

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **BISHOP'S HULL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bishop's Hull, Taunton

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123700

Headteacher: Mr R Bullock

Lead inspector: Harold Galley

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2004

Inspection number: 255522

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:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	217
School address:	Bishop's Hull Hill Bishop's Hull Taunton Somerset
Postcode:	TA1 5EB
Telephone number:	01823 331624
Fax number:	01823 325114
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Hughes
Date of previous inspection:	September 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Bishop's Hull Primary is a school of about average size, serving a local village and neighbouring housing estates to the west of Taunton in Somerset. There are 217 pupils on roll, with a broadly even mix of boys and girls. Some classes contain pupils from more than one age group. During the inspection one class was taught by a teacher on a temporary contract. Over 90 per cent of pupils are white, with no more than one pupil in other ethnic groups. All pupils speak English as their first language. Eighteen per cent of pupils are on the school's special educational needs register, which is slightly below average. Pupils' special educational needs range from moderate learning or speech and communication difficulties, to social and emotional. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs. Pupil mobility varies from year to year, but is average overall. Eight per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. Attainment on entry to the school has been consistently below average for many years, especially in terms of language and social skills.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21313	Harold Galley	Lead inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, Mathematics, Information and communication technology, History, Personal, social and health education.
9487	Frances Hurd	Lay inspector	
22942	Jackie Cousins	Team inspector	Special educational needs, English, Art and design, Design and technology, Music.
30438	Roger Guest	Team inspector	Science, Geography, Physical education, Religious education.

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## OVERALL EVALUATION

### PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This is an effective school with many good features but some important weaknesses. Overall, the school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Taking into account the balance of strengths and weaknesses, and the below average unit costs, the school gives good value for money.

The school has improved significantly since the appointment of the present headteacher, who leads with considerable commitment and vigour. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 achieve well in English and mathematics and very well in science. Teaching is good overall, with very good teaching in Years 5 and 6.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils in Years 4 to 6 achieve well in English and mathematics, and very well in science.
- The leadership of the headteacher is good with some very good features.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall and very good in Years 4 to 6.
- Standards are above the expected levels in Year 6 in art and design, music and physical education.
- The curriculum is enhanced by a very good range of high quality activities outside the school day.
- Standards in science are well below the national average at the end of Year 2.
- Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory.
- There are inequalities in the quality of provision for children in the Foundation Stage (reception) due to a lack of space and suitable resources for those in the Year R/1 class. This is mainly in the area of physical development.

There have been significant improvements since the last inspection, especially in standards in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Standards have risen above the national trend since the last inspection.

### 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	C	C	A
Science	E	E	D	C

*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.*

Attainment on entry to the school is below average. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in communication, literacy and language and mathematical development. However, not all children will reach the Early Learning Goals<sup>1</sup> by the end of reception. At the end of Year 2 in 2003, standards were below average in reading and mathematics, average in writing and well below average in science. Apart from in writing, standards in Year 2 have not kept pace with the rising national trend. However, given the below average attainment on entry, achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good in writing, satisfactory in reading and mathematics, but unsatisfactory in science. The table above illustrates recent improvements in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Standards in English and mathematics observed during the inspection were not quite as high as in 2003 because of a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Nevertheless, achievement in English and

<sup>1</sup> The curriculum for children in reception comprises six 'areas of learning': Personal, social and emotional development; Communication, language and literacy; Mathematical development; Knowledge and understanding of the world; Physical development; and Creative development.

mathematics is good. Standards in science continue to rise year on year and achievement in science is very good. Standards in Year 6 are above the expected level in art and design, music and physical education, and pupils achieve well in these subjects. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve as well as their peers. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' development in personal, social and health education is good. Attendance is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in terms of literacy and numeracy skills. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3 (with an excellent dance lesson seen in a Years 2 and 3 class). Teaching is good to very good in Years 4 to 6 (good in Year 4 and particularly good in Years 5 and 6). Teaching is best in English and mathematics. These lessons are well organised and presented in an interesting manner; as a result, the quality of learning is good and often very good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. The extent to which assessment is used to stretch able pupils is variable. In Year 2, the challenge for more able pupils in science is poor, while such pupils are challenged and stretched well in Years 5 and 6 in subjects across the curriculum.

The curriculum is satisfactory with strengths for example: in English, mathematics and personal, social and health education. The school provides an interesting, broad and balanced curriculum enriched by a wide range of good quality activities outside the normal school day. However, a significant weakness is the unsatisfactory use of ICT to support learning in subjects across the curriculum. The curriculum for children in reception is satisfactory overall despite some inequalities in provision between the two classes. The school gives good support, advice and guidance to pupils. The school has worked hard and with considerable success to develop very positive links with parents.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. He leads with tremendous energy and commitment and has been at the forefront of raising standards in Year 6. Subject leadership in English and mathematics is effective. However, there has been insufficient focus on raising standards in Years 1 and 2, especially in science. Governors are well led and supportive, take a keen interest in the work of the school, and fulfil their responsibilities well. The governance of the school is good.

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

Parents' views of the school are very positive. Parents have a very high regard for the headteacher and his staff. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy the range of opportunities available to them. Pupils feel that their views are valued and acted upon.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in science in Years 1 and 2.
- Ensure that ICT is used effectively to support learning in subjects across the curriculum.
- Ensure that provision for children in the two reception classes is broadly similar.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

**Pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities in English, mathematics and science.** In Years 1, 2 and 3 levels of achievement are satisfactory in English and mathematics, but unsatisfactory in science. In Years 4 to 6, pupils achieve well in English and mathematics and very well in science. Despite attainment on entry to the school being below average, pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage (reception) achieve well in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development.
- Pupils in Years 4 to 6 achieve well in English and mathematics and very well in science.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- In Year 6, standards are above the expected level in art and design, music and physical education.
- In the Foundation Stage, achievement in physical development is unsatisfactory because of inadequacies in accommodation and resources.
- In Year 2, standards are well below average in science.
- In Year 6, standards are below the expected level in ICT.

#### Commentary

1. When children join the school their attainment is below average, especially in terms of language and social skills. In both reception classes children achieve well in terms of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. These areas are given a high priority and lively class sessions are used well to develop early literacy and numeracy skills. Achievement in others areas is satisfactory, apart from in physical development where the lack of a suitable outdoor play area and a lack of resources can restrict progress.

