

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BERWICK HILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Middlesbrough

LEA area: Middlesbrough

Unique reference number: 111626

Headteacher: Mr J W King

Lead inspector: Dr J N Thorp

Dates of inspection: 3 – 6 November 2003

Inspection number: 255496

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:	Independent
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	414
School address:	Westerdale Road Berwick Hills Middlesbrough
Postcode:	TS3 7QH
Telephone number:	01642 245598
Fax number:	01642 245604
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R J Holland
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Berwick Hills Primary School is located on the Berwick Hills estate on the east side of Middlesbrough. The present primary school is located on a large site, which also includes a separate nursery building. Most children come from the surrounding estate. There are currently 414 pupils on roll, the vast majority of whom are white, organised into 13 classes and a nursery. There is a second intake of reception children at the start of the spring term. There is some mobility of pupils, with 15 joining the school other than the usual time of first admission last year and 26 leaving. The area around the school is very mixed and there are wide variations in attainment on entry, but overall it is well below average. There are 59 pupils (14 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs, which is below average compared with schools nationally. Most of these pupils have learning difficulties. Two pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. A very small number of children speak English as an additional language. The school was part of the East Middlesbrough Education Action Zone for five years up to 2003. The school received a Schools Achievement Award from the Department for Education and Skills in 2002 and achieved Investor in People status in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6327	Dr J N Thorp	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology English as an additional language
19698	Mrs J Garland	Lay inspector	
16971	Mr R W Hardaker	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education
16761	Mr M Hemmings	Team inspector	Foundation Stage of Learning History Religious education
17756	Mrs H Monaghan	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school which continues to get better.** The excellent leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher has had a most positive impact, enabling the school to improve significantly over a relatively short period. Standards have risen year on year since the headteacher took up his post. Teaching is now better than it was; and, while it is good overall, some lessons in literacy are of very high quality. Throughout the school pupils' achievement is good; pupils do well to reach expected standards in most subjects. The school's significant strengths far outweigh any weaknesses identified, although standards are not yet high enough in writing and in some aspects of information and communication technology (ICT). The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- ? The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide excellent leadership, which ensures that the school continues to develop and improve.
- ? Overall achievement is good; pupils make particularly good progress in Years 3 to 6.
- ? Standards in writing are not high enough by the end of Year 6.
- ? Teaching is frequently good, especially in English, mathematics and science.
- ? Pupils' attitudes and very good behaviour contribute to the very positive atmosphere for learning.
- ? Pupils have too few opportunities to use the computers in other subjects; standards in some aspects of ICT are below those expected by the end of Year 6.
- ? Provision for special educational needs is very good; achievement of these pupils is very good
- ? Pupils are not always sufficiently clear how to improve their work.
- ? Some co-ordinators are not yet making an effective contribution to subject leadership.

There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection. There has been significant improvement in standards generally by the end of Year 6, with a notable improvement in boys' attainment. There are now clear systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment, providing detailed information with which to track their progress, although teachers are not yet sufficiently clearly indicating to pupils how to improve their work. Teachers identify clear learning objectives for lessons and mostly explain them carefully so their pupils understand what it is they are going to learn. The majority of pupils and parents have very positive views about the school and are pleased with the improvements made.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	D	D	E
mathematics	D	C	D	D
science	C	B	B	B

*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.*

**Achievement is good overall.** Children start school with low overall attainment. They make progress and achieve well, although standards in relation to the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year are likely to be below average in some important areas of learning. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, although standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, they do well to achieve standards which are above average in science and average in mathematics, but standards in writing remain

below average by the end of Year 6. Standards in most other subjects are in line with those expected. Standards in some aspects of ICT are not yet high enough.

**Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.** Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. Relationships and behaviour are very good. Attendance is unsatisfactory overall, because too many pupils are taken on holiday in term time. A few pupils are not as punctual as they should be.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.** Teaching is good overall, with some lessons of very high quality. Teachers manage behaviour very well and have very good relationships with their pupils, which helps them promote positive attitudes to learning. Some teachers provide too little guidance for pupils on how to improve their work.

High levels of care, guidance and support ensure that pupils' varied personal needs are identified and met. The curriculum is good overall, but teachers make insufficient use of computers to support teaching and learning in subjects. The school provides a good range of activities to enrich the curriculum. Pupils are increasingly involved in the school and the school council is effective in representing their views. The school has very good links with parents.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall, **leadership and management are very good.** The headteacher provides excellent leadership, which is ensuring that the school continues to improve. Management is good overall, but some subject co-ordinators are not yet contributing effectively to managing the curriculum. The school's strategic planning for further development is good. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well, making a good contribution to the management of the school.

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

The majority of parents have a positive view of the school. They are pleased with the progress their children make, believing that teachers expect their children to work hard and do their best. Parents believe the school has a strong headteacher and that it is well run. They are pleased with the ready access they have to all staff.

Pupils have positive views about school. Most enjoy coming to school and feel that their teachers treat them fairly. They take their work on the school council very seriously. Very few pupils have any concerns about bullying, but they indicated that behaviour generally could be better.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- ? Raise standards in writing.
- ? Extend the opportunities all pupils have to use their ICT skills in all subjects and improve standards in those aspects of ICT where they are below average.
- ? Ensure all teachers provide guidance for pupils on how they can improve their work.
- ? Develop the roles of some curriculum co-ordinators.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, pupils' **achievement is good** throughout the school. Standards on entry to the school are low, but achievement is good for children in the reception class, even though fewer than expected attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. Achievement is good in Years 1 to 6, particularly in reading where pupils do well to attain average standards by the time they leave the school.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well in reading, but insufficiently well in writing.
- ? Pupils achieve well in science and standards are higher than expected by the end of Year 6.
- ? Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, with standards rising year on year.

#### Commentary

1. Children enter the school with very wide ranging levels of attainment, but overall standards are low. This is similar to that reported in the previous inspection. Children make a good start to their time in school and achieve well, even though the majority of them are not on course to achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children attain the expected goals in personal, social and emotional development and in creative and physical development, areas in which their learning is not inhibited by their restricted language development. The good provision made for these children, particularly in the reception class, contributes positively to this good start.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.3 (12.7)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	12.9 (12.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.7 (14.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. This table shows that standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were below average in reading and writing and mathematics, compared with pupils in other schools. These test results also show that in all three subjects pupils performed better than they had the previous year. Teachers' assessments also indicate the continuing trend of higher standards in science. There are significant fluctuations in standards at this stage from one year to the next, but the previous downward trend has been reversed. However, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were not as high as reported at the time of the previous inspection.



