

## ERRATUM

The following paragraphs should be replaced:

15. Music is taught well both by class teachers and a specialist teacher; as a result, pupils make good progress and by Year 3 are beginning to read a score. The teaching of religious education is good, with pupils' attention held effectively by challenging questions and good quality resources, such as slides. As a result, higher attaining pupils make perceptive comments about, for example, the different features of a church.

16. Teachers mark pupils' mathematics work very well. However, too little time is given for pupils to do their corrections and remind themselves of advice previously given, before beginning new work. All pupils in Years 3 to 5, including lower attaining pupils, present their work in mathematics exceptionally well. All work is dated with a clearly written heading and work is neatly arranged on each page. The standard of presentation is high and contributes to clear thinking in this subject. The presentation of pupils' work in other subjects, such as English, is less consistent and joined handwriting is not fluent by Year 3. The amount of work pupils complete in English is also variable and reflects a lack of understanding as to how much is expected of them in a given time.

17. Assessment was developing at the last inspection and is now good. For example, in mathematics and English, pupils know what National Curriculum level they are working at, as they keep a record of their own progress at the front of their exercise books. This information, together with the school tracking system, is now available to co-ordinators and senior management to analyse pupils' needs. The use of data, however, is not yet fully developed, either in the Reception class, where it is unsatisfactory, or across the school. It is not used sufficiently to inform the school development plan.

18. Mathematics is used well across the curriculum, especially in science, design and food technology, and in geography, where tallies and graphs were used, for example, in a traffic survey and to record climate change. Information and communication technology is also used well in other subjects. In science, ICT was used well to demonstrate change in materials, and in art and design it was used well to create pictures showing different emotions.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	5	8	10	1	0	0

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

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but unsatisfactory in the Reception class. Learning is extended through a good range of out-of-class activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in their Reception year are not given the full range of experiences expected for their age.

- The curriculum is extended well through a wide range of interesting activities outside lessons.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Literacy skills are not given enough emphasis in subjects other than English.
- A successful curriculum has been developed for the new Year 5 age group.
- There is a good programme for pupils' PSHE.

### **Commentary**

19. The Foundation Stage curriculum is planned for, but in practice is not fully in place at the present time. Children are not sufficiently involved in activities which promote their independence, such as 'self-registration', or in 'planning' with their teacher at the beginning of the day. This has an

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BLAKEDOWN C OF E FIRST SCHOOL**

Kidderminster

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116784

Headteacher: Mrs H Pritchard

Lead inspector: Miss M A Warner

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2004

Inspection number: 255533

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 10 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	91
School address:	Birmingham Road Blakedown Kidderminster Worcestershire
Postcode:	DY10 3JN
Telephone number:	01562 700243
Fax number:	01562 700243
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Hiscock
Date of previous inspection:	1 <sup>st</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Blakedown C of E First School is a village school on the outskirts of Kidderminster and is much smaller than most primary schools nationally, with 91 pupils aged 4 to 10 on roll. The inspection took place at a time of expansion, with extensive building works in progress. This is the first year that Year 5 pupils have been taught at the school. A Year 6 class will open in September 2004 when the school is to become a primary school. The majority of pupils come from the immediate area which includes a small housing estate, and 20 per cent come from nearby villages or from Kidderminster. The context of the area is very favourable. There is little movement of pupils to and from the school during a year. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, three per cent, is well below the national average of 18 per cent. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, nine per cent, is below the national average of 17 per cent. Pupils' needs include specific and moderate learning difficulties and speech, communication and physical needs. The percentage of pupils identified as having a statement of special educational need, two per cent, is similar to the national average. The large majority of pupils come from white British heritage backgrounds with 13 per cent coming from various other ethnic backgrounds. All pupils speak English as their first language. Most children have pre-school experience, many at the nearby playgroup, and begin school with standards that are above the nationally expected levels in all areas of learning. The school was awarded a School Achievement Award in 2000, and an 'ECO Schools' Bronze Award in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17288	M A Warner	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics; Art and design; Design and technology; Music; Physical education.
1165	P Dannheisser	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
23658	S Parker	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Geography; History; Religious education; Special educational needs.
27369	C Sandall	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Information and communication technology; Foundation stage.

