to remind pupils of the learning intention, which is displayed throughout the lesson, and planning and assessment is collaborative between the staff. Learning support assistants are used very effectively to support groups of pupils, and they are involved in the planning processes, ensuring that they know the learning intention for their pupils. Planning is based firmly on the National Literacy Strategy and teachers balance effectively the whole-class element of the lesson with group work. Opportunities are missed to make effective use of the final whole-class sessions, or plenaries, to review and consolidate what has been learned.

131. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupil progress, productivity and behaviour but, in too many lessons, pupils are not encouraged to be independent, and timing is slack with resulting loss of pace. Assessment is not used rigorously enough to match tasks to pupils' capabilities. Teacher subject knowledge is satisfactory. Effective work is taking place in implementing support strategies such as booster classes and Further Literacy Skills, and these are demonstrating the benefit of lessons with a specific focus. Learning support assistants are extremely effective, and have readily taken on small group work to support underachieving pupils, for which they have received training. They make a valuable contribution to lessons by recording the progress of targeted pupils and encouraging full participation by pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
132. Teachers have made a good start in implementing a system of literacy assessment records. Staff are aware that these now need to be used more frequently and more rigorously to match tasks to pupils' capabilities, and to provide the right levels of challenge, especially for higher attaining pupils.
133. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership. Recently appointed, she has carried out an audit of the subject and, with the assistance of local education authority personnel, produced a very good action plan, which she is following closely. She has identified appropriate areas for development and is beginning to use assessment data to inform all staff of progress and areas for concern. Opportunities for the co-ordinator to observe colleagues teach are limited.
134. The co-ordinator has helpful plans to encourage staff to be more adventurous in the way they use other subjects of the curriculum to extend pupils' literacy skills, including the use of information and communication technology. The co-ordinator has run book weeks, and has arranged for theatre groups to visit the school, so that pupils have the advantage of a wide range of stimuli.
135. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through shared enjoyment of stories and poems, group activities and the study of texts from different parts of the world. Resources for the subject are of good quality and quantity, in particular the stock of books in the library, funded by a grant from a local trust. The library has a computerised checking system, and pupils are being trained as librarians to operate it. Pupils were observed choosing books and were able to use the identification system effectively for both fiction and non-fiction texts. Books have recently been audited and new books for group reading purchased, ensuring that staff have a wide range of appropriate texts from which to choose.

## **MATHEMATICS**

#### Strengths

- Effective use is made of booster groups to raise attainment in Year 6.
- Learning support assistants give good additional support to lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work and behave well in lessons.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2.

#### Areas for improvement

- Whole-class sessions at the end of lessons are not used well enough to discuss what has been learned.
- Opportunities are missed to use assessment information to make changes to lesson plans and set challenging targets for pupils.
- The co-ordinator does not have enough opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and teachers' planning.
- Pupils' numeracy skills are not promoted as well as they might be in other subjects.

136. Standards by the end of Year 6 are below the national average. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above the national average. The results of national tests at the end of Year 6 over time show that standards have risen steadily in line with the national trend. Pupils currently in Year 6 have been taught by many different teachers since leaving Year 2. The school is very conscious of this and has set in place booster classes to help these pupils catch up and standards are improving. In particular, higher attaining pupils are now set work that more closely matches their capability. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Throughout the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make at least satisfactory progress; pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2.
137. Staff have worked hard to improve standards in mathematics. They have made good use of the National Numeracy Strategy to improve provision. Mental mathematics activities at the beginning of lessons are appropriately linked to group activities in the lesson and form a good warm-up session. As a result, pupils are keen and ready to undertake the activities later in the lesson. Teachers' plans do not give enough time to whole-class sessions at the end of lessons to successfully reinforce learning or for teachers to accurately assess pupils' understanding to help them plan subsequent lessons.
138. By the end of Year 2, pupils confidently round numbers to the nearest ten and sequence numbers to 1000. They quickly sort car number plates into ascending or descending order by the three digits shown on the plates. They carry out

investigations into mathematical problems well. They competently enter instructions into a programmable robot to make it travel to a friend, carefully estimating the distance in centimetres prior to entering the data.