2. In National Curriculum tests and assessments at the end of Year 2, standards have remained below average since the last inspection in reading and mathematics. The school's focus on writing has led to improvements in this area and standards in the 2003 tests were average. In science standards are well below average. A weakness in science is the lack of any pupils reaching the higher Level 3. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are slightly higher than last year, although still below average. In science, standards remain well below average with no improvement in terms of pupils reaching Level 3. Given the below average attainment on entry, levels of achievement are satisfactory in reading and mathematics, good in writing, but unsatisfactory in science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.2 (14.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.0 (13.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.5 (15.7)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Although levels of achievement in Year 3 are satisfactory in English and mathematics and unsatisfactory in science, pupils' progress begins to accelerate in Year 4 and this improvement is



successfully built upon with increasing rates of progress in Years 5 and 6. Over the course of Years 4 to 6, achievement is good in English and mathematics and very good in science. Standards observed during the inspection in Year 6 were average in all three subjects. The slightly lower standards in English and mathematics are explained by a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the present Year 6.

4. In Year 6, standards are above the expected levels in art and design, music and physical education. In the latter, standards are especially impressive in dance.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3 (25.4 )	26.8 (27.0 )
Mathematics	28.2 (26.8)	26.8 (26.7 )
Science	29.0 (27.5)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. A positive feature throughout the school is the good support given to pupils with special educational needs and these pupils achieve well. Pupils’ individual education plans are carefully drawn up to ensure that targets are closely matched to prior attainments. These plans are monitored well and updated regularly and make a positive contribution to pupils’ progress. The small group of pupils from ethnic minorities are well supported and achieve as well as their peers.

6. A weakness in all classes, except the reception class, is the limited use of ICT to support learning in subjects across the curriculum. Although resources have been significantly improved recently, with the opening of a superbly appointed ICT suite, the number of computers is below average. The amount of recorded work covered is much less than that normally seen, especially in Years 3 to 6 and standards in Year 6 are below the expected level.

7. Provision for pupils’ personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. Many initiatives, such as the house system and the wide range of well supported activities outside the school day, enable pupils to achieve well in this key area of learning.

8. Since the last inspection, standards in Year 2 have risen in line with the national trend in writing, but have not kept pace with the rising national trend in reading, mathematics and science. In Year 6, standards have risen above the national trend in English, mathematics and science.

**Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

**Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour are good overall.** Efforts to improve what the school refers to as ‘the culture of learning’ have been successful, and are having a positive impact on attitudes. Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils’ personal development is good, and the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision for development of pupils’ understanding of their own and others’ cultural traditions is very good and much improved since the last inspection.
- The school deals very effectively with all forms of harassment.
- Staff ensure that pupils fully understand the school’s simple moral code and abide by it.
- Attitudes and behaviour in lessons were very good in Years 4 to 6, reflecting the consistently high quality of teaching and learning in these classes.

## Commentary

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.6
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

9. Attendance in the academic year 2002 - 3 was above national averages, an improvement from the last inspection and results from the improved monitoring procedures. Contact is made on the first day of an unexplained absence, and the importance of regular attendance is promoted to parents and carers. The unauthorised absence rate reflects family holidays taken in term time, but apart from this parents conscientiously ensure regular attendance.

### 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	200	7	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	11	0	0

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

10. The school rightly prides itself on its inclusive nature, and welcomes pupils excluded from other schools, some of whom continue to find conforming and co-operating difficult. The comparatively high exclusion rate is therefore a false indicator of the nature of the pupils as a whole, who enjoy coming to school and expect to work hard. Pupils take a pride in their work and are keen to show it off to visitors. In the older classes, the standard of thoughtful debate was noticeably high, and in the most successful lessons for younger children, opportunities to discuss and reflect on their work and on important issues were a common feature. Lunchtimes are happy well organised occasions and no aggressive behaviour was seen. Ball games are restricted to a separate fenced area.

11. The school gives Year 6 many opportunities to take responsibility (helping younger children at playtime, acting as hosts to visitors, and in particular through the Captain and Vice-Captain House system), which have a wholly beneficial effect on the pupils concerned. However, there is no school council or other system through which younger pupils can feel they play a useful part in the running of the school. The school's high standards in art and music, and in particular its current involvement in Taunton's multicultural learning initiative, provide a rich and stimulating cultural environment, to which pupils have responded with enthusiasm.

12. Teaching and non teaching staff manage behaviour very well, and even those pupils who transgress have a good understanding of right and wrong. Courtesy, kindness and good manners

are rewarded as well as academic and sporting achievements. There is a strong emphasis on fundraising for local and national charities, which makes a positive contribution to pupils' early ideas of citizenship.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.** Provision in Years 4 to 6 is good. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school is well regarded by parents and pupils and is a highly valued, integral part of the community.

### Teaching and learning

**The quality of teaching is good.** Teaching is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1, 2 and 3 (with an excellent dance lesson seen in a Years 2 and 3 class). Teaching is good to very good in Years 4 to 6 (good in Year 4 and particularly good in Years 5 and 6). The school has worked hard, and with considerable success, to improving the quality of learning throughout the school to the good level.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the Foundation Stage, teaching is good in communication, language and learning and mathematical development.
- Throughout the school almost all lessons are well organised and proceed at a lively pace.
- Effective use is made of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour in almost all lessons.
- In Years 1, 2 and 3, teaching in science is unsatisfactory.
- Teachers' use of ICT to support learning is consistently weak in all classes except reception.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2.3%)	9 (20.9%)	18 (41.9%)	13 (30.2%)	2 (4.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

13. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. In both classes, teachers give a high priority to communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, and teaching and learning in these key areas are good. Teachers make effective use of letter sounds (phonics) to develop children's early reading skills and a good range of number songs and rhymes to support children's progress in numeracy. Inadequacies in accommodation and resources for physical development mean that, despite the teachers' best efforts, the quality of learning in this aspect is unsatisfactory.

14. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3. Lessons are well organised and most have a calm and purposeful atmosphere. The best teaching is in English and mathematics, where teachers make effective use of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. In mathematics lessons, there is a good focus on the development of number skills, although teachers do not give enough emphasis to shape, space and measures. Although no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection in science lessons, a scrutiny of pupils' work over the course of the year shows some key weaknesses in the teaching of science in Years 1, 2 and 3. The pace of work is too slow and more able pupils are not stretched or challenged with enough rigour.