The inspection contractor was:

VT Education Ltd  
Old Garden House  
The Lanterns  
Bridge Lane  
London  
SW1 3AD

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>3</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>6</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>24</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Blakedown C of E First School provides a reasonably effective education** and satisfactory value for money. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach above average standards, overall, by Year 5. Standards in English are above average, overall, with writing being in line with the national average. Standards in mathematics are average, with a significant number of pupils reaching above average standards. The quality of teaching and learning is generally good. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and relationships are very good. The overall governance, leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, and the management of change is very good.

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

- Standards in science are well above average in Years 2 and 5.
- Standards are above average in speaking and listening in Years 2 and 5, and in reading in Year 5, but in writing, standards are below average in Year 2.
- Higher attaining pupils achieve well in mathematics.
- The school development plan does not focus sufficiently on what standards the school expects of pupils in different age groups.
- There are too few opportunities for children in the Reception to develop their independence, make choices and think for themselves.
- Pupils' personal development and opportunities for initiative are promoted very well through the school council and the Ecology group.
- The school provides pupils with a good range of extra-curricular activities.

The school is not as effective as it was at the last inspection, when the school was judged to give good value for money. The school is in a time of transition, from a First to a Primary school. Issues in the previous report relating to the school development plan and the involvement of governors have been partly tackled, which reflects the changes in personnel and the limited time they have been in post to be fully effective. However, the governance of the school is improving. Standards have improved in science, music and religious education, but declined in writing and geography. Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) has greatly improved since the last inspection, when it was a key issue, and standards in the subject are higher than before. There has been steady improvement in overall curriculum planning, assessment and in the management of special educational needs. The range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility has improved, and parents and staff are more fully involved in the Parent Teacher Association. There has also been a reduction in the number of unauthorised absences since the last inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2002	2003	2003
reading	A	B	C	E
writing	A	B	D	E
mathematics	A	B	E	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

**Pupils achieve satisfactorily** and reach above average standards, overall, in Years 2 and 5. Children in Reception make sound progress in their communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills and are on course to exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of their Reception year. They are on course to meet most of the expected goals in their personal, social and emotional development. In 2003, standards in the National Curriculum tests in Year 2



were average in reading and below the national average in writing. In mathematics, they were well below average, although three pupils achieved the higher than expected Level 3. Inspection evidence shows standards in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. In Year 2, standards are average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. Standards in Year 5 are above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics, with a significant number of pupils reaching above average standards in mathematics. Standards in science are well above average, and in religious education they are above those expected in Years 2 and 5. Standards by Year 5 are above average in music, physical education and history, and average in ICT and geography. There was too little evidence of art and design to judge standards. Boys and girls reach similar standards, as do those from different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils who are gifted or talented achieve satisfactorily and those with special educational needs achieve well. **Pupils' personal qualities are good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** Their attitudes and behaviour are good and their attendance is above average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is good,** particularly in mathematics, science and design and technology and in planning work for pupils of different levels of attainment. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Reception, and good, overall, in Year 2 to 5. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly for a small school. The school takes good care of its pupils and provides good support, advice and guidance for them. The involvement of pupils in all that the school offers, particularly the school council and 'ECO group', is very good. Links with other schools and colleges are very good and the school has good links with parents and the community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are satisfactory, overall.** The headteacher has shown sound leadership under difficult circumstances in the relatively short time since her appointment during which she has had a high level of teaching commitment. She is focused on raising standards and has a sense of purpose. The sound management and leadership of other key staff reflect not only the work they have undertaken, but also the short time they have had to be effective. The governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and help to shape the vision and direction of the school. All statutory requirements are met, although the Foundation Stage curriculum needs further development.

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

Parents have very positive views of the school and the education it provides for their children. They are particularly appreciative of how accessible the teachers are to talk to. Pupils are also very positive about the school and appreciate that there is always an adult to go to if they are worried. They say that they are expected to work hard and enjoy being trusted to do things on their own.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Map writing opportunities throughout each day and across the curriculum, and use marking more purposefully in English to guide improvement.
- Ensure that the curriculum for children of Reception age provides planned opportunities for them to explore, investigate and be creative.

- Make more explicit, in the school development plan, the expected standards of each age groups and what measures the school intends to put in place to achieve them.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach above average standards, overall, in Years 2 and 5.