139. By the end of Year 6, pupils draw, measure accurately to the nearest degree and name angles using correct mathematical terms. They confidently give co-ordinates to establish the position of an object or place on a grid map. They use a spreadsheet on a computer to calculate building costs for an extension to a house and understand that such a program enables them to easily amend the total as costs vary during the project. They devise their own strategies for checking if answers to calculations are accurate and to check if those shown on a calculator or spreadsheet are reasonable. However, problem-solving skills are generally weak. Many pupils do not recall number facts quickly or confidently enough. They do not make sufficient links between the methods they learn in mathematics lessons to the use of mathematics in other subjects such as co-ordinates in geography and time in history.
140. Attitudes to mathematics in Years 1 and 2 are good and sometimes very good. This means that teachers hold open discussions in the introductory part of the lessons, where pupils check their understanding of what is being taught and put forward ideas to consolidate their understanding. This is because teachers have established strong relationships with their pupils, so pupils feel confident to put forward answers or ideas even if these prove to be incorrect. Consequently, when pupils move to the main activity of the lesson, they have a good grasp of what is required of them and confidently start their work, helping them to achieve well.
141. Throughout Years 3 to 6, attitudes are generally good as teachers try to make the mathematics interesting by drawing on real-life examples or using information and communication technology. In some lessons, however, pupils do not understand the relevance of what they are doing and, whilst their attitudes are satisfactory, they do not learn with the same interest and intensity.
142. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good and sometimes very good. It is lively, interesting and engenders confidence and enthusiasm for the subject. Teachers frequently emphasise aspects of literacy such as mathematical vocabulary. Pupils benefit from good use of resources, such as counters and number lines or computer programs, to reinforce their understanding or catch their imagination with interesting problems to solve.
143. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. Some good quality learning was observed in booster groups, where teachers carefully matched work to pupils' capabilities and engaged pupils in lively discussion. Pupils in these sessions were attaining standards closer to those expected of their age and making good progress when compared to their previous work. Effective use is made of learning support assistants to give additional support to lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs often resulting in pupils making good progress and achieving well.
144. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. She is working hard to establish effective assessment procedures to support teachers in identifying what groups and individual pupils should be learning in particular lessons. Assessment procedures are now satisfactory but the information is not used well enough to make adjustments to teachers' lesson plans or to set individual pupil targets. Some pupils are encouraged to write the purpose of the lesson in their books and teachers mark work to show how well pupils have achieved this, but this is not common practice. Annual reports do not

clearly identify targets for improvement in the subject. As a result of successful analysis of school and national test assessment data, grouping by ability, or setting, has recently been introduced into Year 6 and this is successfully raising standards. The co-ordinator has opportunities to observe and support colleagues in other classes in order to ensure assessment strategies are effective in further raising standards.

145. Overall, the effectiveness of strategies for teaching numeracy skills is good. However, insufficient use is being made of work in other subjects of the curriculum to practise numeracy skills, resulting in some lack of challenge, for higher attaining pupils in particular. Information and communication technology is not used as well as might be expected in all classes of the school to support pupils' learning, for instance when presenting their findings in mathematics.

## SCIENCE

### Strengths

- Pupils are developing good skills of scientific enquiry in all classes.
- Pupils in all classes are acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding across a broad range of scientific areas of study.
- Pupils generally record results neatly and carefully.

### Areas for improvement

- Pupils' ability to make predictions and draw conclusions from results is not well developed.
- Higher attaining pupils do not have enough opportunities to make decisions for themselves about investigations and ways to record results.
- Lesson plans do not always contain a wide enough variation in the activities for pupils of differing capabilities.

146. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were reported to be average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils made steady progress. There has been a good improvement in standards since then, especially in Years 3 to 6. For example, in the 2002 end of Key Stage 2 national tests, standards were above the national average and those of similar schools. Improvement is due to more effective lesson planning, improvements to teachers' subject knowledge and higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. Standards of the present Year 6 pupils are broadly average, but with fewer pupils than in the previous year achieving higher levels. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.
147. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding about life processes, materials and their properties and physical processes. Activities are generally interesting and motivating, successfully maintaining pupils' interest and concentration. For example, Year 2 pupils showed a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of forces, such as pushing, pulling, squeezing and stretching, as they completed a chart to show examples of each of these. A study of Year 2 pupils' past work shows that they benefit from opportunities to make some decisions for themselves, for example choosing their own classification criteria, such as strong and bendy and not strong and bendy, to sort materials. Much of the work in Years 1 and 2 is well presented, with labelled diagrams

and neat colouring such as the electrical circuit diagrams on display in one of the Year 2 classrooms.