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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.5 (25.9)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.2 (27.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.4 (29.4)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 62 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. This table indicates that standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were below average in English, slightly below average in mathematics, but above average in science. These results are not as good in both English and mathematics as they had been the previous year, despite the fact that a larger proportion of pupils achieved a level higher than that typically expected for their age. The previous year's above average standards in science were maintained. Over time, until this year, there has been a consistent year-on-year improvement in standards, the rate of which has been more rapid than the trend in other schools.
4. Pupils of all ages achieve well in reading. Although by the end of Year 2, standards remain below average, they are in line with those expected by the end of Year 6. Teaching of reading is good and pupils receive good support from skilled classroom assistants. Standards in reading are consistently better than they are in writing across the school. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can read appropriate texts accurately, with some of the higher attainers able to use expression effectively to help them communicate meaning. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils read fluently and quite expressively. Many pupils enjoy reading at this stage and can discuss their favourite books. Work seen during the inspection indicates that pupils achieve less well in writing, which is below average in standard throughout the school. Pupils have too few opportunities to develop their skills in extended pieces of writing and they are not shown how to improve their work in further drafts. Standards in speaking and listening are below average by the end of Year 2, but in line with expectations by the end of Year 6.
5. Pupils achieve well in mathematics in Years 1 and 2, their learning is good but many do not reach expected standards. Since they start from a low base, this, nevertheless, represents good achievement. Pupils make good progress through Years 3 to 6 and their achievement is good, with most pupils reaching standards in line with those expected nationally by the end of Year 6. There has been consistent year-on-year improvement in standards over the past eight years.
6. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in science. Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 but slightly better than average by the end of Year 6. This is because teaching is good, pupils respond positively and they enjoy their lessons. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress from a below average base and, although most of them do not reach expected standards, their achievement is, nevertheless, satisfactory. Pupils make particularly good progress through Years 3 to 6 and reach standards that are above average, which represents very good achievement. There has been very good improvement in standards in science over the last five years, during which time they have risen from well below average to above average.
7. A significant feature of the school is the way that standards in English, mathematics and science have risen consistently over the last few years. At the time of the previous inspection pupils' progress and the standards they achieved were considered weak by the end of Year 6. This situation has been successfully reversed, particularly in mathematics and science, which represents very good achievement over time in Years 3 to 6. There has also been a very significant improvement in the standards achieved by boys since the previous inspection. These improvements in standards have all resulted from the improved teaching, the

development of more positive attitudes among pupils and improvements in their behaviour, all of which have been very effectively led by the co-ordinators in these subjects.

8. Pupils' learning and achievement in ICT are good. Pupils make appropriate progress through Years 1 and 2, although by the end of Year 2 there was insufficient evidence of pupils' work available to support a judgement about standards. Pupils make good progress in developing some of their skills in Years 3 to 6 and, by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average in aspects of ICT. However, pupils' understanding of control technology is below average. There has been good improvement in this subject since the previous inspection, with better resources now supporting teaching and learning effectively. Further training has enabled teachers to develop their own skills so that they are much more confident and they are very well supported by some skilled classroom assistants. These factors are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement and the standards that they now reach.

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

Pupils' attitudes to school are very positive and their behaviour is **very good**. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Attendance is unsatisfactory overall and some pupils regularly arrive late.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ? Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour contribute positively to the very positive atmosphere for learning in the school.
- ? Relationships are very good throughout the school.
- ? Attendance is unsatisfactory overall, although it is improving.
- ? Pupils' personal and social development is very good.
- ? There is insufficient emphasis on promoting pupils' understanding of contemporary multicultural society.

### **Commentary**

9. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and their very good behaviour contribute most positively to the improving standards of their work and to their good achievement across the school. Everyone in school has worked very hard indeed to improve pupils' attitudes and behaviour and the success they have enjoyed since the previous inspection has been appreciated by pupils and their parents. There is now a shared will to work hard, which fosters pupils' personal growth and widens their horizons so that they feel they can succeed. Expectations of behaviour and conduct are extremely high and pupils respond to this very well. Their very good behaviour throughout the school helps to raise standards in the classroom, resulting in a positive and supportive atmosphere in which teachers can teach and pupils can work purposefully, while enjoying their time in school. The table below shows there were a small number of exclusions among a very small number of pupils during the last school year. These pupils have since left the school. It also provides a measure of how behaviour has improved since the previous inspection and illustrates why parents are now so pleased with 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	408	6	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	4	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

10. Relationships throughout the school are very good, between all the adults and pupils, and among the pupils themselves. There is an anti-racist ethos which has ensured that new pupils who are asylum seekers have been warmly welcomed into the school and their particular needs addressed. Pupils say they feel safe and happy in school.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.1	School data	0.8
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.*

11. Attendance levels are gradually improving. The school is working hard to improve the rate of pupils' attendance and to ensure better punctuality. For example, an attendance officer has been employed who has achieved significant results with individuals. Attendance is a focus for awards in assemblies and public recognition is also contributing towards improvement. However, some parents are not doing as much as they can to improve attendance, and continue to take children out of school during term times for holidays. The school tries to ensure that these parents are made fully aware of the detrimental effects of both unauthorised absence and of lateness on their children's progress.
12. Pupils' social and personal development is very good. There is a strong emphasis on these aspects of development right from the start, which parents value. It ensures that pupils are given the skills and understanding to live in an ordered community, to respect themselves and others. The pupils' voice is heard in school, through the school council for example, and their opinions responded to. Pupils become mature and thoughtful members of the school community, so that their personal skills, which are underdeveloped when they enter the school, are very well developed by the time they leave.
13. Although pupils are introduced to some aspects of other cultures and of their local traditions, they have too few opportunities to extend their understanding of contemporary multicultural society. The school has recognised the need to extend these opportunities.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education enabling pupils to learn effectively. The curriculum is good and there are good opportunities provided for pupils to learn outside of lessons. Teaching is good and pupils are very well cared for.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching is **good** overall. Pupils' learning and their achievements are good and they do well to achieve average standards in most subjects by the end of Year 6. A clear focus on learning contributes positively to pupils' good achievement and to the recent improvements in standards.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Good teaching is ensuring standards are rising.
- ? Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well.
- ? There is a firm focus on extending pupils' learning.
- ? There is a lack of consistency in the precision with which some lessons are planned and in some teachers' marking, which does not always help pupils improve their work.
- ? Teachers do not use ICT to support pupils' learning as effectively as they could.