15. Teaching is good in Year 4 and very good in Years 5 and 6. A key difference in the teaching of older pupils is the pace of work which accelerates as pupils move through the school. Throughout the school, teachers have high expectations of behaviour; in Years 4 to 6, teachers ally this to high expectations of effort and work. In Year 6, teachers' superb subject knowledge in terms of literacy and numeracy underpin the very good quality of learning. For example, teachers' literacy expertise in Year 6 means that pupils learn to read and understand formal and informal vocabulary in letters very well. Lessons in Years 5 and 6 are planned in a manner that ensures that more able pupils are suitably challenged.

16. Teaching in art and design and music is good. Although only a limited number of lessons were observed during the inspection, a scrutiny of pupils' work indicates good teaching over time. In physical education, teaching is good, with one excellent dance lesson observed in a Years 2 and 3 class. Apart from the dynamic pace, a key feature of this lesson was the superb level of the teacher's evaluations of pupils' work which gave a clear indication of the strengths and weaknesses of each performance.

17. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Teachers take great care in preparing pupils' individual education plans, ensuring that the work presented to pupils is well matched to their prior attainments. Targets in pupils' individual education plans are specific but manageable and they are regularly monitored.

18. A consistent weakness in teaching across the school is teachers' use of ICT to support learning in subjects across the curriculum. Such shortcomings partly reflect a lack of resources in terms of classroom computers. Teaching in the ICT suite is good, with lessons being well organised and very enjoyable. However, computers were rarely used in classroom lessons and many opportunities to enhance pupils' learning were wasted.

19. Two lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. In these lessons, in Years 1 to 3, the teachers' presentations were not sufficiently challenging or interesting, pupils became bored and restless, and the quality of learning declined to an unsatisfactory level.

20. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall, with significant improvements in the teaching of older pupils.

## **The curriculum**

**The curriculum is satisfactory overall.** Enrichment of the curriculum is good. Staffing is good overall. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In Years 4 to 6 literacy skills are used well in many subjects.
- Extracurricular activities are used very effectively to develop sport and musical skills.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils' skills in science are not being developed effectively in Years 1 to 3.
- The resources and accommodation for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory because they do not offer children equal opportunities in the mixed Year R/1 class.
- Resources are below average for ICT.

## **Commentary**

21. The curriculum planned for the school covers most subjects well including religious education. A satisfactory balance has been achieved in the time spent on subjects taught in Years 1 to 6, except science where the time spent teaching pupils in Years 1 to 3 is well below average and this could partly be why standards in Year 2 are well below average. The curriculum prepares pupils well for their transfer to secondary school by enabling pupils in Year 6 to learn about highly technical vocabulary in English lessons. The provision of homework to support and extend learning is

satisfactory overall and effective in Year 6. The curriculum planned for children in the reception year does not give both groups access to a similar quality of provision and this means that some children do not have sufficient opportunities to use structured play to develop their skills. Curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. This judgement reflects some strengths in provision, for example in literacy and numeracy, alongside some weaknesses in terms of equal opportunities.

22. Curriculum development is good overall. The school has worked hard to develop pupils' awareness of life in a multicultural society in a variety of projects. High emphasis has been placed on older pupils using literacy skills for many purposes. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been adapted effectively. For example, pupils in Years 4 to 6 write effectively about how to make a model Tudor house. The extent to which the curriculum meets the needs of more able pupils is satisfactory overall, but too variable. Whilst pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills in Years 4 to 6 are of a high enough quality, this is not the case in Years 1 to 3 where too few pupils are working at higher levels.

23. Curriculum enrichment is good. Pupils enjoy a wide range of visits both locally and further afield, as well as a variety of visitors to the school. Enrichment through after school activities is very good. There are many opportunities for pupils to learn a wide range of sports and musical instruments. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Acts of collective worship contribute well to developing pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

24. Teachers and support staff are effectively aware of the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Support staff enable these pupils to be involved in lessons successfully so that they achieve well for their abilities. The school works effectively with appropriate external agencies, including specialists, who support pupils with special educational needs. The school makes good provision for pupils identified as being gifted and talented such as those who are gifted in art, music or sport.

25. Teachers and teaching assistants are well matched to the age groups they work with overall. With the exception of the shared Year R/1 class classrooms are generally spacious and there is a good library and large hall. The outdoor area is rather small for the youngest children and has very limited resources and this restricts pupils' opportunities to develop creative and physical skills in the open air.

26. There are below average numbers of computers. The school only has computers in one centralised area and only one other classroom has a computer for pupils to use.

27. Improvement in curriculum provision since the last inspection is satisfactory.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is good.** The provision of support, guidance and advice is good. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for ensuring the health and safety of all who work in the school community is good, a major improvement from the last inspection when it was poor.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good; gifted and talented pupils are identified and provision is made to develop their abilities.
- All pupils have a good relationship with at least one adult at school.

## **Commentary**

28. Staff and governors are involved in regular risk assessment, both of the school premises and before offsite visits: governors are currently reviewing training and procedures. The school has good first aid management arrangements, and pupils with specific medical conditions are made known to

all staff. Unanticipated hazards, such as broken windows, are swiftly dealt with. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place: all adults who work regularly in school are submitted for criminal record clearance. The nature of the site means that the building and grounds suffer from occasional vandalism and graffiti daubing: a very small amount of drug and alcohol abuse debris has been found in the grounds over the past four years. This was cleared away before children could come in contact with it. The inspection team's comments on some health and safety issues have been passed to the governing body.

29. Staff make every effort to get to know their pupils, their families and any problems boys and girls may have. Those with personal and educational difficulties are very well supported and encouraged. More able pupils, particularly at the top end of the school, are appropriately challenged and extended. Pupils are encouraged to pass any suggestions they may have for improving school life to the Captains and Vice-Captains. Although there are plans to develop opportunities for pupils below Year 6 to take on responsibilities outside their classrooms and play a role in developing their community, these are at an early stage of development. The school has good links with the local pre-school providers, and ensures that new pupils and their families feel welcomed and supported.