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

- In Years 2 and 5, standards are well above average in science.
- In Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are above average, but in writing they are below average.
- In Year 5, standards in speaking, listening and reading are above average.
- Higher attaining pupils achieve well in mathematics in Years 3 to 5.
- Standards are above average in music, physical education and history and above the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus in religious education.
- There was limited evidence of work in art and design.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children enter the Reception class with levels of attainment that are above average. They make sound progress in their communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills and are on course to exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of their Reception year. They will meet most of the expected goals in their personal, social and emotional development. It is not possible to give a judgement on their knowledge and understanding of the world, their physical or creative development.

2. In 2003, standards in the National Curriculum tests in Year 2 were average in reading and below the national average in writing. In mathematics, they were well below average, although three pupils achieved the higher than expected Level 3. These results reflect the particular cohort where there were a larger than usual number of pupils with special educational needs, pupils with August birthdays, and pupils who were recently new to the school.

3. Inspection evidence shows standards in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. In the present Year 2, standards are average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. This is partly due to the fact that writing is not promoted well across the whole curriculum and pupils underachieve as a result.

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

<b>Standards in:</b>	<b>School results</b>	<b>National results</b>
reading	15.7 (16.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.3 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.4 (17.4)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. The number of pupils, across the school, recorded on the special needs register is below the national average. They are given good support in class so that they achieve well. In the 2003 national tests in English and mathematics at the end of Year 2, the number who failed to reach the expected level was lower than found nationally. This reflects the good quality of care that the school takes in identifying and meeting pupils' individual needs, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Gifted and talented pupils have not been formally identified, but the school sends selected more able Year 5 pupils to special 'booster' days organised by the cluster and pyramid of local schools. There are no

pupils who speak English as an additional language and the progress of those from different ethnic groups is tracked in the same way as the progress of other pupils. No significant differences have been found. Standards in the newly introduced Year 5 are above average in reading, but average in writing. In mathematics, standards in Year 5 are average, overall, with a significant number of pupils reaching above average standards. Mathematics is used particularly well in other subjects.

5. Pupils achieve satisfactorily, overall, and they achieve well in science, ICT, history and usually in religious education. Higher attaining pupils achieve particularly well in mathematics and those with special educational needs in Year 2 achieve well in music because of the very good support they are given. In design and technology, pupils learn and achieve well because of the good teaching. Pupils achieve particularly well in lessons where the work is well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils, such as in a mathematics lesson in Year 2 and many lessons in Year 5, but pupils achieve unsatisfactorily when they talk too much instead of working, because the work is not challenging enough, as in a religious education lesson where they were all given the same work sheet in Year 3 and 4. Whilst pupils' achievement is generally at least satisfactory, staff changes have sometimes prevented their achievement from being good. Where stability is evident, achievement is higher. Whilst no substantial evidence was available of the achievement of pupils from different ethnic groups, in lessons they achieved as well as their peers.

6. Standards in religious education are above those expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus in both Years 2 and 5. Standards are in line with national expectation in ICT in Years 2 and 5. Most other subjects were sampled during the inspection, but standards are judged to be above average in music, physical education and history, and they are in line with national expectations in geography. Art and design and design and technology are taught in alternate half terms. There was too little evidence of art and design to make an overall judgement on standards, as design and technology was the focus during the inspection.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, and their attendance is above the national average. Overall, their personal development is good; with their spiritual and cultural development being good and their social and moral development being very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The caring ethos of the school permeates all activities and helps to promote pupils' good attitudes and their personal development.
- Pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- Pupils have very good relationships with other people.
- Pupils are keen to accept the responsibilities offered.

### **Commentary**

7. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. They are interested and involved in the range of activities that the school provides, both in lessons and after school. Pupils are encouraged, through all school activities, to be honest, trustworthy, and well mannered. This provision also gives pupils an enjoyment of learning. Being at school is a pleasure for almost all of these pupils. When given opportunities to work independently or in groups, pupils work cooperatively, sharing and valuing ideas, and concentrating well on the task. However, there are few opportunities for children in Reception to develop these skills and, as a result, they are not on course to reach the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the end of the year. Pupils with special educational needs generally have the same positive attitudes and values as their peers. All pupils are helped by staff, so those with behavioural difficulties cause the minimum of disruption. Values are promoted through the school's programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) taught throughout the curriculum and through Circle Time, when pupils put forward their own ideas and views. Pupils benefit from the very good role models set by the adults.

