

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BARROW HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Chesterfield

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112626

Headteacher: Ms. J. Primmer

Lead inspector: Miss M. A. Warner

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup>– 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2003

Inspection number: 255439

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	102
School address:	Station Road Barrow Hill Staveley Chesterfield
Postcode:	S43 2PG
Telephone number:	01246 472494
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. M. Tighe
Date of previous inspection:	27 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> April 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Barrow Hill Primary School is smaller than most primary schools nationally, with 102 pupils on roll. This includes a part-time nursery where, during the inspection, 15 children attended part time for mornings only. Many of the parents and grandparents attended the school and have a strong sense of loyalty to it. The village served is one of high unemployment and social and economic disadvantage; the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is high at 50 per cent, compared with the national average of 17.9 per cent. Standards, when children start school, are significantly below the national average in all areas of learning. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is above the national average at 27.2 per cent compared, with 17.5 per cent nationally. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. All the pupils are from white British heritage backgrounds. Ten pupils started and 28 left the school during the last year. The school achieved the School Achievement Award 2000-2001 and the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2003.

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

<b>Members of the inspection team</b>			<b>Subject responsibilities</b>
17288	M. Warner	Lead inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs
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27426	T. Aldridge	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Geography History Religious education Foundation stage

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Barrow Hill Primary School provides an acceptable standard of education.** The governance of the school is good and the leadership and management of the school are now satisfactory. Pupils make limited progress from a very low standard on entry to well below average standards in Year 6. Although pupils are now beginning to achieve better, especially in the Foundation Stage and Year 6, their overall achievement is still unsatisfactory, mainly because of past staffing problems at the school. The socio-economic circumstances of the school are unfavourable but the present staff are determined not to let it affect the progress the pupils make, although the quality of teaching and learning is still unsatisfactory in a small number of lessons. The school is improving, under the leadership of its headteacher and the supportive governors. The headteacher now has the trust of the local community and parents, who now give the school their support as a result of this and there is a committed, experienced and hardworking staff who provide good role models. However, the school has serious weaknesses in: the achievement of pupils; some aspects of teaching; the balance of the curriculum; and in the use of self-evaluation and assessment. **The school's overall effectiveness is therefore unsatisfactory** and it provides unsatisfactory value for money.

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

- Good foundations to pupils' education are laid in the nursery class and children achieve well in this year.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour and very good relationships make strong contributions to the school's now good ethos for learning.
- Pupils are underachieving because of past staffing problems but standards are rising because of pupils' improved attitudes to learning. However, pupils do not know how well they are learning and how they can improve.
- There is unsatisfactory teaching in a small number of lessons. The school collects a considerable amount of assessment data but these are not used well to plan work at appropriate National Curriculum levels for different age groups.
- The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are not fully implemented and information and communication technology (ICT) is not taught on a regular basis: the curriculum is not balanced.
- The school provides many extra-curricular activities to enhance the curriculum and motivate the pupils.
- There are not enough classroom assistants to support pupils' learning, especially for those with special educational needs.
- The governors are well organised, committed and give good support to the school. There are very good links with the community.
- Pupils' attendance is well below the national average.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good, especially since the appointment of the present headteacher. Good progress has been made in addressing four of the five key issues of the last report, although progress in some areas has been adversely affected by the high turnover of staff. Pupils' behaviour has much improved, which has positively affected the ethos for learning. Standards have improved over the last five years, with the school's results in English and mathematics rising faster than the national trend. There have been improvements in accommodation and resources and the provision in the nursery has improved. Although there have been satisfactory improvements in meeting statutory requirements in ICT, improvement in building up ICT resources has been unsatisfactory. Provision in the reception class does not meet the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	E	C	A
Mathematics	E	D	E	D
Science	C	E	D	A

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2. Caution is needed in interpreting the grades, as numbers of pupils taking the test are small.*

**Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory, overall.** Children achieve satisfactorily by the end of the Foundation Stage, although standards remain well below average and few children reach the goals set nationally for when they leave reception. At the end of Year 2, standards are still well below average.

Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory, overall, but they do make particularly good progress in Year 6, catch up a little, and are reaching below average standards in the present Year 6. Results in English at the end of Year 6, in 2003, were far better than they were at the time of the last inspection. Whereas no pupil in Year 6 achieved the expected level 4 in English in 1998, 69 per cent of pupils achieved the expected level 4 and 31 per cent the higher level 5 in 2003, making standards in English in line with the national average. Compared with their prior attainment, pupils in Year 6 achieved very well in 2003 in English and science. Girls achieved better than boys. Pupils underachieve in the foundation subjects because too little time is spent on them.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are developed well.** Attitudes and behaviour are good in lessons and at play. Attendance, often because of ill health, is well below the national average and this affects standards adversely.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory, overall. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory in a small number of lessons.** The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, being good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory, overall, although excellent in physical education. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is satisfactory, ranging from very good to unsatisfactory in one lesson. The over-emphasis on literacy and numeracy provides an unbalanced curriculum but there are a very good range of extra-curricular activities to enrich the curriculum and motivate the pupils. There are insufficient classroom assistants to support learning, especially for pupils with special educational needs. The school takes good care of its pupils. Links with the community are very good and these together with the good links with other small schools contribute well to the curriculum. Links with parents are satisfactory.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The governing body is supportive and governance of the school is good. **The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.** The headteacher has moved the school forward from a position in the past where parents were formally complaining to the local education authority, to what is today an acceptable level of education. Pupils are now willing to learn, staffing is stable and standards have risen since the last inspection. Statutory requirements are met, except for minor omissions in the governors' annual report to parents; however, there is still work to be done in ensuring that pupils learn at the levels expected at different ages in all subjects.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

A larger than average number of questionnaires were returned to the school (57 per cent). Parents are satisfied with the school and believe it has greatly improved. They had some concern about bullying and lack of information about their child's progress, however the school has good procedures to deal with bullying, relationships are very good and the school provides good information about their child's progress. Pupils like the

school and enjoy playtime. They like their teachers and lessons and feel that they work hard. Some older pupils are concerned about behaviour, but the inspection team found this to be generally good.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve pupils' learning by building more effectively on teachers' strengths.
- Raise standards in English and mathematics and ensure that the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are implemented well.
- Ensure that ICT skills are taught and practiced on a regular basis and teachers are aware of the levels expected at different ages.
- To apply literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in all subjects so that pupils are given time to reach the standards of which they are capable across the curriculum.
- Use assessment data more effectively to match the planning of lessons to appropriate National Curriculum levels for pupils of varying attainment in different age groups.
- Ensure that pupils know what progress they are making and how they can improve.\*
- Improve the attendance of a small number of pupils where sickness is not the reason for absence.

\*the school already has identified this as an area for development.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

**Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory, overall.** They achieve satisfactorily in the Foundation Stage and by the end of Year 6, but achievement is poor in Years 1 and 2. Standards are well below the national average overall, at the end reception, Years 2 and 6. Girls perform better than boys.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the school are improving at a rate that is faster than the national trend.
- Compared with their prior attainment and similar schools, pupils in Year 6 achieved very well in 2003 in English and science.
- Pupils in Year 6 reached average standards in English in the national tests 2003.
- Children in the nursery achieve well through good teaching and provision.
- Children in reception and Years 1 and 2 underachieve.
- Due to the good provision in Year 6 the achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is improving.
- Standards in the present Year 6 are well below average in English, mathematics and ICT.
- Standards are below or well below national expectations and pupils underachieve in the foundation subjects.