30. Improvement in terms of care and guidance since the last inspection has been good.

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

**Links with parents are very good.** The educational programmes the school provides are of a good standard, and links with other educational establishments are good. Links with the wider community are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very happy with the school and the vast majority support their children's learning well, as at the last inspection.
- The school makes very good efforts to seek parents' views.
- Procedures to ensure satisfaction and deal with complaints are very good.
- The school makes good use of its links with other educational establishments to enhance the curriculum.
- The shared ownership of the building with a village trust makes it difficult for the school to organise large scale public performances such as concerts or plays, but these do take place.

### **Commentary**

31. Parents who returned the Ofsted questionnaires felt that their children enjoyed school, that teaching was good and that the school was very approachable. There were virtually no negative responses. Since the introduction of homework diaries, most work set gets done, and many parents provide extra resources (artefacts or expertise) to support learning. Over 40 parents regularly help in school in one way or another, and a very active parents' association has raised many thousands of pounds. Parents helped pupils participate in lively events such as the '*Time Team* Big Dig'. The prospectus and governors' reports fulfil statutory requirements and provide much useful and relevant information. Newsletters, curriculum information and a website keep parents up to date with school events. Pupils' annual reports clearly show whether a pupil is working at, above or below the expected level for their age group, and comments on personal development show teachers' good knowledge of their pupils. Reports do not include targets, or comments from pupils but individual target setting takes place at the beginning of each term. Targets are discussed with children and sent home to parents.

32. The school sends out regular questionnaires to gauge parental opinion on various topics, and welcomes suggestions and comments. Staff are easily contacted, and the response to complaints is speedy, courteous and thorough. A rolling programme of courses for parents is provided, some through the local education authority and some organised by school staff. Courses meet identified needs and outcomes clearly benefit pupils. The school works closely with its educational partners, in

particular the Castle School, which offers Year 6 pupils participation in special events – last year a week of workshops with writers and artists. Transition arrangements are well established and curriculum links in literacy are being developed. Castle School pupils visit for work experience. All Taunton schools are currently focusing on multicultural education, to culminate in a fortnight of special events.

33. The school has good links with the parish church and a nursing home: it has benefited from specialist sports coaching from several local centres, including Somerset County Cricket Club. The school's hall is jointly owned by a community trust, and regularly used for lettings: any evening use by the school must be booked a year in advance and the number of evenings available to it is limited.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership of the head is good** and he is appropriately supported by the majority of other staff with leadership responsibilities. The management and governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The head has a strong sense of purpose and clear vision for the school.
- Leadership has not yet been effective in ensuring the highest possible standards and achievement in all areas of the school's work.
- The school supports initial teacher training very well.
- The governing body offers good support to the school and is committed to promoting inclusive policies.
- The leadership of science in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

34. There are very good aspects to the leadership of the headteacher. He is building a committed and effective school team and has prioritised many areas for school improvement with a strong sense of purpose. He is both reflective and innovative. He has not yet managed to achieve the highest possible standards in all areas of the school's work, as there remain important weaknesses in science, aspects of pupils' achievement in Years 1, 2 and 3, and equality of provision for children in reception. His construction of the senior management team has been successful in promoting professional discourse and a sense of purpose, but some members of the team have not been as successful in supporting the head's leadership in the areas mentioned above. Many subject co-ordinators, however, are influencing standards in subjects such as English, mathematics, art and design, music and physical education.

35. The governing body has successfully tackled the requirements of the relevant key issue of the last report. Governors visit the school regularly to undertake a health and safety risk assessment. They fulfil their statutory roles and have constructed an effective system of committees to enable them to do so. Whilst they have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school they rely heavily on information from the head and local authority advisor. Governors do visit the school with specific purposes: for example to monitor subjects such as numeracy and literacy. The chair is properly committed to developing this system in order to support knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses more directly. This, when fully implemented, will increase the ability of the governing body to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all areas of school life in a more direct manner. The performance management of the headteacher is well implemented by members of the governing body.

36. The governing body plays a full part in shaping the direction of the school and supports the school leadership effectively. Governors challenge appropriately and are committed to improving their role by undertaking training. Recent training has enabled them to have good understanding of national statistics provided for their information.

37. The management of the school is good. The headteacher is evaluative, efficient and informed by good practice in similar schools. All adults provide good role models for pupils; they listen to their concerns, apply roles consistently, fairly, and always have time for pupils. There are good processes for the induction of staff, professional development is well managed and the school supports initial teacher training very well. There are two student mentors on the staff and at the time of inspection two students were undertaking their final practice at the school and receiving good support. Performance management is well managed by the headteacher and other leaders, and is effective in addressing the school's needs.

38. The school had not had an independent audit since 1998. The inspection team is consequently unable to report on the successful implementation of recent audit recommendations. The school does, however, have good approaches to financial management and applies principles of best value well in all aspects of school life. The finance committee maintains good control of the budget which is set with educational priorities in mind. The school secretary provides good support to the head and finance committee, and spending of the school budget is appropriately monitored.

39. The large carry forward, which the headteacher inherited, has diminished to a reasonable proportion of the budget this year. The finance committee of recent years had a cautious view of budgeting and felt that a large carry forward represented prudent management of resources. The current finance committee are aware of their responsibilities to pupils presently in the school and are managing a falling roll situation effectively to maintain staffing and resource educational priorities. This year's carry forward is much reduced. Considering this reduction in carry forward, the relatively low unit costs and overall standards achieved, the school gives good value for money

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	537,300
Total expenditure	533,020
Expenditure per pupil	2184.5

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	85,100
Balance carried forward to the next	36,000



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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **satisfactory** overall. This judgement reflects a range of good elements alongside some important weaknesses.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in personal, social and emotional development is good in the reception class.
- Teaching and learning in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development are good in both classes.
- There are significant differences in the quality of provision for children in the reception class, compared to those who share the nearby classroom with Year 1 pupils.
- Provision for physical development is unsatisfactory because of inadequacies in terms of accommodation and resourcing.