### Commentary

14. Teaching in the school is good overall, and ranges from satisfactory to excellent. Teachers work hard, are very skilful and have a firm commitment to improvement. This has a most positive effect on pupils' attitudes to school and ensures that learning is consistently good. Overall, teaching has improved since the previous inspection, when a significant proportion of lessons was judged unsatisfactory. In three-quarters of all lessons seen in this inspection teaching was good or better; there were no unsatisfactory lessons. Teaching in literacy and numeracy is particularly effective and has had a considerable impact on pupils' learning and contributed most positively towards raising standards.

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	9 (19%)	25 (53%)	12 (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

15. Teachers manage the pupils' behaviour well, drawing on a range of strategies to ensure that classrooms are orderly, which ensures that pupils are able to learn. There has been a substantial effort to improve pupils' behaviour over the recent past. Both parents and pupils are pleased with the success the school has enjoyed in improving behaviour. Teachers respond very positively to their pupils and are consistent in communicating what they expect. Teachers and classroom assistants are good role models and have good relationships with their pupils. This helps promote pupils' positive attitudes to learning.
16. There is a very firm focus on extending pupils' learning. Teachers use a variety of teaching techniques and approaches effectively to engage pupils' interest and enhance levels of understanding. The school's approach to accelerated learning is having a major positive impact, because teachers are thinking carefully about matching their teaching to pupils' different learning styles. At times, teachers make very good use of their skilful classroom assistants, who support pupils' learning very effectively. This all ensures that learning is good. Most pupils find lessons interesting and think that teachers explain things clearly.

17. The school has good systems for assessment and a good deal of assessment information provides teachers with a clear picture of pupils' progress. However, the use of this information to help teachers plan specific learning activities to meet the needs of some individuals or groups of pupils, is not consistent across the school. This results in a lack of precision in some classes and subjects in the use of targets for improvement. Similarly the marking of pupils' work is not always consistent with the school's policy and teachers generally provide insufficient guidance in their comments for pupils as to what they could do to improve, develop or extend their work.
18. While teaching of skills in ICT is good, teachers make insufficient use of ICT to promote or extend pupils' learning across the curriculum. Pupils have too few opportunities to work with the computers in other subjects, because teachers do not make use of the computers in their classrooms, or those in the temporary computer suite, as effectively as they might.

## The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **good**, including the opportunities provided to extend learning outside of lessons. The approach to curriculum development is very good. Overall, accommodation is good and resources for learning are satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? The curriculum is broad and balanced and carefully planned.
- ? Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use the skills they develop in some subjects, but not in others.
- ? There is good support for curriculum development.
- ? The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- ? Resources for reading are good, but pupils have too few opportunities to use the library.

### Commentary

19. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which is very well planned to make it particularly appropriate for all pupils and relevant to their lives both in and out of school. Curriculum planning has focused especially on the provision for literacy and numeracy. Planning is thorough and detailed so that the curriculum builds effectively on previous work. It also takes into account the different ways that pupils learn. This has had a significant impact on standards throughout the school, both in improving results in national tests and in raising boys' achievement, which was reported below that of girls in the previous inspection.
20. Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to apply the skills they learn in some subjects across the curriculum. For example, they provide very good opportunities for pupils to practise their skills of speaking and listening and this has a significant impact on pupils' learning and on improving standards achieved throughout the school. Teachers also make links between subjects, which adds coherence to the curriculum. For example, in Year 2, pupils planned puppets in a design and technology lesson which were based on a story they had enjoyed in literacy. In a science lesson, pupils used thermometers linked to the computer, which produced a temperature graph. There are, however, too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects and too few opportunities for them to work with the computers across the curriculum.
21. The school makes good use of local and national initiatives to support the development of aspects of the curriculum. The additional support for individuals and groups of pupils experiencing learning difficulties, particularly in literacy and numeracy, has accelerated their learning and raised the standards achieved by these pupils. The school's involvement with the East Middlesbrough Education Action Zone had a significant impact on the development of the arts curriculum, by providing support, expertise and resources for art and design. This

involvement has had a positive impact on the standard of pupils' work in art and design. The school has also benefited from the contribution of both local and national artists who worked with groups and classes to produce large-scale sculptures and mosaics, of which the pupils are justly proud.

22. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual education plans are detailed and reviewed regularly. Teachers have high expectations of these pupils. They are fully included in all the school's activities; the very able teaching assistants ensure that pupils with special educational needs play a full part in lessons and that they are able to complete the work set for them. As a result, pupils know that their contribution to lessons is valued, which increases their confidence and self-esteem. This ensures that their learning is good and they make very good progress in relation to their abilities.
23. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall for most subjects, but they are good for mathematics and art and design, and very good for physical education. There are also good resources for reading, the effective use of which is supporting the improvement in standards among all pupils, including those with special educational needs. However, while the new library is attractive and resources are developing, pupils have insufficient opportunities to use the library for their own research. There is a lack of sufficient outdoor play equipment for reception children.

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

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are **very good**. The support and guidance for pupils, based on the monitoring of their personal and academic achievements, are very good. Action to involve pupils in the work and development of the school is also very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ? The provision of high quality care, guidance and support is fundamental to the school.
- ? Pupils' understanding of health is very well promoted.
- ? The specific needs of young children are met right from the start.
- ? Very good relationships between adults and children underpin the very effective provision for care, guidance and support.

### **Commentary**

24. The provision of high quality care, guidance and support is a very important aspect of the school's ethos. Consequently, there are very clear policies, procedures and routines in place, which work very effectively to ensure a safe and positive environment where all pupils can flourish. All members of staff play a full part in implementing these policies consistently, which has a most positive impact on pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development.
25. Promoting pupils' health is currently a major initiative. The school is working towards the healthy schools award and the provision of water for pupils, an approach to accelerating pupils' learning and the evaluation of how school systems work, are producing very positive results. Pupils are taught that they have choices and are guided effectively to make the right ones. Meals cooked on the premises are of a high standard, with pupils given a good range of alternatives, which helps promote their understanding of a healthy lifestyle.
26. The school is fully aware of the particular needs of children entering the nursery, in terms of their personal and social development. Teachers and support assistants of these very young children give high priority to fostering this personal development, ensuring that children feel safe, secure and valued. This ensures that the conditions are created in which children settle in well and can learn, and this has a positive effect on their attitudes and achievement as they move through the school.

27. The very good relationships between adults and children, which exist throughout the school, contribute most effectively towards the continuing care, guidance and support of pupils. These are reinforced effectively in a developing programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) which extends the school's approach to promoting good and safe behaviour, preventing bullying and developing a sense of personal responsibility. As a result of both the very good relationships and the school's provision, pupils feel safe and secure. They feel valued and they say that their views or concerns are listened to and dealt with promptly and effectively.