148. The satisfactory rate of progress established in Years 1 and 2 is successfully maintained in Years 3 to 6. Pupils benefit from the experience of carrying out a good number of investigations and experiments, and this emphasis on learning by doing makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievements. Many pupils show a preference for practical activities, with less enthusiasm for written tasks and so they tackle investigations with enthusiasm. For example, a class of Year 4 pupils chattered keenly about their work and levels of concentration and effort were good as they began a new project on solids and liquids with a classification exercise. Several higher attaining pupils used their previous knowledge and understanding well to identify properties of some of the materials. Lower attaining, special educational needs and autistic pupils were well supported by the class teacher and a learning support assistant and were fully included in all the activities. The lesson was successfully concluded with a whole-class session, or plenary, in which pupils confidently explained the reasons for the classification systems they had used.
149. Year 6 pupils show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of a broad range of areas of learning, such as food chains, evaporation and condensation and light, as well as a satisfactory understanding of how to make an experiment fair. This was evident in lessons seen where pupils were revising the science curriculum in ability groups, or booster classes, as they approached the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in the summer term.
150. However, a study of their written work shows that many pupils, including higher attainers, often do not write and record as much as might be expected. There is a weakness in pupils' ability to make predictions and draw conclusions from results. This partly reflects a general weakness in many pupils' thinking and logical skills, which is apparent in other subjects such as mathematics and geography. It also reflects some over-direction by teachers of pupils' learning, with not enough time given to whole-class discussions at the end of lessons.
151. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers' subject knowledge in several of the lessons seen was good, enabling them to give confident, accurate answers to pupils' questions. Teachers are keen on the subject and their interest and enthusiasm is conveyed to pupils, helping them to develop good attitudes towards their work. Lessons move at a good pace. Teachers make effective use of their own time and that of learning support assistants to work with individuals and groups of pupils, and this is of particular benefit to special educational needs pupils in all classes. The behaviour of some of the older pupils, in Years 5 and 6, is not always managed well enough, and the quality of pupils' learning is spoilt by inattention, calling out and unnecessary interruptions to the flow of the lesson.
152. Teachers plan lessons with care and make effective use of national guidelines to provide tasks at appropriate levels of attainment. However, a study of pupils' past work shows that there is often little difference in what is planned for pupils of different capabilities. This is because, although assessment procedures are satisfactory, information gathered from assessments, such as tests at the end of units of learning, is not used well enough to match tasks to pupils' needs. In this respect, expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes too low and there is insufficient challenge in tasks, especially for higher attaining pupils.

153. Satisfactory use is made by teachers of other subjects of the curriculum to extend pupils' learning, especially in the use of arithmetic and measure. There are some good links with art and design, design and technology, geography and music at both key stages. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to produce results in graph form. However, opportunities are missed to use the subject to promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, and this is reflected in the limited amount of written work in Years 1 to 6.
154. The co-ordinator is providing good leadership. She has a good knowledge and understanding of pupils' strengths and areas for improvement and has drawn up a well-judged action plan to improve the quality of teaching and learning and standards over time. She provides her colleagues with effective levels of support and guidance as they plan their lessons. The co-ordinator has opportunities to observe her colleagues teach and to look at their planning, but her analysis of teaching and learning is not sufficiently critical and this restricts the impact her work has on pupils' standards.
155. Science activities promote the school's aims and values well because they create positive attitudes and a desire to learn amongst pupils. Resources are satisfactory in quantity and quality, well labelled and stored, making them easily accessible to staff. The recently established environmental area is making a significant contribution to pupils' learning in all classes through participation in practical activities related to several areas of the science curriculum.

## ART AND DESIGN

### Strengths

- Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 4 use information and communication technology well in art and design lessons.
- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good and they particularly enjoy drawing and painting.

### Areas for improvement

- The development of pupils' skills, such as use of sketchbooks and experimenting with paint, is weak in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to work in two- and three-dimensions.
- There are not enough links with other subjects of the curriculum.

156. Standards in art and design by the end of Year 2 have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with nationally expected levels. Achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, pupils work competently in a suitable range of media such as fabric collage, painting and printing. When completing portraits, higher attaining pupils manage good detail of facial features and colour mixing to achieve skin and hair tones because they are encouraged to observe closely using mirrors. Lower attaining

pupils show they have observed with good concentration and have features in the right places. Their portraits show less detail and they do not attempt to mix colours although, for instance, they match yellow to fair hair.