#### Commentary

1. Although children start school with low levels of attainment, they achieve well in the nursery. Reception children are taught with Year 1 pupils and the curriculum is often inappropriate for this age group. As a result, the good progress begun in the nursery is not continued, and their overall achievement is satisfactory by the end of the Foundation Stage. In 2003, Year 2 pupils reached well below average standards in reading and writing and were in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally in mathematics although 75 per cent achieved level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. These low results are partly explained by the fact that three out of the twelve pupils in this group had special educational needs. Standards seen during the inspection were well below average in all three subjects. In some lessons seen planning was not matched to expectations of pupils of their age and abilities. The lack of classroom support in these mixed aged classes, with pupils of a very wide range of ability is also a strong factor in pupils not making the progress that they should. Another factor which limits pupils' achievement is that marking and target setting does not clearly identify what they could do to improve their work although the school has identified this as a priority in the current development plan.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.5 (15.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.5 (13.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	12.8 (16.7)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (24.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.2 (26.3)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.4 (27.0)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The trend in National Curriculum test results, at the end of Year 6, has been better than the national trend over the last four years. The National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 have improved over the last four years with no pupil in Year 6 achieving the expected level 4 in English 1998, but 69 per cent achieving the expected level 4 and 31 per cent the higher level 5, in 2003. Compared with their prior attainment, pupils in Year 6 achieved very well in 2003. This is a considerable improvement.
3. For current Year 6 pupils overall standards, especially in English and mathematics are well below average. They are better, but still below average in science. Standards are lower than last year because of the make up of the cohort and also the changes in staffing and unsatisfactory teaching in previous years which has had a detrimental effect on these pupils' progress. However, they are being taught very well this year and are making much better progress so that achievement in this year group is now good, and overall achievement in Years 3 to 6 is now satisfactory.
4. Standards at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are well below expectations in ICT because of limited access and unsatisfactory teaching and provision in the past. The achievements of pupils in this subject, in the current Years 2 and 6, are unsatisfactory, as insufficient resources affect the progress pupils can make.
5. Pupils underachieve in the foundation subjects, geography, history, art and design, design and technology, music and physical education, because of the lack of time given to these subjects and the variations in teacher expertise between different subjects. In one aspect of technology (food technology) pupils reach well above average standards in their knowledge of food and they achieve very well through very good teaching. Pupils also achieve very well in physical education when they are taught particularly well and have additional support. The quality of teaching and the amount of additional support pupils have has a direct impact on the standards pupils reach. Pupils with special educational needs and higher-attaining pupils could achieve much more if there were a greater degree of classroom support.

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

**Overall, pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development are good.** Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and their personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Their attendance is well below the national average, often because of health reasons, but punctuality is satisfactory.

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

- Pupils are happy in school. They have good attitudes and are keen to please and this is beginning to improve their work. The attitudes of children in the nursery are very good.
- Relationships across the school are very good. Pupils work very well together and care for one another.
- Personal and social development in the nursery is good.

- Behaviour in lessons and at play is good, the latter in spite of the small play area available to them.
- Attendance is well below the national average, often because of ill health.

### Commentary

6. Pupils enjoy coming to school, settle quickly in lessons, listen attentively and contribute confidently. Nearly all are well-motivated and enjoy learning. This has contributed to a better rate of learning although pupils' improved attitudes and behaviour have not yet had sufficient time to have had a major impact on improving achievement. Parents feel the ethos for learning has improved since the last inspection. The pupils work together constructively on tasks and when sharing resources, for example in making sketch maps. They are usually interested in their work and keen to answer teachers' questions. They participate enthusiastically in physical activities such as singing, painting and physical education. The concentration of younger pupils wanes towards the end of the day and when tasks become repetitive. There is sometimes a lack of urgency in completing written work.
7. Attendance by pupils is well below the national average and has a significant detrimental impact on overall achievement. Illness is the greatest factor. Attendance improved over that of the previous inspection in 2001/2, but has declined again in 2002/3. The rate of unauthorised absence has improved significantly since the last inspection and is broadly in line with national averages. The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor pupils' absences and recently introduced initiatives, such as telephone calls home on the first day of absence, have resulted in better attendance so far this term. There is also support from the educational social worker to encourage good attendance. Issuing pupils in Year 5 and 6 with alarm clocks has helped to address the school's concerns about punctuality. Punctuality is satisfactory.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.8	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

8. Behaviour in class, at lunchtime and at play is good and has improved since the last inspection, through the appointment of experienced staff and the growing trust and support from parents. This is reflected in the changed attitudes of the pupils. Behaviour is very good when pupils come together for assemblies. There are isolated incidents of bullying, but staff deal with these quickly and effectively. Some pupils are concerned that 'play fighting' in the playground gets out of hand, but the introduction of playground buddies has helped to improve relationships and most pupils enjoy break times. The two girls who were excluded on several occasions for violence and inappropriate behaviour last year are no longer on roll. One boy has been excluded this term for violence and is receiving extra support to improve his behaviour.

#### 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	88	5	0

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

9. The stated aims and ethos of the school relate well to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Pupils respond well to the school's provision and parents agree that it leads to greater maturity as they move through the school. They become familiar with the school's expectations of good behaviour and care for one another. Relationships between pupils and adults across the school are very good. There is a willingness to be enterprising, for example through the school council, which give pupils a good understanding of democracy and citizenship. Elected pupils serve as chairman and secretary and are keen to fulfil their duties of improving the school environment and raising money for charities. A sense of responsibility is cultivated and older playground buddies take good care of younger pupils on the

playground. The pupils agree that they are generally trusted to do things on their own. They perform routine classroom duties, such as handing out books and clearing up, competently. They enjoy the numerous enrichment activities, for example the hush club, playground games and music club. They behave very responsibly when out of school when attending swimming lessons at a nearby community swimming pool. Children make a very good start in the nursery and their personal development is very good. Pupils with special educational needs are accepted well by all pupils. They are included in all school and class activities.

10. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. Staff provide good role models, showing respect and concern for the individual needs of all pupils and taking their views seriously. The pupils are involved in making classroom rules and respect the right of others to learn. They respond well to teachers' positive approach to good behaviour and are very polite to visitors and to each other. Moral development is promoted very well in the every day life of the school and is well supported in personal, social and health education, which encourages respect for the feelings and emotions of others. Good support for charities raises pupils' awareness of the wider community and of those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils take good care of their environment and the school has recently received a gold award for Chesterfield Borough Council's Litter project.
11. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development has improved since the previous inspection and is enhanced through assemblies and religious education. Assemblies provide good opportunities for the pupils to pray and reflect. In particular they foster a strong sense of belonging to a whole school community. A visiting vicar used a candle well in an assembly to foster a spiritual atmosphere. Pupils learn about Christianity and other religions in religious education and pupils in Class 4 led an interesting assembly on Islamic beliefs and traditions. Pupils in Year 1 and reception were learning about the story of Jesus' birth in the run up to Christmas.
12. Pupils have a good awareness of different cultural beliefs. Their awareness of Britain as a multicultural society is good and is promoted, for example, through music and black history week, although displays around the school do not reflect the multicultural dimension of this country. For example, in a literacy lessons they discussed foods from different countries that they enjoyed eating. Participation in the Trading Game makes pupil aware of the differences in life between rich and poor nations. Cultural provision is greatly enhanced by a wide range of visitors and out of school visits such as to White Post Farm, pantomimes and a performance of Samba Wamba in a secondary school.

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

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory, overall.** The overall quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory because, despite improvements in teaching, there are still too many unsatisfactory lessons. The over-emphasis on literacy and numeracy provides an unbalanced curriculum. However, the school provides a very good range of activities to enrich the curriculum. The school takes good care of its pupils. Links with the community are very good, with other small schools are good and with parents are satisfactory.