#### Commentary

40. One organisational problem for the school is that the standard number (the maximum allowed in each year group) is 38. As a maximum of 30 children is allowed in any reception class, and with 32 children provisionally registered for September 2003, there was a need to organise children into more than one class. As a result, provision in the Foundation Stage had to be shared between two classes, with the main bulk in the reception class, and eight children sharing a nearby classroom with the Year 1 group. In the event two children left the school at the end of September so currently there are 22 children in the reception class and 8 pupils in a class with 18 Year 1 pupils. There are significant differences in the provision in the two classes. The 22 children in the reception class benefit from a spacious, well resourced classroom. All the resources normally expected in a reception class are available to the children in this class. These include a large carpeted area for group and class activities, an inviting reading area, a spacious and well resourced role play area, a computer, access to water and sand play, a wide range of construction toys and access to a small outdoor area. None of these are routinely available to the eight children in the Year 1 class. The staff work hard to redress this weakness, but, nonetheless, there is a clear equal opportunities issue here with the 8 children in the Year 1 class being disadvantaged when compared to their peers in the reception class.

41. Attainment on entry to the school is below average, with particular weaknesses in terms of literacy and social skills. Children achieve well in terms of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, satisfactorily in terms of personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development, but unsatisfactorily in terms of physical development. By the end of the school year, children are not on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in any of the areas of learning.

42. Provision in **personal, social and emotional development** is satisfactory overall. Both teachers have a warm and supportive relationship with the children in their care. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and children soon settle to the demands of the school day. Provision for children in the reception class is good and for children in the Year 1 class it is satisfactory. Children in the reception class have more obvious access to resources such as the water and sand play areas that give useful opportunities for children to co-operate and collaborate, share equipment and learn to take turns. Such positive opportunities are less frequent for the children in the small Year 1 classroom.

43. In both classes, provision in **communication, language and literacy** and in **mathematical development** is good. Teaching is good leading to good progress in these key areas of learning. Speaking and listening skills are developed well through well led class discussions. For example, the

calling of the register at the start of the day is used effectively to discuss what children have done, what day it is and the weather that day. Questions such as 'What does cloudy begin with?' help develop children's early ideas of sounds. The use of 'Letterland' characters further develops children's use of letter sounds. Both teachers use a good range of number rhymes and games to support children's early knowledge and understanding of numbers to 10. The careful use of correct vocabulary helps children develop the proper use of mathematical terms such as 'most', 'least' and 'double'. Children respond positively to lively counting games and some can count to 10 confidently.

44. Provision in **knowledge and understanding of the world** and **creative development** is satisfactory. In both classes, children have enjoyed learning about stories from Africa. Early scientific ideas have been developed effectively through the 'Ourselves' project, introducing an understanding of sounds and listening. Opportunities to use the sand and water play areas help develop ideas of capacity, and sinking and floating. Teaching is satisfactory, with a well planned range of learning opportunities in both areas of learning, although the range of resources in the reception class means that children here make better progress than their peers in the Year 1 class. In particular, the much more spacious role play area in the reception class gives children a wider range of opportunities to develop imaginative and creative play. Similarly, the reception class has a wider range of opportunities for drawing, painting, printing and model making.

45. Provision in **physical development** is unsatisfactory. The accommodation and resources for this area of learning are inadequate. There is an outdoor area with access from the reception classroom but it is too small for the number of children and is poorly resourced, being without wheeled toys such as bikes, trikes and scooters, and lacking any climbing frame. Teachers work hard to redress these shortcomings, making good use of the school hall and occasionally sharing resources with the workplace nursery on the same site. Children achieve satisfactorily in terms of their manipulative skills as they handle a range of materials with reasonable dexterity. Nevertheless, levels of achievement in physical development are unsatisfactory.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good** overall. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

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

- Standards in the 2003 tests show that pupils made very good progress between Year 2 and Year 6.
- Literacy skills are used effectively in all subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their abilities.
- Teaching and learning are effective in Years 4 to 6.
- Standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening are below average for the current Year 2.
- Teachers' oral comments do not always specifically inform pupils of how they could improve.

#### **Commentary**

46. The school has worked hard to improve pupils' attainment in writing and in 2003 tests standards in English were above average in Year 6 and average in writing in Year 2. Standards in reading were below average in Year 2 tests because there were above average proportions of pupils with special educational needs and there was less emphasis on reading last year. To address this, teachers are now using pupils' literacy skills in many subjects to enhance their reading and writing. The school has targeted reading as an area for development and this is highlighted in the school development plan with a view to improving standards.

47. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported so that they achieve well in relation to their abilities. Sometimes pupils are supported in class, but at other times pupils are withdrawn

effectively for extra literacy teaching. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs and teaching assistants are good at developing reading and writing skills.

48. Standards in speaking and listening skills meet expectations in Year 6 but are below expectations in Year 2. Standards in Year 2 are below average because although pupils achieve satisfactorily a significant proportion of pupils enter school with a rather limited range of vocabulary. The teaching of speaking and listening is good in Years 4 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 to 3. The best teaching uses group discussions and 'chat partners' effectively. Teachers value pupils' contributions highly and allow plenty of time for less confident speakers to gather their thoughts and express their ideas. Pupils enjoy learning, behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to their work.

49. Standards in reading are average in the current Year 6. Standards are lower than last year because of an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Standards in Year 2 are below average because these pupils entered the school with rather limited literacy skills. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 to 3 and effectively in Years 4 to 6. Teaching and learning in reading are satisfactory in Years 1 to 3. There is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of letter sounds in Years 1 to 3 so that pupils develop a secure knowledge of their use in reading and spelling. The teaching of reading is good in Years 4 to 6. A significant strength of teaching is in Year 6 teachers' literacy expertise. This means that pupils learn to read and understand formal and informal vocabulary in letters very well. More able pupils make good use of expression and tone to bring meaning to their reading because of teachers' high expectations. Less able pupils read appropriate texts satisfactorily. Homework supports pupils' development in reading and spelling satisfactorily.

50. In the current Year 6 standards in writing are average and pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching. A significant proportion of pupils in Year 6 write at above average levels when they produce creative stories about how the leopard got his spots. This is because teachers' marking is effective at developing pupils' writing skills. In the present Year 2 standards are below average, but they could be better. Teaching and achievement are satisfactory in Years 1 to 2. Teachers' expectations of more able pupils could be higher. For instance, teachers do not set extension activities which ensure that pupils are working at higher levels. Teachers' oral feedback does not always inform pupils effectively what they have achieved well in, or say how they could improve their writing. Handwriting is taught satisfactorily so that most pupils' work is beginning to show a flowing and joined style.