157. By the end of Year 6, standards are below national levels, representing a fall in standards since the last inspection. This is partly due to teachers focusing more closely on literacy and numeracy, although timetables show that the nationally recommended amount of time is given to the subject. Inspired by the landscapes of Victorian artists such as Alfred Sisley, and photographs of landscapes, pupils draw and paint keenly, but with little sense of perspective or change of colour tone over distance. Few pupils venture to experiment with paint, although in the rare examples seen, it is successful. Year 6 pupils work carefully and create a good range of characters of people in action, although the quality of their work is immature. Figures and objects lack detail and accuracy.
158. Year 2 and Year 4 pupils enjoy experimenting with computer software to produce compositions after Mondrian, and paint in different styles and techniques such as pointillism and impressionism. Trying out techniques gives them a good sense of how artists work. The use of sketchbooks to prepare sketches and practise techniques is underdeveloped. An art club provides good additional opportunities for exploring art and design and working on a large scale. Some pupils with special educational needs show special talents in art and design and benefit from knowing this is something they do well and from the changes in how others perceive them.
159. Years 1 and 2 pupils were working on a design and technology topic during the inspection and so it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. Two lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6. The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory in both of these. It was clear in the lessons that teachers' expectations of pupils in the tasks set were high. Pupils in Year 5 rose to the challenge best when they had practical work to do, applying themselves to still life sketching with very good concentration, and developing their awareness of proportions and relative positions of objects.
160. Although teachers had researched the topics in preparation for the lessons, it was evident in both lessons that their expertise was limited in the skills of still-life drawing and painting and the teaching of the concepts of sculpture. Pupils found difficulty talking about the pictures of sculpture. When they discussed Brighton beach sculptures, they showed interest because they could relate them to their personal experience. They began to relate these forms they had seen to possible sculptures for the playground.
161. Teachers sometimes plan helpful links with other subjects for pupils to extend their skills. This is more evident in Years 1 and 2. Most year groups illustrate stories with drawings, especially in religious education and English and in diagrams for science. Art and design makes a satisfactory contribution to the promotion of pupils' spiritual and cultural development but opportunities are missed to broaden pupils' experiences and extend their appreciation of works of art.
162. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and newly in post, and has made a satisfactory start to managing the subject. Areas for development have been suitably identified; for example, raising the profile of art, improving resources, which are just adequate, and developing assessment procedures.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

#### Strengths

- Pupils are good at making models from their designs.
- Years 1 and 2 pupils are particularly successful at evaluating their designs and making adjustments to them.

#### Areas for improvement

- There is not enough emphasis in lessons on the process and the importance of evaluating products.
- Lesson plans are generally drawn directly from national guidelines and are not adapted to meet pupils' requirements.

163. By the end of Year 2, pupils are achieving standards that are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Year 1 pupils, having explored moving parts, such as using levers, split pins and flaps, create effective moving pictures, applying their knowledge and skills well. Year 2 pupils have fun designing characters for hand puppets and evaluate their work against the design criteria. A group of pupils wrote: 'We enjoyed making them and are very proud of our sewing skills. We think they fit our design criteria and will never fall apart.' Another pupil wrote: 'I like my puppet because the running stitch is neat, but I would change the mouth to make it rounder'.
164. At the end of Year 6, standards are below those expected nationally and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards are lower than at the time of the previous inspection. This is because there is insufficient focus on the design and make process. The evaluation of products is often given slight attention or omitted altogether.
165. Pupils show great pride in what they have produced; for example string, wind and percussion instruments in Year 5. They draw and label their designs in detail. Higher attaining pupils write about how they will make them and the tools they will use such as scissors and hacksaws. Most pupils draw and label only. One pupil notes how he improved the sound: 'I put papier-mâché over the pipe cleaners to make a better scraping sound'. Using the new kitchen facility, pupils in Year 3 design and make their own sandwiches, on the theme of healthy eating linked to science and personal and social education. They use a digital camera confidently to take photographs of the process and products. Year 4 apply knowledge and skills learned in Year 1 to successfully design and make attractive storybooks with moving parts.
166. During the inspection, only two lessons were observed and so it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. However, evidence from teachers' plans, scrutiny of pupils' work, talking with pupils, study of photographs of recently completed work, a portfolio of work examples and from displays in school is sufficient to judge that pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit from better teacher subject knowledge and expertise than pupils in Years 3 to 6.
167. In both lessons observed, the emphasis was on looking at different designs for the same purpose. A Year 2 teacher provided a good range of models and pictures for pupils, who enjoyed identifying different types of vehicles. Aware of pupils' levels of vocabulary, the teacher checked pupils' knowledge and understanding of key words for parts of the vehicle, many learning new terms such as 'hub cap' and 'exhaust'. Pupils relished the opportunity to practise and use their skills of drawing a vehicle

using computer software. This showed good awareness by the teacher of pupils' needs to meet this challenge and apply their knowledge in a different medium.