## Teaching and learning

**The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall.** It is satisfactory in the nursery but unsatisfactory in the rest of the school because of the occasional unsatisfactory lesson in each age group. Excellent and very good teaching was also seen and all teachers have particular strengths. The quality of learning is sometimes lower than that of teaching. The use of assessment is good in the nursery but unsatisfactory, overall, in the rest of the school.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some very good teaching was seen in the nursery and in English, science, food technology and physical education.
- In thirteen per cent of lessons, teaching was unsatisfactory.
- Not enough use is made of teachers' particular strengths in teaching.
- The school has much assessment data but it is not used sufficiently to plan lessons, especially for different age groups in these mixed aged classes.
- Planning for reception children does not meet the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum.
- Pupils do not know how much they have learned and marking seldom shows them how to improve their work.
- Lack of teaching assistants affects pupils' learning adversely.

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	7 (23%)	9 (29%)	10 (32%)	4 (13%)	0	0

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

### Commentary

13. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and have changed an anti-learning ethos to one where pupils want to learn. They encourage them well and expect high standards of behaviour which is a considerable improvement on recent reports.
14. The quality of teaching in the nursery is good overall, and sometimes very good. As a result, children learn well and make good progress. The teacher questions well, there are very good relationships and very good structures and planning. Adults are very caring. In the reception class teaching is satisfactory overall, but unsatisfactory in language, literacy, and communication. Children of this age group are taught with Year 1 pupils and make slower progress than they should because the curriculum is inappropriate for their age.
15. The quality of teaching overall in Years 1 and 2 ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory, but is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils' learning is very good in physical education but unsatisfactory in science where lessons do not always fully engage pupils' interest or the development of skills is not sufficiently emphasized. Learning is also unsatisfactory in geography, partly because this subject is not given enough emphasis. Where teaching is excellent, as in physical education, the teacher has high expectations, very good discipline and subject knowledge and makes very good use of demonstrations.
16. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning in over half the lessons is good. It is very good in food technology, and good in English and science, but unsatisfactory in physical education. As a result pupils' learning varies between subjects and classes. Teachers do not take each other's classes or team teach and hence their strengths are not used to the full. Lack of subject expertise was an important factor in the unsatisfactory teaching seen. The lack of expertise is also a major reason why the teaching of mathematics is unsatisfactory throughout the school. Where teaching is very good, work sheets help pupils to evaluate their own work, with the result that they criticise their own and other pupils' work well. Their speaking and listening skills are promoted well, for example, when they describe to a partner what they see in a picture and the partner then draws what is described. In some lessons the introductions are too long and questioning is not used well so that pupils lose concentration and learning slows. However, in

other lessons introductions are very informative and all pupils are involved in the question/answer session. Homework is generally not well used to promote pupils' learning.

17. The use of assessment is variable. Generally, not enough account is taken of assessment information to plan lessons in these mixed aged classes and work set does not always match what different ages should be learning. Where it is used well, such as in a Year 3 / 4 English lesson the good range of activities were well matched to the prior attainment and ages of different groups of pupils. Pupils worked confidently and quickly at given tasks with a partner. However, the lack of additional classroom support affected the standards that could be achieved. It was almost impossible to provide satisfactorily for the very wide range of ability and ages in the class with only one adult in the room. This has an adverse affect on the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and higher attainers. However, pupils with special educational needs are taught very well in booster groups and provision for them in English lessons is very good. They enjoy working together as a group and this motivates them to achieve well. Support staff take groups for additional literacy lessons during the year but this was not observed during the inspection.
18. The school's over-emphasis on literacy and numeracy in order to raise the well below average standards has meant the curriculum is unbalanced. As a result, not enough is learned across the full curriculum. However, the school provides a very good range of activities to enrich the curriculum, which helps to encourage pupils to want to learn. Where learning is lower than the quality of teaching this sometimes relates to the length of the lesson. For example, in a lesson where the teaching of physical education was excellent the lesson was too short for pupils to develop their ideas and achieve excellently.
19. Overall, teachers' subject knowledge is variable and they do not always have a secure understanding of National Curriculum expectations and levels. This was evident through interviews, pupils' work and planning. In lessons where teachers show good subject knowledge and lessons are planned effectively, pupils learn well, showing keen interest and enthusiasm. There is a lack of informative marking which clearly shows pupils what they need to do to improve. This prevents pupils from improving both within a lesson and on their previous performance. In some classes, such as in a Year 6 literacy lesson pupils learn to evaluate their own work but this is not developed in the rest of the school. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of handwriting and how pupils should present their work and this limits their achievement. In many classes pupils' tiredness affects their concentration and ability to succeed.

## **The curriculum**

**The breadth of curriculum opportunities is, overall, unsatisfactory.** It is satisfactory in the nursery but in the rest of the school there is an over-emphasis on literacy and numeracy which results in an unbalanced curriculum. The school provides a very good range of activities to enrich the curriculum. Accommodation, particularly the outside provision, and resources are unsatisfactory. However, the school makes good use of the small playground.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The time given to teaching literacy and numeracy prevents pupils reaching standards of which they are capable in other subjects.
- The school provides a good food technology curriculum.
- The nursery provides a stimulating curriculum.
- The curriculum for reception children is unsatisfactory.
- The National Numeracy strategy is not yet fully effective.
- Lack of resources limits the implementation of the ICT curriculum.
- Outside play space limits the physical education curriculum for the reception class and pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- There are too few teaching assistants to effectively support teachers in mixed aged classes and those pupils with special educational needs.

## **Commentary**

20. The school has an unbalanced curriculum as it has been focusing on raising standards in English and mathematics, in which it has had some success. However, not enough use is made of cross-curricular links to develop these subjects whilst promoting a wider curriculum. A strength in the curriculum is food technology which also contributes well to pupils PHSE development. There is satisfactory provision for personal, social and health education supported by a commercial scheme of work. As a result of the limited time given to foundation subjects pupils do not reach the standards in these subjects of which they are capable.
21. The curriculum in the nursery is well planned and provides a wide range of interesting and relevant activities. The nursery accommodation is spacious and outside facilities are good. These factors make a positive contribution to children's good achievement. Reception children are taught with younger Year 1 pupils. The curriculum and activities are not always appropriate, and planning for reception children is unsatisfactory. The reception/Year 1 classroom is satisfactory overall but during the inspection there was no role-play area and insufficient activities to stimulate children's natural curiosity. The children do not have regular access to a separate secure outside area, and resources for outdoor activities are unsatisfactory. The classroom, which is separated from the nursery by a Year 3/4 class, is also a passageway to another, Year 1/2, class, which is distracting.
22. The school is fully aware that current provision for ICT is unsatisfactory and the school's development plan sets out suitable strategies to bring about improvement. Although the National Numeracy strategy is in place, it has not yet been implemented effectively enough to help raise standards in mathematics. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory because not enough support is provided in lessons, although, in Year 6 these pupils are suitably supported. Provision through additional small group teaching is insufficient. However, the school has a successful programme, run by support staff, on 'positive play' for pupils who would particularly benefit from one to one attention. The school runs a good number of after school clubs for pupils considering the small number of teachers on the staff. Outside visits and visitors to the school also enrich pupils' life experiences. An outside sports' coach takes football practice and a small number of pupils are beginning to learn a brass instrument. Singing clubs are run at lunch time. Gifted and talented pupils are supported through the local cluster of schools which share expertise and resources. However, because little time is given to foundation subjects, they have few opportunities to develop their skills further. There are good links with the education social worker who, during the inspection, spoke to the pupils in assembly about the importance of good attendance. An additional strength of the curriculum is in the 'curriculum weeks' which focus on a particular subject and which motivate pupils well.
23. The school has experienced considerable difficulty in appointing and retaining staff, including at management level, which has been a major barrier to improving standards and achievement. There is now has an experienced team of teachers who are dedicated to the school and are competent. However, their expertise across the whole range of National Curriculum subjects varies and better deployment and management of their strengths would improve teaching and learning. There are very few teaching assistants and this a serious weakness, especially in a school with mixed aged classes and some pupils who have considerable learning difficulties. The school enhances the curriculum well by involving staff such as the cook and caretaker who, for example, talk to classes about their jobs. Management has successfully raised standards in the core subjects but at the expense of foundation subjects, which the school has identified as the next area for development.
24. The school is housed in an old building, which has recently been decorated and is managed well. The outside is generally well maintained although there is some work to be completed. The staff toilets are outside. The school is kept clean and bright by a conscientious caretaker and displays are attractive. The school has very limited outside play space and as a result this limits the sports that can be played successfully. The only grassed area nearby is a public park, which is not suitable for use by the school.