8. Pupils' relationships with adults and each other are very good and have a positive impact on their learning. They are supportive of each other and their teachers. They are happy and secure and enjoy school life in an atmosphere where all are valued. Pupils of all ages mix well at playtime and lunchtime. They have found the 'friendship stop' a useful innovation which helps pupils who need a friend find someone to play with. Pupils enjoy school and show a considerable pleasure in being members of the school community.

9. Parents are supportive of the school and happy with the values that it promotes. Staff are willing to touch on spiritual elements, especially within assemblies and prayers and elsewhere, wherever they may happen to arise, for example, classroom prayers are said before pupils go to lunch. Pupils contribute to good causes and this activity helps them appreciate their blessings along with their duties and responsibilities. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong, which is promoted from a very early age. They help to design their own class rules. When pupils show qualities such as honesty, politeness and helpfulness, these are rewarded alongside academic achievement. They enjoy receiving rewards for the 'stars of the week' and their strengths are recognised at special assemblies. These rewards, which include small prizes, are strong motivators. Pupils are grouped in houses and are enthusiastic about competitions and activities which bring the whole age range together. The 'head's awards' at the end of each week underline what is expected of all pupils and the use of 'zone boards' in class reinforce the understanding of good and unsatisfactory conduct, as pupils' names are moved up or down the board depending on their behaviour.

10. Children in Reception enter school with above average social skills. The majority of pupils throughout the school are well behaved, polite and courteous and respond well to the caring ethos of the school. The positive picture found at the last inspection has been maintained, although behaviour is now generally good rather than very good. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection and no pupils have been excluded from school in the past academic year. There have been no racist incidents. Pupils' social development will also be promoted during a residential visit to Norfolk, organised for the first time for Year 5 pupils.

11. There are many good opportunities for pupils to enhance their social development through taking responsibility. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. They do this with commitment and pride. Each house has captains, monitors and vice-monitors. They are elected from volunteers and are proud of the contribution they are making to the school. Members of the recently set up school council take their responsibilities seriously. They have had only one meeting but the members are very enthusiastic and feel that they will make an important contribution. At present members are selected and have yet to learn how to chair their own meetings. Other pupils have been formed into the 'ECO group' which is having a very significant impact on the school environment and on pupils' awareness of environmental issues. Members are also very enthusiastic and gain a wide knowledge of subjects from paper recycling to wormeries. In classrooms, pupils are keen to act as monitors, helping the smooth running of the class. Year 5 pupils are offered several jobs around the school such as helping at assemblies. After an art and design lesson they cleared up quickly and quietly.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	5.0
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

12. The level of authorised absence is slightly below the national averages, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. The lack of unauthorised absences marks an improvement. The great majority of pupils arrive punctually for the start of school. Registration practice is efficient. There are few unpunctual pupils, but the registers remain open until 9:30 in the morning, which gives them more leeway than usual. Very few pupils are more than a few minutes late.

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

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory, overall, as the quality of the curriculum, accommodation and resources are all judged to be satisfactory at the present time. However, the quality of teaching and learning is good and the school takes good care of its pupils and provides good support, advice and guidance for them, seeking and acting on their views very well. Links with parents and the community are good and links with other schools and colleges are very good.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Teaching is very good in mathematics and good in science, ICT, religious education and music.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers plan well for pupils of different attainment, especially in English and mathematics.
- The teaching of mathematics is excellent in Year 5 and very good overall.
- The teaching of science, ICT, music and religious education is good.
- Teaching in Reception is sometimes over-directed.
- There are good examples of marking in mathematics, but it is inconsistent across other subjects.
- The presentation of pupils' work is very good in mathematics but varies in other subjects.
- It is not always made clear to pupils how much written work is expected in English, or when it is to be completed and checked.
- Mathematics and ICT are used very well across the curriculum.
- Assessment is good overall and pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve.