51. Leadership and management of English are satisfactory overall. Good leadership means that literacy is used well in other subjects. Management has brought about satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. Last year's standards in tests were above average in Year 6. Pupils' progress is tracked and monitored effectively in reading and writing in Years 4 to 6. However, the co-ordinator has not effectively monitored standards in Years 1 to 3.

### **English across the curriculum**

52. There is good use of English in other subjects such as design and technology, history, science and geography which is helping to develop pupils' basic literacy skills. For example, design and technology projects allow pupils in Years 5 to 6 to write detailed evaluations of their own work. Furthermore, pupils in Year 6 write effective descriptions of Elizabeth I. ICT is used for word processing, with some good examples, but there is room to develop this further.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well overall, with very good achievement in Years 5 and 6.
- Effective use is made of the National Numeracy Strategy.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall, and very good in Years 5 and 6.
- Although leadership is satisfactory overall, not enough has been done to monitor provision in Years 1 and 2.
- ICT is not used enough to support learning.

## Commentary

53. Attainment on entry to the school is below average. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, although standards remain below average at the end of Year 2. Standards between 1999 and 2003 have remained at broadly the same below average level, although inspection evidence shows that standards in the present Year 2 are slightly higher than in previous years, indicating that, after a plateau lasting several years, standards are at last beginning to rise. A scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 shows a considerable emphasis on number work and standards in this aspect of the subject are only just below average. By contrast, work in shape, space and measures is not given enough priority and standards in these areas are well below average.

54. Although there has not been any significant improvement in standards in Year 2 in recent years, the picture in Year 6 is entirely different, with standards having risen well above the national trend since the last inspection. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests, standards were above the national average. Given the below average attainment in Year 2, this represents very good achievement between Year 3 and Year 6. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows some differences in levels of achievement in these year groups. Achievement is satisfactory in Year 3, good in Year 4, and then accelerates significantly in Years 5 and 6.

55. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3. The effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy gives all lessons a clear structure and a purposeful atmosphere in which learning objectives are shared with pupils. Lessons are interesting and enjoyable. Although lessons observed during the inspection had a reasonable pace, the amount of recorded work over the course of the school year is much less than normally seen. The quality of marking is weak because, although work is marked regularly and accurately, pupils are rarely given any clear written idea of the strengths and weaknesses of their work, or what they need to do to improve further.

56. Teaching and learning in Year 4 are good. Lessons are calm and purposeful, with clear exposition leading to good levels of understanding. Lessons are interesting, relevant and enjoyable, leading to a positive attitude from pupils and a satisfactory pace of work. In Years 5 and 6, the positive aspects of teaching seen in Year 4 are allied to a dynamic pace and a more challenging approach to pupils' work. In Years 5 and 6 there is an unrelenting pace of well organised, challenging work and pupils respond with terrific commitment. In Years 5 and 6, the teachers' questioning is thoughtful and often perceptive, leading to very good levels of knowledge and understanding from pupils of all abilities. The quality of marking in Years 4 to 6 is good with a range of useful comments to guide pupils in developing an understanding of what they need to do to improve.

57. A consistent weakness in teaching mathematics throughout the school is the weak use of ICT to support pupils' learning. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils use an appropriate software package to support their learning of measuring angles, but this was an isolated example of good practice.

58. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are good throughout the school, with considerable care taken to ensure that work presented to pupils is well matched to their recent attainments.

59. Leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator sets a good example with her own very good teaching and has a thorough and detailed view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Her positive impact on standards in Year 6 is considerable. However,

although she has undertaken a detailed analysis of the weakness in pupils' performance in Year 2, this has yet to have an impact on pupils' attainments.

60. Provision in mathematics has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teaching and learning have improved in Years 4 to 6 and, as a result, standards have improved well above the national trend.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

61. The overall use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. There are some good links with science, with detailed graphs and pie charts, and number lines in history, but the value of mathematics across the curriculum is weakened by the limited use of ICT.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**. This judgement reflects that whilst achievement in Years 4 to 6 is very good, it is unsatisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3. There are both important strengths and weaknesses within the subject.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is very good through Years 4 to 6.
- Achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3.
- Science investigations are well covered throughout the school but especially by older pupils.
- Insufficient time is allocated to permit younger pupils to study science with sufficient depth or challenge.
- Although leadership has been effective in raising standards in Years 4 to 6, it has been ineffective in raising standards in Years 1, 2 and 3.

### **Commentary**

62. At the time of last inspection standards of pupils' work in science were well below expectations by the age of eleven. They are now average which represents very good improvement since the previous inspection report. Younger pupils at the last inspection were not meeting expectations and standards achieved by these pupils remain stubbornly well below average. Improvements in standards for pupils by the age of seven remain unsatisfactory. The school has not made science a focus for improvement in recent years. The co-ordinator's influence is not wide ranging and the successful drive to improve standards with older pupils is a result of some good and very good teaching in the subject in Years 5 and 6 rather than a whole school approach to raising standards in the subject. Within this, support for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Conversely support for higher achieving pupils, especially in Years 2 and 3, does not enable them to achieve the higher levels of which they are capable.

63. Contrasting elements of management in the subject are reflected in the quality of teaching and learning seen which varies from very good to unsatisfactory. In lessons seen with pupils in Years 4 to 6 teaching was never less than satisfactory with 50 per cent being very good. This teaching revealed very good teacher understanding of the subject, skilful questioning, challenging tasks for pupils, good planning with appropriate tasks for all groups of pupils, and a very good focus on scientific investigation. One group of higher attaining pupils in Year 6, investigating the effect of temperature on the speed at which salt dissolves, could speak intelligently about prediction, measurement, observation, replication and conclusions. They were developing real scientific skills at a good level with the ability to construct a fair test and use appropriate scientific language well. It is the very good teaching of older pupils which enables them to achieve very well and reach standards appropriate to their age before they leave the school. They cover all aspects of the National Curriculum in science well.

64. Where teaching and learning were unsatisfactory the tasks set were appropriate but all pupils in a large class of Years 2 and 3 pupils had very similar work. More time was spent managing the demands of challenging behaviour than effectively teaching those who were engaged and wanting to learn. The lack of any adult support for the teacher coupled with lack of challenge for some pupils, resulted in unsatisfactory achievement for all pupils.