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

**The school takes good care of the pupils.** The school takes good care of pupils' welfare, health and safety. Support, advice and guidance are satisfactory, and pupils have a very good involvement in their school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Health and safety procedures are good and care is taken to ensure the safety of pupils in and out of school.
- Staff have very good relationships with pupils and this helps them to support and guide pupils.
- There are very good induction arrangements for settling children into the nursery.
- Pupils' development is largely monitored informally; use of data to identify areas of weakness in progress is not fully effective. Pupils' knowledge of their own learning is poor.
- School seeks, values and acts upon pupils' views where appropriate very well through school council.

## Commentary

25. Procedures for health and safety and child protection are good. School governors have carried out a comprehensive health and safety audit of the premises and there is good provision in place to ensure pupils' safety on school trips. Routine health and safety procedures are in place at whole school level. The school has good procedures for child protection and all staff are aware of their responsibilities. The school works well with other agencies, such as social services, to ensure that pupils get specific additional help when they need it. Healthy eating is promoted at break times when unhealthy snacks are banned and pupils are encouraged to eat the fruit provided by the school.
26. Staff know pupils very well and give sound support, advice and guidance based on knowledge of pupils' academic and personal achievements. They monitor pupils' personal development informally and involve parents as necessary. Information about pupils' progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is systematically recorded but the data is not used well enough to track individual progress in relation to their development or to find areas of weakness. Partly as a result of this, target setting is underdeveloped and pupils have a poor understanding of how they can improve their work. This limits their achievement. Pupils feel happy and secure in school and the younger ones in particular know there is always an adult they can ask for help. Many pupils come to school tired and this affects their ability to concentrate and slows the rate of their learning. The formal personal, social and health education provision includes regular *circle times* successfully aimed at improving relationships between pupils. Pupils with specific educational needs receive inadequate support, largely because of the lack of sufficient classroom assistants, and as a result do not achieve as well as they should. The school has good relationships with appropriate outside support agencies such as the behaviour support service.
27. Induction arrangements into the nursery are very good and transfer into reception class is well organised. Home visits are made to families of children new to the nursery and parents agree that arrangements help them to settle in quickly. Nursery children learn the school routines and join whole school assemblies. A good programme for transition helps pupils settle into the reception class. There are good arrangements to keep parents informed and to answer any concerns they may have about their child settling in the reception class.
28. Nearly all parents believe that the staff encourage pupils to become mature and independent. Pupils have a very good involvement in the school. They believe that most teachers listen to their ideas and value their views. These are formally canvassed through the democratically elected school council, chaired by a Year 6 pupil. Time is given for members to seek the views of all the pupils and to discuss these formally with the head teacher. Pupils have helped to decide the colour scheme of the classrooms and are discussing other ways to improve the school environment. They are also devising ways to raise money for charity.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

**Links with parents, other schools and the community are good overall.** There are satisfactory links with parents, who like the school. The school has good links with other schools and they are very good with the local community.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There was a very good response to the questionnaire sent to parents before the inspection.
- The annual reports on pupils' progress are good but do not relate progress to national expectations.
- Pupils' reading diaries provide good home-school communication.
- Some parents' involvement in their children's learning is limited but the school is finding ways to improve this.
- The very good links with the community and local industry enhance pupils' curriculum opportunities.



- Good links with other schools support management development well.

### Commentary

29. Parents like the school and are very positive about the provision for their children's learning. They believe it has greatly improved since the previous inspection. The few negative comments they made were not supported by evidence during inspection. Several were concerned about bullying, but the school has good and effective procedures for dealing with this and pupils are mainly happy and secure in school.
30. The school provides good information to parents for them to help their children learn, especially in the nursery. A few parents regularly attend the *Keeping up with the Kids* literacy course, and have become much more confident in coming into school because of it. The school has also courses planned in ICT and numeracy for this academic year. A few parents do not feel well informed about progress. Pupils' annual reports are good. They tell parents what pupils have studied and give them targets to aid them in helping their children to improve, but standards are not related to national expectations. Parents are invited to consultations with the teachers every term, but attendance is often low. However, all the parents of new reception children attended a meeting in October to see how they were settling in. Parents are comfortable in approaching the school, but very few take advantage of teachers' accessibility at the start and end of each day and only a few help in the main school, although there a parent regularly helps and others occasionally help in the nursery. Home visits are made to gather information before children join the nursery and this helps them settle very well.
31. Parents are provided with good information about the school in the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents, although there are some minor statutory omissions regarding the school's provision for the disabled. The pupils' reading diaries are used well to communicate between school and home and by parents to monitor progress in reading. Parents understand the school's policy on homework, but some believe their children receive too much. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to children's learning although parental involvement with their child's homework, including hearing them read, is variable. A large majority of parents think the school seeks their views sufficiently and takes them into account. There is no parents' association.
32. The school's very good links with the local community and local industry enhance pupils' opportunities and contribute positively to their learning and personal development. Donations from local business support outside visits and provide incentives for learning. A very good variety of visitors, including representatives of local churches, the fire brigade, the police and a doctor, broaden pupils' horizons and give them an insight into the world of work. The school makes good use of local community facilities, such as a swimming pool and local theatre, to enhance the curriculum.
33. The school has good partnerships with other schools. Links with another primary school provide good support for managerial development. The schools share training and work together on the development of policies. Pupils use this other school's playing fields for their sports day. The school belongs to a cluster of schools, which in turn is part of an excellence cluster. This supports provision for gifted and talented pupils. There is good liaison with the local secondary school to aid transition to the next stage of education.

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.** The leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff are both satisfactory. The governance of the school is good.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are well organised, committed and give good support. As a result, trust between the community and the school has been built up over time.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and most of the weaknesses of the school and monitors its progress very well.
- The headteacher has worked hard to successfully improve pupils' behaviour and the school's relationships with parents and the community.
- Parents believe the school is well led and managed.

- Staff are hardworking and provide good role models.
- Financial control is good.
- Subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and standards in their subjects. \*
- Insufficient use is made of school's evaluation information to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils in the mixed age classes.

\*this has been identified on the school development plan.