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

The school has developed a **very good** partnership with parents and a **good** relationship with the wider community. It has **good** links with other schools.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ? Parents have very positive views about the school.
- ? The school is actively involved with the local community.
- ? Parents are keen to help their children learn, but some disrupt their learning with holidays in term time.
- ? Parents receive good information and are regularly asked for their views about the school.

### **Commentary**

28. Most parents have very positive views about the school, which they indicated clearly in their responses to the questionnaire and in their meeting with inspectors prior to the inspection. Parents feel welcome in the school, they appreciate the formal and informal opportunities they have to discuss their children's progress or any concerns they may have. They think the school is very well led and they value the access they have to the headteacher at the beginning of each day. Most parents believe their children are receiving a good education. They are pleased with, and proud of, the improvements made to the school.
29. The school benefits from the number of parents and local residents who come into school to help pupils' learning. This effectively strengthens the school's links with the local area so that it feels fully part of the community it serves. The school also contributes to wider community development, for example, in tree planting in an area where many of the pupils live. The strength of the school's relationship with the community is reflected in the fact that it suffers from very little vandalism, in an area where this is not uncommon.
30. Parents are keen to help their children learn and many help in classrooms. They also accompany swimming classes and other trips when asked and attend productions and assemblies in the school. Several parents have benefited from training in school, which has led to further qualifications. Some parents are less supportive of their children's learning, because they take them on holiday during term time, which is disruptive.
31. Parents' views on the work of the school are sought frequently and their comments considered and acted upon. Classes and courses are arranged in response to parents' requests, including aerobics, self defence, as well as workshops to inform them about the curriculum. Parents are well informed about school life through newsletters, and about their children's progress through good written reports and feedback at consultation evenings.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **very good** overall. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide excellent leadership, ensuring a continuing and vigorous drive for improvement. Governance is good. The governing body, under the effective leadership of an informed chairperson, fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. As a result of good management, the school runs smoothly.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ? The headteacher's vision, commitment and enthusiasm are central to the school's effectiveness and improvement.
- ? Excellent leadership has ensured a positive ethos and the creation of the right conditions for learning.
- ? Governors effectively help to shape the direction of the school.
- ? Co-ordination of English, mathematics and science is good, but in other subjects and in the Foundation Stage it is not yet contributing effectively to further improvement.
- ? Financial management is good.

### **Commentary**

32. The headteacher has a clear vision and high aspirations for the school, which he communicates very well to others. This has been the key factor in the school's continued improvement and rising standards. All the staff and governors fully support him. The school presents many challenges but, with its high staff morale, it is well placed to face them. Firm and effective routines have been established, which all staff apply well and which positively influence pupils' behaviour. As a result, the school runs very smoothly. High expectations are placed on everyone working in the school, both pupils and adults; all the adults are continually striving for improvement. As a result, the school has made very good improvement since the previous inspection and is well equipped to continue improving.
33. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the school has ensured that a very positive ethos is evident in most of its work and that a very good climate for learning exists. It is a caring community where inclusion is visibly successful as pupils interact together very well. Equality of opportunity is very strong. A recent focus of teacher training has successfully ensured that approaches to teaching and learning involve the use of a range of strategies directed at meeting the learning needs and preferred styles of all pupils.
34. A strong, committed and well-led governing body provides good support for the school and makes a significant contribution to its leadership. Governors are well informed and this enables them to make strategic decisions. The headteacher and other senior staff help keep them updated about standards and developments in the school. They are in a good position to do this as very good systems are in place for monitoring and self-evaluation. A significant number of governors are frequent visitors to the school and, as a result of this and the information received from senior staff, they have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They concern themselves with standards and strive to give all pupils a high quality education, particularly one that offers an appropriate challenge. They keep themselves updated with curriculum developments and consider at length the implications of decisions they take. The vision of the headteacher, his effective consultation with staff and the depth of thinking given to issues by the governors, all combine to enhance the very good quality of planning.
35. Subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science lead and manage their subjects well. They lead their colleagues by example, check teaching and learning in their subjects and contribute effectively to the consistent drive for improvement. They have a clear understanding of the way pupils learn. In other subjects, and in the Foundation Stage in particular, the role of the co-ordinator is not so well developed, because there are few opportunities for them to monitor teaching and learning and support improvement. In the Foundation Stage the prolonged absences of the co-ordinator has inhibited the development of the role and restricted the pace of improvement.



**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	845,706
Total expenditure	890,393
Expenditure per pupil	2,161

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	69,974
Balance carried forward to the next	25,287

36. The school manages its financial spending and resources well. All funding, both basic budget allocation and additional grant received for specific purposes, is carefully allocated to help the school achieve the educational priorities defined in the School Improvement Plan. Spending of money allocated for the education of pupils with special educational needs provides a good example of how prudent spending, linked to careful planning, is helping to raise pupils' attainment. Provision in this area is very good and pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. The principles of best value are applied very successfully to the purchase, management and use of resources. The school provides very good value for money.

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

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

Overall provision is **good**, although it is stronger in the reception class than in the nursery. This reflects the situation reported in the previous inspection.

Supply teachers were observed teaching most of the lessons during the inspection, as the regular teachers were absent. Teaching in the nursery is satisfactory and in the reception class it is good. The better teaching is characterised by the provision of a more stimulating setting in which children can learn and more closely focused activities for learning. Teaching assistants in both classes make a very good contribution to children's learning.

Most children start school with low levels of attainment, especially in their language development. This slows down the progress they can make towards the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year and most children fail to reach them in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in knowledge and understanding of the world. Nevertheless, their achievement is good in these areas of learning because they make progress from such a low base. Most children do well to achieve the goals set for them in personal, social and emotional development because there is a very strong emphasis on this aspect right from the start. They also do well to reach the goals set in creative development, and in physical development, in which achievement is satisfactory because their development in this area is generally better when they start school.

The curriculum is good, with all children engaging in a wide range of worthwhile and interesting activities. The development of leadership and management of the Foundation Stage has been hampered by the amount of time that the co-ordinator has been absent from school over the recent past. It is satisfactory overall because other colleagues, particularly the deputy headteacher, have taken on extra responsibilities to deal with the key issues from the previous inspection. This has resulted in recent improvements in planning and assessment procedures, for example. There are now thorough planning arrangements, with clear guidelines for moving children through the stepping-stones for learning to the early learning goals. There are also comprehensive procedures for checking the progress that children make. These have just been put into place and provide a positive step in improving progression between the nursery and reception classes, as teachers are now planning lessons and checking children's progress to a common format.

There is very good provision for children with special educational needs, which enables them to take full part in all activities. Induction arrangements are good, which helps the children to settle quickly into everyday routines when they start school. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress and are welcome to discuss this with the teacher at any time.