### **Commentary**

13. The school plans well for pupils of different attainment, especially in English and mathematics, where, for example, higher attaining Year 4 pupils join Year 5 pupils for literacy and numeracy lessons. The needs of the most and the least able, including those from ethnic minority groups, are provided for well. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all class activities. The teachers' planning reflects the targets set out in the individual education plans (IEPs) for these pupils. Teaching assistants support them in lessons, helping them to meet their targets and praising their achievements to boost their confidence. Their progress is monitored regularly and their targets are adjusted as necessary.

14. The teaching of mathematics is excellent in Year 5. The teacher works with a higher attaining group to challenge them and with a lower attaining group to support them with modified work. Pupils of average attainment are also supported well in this class. In Years 3 and 4 the lower attaining pupils are supported well, but the average attaining pupils are sometimes held back by too long an introduction to the lesson, for example, in mathematics. In science, teachers are confident and have a good level of expertise, challenging pupils to think in scientific terms. Pupils are tracked to ensure that aspects of science are built systematically through the units of work and any weaker areas are quickly identified. The teaching of design and technology is very thorough, with products planned, made and evaluated carefully over a number of weeks. Teaching and learning in the one physical education lesson observed in Year 5 were also very good.

20. Teaching in Reception tends to be over-directed, with the result that children have too few opportunities to develop their independence. As yet there is an incomplete grasp of the curriculum for this age group. Sessions at the end of lessons with this age group are not always used well to consolidate what children have learned and help them assess what knowledge or skills they have gained.

21. Music is taught well both by class teachers and a specialist teacher; as a result, pupils make good progress and by Year 3 are beginning to read a score. The teaching of religious education is good, with pupils' attention held effectively by challenging questions and good quality resources, such as slides. As a result, higher attaining pupils make perceptive comments about, for example, the different features of a church.

22. Teachers mark pupils' mathematics work very well. However, too little time is given for pupils to do their corrections and remind themselves of advice previously given, before beginning new work. All pupils in Years 3 to 6, including lower attaining pupils, present their work in mathematics exceptionally well. All work is dated with a clearly written heading and work is neatly arranged on each page. The standard of presentation is high and contributes to clear thinking in this subject. The presentation of pupils' work in other subjects, such as English, is less consistent and joined handwriting is not fluent by Year 3. The amount of work pupils complete in English is also variable and reflects a lack of understanding as to how much is expected of them in a given time.

23. Assessment was developing at the last inspection and is now good. For example, in mathematics and English, pupils know what National Curriculum level they are working at, as they keep a record of their own progress at the front of their exercise books. This information, together with the school tracking system, is now available to co-ordinators and senior management to analyse pupils' needs. The use of data, however, is not yet fully developed, either in the Reception class, where it is unsatisfactory, or across the school. It is not used sufficiently to inform the school development plan.

24. Mathematics is used well across the curriculum, especially in science, design and food technology, and in geography, where tallies and graphs were used, for example, in a traffic survey and to record climate change. Information and communication technology is also used well in other subjects. In science, ICT was used well to demonstrate change in materials, and in art and design it was used well to create pictures showing different emotions.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	5	8	10	1	0	0

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

**The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but unsatisfactory in the Reception class. Learning is extended through a good range of out-of-class activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in their Reception year are not given the full range of experiences expected for their age.
- The curriculum is extended well through a wide range of interesting activities outside lessons.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Literacy skills are not given enough emphasis in subjects other than English.
- A successful curriculum has been developed for the new Year 5 age group.
- There is a good programme for pupils' PSHE.

**Commentary**

25. The Foundation Stage curriculum is planned for, but in practice is not fully in place at the present time. Children are not sufficiently involved in activities which promote their independence, such as 'self-registration', or in 'planning' with their teacher at the beginning of the day. This has an

effect on all areas of learning, where there is an expectation that the children in a Nursery or Reception class should 'think for themselves and enjoy self-chosen challenges within a structured environment'. As a result, their achievement is unsatisfactory.

26. Planning for Years 1 to 5 is on a two- or three-year cycle to avoid repetition by pupils in mixed age classes. This ensures broad and balanced coverage of all required subjects. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Provision for science is very successful, securing high standards through the school. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to carry out mathematics investigations, although the curriculum is effective in promoting the development of numeracy skills. There are sound opportunities for pupils to use their skills in numeracy and ICT in other subjects. However, opportunities to develop literacy skills could be more clearly identified in the planning of other subjects to make best use of time. Pupils are not given enough time to develop their ideas in full in writing or to check its accuracy, for instance the spelling of key words.