## Commentary

34. The leadership shown by the headteacher is satisfactory overall. During the past five years she has worked hard to successfully improve standards of behaviour and links with parents and the local community. Because of the very unsatisfactory standards of behaviour and the lack of trust in the school by parents and the community when she began, this has been a slow process. She is totally committed to the school and displays a clear vision and sense of purpose for promoting an inclusive school. She is well supported by an effective senior teacher and committed teaching and support staff who work well together as a team. There is a common purpose and sense of direction within the school and relationships are good.
35. The school improvement plan is focussed on raising standards based on a sound analysis of performance and the needs of the school. Staff and governors are fully consulted through meetings but parents and pupils are less involved. It is a soundly prepared document indicating mainly appropriately planned areas for development, those responsible, time span, monitoring responsibilities, resources implications, and success criteria.
36. Most staff have joined the school during the past fifteen months and leadership has created a hardworking team. There are effective arrangements for regular staff meetings and training. There is a positive atmosphere amongst the staff promoting mutual respect, equality and inclusion and all teaching and support staff provide good role models. Subject action plans are in place for all curriculum areas. However, subject co-ordinators have insufficient opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and standards in their subjects.
37. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and standards by the headteacher takes place and has been instrumental in bringing about improvement. However, it is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that pupils are taught by those with the greatest expertise in the subject and at a level appropriate for their age. All subjects have subject managers and in literacy and numeracy they undertake thorough analysis and evaluation of assessment and performance data identifying strengths and weaknesses. However, because of the very small staff, not all subject managers are sufficiently involved in the monitoring of teaching, learning and standards in their subjects. This is an area identified by the school for development and needs to be addressed if standards are to improve, especially in foundation subjects. The special needs co-ordinator provides sound leadership.
38. The school is soundly managed. The deputy headteacher was absent on maternity leave during the inspection, so limited evaluation could be made of her contribution to leadership. Indications from documentation and the preliminary visit, however, are positive. The headteacher has worked hard on establishing a supportive atmosphere for staff in the school, and a positive climate for learning. She has concentrated on raising standards in English and mathematics with some success. At the same time she has been mindful of the need to deliver the whole curriculum and co-ordinators are being encouraged to take a lead in developing their subjects now that literacy and numeracy standards have improved. All staff are clear about their roles through written job descriptions which are regularly reviewed. Self-evaluation procedures are soundly established involving staff and governors to identify strengths and weaknesses and areas for improvement but there is limited involvement from parents and pupils. These form the basis of the school improvement plan which is regularly monitored by the headteacher and governors. The school carefully monitors pupils' performance using national and optional tests in English and mathematics and thoroughly analyses the results. However, this information is not yet used effectively to match the curriculum to pupils in the mixed aged classes and set targets. Regular assessments in other subjects are not yet fully in place and this area has been identified by the school for development. Tracking procedures in literacy and numeracy are well established using computers. This enables the school to effectively monitor the progress of groups and individuals and make predictions and set targets although these are not yet shared with pupils, which is the next step planned by the school. The management of special educational needs by the co-ordinator, within the staffing limitations, is satisfactory. There are sound

systems in place for ensuring that individual education plans and statements are regularly reviewed. However, there is no effective monitoring to ensure that pupil targets are regularly implemented in classrooms so that pupils make effective progress in meeting them.

39. Performance management procedures are well established for the headteacher and full-time teaching and support staff and this is helping to raise standards and identify areas for focused staff development. Induction procedures for staff new to the school are satisfactory although the school has yet to produce a written policy to guide this process.
40. Day-to-day financial procedures are secure and managed well by the conscientious and hard working school secretary. She makes good use of computer systems to manage pupil and financial records. The most recent external audit identified a number of minor weaknesses which have been addressed. Grants are used effectively and finances are kept in good order. The school has satisfactorily absorbed the principles of best value into its management practices.
41. The governing body is ably led by a knowledgeable and very experienced chair of governors. The governors are well organised and committed and give good support to the school. Trust between the headteacher, teachers and the parents and community has been built up over the last few years, from a very low level, as a result of their support and, as a result, parents are beginning to find ways of supporting the school which is also gaining a positive profile in the wider community. They take a keen interest in the school and make good use of training opportunities to improve their knowledge and understanding. They have a good understanding of the strengths and of most of the weaknesses of the school and are aware that only if trust is maintained will improvements continue. The governing body effectively fulfils its responsibilities through a wide range of policies which are regularly reviewed. Statutory requirements are met except for minor omissions in the governors' annual report to parents. Governors clearly influence performance from regular meetings where key decisions are clearly recorded. Governors take responsibility for various subject areas and are developing their roles in monitoring and evaluating standards. Recently, joint meetings with staff have taken place where planning and samples of work have been examined. The governing body regularly appraises the work of the headteacher and successfully sets and monitors appropriate performance targets. Governors take an active role in leading the school through their involvement in producing and monitoring the annual school development plan, setting targets and looking at test results. The high carry forward in the budget is planned to guard against falling numbers and ensure that the school is in a position to offer management points to new teachers and thereby attract experienced and well qualified teachers.

**Financial information for the year April 2001 to March 2002**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	409110
Total expenditure	374768
Expenditure per pupil	3719

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	46030
Balance carried forward to the next	39000

## PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** overall which is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection. It is good in the nursery but unsatisfactory in the reception class because teaching, learning and planning are not sufficiently based on the Foundation Stage ethos and curriculum. Assessment procedures using the recently introduced Foundation Profile are satisfactory. There is little intermingling between the nursery and reception classes because they are separated by a Year 3/4 classroom. There could be closer co-operation and sharing of the good nursery resources and use of the outdoor play facilities. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall with good improvement in the nursery.
43. Children enter nursery in the term after their third birthday and attend mornings only until they transfer to the reception class in the September or January before they are five. Induction procedures are very good. Assessments show that the majority enter with standards that are very low in all areas except in physical development. Although most make good progress throughout nursery, many are still well below expectations in all areas except personal, social and emotional development and physical development when they move to the reception class. Planning in the nursery is clear and thorough and linked well to the recognised 'stepping stones' and early learning goals. It clearly indicates what children are expected to do. All children in the nursery achieve well because the teaching is good and sometimes very good. The curriculum is well planned to provide a wide range of interesting and relevant activities, which are well matched to the children's needs. Staff set excellent role models for the children and manage them very well. They work very well together sharing teaching responsibilities and carefully monitoring children's progress. The nursery accommodation is spacious and consists of one large and two smaller interconnecting rooms and provides a stimulating learning environment. Outside facilities are good with a large, secure hard play area, sand and water, role-play, road track, portable climbing apparatus and range of large wheeled toys. It provides a very good learning area and is very much an extension of the indoor facilities. Most children achieve well in the nursery.
44. Reception children are taught with younger Year 1 pupils. Relationships between staff are good and they provide effective role models. However, the curriculum and activities are not always appropriate and planning for reception children is unsatisfactory. It is focused too much on national curriculum requirements appropriate to Year 1 and does not sufficiently address the needs of the reception children. It is not always clear what children are expected to do and learn and there is no provision for regular outdoor play activities. The reception/Year 1 classroom is satisfactory overall but during the inspection there was no role-play area and insufficient activities to stimulate children's natural curiosity. The children do not have regular access to a separate secure outside area, and resources for outdoor activities are unsatisfactory. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory in that the methods used and the curriculum are not sufficiently continuous.
45. By the end of reception, most children are likely to achieve the expected level in personal, social and emotional development and physical development. However, few are likely to achieve expected levels in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development.

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide a caring and supportive environment from which children learn to co-operate and help each other.
- Children achieve well in the nursery because of the good teaching and the high expectations set by staff.

#### Commentary

46. Many children have underdeveloped social skills on entry to the nursery, and nursery staff work hard to develop these. High standards and caring relationships set by the adults ensure that the children know what is expected of them, so that they quickly learn the correct way to behave. Children quickly settle into the daily routines and learn to settle to tasks with little fuss, and behave very well. They are given many opportunities to co-operate with others and share and take turns during activities. They are expected to clear away at the end of sessions and help with activities such as giving out fruit, straws and milk during 'snack time'. Opportunities for co-operation are continued in the reception class. The very good teamwork of the adults in both classes gives the children very effective role models for co-operation, and a calm approach to work. The majority of nursery children show high levels of interest in what they are doing, concentrate well, even when not directly supervised, and are eager to learn. However, in the reception class children are often over directed and do not have enough opportunities to choose what they want to do and share experiences with their friends. Most children go to the toilet unaided and manage to dress themselves and put on their own coats. Teaching is very good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception class.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory** overall. It is **good** in the nursery but unsatisfactory in the reception class.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff take every opportunity to develop the children's language skills, and teaching is always good in the nursery.
- Children are not provided with enough opportunities to develop communication, language and literacy skills at an appropriate level in the reception class.