168. A successful feature of the teaching in Year 6 was the use of a real tent for pupils to examine how it is constructed and the materials used. Pupils' attitudes in lessons in Year 6 are unsatisfactory because a few pupils persist in talking and interrupting the teacher, adversely affecting the ethos for learning. Opportunities for pupils to independently research shelters were missed and picture resources used were difficult for pupils to extract information from. This led to time wasting and further poor behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs made good progress because they had suitable support and guidance to help them extract necessary information.
169. The scheme of work is adopted from a commercially available scheme and provides teachers with lesson plans. However, these are not adjusted to suit the needs of pupils in Years 3 to 6 in the successful way that they are in Years 1 and 2. Evidence suggests that teachers feel pressured by time constraints and the need to focus on literacy and numeracy.
170. The recently appointed co-ordinator is providing satisfactory leadership and has made a good start in addressing priorities such as the need to modify lesson plans. As a result, monitoring and evaluation of teachers' plans, observations of teaching, and auditing and improving the accessibility and range of resources have been started, along with collecting together a useful portfolio of good examples of finished work. Assessment is satisfactory. The use of information and communication technology skills in design and technology is an area that is developing well in Years 1 and 2. Design and technology makes a satisfactory contribution to the promotion of pupils' spiritual and social development through shared appreciation of the efforts of others and group activities. Pupils develop a greater awareness of their surroundings and of objects they use daily, and it challenges them to reflect on everyday experiences and create pleasing and useful designs.

## GEOGRAPHY

### Strength

- Teachers collect samples of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2, helping them to develop a good knowledge and understanding of standards.

### Areas for improvement

- Not enough is demanded of pupils in Years 3 to 6 and so standards are below expectations.
- The subject is not used well enough to promote pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are not sufficiently rigorous.

171. Only one lesson of geography was seen during the week of the inspection, so no judgement is made about the quality of teaching and learning. However, from the scrutiny of pupils' past work and from discussions with staff and pupils, it is evident that standards are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2, but are below those expected by the end of Year 6.
172. Samples of Years 1 and 2 pupils' work, kept by staff in a portfolio, help them to gain a good knowledge and understanding of strengths and areas for improvement. The samples show that pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of basic mapping skills. Pupils recognise simple features of localities. They carefully draw an imaginary cove, incorporating human features such as a road, trees and starfish, as well as physical features such as a pond and a river. They understand that specific buildings are found at the seaside and use their information and communication technology skills well to make lists of these buildings. They are beginning to recognise how people affect the locality and they use appropriate geographical vocabulary, showing at least satisfactory progress over time.
173. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 underachieve in geography. They do not study geographical localities well enough to improve standards. In the one lesson observed, pupils in Year 4 were unable to identify the four countries of the United Kingdom, neither did they know that the United Kingdom was part of Europe. They do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding through in-depth practical tasks that require them to make judgements, use resources and recognise geographical patterns. This is because the time planned for geography is often too small, and lessons are not planned well enough to improve and sustain knowledge.
174. Leadership of geography is temporary and, as such, has little impact on the subject's development, although the co-ordinator has a clear overview of the planned curriculum. The curriculum is satisfactory, but topics are not studied in-depth in Years 3 to 6. This is largely due to the school's drive over the last two years to raise standards in literacy and numeracy. Consequently, pupils do not develop the higher order skills of investigating, enquiring and comparing, so that they can recognise and describe geographical patterns and appreciate the importance of wider geographical issues in the world.
175. The lack of assessment opportunities is a major weakness because teachers are not aware what levels pupils are achieving. It is difficult, therefore, to measure the progress pupils make. Staff are aware that pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are not promoted well in geography lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and that opportunities are missed to use the subject to complement the good work taking place in English and mathematics lessons.

## HISTORY

### Strengths

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit from some well-planned practical activities.
- A good range of visits to places of historical interest helps pupils throughout the school to extend their learning well.

### Areas for improvement

- Opportunities are missed to use history lessons to promote pupils' literacy and information and communication technology skills.
- Skills and knowledge are not planned or taught well enough in Years 3 to 6 and standards are below average as a result.