The nursery and reception classes are in separate buildings, which causes communication difficulties at times and results in a barrier to progression between them. The secure outdoor areas are not used enough as a means of developing children's learning through outdoor play. Resources are adequate across most of the areas of learning, apart from a lack of large outdoor equipment for reception children to support their physical development.

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

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All staff place strong emphasis on this aspect of learning.
- Very good relationships are fostered so that children feel safe and secure.
- Teaching is good, with teachers being aware of the needs of their children in this area of learning.

### **Commentary**

37. In the nursery and reception class, all staff work successfully to ensure children make good progress in learning to share, co-operate and play harmoniously with others. This is especially important in the nursery as many children start school with poor social and personal development. Adults interact with them in a friendly and positive manner and, as a result, the children obviously feel safe and secure and are happy in the classroom and wider school environment. The children grow in confidence through the constructive praise that they receive from adults, who act as very good role models. A good example of this was seen when the children's self-esteem was built up during the reception class 'Hometime awards', which celebrated personal achievement. As a result of these very good relationships, the children's attitudes to learning are positive and their response in lessons is good. They are well behaved and able to share resources fairly and take care of one another. They co-operate well with each other, especially when given the opportunity to work on activities independently of the teacher. This was seen when children were working in the sand and water areas and using construction kits to make models. As a result of experiences such as this, they are effectively learning to show respect for others' feelings and ideas. There is good emphasis placed on health and safety issues, as was seen when children were told the importance of washing their hands after going to the toilet. Going on visits, in which they mix with adults and other children, supports children's social development well.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision for communication, language and literacy **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A strong emphasis is placed on developing the children's speaking and listening skills.
- At times there is too little intervention to promote the development of children's writing skills in the nursery.

### **Commentary**

38. On entry to school, most of the children have underdeveloped speaking and listening skills. Staff put a lot of effort into developing these skills and give children many opportunities to talk about their experiences and the work they are doing. The role-play areas, particularly in the reception class, provide a stimulating environment for pupils to act out a variety of make-believe dramas and, in so doing, practise and develop their speaking and listening skills. As a result, they make good progress and, by the time they reach Year 1, most of them are beginning to express themselves clearly and make themselves understood. They will listen to a story attentively and respond appropriately, talking about their likes and dislikes. They are taught how to associate sounds with patterns, words and letters, and to recognise simple familiar words. In the reception class, this was seen to good effect when the teacher was showing children how to form the letter 'b' by clear modelling of the letter on the board and by encouraging them to draw 'b' in the air. To develop their reading skills, the children are taught to hold a book the right way, to understand that words and pictures carry meaning and to be

aware that print is read from left to right. As a result, the children enjoy books and handle them with care. They enjoy basic writing experiences, and can use a range of implements for drawing, marking, scribbling and writing. There are times in the nursery when too little intervention by adults results in these skills being insufficiently developed. The higher ability children are capable of writing a recognisable simple sentence and make reasonable attempts at words with which they are not familiar.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for children's mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is an emphasis on learning through practical activity.
- Independent activities sometimes lack challenge in the nursery.
- There are good links to other areas of learning.

### **Commentary**

39. There are many practical activities provided for the children to practise their mathematical skills and to make their learning fun. For instance, in the nursery when handling a variety of two-dimensional shapes to learn about their properties, and in the reception class when children were using 10 pence coins to buy differently priced items from the toyshop. Most of the children are developing appropriate mathematical language well, using 'more than' and 'less than' during these mathematical and play activities. During their sorting and matching activities, the children are encouraged to match objects by colour and shape. The children recognise and name regular shapes, such as 'circle', 'triangle' and 'square', and are beginning to develop their spatial awareness to distinguish between forward, backward, left and right. In the reception class, the higher ability children can count up to 10, and beyond, with some help, and recognise what comes before and after different numbers. When observed working in the sand and water areas, some children were able to use mathematical terms such as 'full', 'empty' and 'half full' to talk about what they were doing. Sometimes in the nursery, however, independent activities are not focused enough and lack suitable challenge, and this limits the progress that children make. Mathematical skills are fostered effectively in other areas, such as when using a variety of shapes in art as a basis for their pictures in the style of the artist Kandinsky.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Activities build well on the children's own experiences.
- Teachers provide tasks that are practical and interesting.
- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for children to use the computers.

### **Commentary**

40. The teachers provide good opportunities for children to develop their powers of observation and ability to ask questions, as part of their natural curiosity. These practical activities are often closely related to children's own experiences. Children look at and talk about the similarities and differences of materials and investigate these by using their senses. They concentrate well on their work and show much interest and enjoyment in their activities. Their ability to communicate their ideas and findings are restricted by their underdeveloped language and literacy skills. The children build and construct, using a variety of objects, and select the tools

and methods they need to assemble and join the materials that they are using. Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for children to use computers and this limits the progress they make in developing their skills in ICT. Good use is made of the local environment to support the children's learning about the wider world.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for children's physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Accommodation is spacious, but outdoor areas lack imagination and are underused.
- The provision of large outdoor equipment for children in the reception class is inadequate.

### **Commentary**

41. The children are given suitable opportunities to develop their skills in manipulating scissors, writing and painting tools, and in handling a range of equipment when making models. In a good indoor physical education lesson for children in the reception class, they were well taught, learning how to travel in different ways and how to balance on different parts of their bodies. In so doing, children are developing an appropriate awareness of space and control of their own and others' space. However, the available outdoor areas are underdeveloped and teachers make too little use of them to promote children's physical development. This is particularly evident in the reception class, where there is a lack of large outdoor equipment to support children's physical development.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for children's creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers provide a good range of interesting activities to promote children's creative development.
- Children are encouraged to become independent learners.

### **Commentary**

42. The teacher organises the reception classroom effectively in a way which is successful in encouraging children to learn independently and enables them to use their own ideas in their creative work. This is true to a lesser extent for children in the nursery. In both classes, the children are able to make use of paint, crayons, pencils and glue on a daily basis. They have opportunities to experiment with colour-mixing to make a variety of colours. They are making good progress in their understanding of how sounds and noises are made and show much enjoyment in using their own voices in musical activities. The role-play area in the reception class is used well to develop the children's imaginations.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Standards in writing are below average.
- ? A clear emphasis on speaking and listening contributes effectively to pupils' learning in all subjects.
- ? Pupils do well to achieve average standards in reading.
- ? Teaching and learning are consistently good, with some lessons of very high quality.
- ? There is too little use of ICT to support and extend pupils' learning.
- ? Leadership of the subject is very effective.