### **Commentary**

47. When they begin in the nursery, many children have limited language skills with a narrow vocabulary and find it difficult to express themselves. Nursery staff take every opportunity during activities both in and out of the classroom to develop children's speech and language through careful questioning and modelling and ensuring that they take turns and listen to others. For example, during registration when children talk about the weather, days of the week and staff introduce activities for the day. Very good relationships mean that children have the confidence to talk, and all adults show great interest in what the children have to say. Children enjoy books, and listen attentively when a story is read to them. Children regularly take books home to share with parents and carers and there are many opportunities in the morning when children can look at books themselves, which they handle with care. Activities in the role-play area, currently 'McDonalds' provides children with the opportunity to develop speaking and listening skills and mark making as they "take orders".
48. In the reception class, children develop an interest in books through listening to, and acting out, stories such as Little Red Riding Hood. They are taught to recognise words in these stories and recognise letter sounds. Opportunities are provided for children to practise writing patterns and letters. Most children write their names although they are not yet forming letters correctly. There are limited opportunities for children to mark make and develop writing skills outside of the formal literacy session. However, some of the formal writing and copying activities currently provided are not appropriate for some children. In both nursery and reception classes children listen and join in with favourite rhymes and songs developing speech and language.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**. It is good in the nursery.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Adults plan a wide range of activities to support learning in the nursery to promote children's mathematical development which ensures children achieve well.
- Children's skills are built on and extended in the reception class.

## Commentary

49. Teaching and learning are good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception. Staff in the nursery plan a good range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding. Adults use a variety of number rhymes and songs to help children count and a few are already beginning to count to five. Children have regularly access to structured sand and water activities and develop an understanding of weighing and measuring when making biscuits, and measuring objects and furniture using beans.
50. In reception, children are given a sound range of activities to build on what has been learnt in the nursery. These involve counting on and back from a set number and ordering, estimating and matching numbers to ten. They are taught to recognise and name simple regular shapes and their properties and make simple patterns. They undertake activities to reinforce the meaning of longer and shorter through simple measuring activities. All these practical activities prepare the way well for future learning, and are appropriate for this stage of development, ensuring that children sustain interest and do not become bored. In both the nursery and reception, adults ensure they use correct mathematical words to develop to extend their understanding of language.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of interesting activities is planned to promote learning in this area.
- Staff use questioning effectively to enhance the children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them.
- Children have regular access to, and use of, computers, which effectively supports their development.

## Commentary

51. Teaching and learning are good in the nursery and children achieve well. The classroom is well organised with a range of activities to stimulate children's natural curiosity and enthusiasm. Through the use of toys such as road layouts, simple construction kits, and role-play areas and cooking activities, children increase their knowledge and understanding of the world. Cooking and sandwich making activities make them aware of health and safety issues. Children have regular access to the computer where they draw simple pictures which develop mouse and keyboard skills. During registration each day, children are encouraged to talk about days of the week, the weather and things special to them.
52. In reception teaching is satisfactory. Opportunities are provided for children to develop early scientific skills through simple observation and prediction skills when they plant cress seeds to determine what conditions they need to germinate. They learn about famous people from the past such as Florence Nightingale and other areas of the world and begin to learn about their own culture and that of others. Children have regular access to computers using the mouse and keyboard to design and print pictures and control objects on the screen when they 'dress teddy'. However, there are limited opportunities for children to explore and examine objects through interactive classroom displays.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory** overall. It is good in the nursery.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Nursery staff make good use of the outdoor play area and children have regular daily access.
- There is good focus and planning for nursery outdoor play sessions.
- There is no continuous access to an outside play area in reception, so opportunities for development are very limited.
- Good hand and eye co-ordination is encouraged in a variety of activities that require the use of small hand tools, crayons, pencils and brushes.

## Commentary

53. No hall sessions were observed during the inspection. However, nursery children were observed in the outdoor play area. The outdoor playground provides a good learning environment where children can explore areas and initiate ideas of their own. Children move freely with growing confidence and are developing good awareness of space and others as they use the large wheeled toys. They respond well to instructions and stop and start on request and clearly enjoy the opportunities provided in the outdoor play area. Staff are clearly aware of health and safety issues as they support children.
54. Children in both the nursery and reception classes are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their co-ordination and manipulative skills by handling dough, scissors and brushes, and manipulating small construction equipment.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

55. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on provision in creative development as no teaching was seen in reception. However provision in the nursery is good. Children's creativity is developed well in the nursery and most children achieve well because of the good teaching. Planning and displays show that through the use of art, role-play, songs, rhymes and stories, children successfully develop creative skills and imagination. Adults intervene well with challenging questions and are willing to enter into play when opportunities present themselves. A good example was seen when children were playing in "McDonalds" when there was good adult interaction with challenging questioning. Children are given regular opportunities to explore musical instruments and sounds using the 'Magic Music Box'. Children in the reception class do not have regular access to a role-play area.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Standards in reading and writing are well below average in Year 2.
- The value added between Years 2 and 6 in English was very good in 2003. In the national tests these pupils reached standards in line with the national average
- Standards in the present Year 6 are well below national expectations in English.
- In Year 6, pupils are taught to evaluate their work and the meaning of words is constantly discussed. This is not so in other classes.
- Pupils in Year 6 who have special educational needs are taught very well.
- Girls perform better than boys.
- Pupils' speaking skills are limited by lack of appropriate vocabulary but enrichment activities are giving pupils experiences they can write about.

#### **Commentary**

56. Standards have improved over the last five years. Pupils in Year 6 in 2003 made very good progress, reached average standards and achieved well compared with their results when they were in Year 2. The present Year 6 has had a number of different teachers which has affected their progress, and therefore standards, adversely.
57. Pupils' speaking skills are well below average throughout the school, although they listen very well. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to speak freely about things that interest them. Pupils also lack the vocabulary, confidence and skills to contribute well to class 'question and answer' sessions and tend to give one word answers or use short, incomplete sentences even in the older classes. Teachers' questioning does not encourage pupils to develop their answers and speak in complete sentences. However, in Year 6 a very good session was observed when the teacher made sure that pupils understood all the vocabulary in a book about food from different cultures, and the progress pupils made in widening their vocabulary, and using it, were very good. In another lesson higher-attaining pupils were given very good opportunities to develop their speaking skills when they worked with a partner, describing a picture in front of them. They had to describe it in enough detail for their partner to be able to draw the same picture.

They then evaluated how well they had described the picture. In this activity no difference was noted between boys and girls but in larger groups boys tend to be more self-conscious of speaking than girls.