176. By the end of Year 2, standards in history are in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 6, standards are below those expected for pupils of this age and progress is unsatisfactory. This is because history is given too low a profile in Years 3 to 6 and not enough content is planned to help pupils develop a clear understanding of aspects of British history and the wider world.
177. In Years 1 and 2, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the reasons for the Great Fire of London. One pupil comments: 'It spread because of the long, hot summer and the wind was blowing.' Another comments: 'The fire spread quickly because the houses were timber-framed.' Pupils in Year 2 know the difference between the past and the present and identify many differences between seaside holidays now and those in the past. This shows that they are developing a sense of chronology and beginning to recognise that their own lives are different from the lives of people in the past. They use pictures and books to gather information and make simple deductions showing that they are making satisfactory gains in their learning.
178. In Years 3 to 6, there is too little evidence of past work to show that pupils spend enough time studying history. In one lesson in Year 5, for example, pupils were confused about the Victorian period and were not able to give dates or say how long ago it was, showing that their understanding of chronology is weak.
179. Pupils in Year 6 found it difficult to find out details about the ancient Greeks from books, because their enquiry and research skills were not sufficiently well developed. Their observations are simple and do not enable them to find out about the past or give reasons for the main events and changes. Their level of factual knowledge about past historical study is also limited.
180. Pupils in Year 4 have recently studied the Tudors and undertaken a visit to the local Anne of Cleves' House. However, few could remember many details of this visit and were confused about who Anne of Cleves was, although they enjoyed the day and were enthusiastic in their praise.
181. The quality of teaching and learning in history is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, but is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teachers make good use of resources, and visits are used in many classes to enhance understanding. Some effective practical approaches were seen during the inspection, leading to some gains in knowledge of the topic studied. However, there is too little rigour in lessons and not enough attention is paid to the development of factual knowledge and historical enquiry skills, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Not enough use is made of the school library in this respect. Pupils are too often asked to observe sources of information to answer questions, but are not given opportunities to select or combine information or find things out for themselves. Too little use is made of literacy and information and

communication technology in lessons, so that these subjects can support historical investigations. Lessons are often too short, or are shortened because other lessons over-run. This means that tasks often remain unfinished.

182. The co-ordinator is new to the post and is making a good start to ways of improving standards. Effective monitoring and evaluation systems have recently been established so that the co-ordinator is developing a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. The lack of assessment procedures is a weakness in provision for history and, because of this, teachers are unsure what levels pupils are achieving. Hence, pupils' progress is difficult to measure. The good range of historical visits planned across the school enhances the learning opportunities and enriches the curriculum.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

### Strengths

- Standards have improved well since the previous inspection.
- Staff are significantly more confident in teaching information and communication technology.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2.
- Information and communication technology is used effectively to support pupils' learning in the ASD facility.

### Areas for improvement

- Assessment information is not used well enough to plan activities that match pupils' capabilities.
- The use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects of the curriculum is not as effective as it might be.

183. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' standards were reported to be approaching national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Since then, there has been considerable teacher training, an effective revision of the subject scheme of work and improvements to the quantity and quality of resources. As a result, there has been a satisfactory improvement in standards. These are now above those expected for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6.
184. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use art programs to produce attractive pictures illustrating stories they have written and wordprocessed. They accurately enter appropriate data into a small floor robot to instruct it to travel to a friend. Year 6 pupils select and enter data to analyse the different physical features of their class and analyse their findings to see if there is a link between birthdays and heights or other such factors. They are becoming adept at selecting the best graphical presentation to demonstrate their findings. They use the Internet well, thoughtfully selecting appropriate sites and quickly downloading or rejecting information available. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.
185. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and increased staff confidence has made a significant contribution to the improved standards achieved. As a result, by the end of Year 2, pupils are confident and skilful in their use of computers. The majority of direct teaching takes place in the school's main computer suite. Teaching observed in Years 1 and 2 was always of a good quality.

186. Teaching observed in Years 3 to 6 was satisfactory with some that was good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were closely linked to the quality of planning and confidence of delivery by the teachers. For instance, when clear introductions were given and time frames set for work to be completed, pupils responded well and learning was good. When this did not occur, pupils spent unnecessary time asking questions to confirm what they should be doing and attitudes were less positive. In the majority of classes, pupils' good behaviour and sustained concentration greatly enhanced the quality of learning and the development of skills.
187. Assessments of pupils' attainment and progress are not sufficiently precise, for instance to make sure that higher attaining pupils are consistently challenged by their tasks and that they have opportunities to work on more advanced activities than the rest of the class. The school is aware of this, and the new subject co-ordinator is working with the school's assessment co-ordinator to set in place improved procedures.
188. The subject is well led by a skilful and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She has worked closely with members of staff to raise their confidence. As a result, pupils benefit from an improved range of learning opportunities. The co-ordinator is very keen to integrate further learning in information and communication technology with other subjects. Pupils throughout the school have some opportunities to link their work to other areas of the curriculum, both when working in the computer suite and when working in their classrooms, but insufficient links have been identified between information and communication technology and other subjects to promote learning across the curriculum. Simulation packages are successfully used to introduce citizenship programs.
189. Resources are of good quality and quantity. The computer suite has recently been overhauled and computers updated. This has done much to help staff gain confidence in the use of more reliable technology. Most classrooms have access to a television, video, CD player, overhead projector and cassette player, all of which are generally well used on a day-to-day basis. Digital cameras are used well by staff and pupils to record work being undertaken or as a record of work in design and technology. Pupils in the ASD facility are based near the information and communication technology suite and regularly use it to support their learning, as well as the computers and digital camera available in their room. This has a significant impact on the good quality of their learning.