65. The school is covering all aspects of the National Curriculum appropriately. This was evident from a scrutiny of work in pupils' books and discussing work with pupils in class. Whilst older pupils had a clear knowledge and understanding of work covered, pupils aged 7 and 8 had little retention of scientific facts. Where this was the case it was, in part, due to a low proportion of time being devoted to the subject in order to promote and consolidate achievement. School timetables and workbooks seen showed that younger pupils are working with insufficient time allowed on the timetable to permit science to be studied with sufficient depth. Lower standards achieved by younger pupils in Years 2 and 3 reflect this.

66. Despite some effective work in Years 4 to 6, leadership overall is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching in the subject. He has made good analysis of results of national tests but it is not clear how this has then been acted upon to improve both achievement and teaching throughout the school. Pupils do not have a sufficiently clear idea of their own strengths and weaknesses or what they need to do to improve, and assessment is not informing planning to challenge higher achieving pupils in Years 2 and 3 properly. Older pupils have very positive attitudes towards the subject and behave well in lessons.

67. Information and communication technology has not been well used to support the subject throughout the school. Science has links with other subjects especially in using mathematical skills in investigative work. There is a good supply of reference books relating to science in the new school library. Overall the subject is resourced in a satisfactory manner

68. Despite some significant improvements in provision for older pupils, the lack of progress in provision for younger pupils means that improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory in science.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Despite some recent improvements, provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below the expected level in Year 6.
- Good use is made of the superbly appointed and very new ICT suite.
- The lack of classroom computers is a significant weakness.
- Teachers rarely use ICT to support learning in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

69. Provision in Years 1 and 2 is just satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress to reach the expected level by the end of Year 2. Pupils use the mouse confidently and can use the 'click and drag' technique to make colourful pictures in the style of famous artists such as Mondrian. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to explore the Internet and can give appropriate instructions to find out information.

70. The recently opened ICT suite is well used and pupils in Years 3 to 6 are already benefiting from regular lessons in the suite. In these lessons, pupils work hard and make good progress. However, the lack of classroom computers means that the amount of 'hands on' experience is well below that normally seen in Years 3 to 6. One consequence of this is that, by Year 6, pupils' keyboard skills are poor. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 indicate that few know how to use e-mail,

a skill usually expected of pupils in Year 3. A scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 3 to 6 shows clearly that the amount of recorded work is much less than normally seen in these year groups and that there are some gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, older pupils are not adept at reviewing the effectiveness of their work, or comparing strategies with alternative methods. Despite some positive work in the ICT suite, overall levels of achievement in Years 3 to 6 are unsatisfactory.

71. Teaching observed in the ICT suite was good, although a scrutiny of pupils' work over the course of the school year reveals some significant shortcomings in teaching. Teachers' subject knowledge of how to use ICT to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding is weak. Although there are plans to further improve resources teachers' efforts are not helped by the number of computers per pupil being well below the national average. There are examples of good work in each year group, much of it superbly displayed in the ICT suite, but the range of work covered lacks depth, resulting in pupils' knowledge being too superficial.

72. Leadership of ICT is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has a clear view of the school's weaknesses and a determination to improve provision. The recently opened suite is a great boost to the profile of the subject and the expected introduction of electronic whiteboards will further enhance provision. Despite these significant developments, improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

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

73. Despite some pockets of good practice, the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is unsatisfactory. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, good use was made of software to develop pupils' understanding of how to measure angles accurately and, in lessons in the suite, pupils used the Internet to find out information about African animals. However, these are isolated examples with little evidence over the course of the year of ICT being used constructively to support pupils' learning.

## **HUMANITIES**

Provision in history, geography and religious education is **satisfactory**. Standards are at the expected levels and pupils achieve satisfactorily in all three subjects.

### **HISTORY**

74. Although no lessons in history were observed, pupils' work was sampled and discussions held with pupils in Year 6. The school has a detailed curriculum map that ensures all aspects of the history curriculum are covered in a thorough manner. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are in line with national expectations. A strength of work in Years 4 to 6 is the range and quality of written work to support pupils' knowledge and understanding. Much of this work is neat, accurate and detailed. For example, written work on the topic of 'The Tudors' shows an empathy for people's daily lives during that period. A weakness is the very limited use of ICT to support pupils' learning.

### **GEOGRAPHY**

75. At time of the last report pupils were not achieving appropriately by the end of Year 6. This is no longer the case as pupils reach an appropriate standard in geography by the time they leave the school. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. By Year 6 pupils have covered research into many other countries of the world and have a sound knowledge of other geographical features. Work in knowledge and understanding of places is more fully developed than the development of geographical skills in map reading and field studies. However, information and communication technology has not been well used to support the subject. There has been the development of a citizenship policy under the umbrella of geography and it has played a full part in the development of school's multicultural education. Pupils enjoy geography and have a good understanding of world maps. Insufficient lessons were seen to make an overall judgement about the

quality of teaching and learning, but those lessons seen in Year 6 and Years 2 and 3 support the judgement that provision is at least satisfactory.

76. The co-ordinator has kept her own professional development current by attending appropriate geographical courses and has conducted an audit of the subject revealing development priorities. She is continuing to develop a portfolio of work to enable staff to discuss and evaluate pupils' work.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**. The school is fulfilling the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recent improvements in resources to study religions other than Christianity will aid achievement.
- Written tasks for younger pupils are not appropriately planned to match their ability.
- The co-ordinator is making appropriate plans to further improve achievement in the subject.

### Commentary

77. Standards of work seen match the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. School timetables demonstrate that the recommended timings of the syllabus are being followed. Progress of pupils is satisfactory overall, although some pupils do not find that some aspects of religious education engage their interest.

78. There were insufficient lessons seen to make a secure judgement on teaching and learning. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that younger pupils have studied aspects of Christianity and one other major religion. Older pupils have a much broader range of opportunities in the subject. In Years 1, 2 and 3, assessment procedures have not yet been developed sufficiently to allow planning to reflect the differing prior attainments of pupils. The co-ordinator has effectively bought new resources to support teaching, the most notable being artefact boxes to allow a greater depth of study of other religions. She is constructing units of work for aspects of the agreed syllabus, which will support teachers' planning, and pupils' achievement, well. She is ready to introduce assessment procedures and although assessment sheets are prepared, their use is not yet implemented. She is well placed to secure further improvement in the subject's development. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### ART AND DESIGN

Provision in art and design is **good**.