58. Pupils make steady progress with their reading across the school. Teaching and learning are good and pupils, in general, achieve well. From a low start on entry, standards in reading are well below average in Year 2. Pupils who were heard reading in Year 2, talked confidently about the stories and characters in their book and knew about authors and illustrators. Both the higher-attaining and average-attaining pupils read books they knew with confidence and expression. Books are changed regularly and home-school reading diaries are completed well by parents and teachers. However, their progress in reading is limited as no pupil uses the public library. Pupils continue to make good progress although standards in Year 6 are below average, with pupils reading quite confidently but not always understanding what they are reading. In the national tests in 2003 a large proportion of pupils did not achieve the expected level 4 and none achieved the higher level 5. This is partly because three of the 12 pupils had special educational needs. Standards reached by comparatively higher-attaining and average attaining pupils, who read during the inspection, were variable. Whilst a higher attainer was vague about the story and had problems reading some words, the average attainer read with confidence and had a good understanding of the book. However, the book had not been changed since the start of term and the pupil had become bored with it. Overall, there is a range of achievement but pupils' choice of books is not monitored sufficiently and non-fiction books are sometimes too long for pupils to sustain their interest. Book reviews are of a below average standard. Lower-attaining pupils read books in line with their capabilities.
59. Standards in writing were well below average in the Year 2 national tests in 2003. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Year 1 but unsatisfactory in Year 2 where work is pitched at too low a level, especially for the more able. The lack of additional support in classrooms is also a strong factor in pupils not achieving as well as they could, especially in Years 1 to 4. The numbers of pupils in these mixed age classes means that one adult, whilst providing work at a variety of levels can not give the attention needed to support pupils who are of very low ability as well as the highest attainers. In both classes, a very good range of work was set, but the most able were underachieving because of the lack of adult input. In one class two pupils with special educational needs, who should have had regular individual support had to be helped by the class teacher constantly if they were to make any progress at all. In these circumstances many groups work without the adult intervention that would take them onto a higher level. Pupils in Year 4 however, are very well motivated and take a pride in the presentation of their work. This is not so in all classes. In Years 1 and 2, work was set at too low a level when compared to what is expected by the National Literacy Strategy. Many of the pupils were quite capable of completing the work with adult help, but expectations were too low and no adult was available to help them reach these standards. Across the school, not enough writing takes place in literacy hours and there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills, especially writing, in other subjects. This is another reason for low results. Much more notice needs to be taken by teachers of the termly expectations of the National Literacy Strategy in terms of content and time. For example, working towards targets during literacy lessons rather than as a separate lesson.
60. Overall, teachers plan too much at the level the children are at rather than to what they should be achieving. This is preventing them reaching levels of which they are capable. Assessment data is keeping them back rather than showing where additional help is needed to move them forward. Whilst booster classes are used well to support Year 6 pupils, homework and a homework club, classroom assistant support, and group teaching for additional literacy support for different age groups outside lessons is not used sufficiently to help pupils progress more quickly to the levels expected of their ages. In Year 6 lower-attaining pupils are very well motivated by working in very small groups.

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

61. Literacy is slowly being developed across the curriculum. ICT has been used to develop pupils' literacy skills when they used a digital camera to take a series of pictures and then use the pictures to write a story. It has also been used to write books for the library in history and, in Year 6, literacy skills are developed very well in subjects such as food technology. The school has identified that the lack of life experiences pupils have limits their writing and is providing activities which provide a stimulus for pupils' writing other than the television.

### **MATHEMATICS**



Provision for mathematics across the school is **unsatisfactory**. The school has adopted the National Numeracy Strategy but this is not sufficiently embedded in the school's practice.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are slowly improving.
- Results of pupil assessments are effectively analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment information in planning challenging activities and setting targets for different groups of pupils in the mixed age classes.
- The role of the subject co-ordinator needs further development with more involvement in the monitoring of teaching, learning and standards.
- ICT does not support mathematics teaching sufficiently.

- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge in practical problem solving activities.
- The use of mathematical skills across the curriculum has not been systematically addressed or monitored.

### Commentary

62. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards of work seen during the inspection are well below average and a significant number of pupils do not achieve as well as they should. However, there has been an improvement in standards at the end of Year 6 since the last inspection with more pupils reaching the expected standard. Despite this, overall improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory because the quality of teaching is not high enough and issues with monitoring of teaching, learning, and standards still need to be addressed.
63. The school has adopted the National Numeracy Strategy but it is not sufficiently embedded in the school's practice to have had enough impact on improving achievement. Scrutiny of pupils' past work shows marking procedures are inconsistent across the school and expectations are not high enough. Marking does not provide pupils with sufficient guidance as to how they can improve. There are examples of unfinished and untidy work which teachers accept and this leads to underachievement and lack of pride in what pupils are doing.
64. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons seen and from looking at pupils' work is unsatisfactory overall although some satisfactory and good teaching was seen in lessons. This is not as good as that found at the time of the last inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge and expectations varies from good to unsatisfactory which makes an impact on the pace and challenge of lessons. Lesson introductions are often not brisk enough and learning intentions are not always shared sufficiently with pupils so that they know what they will be learning and doing. Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to solve problems mentally and develop swift recall of number facts. Introductory sessions do not fully engage all pupils because teachers often only take answers from those who put up their hands and there are few challenging follow-up questions. The final session does not give pupils sufficient opportunity to talk about what they have been learning and explain the strategies they used. Although teachers provide different activities for groups of pupils these are often not sufficiently challenging or appropriate to their needs because insufficient use is made of assessment information. Some lessons lack pace and rigour and are too long with insufficient use made of learning resources to support pupils. There is a lack of adult support in most classes which makes it difficult for teachers to effectively manage the learning of the wide range of ability in the mixed age classes. Throughout the school, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to use mathematics involving real life problems. ICT is not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning in mathematics. Relationships with pupils are good and teachers have good expectations of behaviour.
65. Mathematics is a continuing feature of the school development plan and identified in the school's evaluation. The co-ordinator has undertaken a good analysis of recent test results which has identified strengths and weaknesses. These findings have been shared with parents but have yet to be fully implemented and monitored in planning, teaching and learning to raise standards. However s/he has had few opportunities to undertake rigorous monitoring of teaching, learning and standards to raise expectations and this is a major development area if standards are to continue to improve.

### Mathematics across the curriculum

66. There is some evidence of numeracy skills being used in other subjects, for example to support measuring in science, time lines in history and measurement in design and technology. However, the use of mathematical skills across the curriculum has not been systematically addressed or monitored to give pupils sufficient opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding.

### SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen since the last inspection.

- Not all pupils are sufficiently engaged during introductory sessions.
- Some lessons are too long so that pupils lose interest.
- Marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory.
- The role of the subject co-ordinator needs further development with more involvement in the rigorous monitoring of teaching, learning and standards.
- Assessment procedures need to be developed.

## Commentary

67. Inspection findings show standards in Year 2 are well below average. In Year 6 standards are below average. This is similar to that found in teacher assessments and test results in 2003 although the small cohort sizes make results unreliable. Standards in science are steadily improving across the school. Current Year 2 pupils entered school with standards well below that expected. They are beginning to develop skills of observation and prediction but limited literacy skills mean that they find recording difficult. Opportunities for developing skills of independent learning are limited, and there is an over-reliance on worksheets, which prevent pupils from developing their extended writing skills. Pupils in Year 6 co-operate well when undertaking investigations and activities which promote speaking and listening skills and personal development well. However, standards of written work are below average and often poorly presented with examples of unfinished work. Scrutiny of pupils' work reveals that insufficient emphasis has been put upon the development of subject-specific skills and there are weaknesses in assessment systems which prevent pupils from making better progress in their learning. Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to record their findings in a variety of ways using ICT, and a range of graphs and charts.
68. In lessons seen, teaching varied between unsatisfactory and good and was satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching is better in Years 3 to 6 where some good teaching was seen, and unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 where the subject has been identified as an area for development. Lack of subject knowledge contributes to the unsatisfactory teaching and some lessons in Years 1 and 2 are too long and pupils lose interest. Teachers do not always engage pupils sufficiently during the introductory session because questions are only directed to those pupils who put their hands up. In lessons where teachers show good subject knowledge and lessons are planned effectively, pupils learn well, showing keen interest and enthusiasm. Teachers provide sound opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations developing skills of observation and prediction. However, pupils' learning has not been underpinned by secure teaching of scientific skills and processes, such as developing scientific questions, synthesising and evaluating information, and hypothesising. Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are not always high enough, as shown by the unsatisfactory standards of presentation which teachers accept, and the lack of informative marking, which prevents pupils from improving on their previous performance. There is some lack of understanding of national curriculum requirements and expectations. The lack of assessment procedures results in all groups of pupils in the mixed age classes covering the same skills and tasks which do not challenge higher attaining pupils.
69. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management within limited non-contact time. She is enthusiastic and has audited resources but is not sufficiently involved in rigorous monitoring of teaching, learning or standards and this is a major weakness. The curriculum is now soundly planned based on national guidance with topics on a two-year cycle to cater for the mixed age classes but there is insufficient rigorous scrutiny to ensure planned tasks are delivered. There are currently no whole school assessment procedures in place linked to national curriculum expectations which means teachers do not always plan appropriate activities for pupils. Resources have recently been updated and catalogued and are adequate. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Various activities such as design a garden, a science fayre and visits from 'Zoolab' and 'Science in a suitcase' have successfully raised the profile of science in the school.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject manager is enthusiastic and has clear plans for the future.
- The curriculum for ICT is now established, but not yet fully implemented due to lack of resources.
- There is a clear action plan in place.
- Standards are not high enough.