#### Commentary

43. Although they have been improving steadily year on year, standards in writing are not yet high enough. Writing skills develop slowly at first and, throughout Years 1 and 2, need constant reinforcement. Teachers provide an appropriate range of opportunities for pupils to extend their skills, writing for different purposes and different audiences, in re-telling a story like *Handa's Surprise*, for example, or in thinking about character in their work on *The Prodigal Son*. There is a strong emphasis on preparation for writing and often very good speaking and listening activities precede particular writing tasks. This was the case in one good lesson in which the teacher and classroom assistant modelled 'hot-seating' as pupils prepared questions to explore character. Such effective preparation for writing ensures that pupils' learning is good and enables them to achieve well in these lessons. Although pupils continue to make progress and achieve satisfactorily, standards in writing are still below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils study different kinds of writing, such as story, poetry, diary, and playscript, but generally they have too few opportunities to develop their own skills in extended pieces of writing. Although there is sometimes good planning for writing, throughout Years 3 to 6, there is not enough emphasis on helping pupils improve their writing through teaching the skills of drafting and re-drafting and too few opportunities are provided for pupils to develop these skills using the computers. Throughout the school, pupils are making good progress in developing their handwriting skills.
44. Pupils start at the school with poorly developed speaking and listening skills and they remain below average by the end of the reception year and Year 2. There is a clear emphasis on developing these skills throughout the school and this contributes to pupils' learning in all subjects, because teachers plan a wide range of opportunities in most lessons to support the development of speaking and listening skills. These activities include role-play, talking in pairs and small groups, 'hot seating', and question and answer and reporting back sessions. This ensures that pupils make good progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6 and, by the end of Year 6, pupils do well to achieve standards which are in line with those expected of pupils their age. Teachers are skilled in posing questions to make pupils think and that demand a response; some use them effectively to structure discussions. In most lessons pupils are keen to respond and confident to offer their point of view. At times, however, some teachers talk too much, which limits the opportunities their pupils have to develop their own skills.
45. Good teaching of reading is enabling pupils to make good progress in developing their skills. Standards are below average by the end of the reception year, but achievement is good throughout the school, with pupils doing well to reach average standards by the end of Year 6. With younger pupils, teachers ensure there is intensive work on phonics, which is successful in developing pupils' early reading. Very good use is made of classroom assistants to support the development of pupils' reading. By Year 2, standards remain below average, although

pupils are developing appropriate skills and some higher attaining pupils begin to read with more confidence and expression. By Year 6, many pupils read with good levels of fluency and some use expression effectively to communicate meaning. Some higher attaining pupils talk confidently about their reading and can discuss books they have enjoyed and, sometimes, their favourite authors. Pupils gain satisfactory library skills, but by Year 6, they have too few opportunities to use their skills for independent research.

46. Teaching and learning are consistently good; some lessons are of a particularly high quality. In most lessons, teachers ensure that pupils are clear about what it is they are going to learn, they are demanding in what they expect and they manage pupils' learning effectively at a good pace. The frequently good discussion of the specific learning objectives is very effective in enabling pupils to begin to understand something of their own learning and this is reinforced with the use of targets written in their books. Teachers clearly interest and engage pupils in lessons, they motivate them well and this helps ensure that learning is good.
47. Although there are now increased numbers of computers available, teachers make insufficient use of ICT to support pupils' learning. Pupils have too few opportunities to work with the computers, to use them in drafting and redrafting their work, for example.
48. Leadership of the subject is very effective. The co-ordinator has a clear grasp of standards, and strengths and areas for development in the subject. She leads by example, providing a model of very good teaching. Her observations of teaching and learning, and ideas for further development, have enabled her to support the improvement of teaching that has been so effective in raising standards.

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

49. Language and literacy are supported well in other subjects. In some lessons, like science or design and technology for example, pupils learn to use appropriate technical vocabulary. They record their instructions for making moving pictures using levers, for example. In many lessons there are very valuable opportunities provided for discussion and teachers are skilled at managing these so pupils' learning is moved on well. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because careful and detailed attention is paid to the development of their literacy skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ? Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- ? As a result of good, and sometimes very good, teaching and learning, all pupils achieve well.
- ? Pupils enjoy mathematics, have good attitudes to learning and behave well.
- ? The subject is well led and managed.
- ? Too little use is made of ICT to support learning in mathematics lessons.
- ? There is no strategy in place to enable pupils to use their mathematical skills and knowledge in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

50. Standards in Year 2 are below average and in Year 6 they are average. Most pupils enter Year 1 with below average mathematical understanding but, by Year 2, have made up good ground and are much nearer to working within the expected range for their age, developing a knowledge and understanding of how numbers, including those involving tens, are written

down. Many can successfully recall addition and number facts to at least 10. They are taught well to recognise number patterns and use different strategies to solve number problems. Throughout the school, all pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by class teachers and teaching support assistants and make as much progress and achieve as well as the other pupils. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils. They give higher attaining pupils challenging tasks with the result that these pupils achieve well. In the 2003 national tests, about a quarter of the Year 6 pupils achieved better than the expected standard. The school is preparing 11-year-old pupils adequately for their continuing mathematical studies in the secondary phase.

51. Teaching and learning are never less than good throughout the school, sometimes being very good. Teachers are confident, having good subject knowledge and a good understanding of the requirements of the national guidance for developing numeracy. They apply this guidance effectively. At the start of lessons, they make clear to pupils what it is they will be doing and what they will be learning, they also make it clear what it is they will be expected to be able to do by the end of the lesson. Towards the end of lessons, they help pupils determine how successful they have been with their learning. In their teaching, they give clear explanations and use a good range of resources very well in order to help pupils understand mathematical ideas and concepts. In teachers' planning, opportunities to use computers to help develop mathematical thinking and understanding are sometimes missed. As a result, teachers are not exploiting the usefulness of computers sufficiently in order to help pupils learn and to reinforce their understanding of mathematics.
52. Teaching is lively and interesting, with the result that pupils enjoy mathematics and are well motivated. There is a good pace to lessons with all pupils set appropriately challenging tasks. Pupils respond enthusiastically and have good attitudes to learning. They co-operate well when asked to work together in small groups. Behaviour in lessons is good. This good behaviour, pupils' good attitudes to work and their enthusiasm make a significant contribution to the good progress they make.
53. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Under his good leadership and management the school analyses test results effectively to find what pupils need to learn to improve. Pupils are set realistic and challenging targets and these are regularly reviewed. This procedure makes a significant contribution to the good progress they make. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection. Standards have improved; the quality of teaching has improved; the co-ordinator now monitors the quality of teaching and learning much more effectively, and resources for teaching mathematics are now good and used very well.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

54. There is no strategy in place for the use of mathematics across the curriculum. As a result, there is little evidence to show that pupils are given a satisfactory range of opportunities to use their mathematical skills and knowledge across other subject areas. In Year 5 in geography, pupils use their understanding of position and grids when using Ordnance Survey maps, and pupils do some measuring in science and in design and technology. Such opportunities tend to occur incidentally and not as a result of systematic planning.



## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Pupils make very good progress in Years 3 to 6, and, by the time they leave at the end of Year 6, standards are above average.
- ? Consistently good teaching throughout the school has contributed to raising standards.
- ? Teachers provide too little indication of how pupils can improve their work.
- ? Resources for science are insufficiently accessible to teachers and pupils.

### Commentary

55. Standards in science are below average by the end of Year 2. When children enter the infant school their knowledge and understanding of the world is well below national expectations. Although they make good progress throughout Years 1 and 2, and their achievement is good, their understanding remains below expected levels. Pupils make very good progress through Years 3 to 6, and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average.
56. Teaching is good overall, and often very good in Years 3 to 6, and has contributed very positively to the improvements in standards. All teachers plan lessons carefully and this ensures that pupils gain a good understanding of the scientific concepts taught and their relevance to everyday life. Teachers are skilled in identifying what pupils already know, and good teaching strategies build on this knowledge very effectively so that all pupils make good progress. In some lessons there is exciting and innovative teaching, as in that observed in Year 4 where pupils were taught a 'rap' to help them remember scientific vocabulary related to temperature. Clear teaching of scientific terms with constant verbal and visual prompts ensures that pupils are very familiar with the language of science. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' work and behaviour and, as a result, all pupils make good progress. Appropriate work is planned for pupils with special educational needs; these pupils are very well supported by teachers and support assistants and take a full part in lessons, their contribution is valued and they make very good progress.
57. Teachers mark pupils' written work regularly. However, their comments in pupils' books do not sufficiently relate to the learning objectives that are so clearly identified in the lessons. Although teachers respond positively to pupils' efforts, they provide too little indication as to how pupils might improve their work. There was little evidence of pupils marking, correcting or improving their written work in science. Consequently, pupils' knowledge of their own learning is underdeveloped.
58. Overall, resources for science are satisfactory and new resources are purchased to support teaching on request. At present there is no dedicated budget for science, which would allow longer term planning and the purchase of more expensive items from time to time. At present the storage of science resources does not make them easily accessible, which inhibits the development of pupils' independence, although the co-ordinator has appropriate plans to reorganise them.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? There has been good improvement in provision since the previous inspection.
- ? Pupils achieve well in ICT, but standards in some aspects of their work are below those expected by the end of Year 6.
- ? Teaching and learning of ICT skills are often good.
- ? Pupils have too few opportunities to use the computers in other subjects.

### Commentary

59. Resources for ICT have been improved considerably since the previous inspection. A new set of portable computers has been purchased and these have brought much greater reliability. They are currently set up as a computer suite in a spare classroom, but once the second reception class enters at the beginning of the spring term, this arrangement will end. All classes use the suite and the current arrangement has contributed very effectively to the successful teaching and learning of ICT skills and to improving standards. Staff training has ensured that staff confidence and their competence in ICT skills have been significantly improved. This has also contributed very effectively to the significantly improved teaching.
60. Pupils achieve well in ICT. Children enter the school with very limited understanding or skills. They make steady progress in developing their word processing skills, and many of them are able to manipulate text appropriately by the end of Year 2. They have some opportunities to use these skills, as in their work on *Mrs Pirate's Treasure Chest*, but generally not enough. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6, so that by Year 6 they can use a word processing program to present their biographies of famous Victorians adding photographs downloaded from the Internet. Pupils also make good progress in developing understanding of data-handling, and by Year 5, they begin to use a spreadsheet, for example to calculate the costs of fireworks for a display. Improved provision and better teaching have ensured standards are rising in some aspects of ICT. However, pupils are not doing as well as they could in the control technology elements of the subject, because these are not covered in sufficient depth, which means, overall, that standards are below those expected of pupils their age.
61. Teaching and learning of ICT skills are frequently good. Teachers are confident in using the available resources. They use the interactive whiteboard effectively to support their explanations and demonstrations as they introduce their lessons. They are good at supporting individual pupils as they work on tasks set. Skilful classroom assistants support the teaching in ICT lessons at times, and help promote pupils' learning very effectively. This contributes positively to pupils' good learning and enables them to achieve well.

### Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. Teachers throughout the school make insufficient use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils have some opportunities to use the computers in their classrooms for individual or small group work, but very little work was seen in which pupils' learning had been enhanced using ICT. Pupils have little or no opportunity to use the computers for drafting their writing in English, for example. At times, when they are not being used for the direct teaching of skills, teachers also make use of the computers for work in other subjects, as, for example, in a Year 6 numeracy lesson. Although it is temporary, the computer suite is generally underused for this purpose.

## HUMANITIES

## Geography and History

It was possible to observe only one lesson in geography during the inspection and no lessons in history. It was not possible therefore to make a judgement about provision in these subjects.

In geography there was very little evidence of pupils' work because it was not taught during the previous half term. Consequently, there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards. In the lesson seen, with Year 5, a significant number of these pupils could locate features on an Ordnance Survey map from given grid references. The subject co-ordinator partly monitors standards in this subject through discussions with pupils and looking at samples of their work, but has no opportunity to observe teaching or to work alongside teachers in their classrooms and, therefore, is unable to monitor teaching and learning effectively.

In history, most pupils reach standards expected for their age. In Year 6, they have a secure knowledge and understanding of the life of children in Victorian times and of the main events in Tudor England. Good use is made of visits and visitors to extend learning in the subject. The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped, because she has no opportunities for monitoring and supporting teaching and learning.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision for religious education in **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development.
- Links with local churches are good.
- The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped.

### Commentary

63. Most pupils in Year 6 reach standards in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as was reported in the previous inspection. In so doing, they have made good progress and achieved well during their time in school.
64. The school has recently provided more opportunities for pupils to discuss values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the manner in which they affect people's lives. In a good lesson for pupils in Year 2 about the story of *The Prodigal Son*, the teacher enabled the pupils to make good use of their literacy skills to explore the main characteristics of the father. In such activities there is strong emphasis on using the pupils' own experiences as the basis for discussion. This has made a positive contribution to their spiritual development.
65. There are good links with local churches that help to deepen the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. The minister from the Baptist Church regularly comes into school to take assemblies and work with pupils, while they in turn visit the church to take part in a variety of Christian services and celebrations. The curriculum is good, with due emphasis placed on learning about the beliefs and traditions of other faiths and cultures. This is shown by the way that pupils in Year 6 talk in an informed way about the Islamic religion.
66. There are insufficient opportunities for the co-ordinator to check teaching and learning, which means she lacks an informed view of the quality of provision in the subject.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

## **Art and Design – Design and Technology**

It was not possible to observe any lessons in art and design during the inspection or to make a judgement about provision in this subject. A small number of lessons were seen in design and technology, music and physical education.