## MUSIC

### Strengths

- Standards of singing are above expectations at both key stages.
- Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and work together well to perform with voice or percussion instruments.
- Concerts play a significant part in the musical life of the school.

190. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were judged to be in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There has been a good improvement and standards are now above those expected. This is due to improvements in teachers' subject knowledge, curriculum planning and expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an

additional language, make good progress and achieve well. Standards of singing are particularly good.

191. Pupils benefit from well-planned opportunities to perform together. As a result, standards of singing in class lessons and assemblies are above average, and parents report that they are pleased with the high standards pupils achieve in school concerts.
192. Pupils show evident enjoyment when singing together. During the inspection, pupils from the reception classes and Years 1 and 2 assembled for a singing practice. They listened carefully to the teacher leading the session and tried hard to respond to the high standards of performance that she set. They sang with enthusiasm and with a good awareness of diction. They concentrated very well when their songs included actions, and performed these confidently. In a similar session for pupils from Years 3 and 6, pupils sang unaccompanied tunefully in four parts and were successful at remaining in tune by the end of the song. The teacher had high expectations of pupils' performance and, as a result, pupils showed a good awareness of pitch, dynamics and tempo. Pupils of all abilities were successfully included in these activities.
193. The quality of teaching is good overall. Where it is particularly successful, expectations are high and pupils have opportunities to make decisions for themselves. For example, in a lesson for Year 5 pupils, they worked in groups listening to combinations of pairs of notes to decide whether or not these displayed concord or discord. The last part of the lesson, or plenary, was particularly effective as pupils confidently presented their findings to each other. In an excellent Year 2 lesson, pupils responded very well to the opportunity to practise and refine skills learned from their teacher at the start of the lesson. Levels of concentration and effort were excellent as they worked on their performances. The teacher had set high, but achievable, expectations. Her relationship with the pupils was very good and, as a result, they made very good progress throughout the lesson.
194. Teachers vary in their confidence and expertise. However, they make effective use of the subject scheme of work and the knowledge and expertise of the subject co-ordinator when planning their lessons. They provide broad and balanced coverage of the required curriculum, making good use of a CD-Rom and percussion instruments to plan a variety of listening, composing and performing activities in lessons. Teachers use music well to promote pupils' personal development, particularly the self-esteem and social skills of many pupils as they work together on musical activities.
195. The co-ordinator is new to the post and so has not had time to make a significant impact on standards. However, she is taking the lead set by the headteacher in raising the status of music in the school; setting high standards and providing a good range of resources for teachers to use in lessons are achieving this. A new scheme of work is currently being trialled and the co-ordinator has useful plans to assess the impact of this on pupils' standards by the end of the academic year. There are a few opportunities for pupils to extend their skills through violin tuition and attendance at the choir club. The co-ordinator has plans to extend the range of additional activities by providing more opportunities for pupils to have instrumental tuition.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

#### Strengths

- Pupils achieve good standards in dance.
- Pupils benefit from the school's involvement in local and national sporting initiatives.

#### Areas for improvement

- The scheme of work does not help teachers to develop pupils' skills progressively between year groups.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are not sufficiently rigorous.
- Some resources, such as floor exercise mats, require replacing.

196. Pupils' standards of attainment are broadly in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection.
197. Standards in dance are above expectations. Pupils confidently devise a sequence of movements and, with the help of good teacher demonstration, revise their movements, using imagination and reflection to interpret the musical stimulus. They create good balance positions and use space well, controlling twists and turns to good effect. They use body and facial gestures to convey the mood of the music. They evaluate their own and other pupils' performances and suggest ways to improve them. Lessons are well controlled, with high teacher input and expectation, and good progress is demonstrated within the lessons.
198. Pupils' gymnastic skills are broadly in line with expectations. Most pupils work co-operatively in groups to put together a sequence of three skills, linking them with a travelling movement. Pupils are keen to demonstrate their achievements to others. Higher attaining pupils in Years 1 to 6 move gracefully and control their bodies well. However, most other pupils are not encouraged to complete movements with sufficient poise. Pupils take part keenly in warm-up and cool-down activities and manage the movement of equipment safely.
199. Pupils' games skills are broadly in line with expectations. Most pupils understand the elements of rules and fair play. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils threw and caught balls successfully, as well as dodging and running with agility. They were able to suggest ways to improve their game, and successfully practised and refined their skills. They co-operated well and showed a good understanding of the competitive element of a team game.
200. There is a limited range of extra-curricular activities to promote pupils' skills. Two after-school clubs exist, and good links have been made with the local secondary school, with female students coming into the school to assist with skills training in football and basketball. Pupils also take part in several local and national initiatives such as cycling proficiency, and inter-school competitions such as athletics and football.
201. The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory. Teaching is planned using national guidelines, and all required elements are taught during the year. In the lessons observed, teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and skills, and promoted personal health and safety appropriately. Relationships were good, and teachers praised and encouraged pupils as they practised their skills. Pupils worked