- There are insufficient computers for effective whole class teaching.
- Computers in classrooms are under used to support other curriculum areas.
- Teachers' skills in delivering the ICT curriculum need to be developed further.
- ICT is currently not used sufficiently to support learning in a range of other subjects.

### **Commentary**

70. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well below expectations because of limited access and unsatisfactory teaching and provision in the past. Achievement is currently unsatisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, pupils are keen to learn and are enthusiastic. Year 2 pupils are developing keyboard and mouse skills and learning to save and retrieve information. They enter simple words into a word processing package or and create simple pictures using a graphics package. Year 3 and 4 pupils are still learning to turn on computers and save and retrieve information. Year 6 pupils combine simple text using different styles and sizes and pictures taken with a digital camera to produce a group poster. They satisfactorily undertake research to support activities in geography and history and save and retrieve information from disks and CD ROMs. The use of the Internet and e-mail is being developed. However, lack of access to computers has meant keyboard skills are below expectations and pupils have little understanding of the use of ICT beyond the school.
71. The school is fully aware that current provision is unsatisfactory and this is identified in the schools development plan. There is a sound action plan in place to try to address many issues. Seven laptop computers have recently been purchased but more are required to ensure pupils have regular access. The use of laptops is timetabled for one day each week per class but in most classes three pupils have to share a computer for whole class teaching which is unsatisfactory. All pupils in Year 3 to 6 save work to their own disk but there are limited opportunities for pupils to print out samples of work. The infant classrooms are equipped with one computer and attached printer and each junior classroom has two computers with attached printers. These are underused in lessons to support pupils' learning in other subjects because of limited skills and knowledge on the part of pupils and lack of programs.
72. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 so no judgement on the quality of teaching is possible. In the two lessons seen in Years 3 to 6, teaching was satisfactory overall within the constraints of the limited resources. Lessons are soundly planned and teachers give clear instructions and directions. Relationships are good and pupils are keen to learn. When working together they co-operate and share well.
73. The subject manager is enthusiastic and has produced a sound action plan. She provides sound leadership and management. However, assessment procedures have still to be developed and there is no rigorous monitoring of teaching learning and standards. Further training is needed to improve staff knowledge and skills and raise awareness of national curriculum levels so that they have a better understanding of what pupils should achieve. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection in ensuring statutory requirements are met. Activities are now soundly planned based on National Curriculum requirements and the school has recently purchased a commercial scheme to support teaching and learning and provide structure. However, this has not yet had time to raise standards.

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

74. The use of ICT to support other subject areas such as in literacy, mathematics, geography, history and art is slowly developing but is limited due to lack of software, knowledge and skills. Examples where it was seen in use, was to support literacy when a digital camera was used to take a series of pictures and to support history when pupils made books for the library. Headphones and story tapes are used in Year 1 and 2 to help pupils read.

### **HUMANITIES**

Geography, history and religious education were sampled during the inspection. Two geography, one religious education and no history lessons were observed.

### **Geography and history**

75. Standards in both geography lessons were judged to be well below expectations. During the past few years, the emphasis in the school has been on raising standards in English, mathematics and science.

This has meant that there has been less focus on history and geography. However, these subjects have been identified for development in the school development plan. In both subjects it is clear, from looking at samples of pupils' books that standards are below expectations. Subject co-ordinators provide satisfactory leadership and management within limited non-contact time. They have produced action plans and reviewed resource provision. Planning for geography and history is based soundly on national guidance on a two-year cycle to cater for the mixed aged classes. However, the co-ordinators have no time to undertake rigorous monitoring of teaching, learning and standards. Although teachers make assessments, there are no whole school assessment procedures in place to ensure that activities provide sufficient challenge for all ability groups in the mixed aged classes. Resources in history are adequate but are unsatisfactory in geography.

### **Religious Education**

76. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards by the end of Year 2, due to limited samples of recorded work and no lessons being observed. By the end of Year 6, from talking to pupils and looking at work samples, standards are judged to be below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. No judgement on standards was made at the time of the last inspection so that it is not possible to comment on improvements since then.
77. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection so that no firm judgement on teaching can be made. The lesson was well organised and managed, and the teacher used questioning well. Pupils were interested, well behaved and co-operated well.
78. Co-ordination is currently shared between two teachers who provide sound leadership and management within limited non-contact time. The curriculum is soundly planned based on the locally agreed syllabus. Co-ordinators have identified the need to introduce assessment procedures so that activities are more closely matched to pupils' needs and provide suitable challenge. There are insufficient artefacts to support the curriculum and few opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of others faiths through visits, visitors or video resources and this is an area for development.

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

79. Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were only sampled during the inspection. Pupils' work was looked at, co-ordinators were interviewed and one food technology, one music and two physical education lessons were observed. Standards are well below average in art and design throughout the school until Year 6 where pupils are taught particularly well and achieve well although standards are below average. Work of an average standard was seen in pupils' sketch books in Year 3 and good work in these books in Year 6. ICT, in particular the digital camera, is used well to enhance the subject and good links are made with science. There was not enough work seen to make an overall judgement on standards in design and technology but photographs and pupils books show that it is covered satisfactorily. Food technology is very well taught in Year 6 and these pupils' are knowledgeable about different foods. Parent helpers and the school cook make good contributions to this aspect of the subject. Average standards were seen in music in a Year 6 lesson, where a broadcast was used.
80. Standards in physical education are variable depending on the quality of teaching. In one lesson teaching was excellent; standards were above average and pupils achieved very well. In another lesson, teaching was unsatisfactory because not enough additional guidance was given by the class teacher, but standards were average as the result of the expectations and instruction in the broadcast. Sports facilities are very limited in the school. The school does have a hall and outside the playground is small and the only grassed area nearby is used by the public and can be a health risk. Governors are concerned that older pupils do not have the opportunities they should to develop their sporting skills and inspectors would agree. However the school provides rounders, netball, football and cricket clubs and the school joins another school for sports day.
81. These subjects have not been an area of focus and not enough emphasis has been given to ensuring pupils develop their skills effectively as they move through the school. One reason for this is the high turnover of staff, and new co-ordinators have not been in post sufficiently long enough to monitor work in all their subjects. These areas of concern have been identified by the school as requiring improvement and strategies to address this in some subjects, such as design and technology, and are on the school development plan for the coming year. Pupils also have limited knowledge of the vocabulary needed in

each subject and this also affects their understanding and learning, this is not an area that the school has identified.

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

82. There is satisfactory planning for personal, social, health and citizenship education, supported by a commercial scheme of work. It includes sex and relationships education, drug education, citizenship and healthy eating and contributes positively to pupils' personal development. It makes a valuable contribution to building respect for themselves and others. Membership of the school council contributes positively to pupils' understanding of democracy and their role in society. An appropriate input is made by outside agencies and visiting speakers such as the school nurse and the educational social worker. The school makes the most of opportunities to promote personal, social and health education but time allocated for it on the timetable may be shortened when other lessons overrun.

**PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>5</b>
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	5
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>6</b>
Pupils' achievement	5
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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