### Commentary

79. Good quality **art and design** displays around the school and work in pupils' sketchbooks indicate that teachers plan an effective variety of activities. Pupils' achievement is good. Teaching and learning are good overall and so standards in art are above expectations in Year 6 and meet expectations in Year 2. Good links between topics studied mean that pupils use knowledge from other subjects effectively when they draw and paint. For instance, pupils in Year 6 paint beautiful pictures of famous Tudor people. Basic skills are taught well when pupils learn to draw effectively. Pupils in Year 6 learn to sketch Tudor houses using pencil shading well to add depth. Pupils' cultural and spiritual development is very good. For example, resources are used effectively when pupils learn to draw a tableau in the style of Paul Gauguin. Pastels are used well which means that pupils in Year 5 learn to draw autumn leaves effectively.



80. Teachers' expectations are high when pupils in Year 6 paint fabric using the technique well. Pupils' ICT skills are utilised imaginatively when pupils in Year 6 create very effective pictures of fireworks. Teachers in Year 2 use printing well which means that pupils learn about how to produce African patterns satisfactorily. Literacy skills are used satisfactorily when pupils in Years 4 to 6 evaluate their own work. However, teachers do not consistently tell pupils what they have achieved well in or say how they could improve their work specifically. Leadership and management in the subject are good and have brought about effective improvements in standards since the last inspection.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

### Commentary

81. In design and technology, pupils experience a satisfactory range of materials and techniques. Pupils in Year 6 talk about the enjoyment they have had from making musical instruments and clay houses. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and so standards are in line with expectations in Years 2 and 6. Most pupils in Year 6 drew detailed labelled diagrams of their model Tudor houses. They used their literacy skills well to write good evaluations of their work recording strengths, problems they had, and ways they could improve their final product. Basic skills are taught effectively when pupils in Year 6 learn to design their cushions considering the shape, fastenings, colour and fabrics to be used. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 learn to write satisfactory step by step plans to order their making of a fruit salad as well as writing lists of suitable materials. Good use of resources ensures that pupils in Years 2 and 3 learn to make model African toys. Teachers do not always set extension activities for more able pupils which enable them to work at higher levels of attainment. Leadership and management in the subject are satisfactory and have brought about satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

## MUSIC

Provision in music is **good**.

### Commentary

82. Pupils across the school clearly thoroughly enjoy music and the subject has a high status throughout the school. Pupils achieve well. Extracurricular opportunities are very good and support the curriculum very well. Pupils are able to learn a wide range of instruments including strings, brass and wind. The curriculum is well established and as a result teachers have confidence in teaching music. Most pupils sing tunefully in school assemblies and show good musical knowledge. Pupils' spiritual awareness is well developed through singing and composition. Teaching and learning is good overall. Cultural development is good when pupils in Year 6 learn to sing classic Indian tunes. Good teacher expertise means pupils learn about octaves and different ways to play tunes such as in a relaxed drone style. Very effective lesson planning ensures that time is used effectively. Basic skills are taught well when pupils in Year 6 learn to recognise musical notes such as A and F#. Teachers use effective methods which allow pupils to perform their improvisations to the class and give each other positive feedback. However, ICT is rarely used to deepen pupils' understanding of music. Leadership and management are good and are responsible for significant improvements since the last inspection so that standards are now above average.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**. This represents an improvement since the last report when it was satisfactory.

### Commentary

83. Although it was not possible to see any gymnastic activities during the inspection, lessons seen in dance and games activities reveal standards are at least good in these areas. Both boys and girls attain very good standards in dance reflecting, in part, the school's recent visit from African dancers. The school provides a broad curriculum in physical education and pupils are well aware of the connection between fitness and health.

84. Teaching of physical education was only observed with older pupils (Years 2 to 6). It was never less than good and was occasionally excellent. Pupils always changed appropriately and due attention was given in lessons to warm up and stretching activities. Lessons in both dance and games skills (tennis) demonstrated good teacher awareness of the developmental needs of pupils. High expectations of pupils by teachers, together with challenging and varied activities ensured pupils sustained concentration and enthusiasm and achieved well. Excellent teaching involved the class teacher demonstrating skills effectively and giving critical but supportive feedback to pupils. Pupils were developing very good body awareness in dance lessons and physical control and mobility in games. The school gives proper attention to swimming lesson and over seventy-five per cent of Year 6 pupils currently meet national expectations in swimming. National Curriculum requirements for physical education are well met in lessons seen, but there were no assessment arrangements to confirm this was the case in gymnastic activities.

85. The subject is enhanced by the provision of a number of after school clubs supported by strong community links with local sporting organisations. The school is proud of its FA Charter award, which significantly enhances provision.

86. Physical education lessons were well planned and pupils were very positive in their attitudes towards the subject. Pupils with special educational needs were included in lessons and achieved well. Currently the subject provides good cultural links through its dance activities.

87. The co-ordinator of the subject has been effective in raising standards and improving provision. The present co-ordinator has just taken over the role and her influence in developing the subject further is yet to be felt. The school has good resources to deliver all aspects of the National Curriculum.

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

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Activities outside the school day are very effective in developing pupils' social skills.
- A strong emphasis on sports contributes positively to pupils' understanding of a healthy lifestyle.
- The house system gives Year 6 pupils the chance to take responsibility and take initiative.

### **Commentary**

88. The school provides a very wide range of high quality activities outside the normal school day that enables pupils to develop their social skills and extend opportunities for taking responsibility. A number of team games gives older pupils the chance to mix with other pupils from their own school as well as meeting pupils from other schools. The school's positive promotion of sports and the arts makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.

89. The school has an active house system with Year 6 pupils acting as House Captains and Vice-Captains. This gives Year 6 pupils the chance to present their views about the routine life of the school and suggest new ideas. Much of the school's successful charity fundraising was initiated and organised by pupils. Although the house system is effective in involving Year 6 pupils, there are no formal systems for involving other pupils in making suggestions about school life.

90. The school has a satisfactory policy that ensures that sex and relationship education, as well as drug and alcohol abuse, are covered thoroughly.

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

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