with confidence, some higher attaining pupils working above the expected standards for their age. Good use is made of materials and equipment provided by national initiatives to extend pupils' ball skills. Teachers make informal assessments of pupils' attainment and progress and this means that there are inconsistencies between classes and year groups in the way skills are developed and the challenges set. For example, teachers vary in their promotion of appropriate footwear, and pupils in bare feet were observed working alongside pupils in trainers.

202. The co-ordinator is hard working and leads staff well in raising their expertise and confidence through, for example, training in the teaching of gymnastics. A recent review of the scheme of work has resulted in teachers looking more closely at how to develop skills in a progressive and continuous way between year groups. The co-ordinator is aware that further work is required to link improved assessment procedures with pupils' skills development in order to raise teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve.
203. Replacement of resources and equipment has not been a priority as governors attempt to reduce the school budget deficit. However, much equipment, such as agility mats for gymnastics work, is in poor condition. The co-ordinator has useful plans to apply for funding from a national initiative to help with the refurbishment of resources.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Strengths

- Standards have improved well since the last inspection.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of right and wrong.
- Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and behave well in lessons.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- Assemblies make a significant contribution to religious education.

### Areas for improvement

- Work is not always matched closely enough to pupils' capabilities, especially higher attaining pupils.
- Pupils do not have enough first-hand experience of world religions.

204. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. This represents good improvement in standards since the last inspection, when they were judged to be below expected levels. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well in developing knowledge and understanding of other faiths. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is satisfactory in understanding of some of the major world religions.
205. By the end of Year 2, all pupils have basic knowledge and understanding of the Jewish and Christian faith and enjoy learning about them. This is because they have had discussions in class, have heard stories from the Old and New Testaments, handled objects, looked at pictures, and become aware of the symbols of religions. They know about differences between the two faiths such as Christians worship and pray in church whilst Jewish people pray in the synagogue. They understand that

church is a special place with special features and have discussed and drawn up rules for behaviour when they are inside a church.

206. Teachers extend pupils' social development well by the knowledge that important events in people's lives take place in places of worship. They use the local churches well to promote pupils' understanding of the community. When interviewing the vicar on a visit to a local church, they ask questions which suggest they have reflected on what they have learned. For example, 'If you are Christian, why do you pray in church?' Year 1 pupils learn about the significance of stained glass windows in past societies and how a famous local artist designed a window in the local church.
207. By the end of Year 6, pupils use previous knowledge and skills gained in Year 5 to consider how Islamic art helps Muslims to worship. They talk with enthusiasm and interest when they compare and contrast with features of Christianity. Teachers provide prayer mats which pupils enjoy handling. They identify the position by using a compass to point towards Mecca. Opportunities for independent research into Islamic art are missed and, therefore, pupils' experiences of this imagery are very limited. In Year 4, teachers use drama effectively to develop understanding of feelings and empathy with Jesus on Palm Sunday. They relate their own feelings and experiences in crowds when they have seen pop stars.
208. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with much of the best teaching in Years 1 and 2. Good quality teaching was observed in half the lessons in Years 3 to 6, and very good teaching in the ASD facility. Where teaching was very successful, questioning and discussions challenged pupils to empathise and to reflect on how we behave and what we feel in certain situations. Years 1 and 2 pupils were encouraged to discuss in mixed-ability pairs and had the advantage of having visited a church to inform their discussions.
209. Where teaching was satisfactory, or less than satisfactory, tasks planned were not sufficiently demanding. Teachers had not matched work closely enough to pupils' capabilities, mainly because of the lack of formal assessment procedures.
210. The co-ordinator, recently in post, gives satisfactory leadership and has been active in identifying appropriately areas for further development such as extending and renewing resources, developing a portfolio of work samples and monitoring teaching and pupils' work. Assemblies contribute well to religious education and conform to statutory requirements. Although art and literacy are well used in religious education lessons, information and communication technology is less in evidence. Religious education makes a good contribution to spiritual, moral and social development because it encourages pupils to reflect and think about right and wrong and helps to develop their sense of community.