In art and design, pupils' work on display around the school is of a high quality, and indicates that a wide range of skills has been taught. Good use is made of national and local artists to support the development of pupils' skills.

Younger pupils' work indicates good painting techniques and brush control, in their painted colour circles in the style of Wassily Kandinsky, for example, and in other paintings, particularly their flower paintings of lavender. Pupils in Year 2 have explored textures in paper, which contributed to a large composite class mosaic. There are many good references to the work of famous artists. Year 1 pupils completed crayon portraits with care and attention to detail and displayed them alongside reproductions of portraits by van Gogh and Leonardo da Vinci. Teachers have made imaginative use of modern media and ICT. For example, pupils enjoyed taking digital photographs of classmates and enhancing them in the style of Salvador Dali. Older pupils have studied reproductions of oil paintings, which effectively influenced their choice of colour in oil pastel still life interpretations of fruit.

The art and design curriculum has been effectively enhanced by the contribution of artists in residence, one for example, who guided a large-scale sculpture project of wicker people and outdoor mosaics to contribute to the environmental garden. Funding from the Education Action Zone has been used to create several very good and attractive patchwork fabric floor cushions using fabric crayons and paints.

In design and technology it was not possible to make a judgement about standards because there was insufficient completed work and too few opportunities to observe pupils working in lessons. In the very small number of lessons seen teaching was satisfactory. Teachers introduce lessons with enthusiasm and prepare well by including good examples to illustrate designs and mechanisms to support pupils' understanding. For example, pupils in Year 2 explored a range of puppets before deciding on their own design. Teachers introduce technical vocabulary at an early stage and teach it well using a range of verbal and visual prompts as well as practical demonstrations to aid pupils' understanding.

In some lessons seen, however, the practical examples of structures and mechanisms illustrated were not sufficiently related to the task to help pupils in their planning. For example, the exploration of large-scale levers for lifting heavy weights vertically did not relate to the simple card lever mechanisms the pupils were going to use to make pictures with a character that could move horizontally. The preparation of recording proformas is helpful in enabling pupils to illustrate their planning appropriately with a minimum of writing.

## Music

Provision for music is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Pupils are very enthusiastic and enjoy their lessons in music.
- ? Teaching is good overall and pupils respond enthusiastically.
- ? There are insufficient opportunities for teachers to share their expertise.

### Commentary

67. Since only a small number of lessons were seen and they were not representative of lessons for pupils of different ages, it was not possible to judge the standards overall. Standards in lessons seen were in line with those expected and sometimes better.
68. Teaching in the lessons seen was good overall. Pupils are enthusiastic in most lessons and their enjoyment of singing is evident, as they take part in assemblies, for example, and as they leave the hall continuing to sing. Year 2 pupils enjoy moving to music in country dancing when they learn a range of dances and perform those they know well with confidence. Where teaching is good, lessons are very practical, teachers use a range of teaching strategies that are well matched to pupils' learning styles and teach the specialist language of music effectively, using oral and visual clues to aid pupils' learning. Where teaching is less confident, the range of teaching strategies is limited and the pace of learning is slower. The music curriculum is enhanced through pupils having the opportunity to learn recorder or guitar and to receive specialist teaching for these instruments. Pupils in these groups were enthusiastic and proud of the instruments they were learning to play.
69. Resources are used effectively to support lesson planning and ensure appropriate teaching across Years 1 to 6. Despite this, the quality of teaching varies between classes depending on the expertise and experience of the teacher because, as yet, there is no strategy for monitoring the teaching of music, supporting its further development or sharing teachers' expertise.

## Physical Education

The provision for physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- ? Pupils achieve well, enjoy lessons and work hard.
- ? Teaching is good overall.
- ? Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have good opportunities to participate in a range of sports out of school.
- ? Facilities, both indoors and out, are very good for physical education.

### Commentary

70. Overall, standards are average as a result of pupils mostly working hard in lessons and achieving well. Most pupils' attitude to work is good. Pupils are enthusiastic and work hard. They persevere well to refine and develop skills, working effectively together in small groups. They receive good support from teachers who encourage them to practise hard to improve. Examples of this occurred in two dance lessons, one in Year 1 and the other in Year 3. A combination of the good effort put in by pupils in practising and the help and encouragement offered by the teachers throughout the lesson, resulted in considerable improvement being made in performing the dance.

71. Pupils respond well to good teaching and coaching. Pupils are encouraged, supported well, shown how to improve and given good opportunities to practise. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well largely meeting expected levels of attainment by the end of Year 6. A Year 3 class were observed working effectively in a swimming lesson. This class were working in small groups, determined according to their respective swimming abilities. They were working on appropriate tasks, practising and developing skills in order to extend their existing swimming capabilities. Working in this way these pupils made good progress developing swimming techniques and they were achieving well. School records show that, by the end of last school year, about seventy per cent of Year 6 pupils could swim the required 25 metres unaided. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, when some unsatisfactory teaching was observed. There is now much more consistency to the quality.
72. A strength of the subject is the wide range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils. They play competitive games against pupils from other schools. Seven to 11 year olds can join a range of sports clubs after school in order to participate with others in a number of different activities such as football, netball, table tennis, athletics and tag rugby. The younger pupils are not as well provided for in terms of out of classroom activities, but they have the opportunity to join a dance club. Year 5 pupils also benefit from an opportunity to attend a five-day outdoor adventure residential course.
73. Facilities in the school for teaching the subject are very good. Two large halls are available for indoor work and a large grassed area and a large hard surfaced area are available for outdoor work. The school also makes use of a nearby swimming pool. Sports development coaches visit the school on one afternoon a week to work with pupils in Years 5 and 6, providing good coaching in a range of traditional team games, which contributes to raising the standard of pupils' games skills.

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

It was possible to observe only one lesson in personal, social, health and citizenship education and so there is insufficient evidence to support a judgement about provision.

In the lesson seen, the teacher used drama effectively to introduce pupils to the idea of responsibility with a practical problem-solving approach. Pupils responded positively and were able to communicate their understanding of responsibility and the connection with school rules. In this lesson pupils' learning was extended well with the good discussion that accompanied the activity, and the teacher managed to draw out the implications effectively.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	3

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