27. Learning is extended well through a good range of special events, focus weeks and visits. These include science and book weeks, a Viking Day, visits to the theatre and visiting music workshops. There is also a good range of after-class clubs, including dance, recorders, French and ICT. These are very popular with boys and girls, with one boy seen performing well in a rehearsal for a dance performance. A very small minority of parents express a wish for more clubs for the youngest pupils, but the inspection team noted a satisfactory range for the youngest and good range for older pupils. There is good provision for pupils' PSHE, and this makes an effective contribution to pupils' attitudes and personal development. A published scheme of work is used to give teachers detailed guidance. Overall, pupils are well prepared to move through the stages of education within the school and on to secondary education.

28. The school takes good care to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with good quality IEPs. These set out clear targets, focused on their identified needs and adjusted in the light of assessments so that they make good progress as their needs change. The school uses the resources of the local cluster of primary schools to cater for the needs of gifted and talented pupils, who are invited to attend special courses.

29. The school is teaching Year 5 pupils for the first time this year. All required subjects are planned at the appropriate level for this year group, and topics covered are stimulating. A good feature is that higher attaining pupils in Year 4 join Year 5 for their English and mathematics lessons, so ensuring that they are given a high level of challenge. Plans for the introduction of a Year 6 class are well under way. Local schools are working together to ensure that the curriculum and resources are in place for the beginning of the new school year.

30. The school is appropriately staffed, and teaching assistants play a good supporting role in lessons. However, the proportion of new teachers and newly qualified teachers is greater than is usually found and has added considerable burdens on the relatively new headteacher, who also has to manage the building programme. The accommodation is satisfactory, although building work on the new extension is putting staff and pupils under considerable pressure from noise, lack of water in some classes and restricted space, indoors and out. The library has had to be moved at short notice and is not easily accessible to pupils for borrowing or study. The school is making sound progress in extending resources to cater for the needs of older pupils, and resources are satisfactory overall. Staff show considerable skill in setting up attractive displays to make the school attractive and interesting.

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

Pupils are well cared for. Governors and staff have good procedures for checking that pupils and staff work in a healthy and safe environment. Pupils have very good relationships with all adults in the school. They are given the support and advice that they need and efforts to involve them in the work of the school are very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of its pupils are good.
- The school council and 'eco kidz' (an ecology group) provide very good forums for hearing pupils' opinions and for helping pupils to participate in the school's development.
- Older pupils like to help the younger ones.
- Induction arrangements for pupils are good.

## **Commentary**

31. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of its pupils are good. Governors and staff are closely involved in regular safety audits to ensure that all areas of the school are consistently and frequently checked. The school has taken considerable care to make sure that the current building work in no way endangers pupils or staff. There is a good awareness of child protection procedures and the school exercises its responsibilities with vigilance and care. New staff have not as yet had formal training on this matter. The school is well prepared to help pupils who do not live with their families. First aid provision is good and trained staff provide assistance in the event of minor accidents and are prepared to cope with emergencies. Records of minor accidents are good quality.

32. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. In this small school staff have a good level of knowledge of pupils' personal progress. However, formal records of significant interactions with pupils and their families are not kept. Pupils say that they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to progress. They understand and use the targets they are given, often placed within their exercise books, and they feel that their work is marked well. The school is able to gauge pupils' views through the active involvement of the school council and 'eco kidz', which provide very good forums for hearing pupils' opinions and acting on them very well.

33. Pupils are well cared for at lunchtime. Older pupils look after younger ones and there is a 'friendship stop' for anyone who is lonely; pupils say that this works well. They enjoy using the playground equipment. Pupils feel they are amongst friends and say that there is always support available from the adults and from each other. Pupils with special needs are well cared for. Teachers and assistants develop close relationships with them, encouraging them to take a full part in school life. Those who need it are given additional help by visiting specialists. Records of their progress and needs are well focused and maintained.

34. Enrolled Reception children and their parents visit the school in the term before children join. When children start school staff help them to develop good and trusting relationships. Adults know the pupils, respond very well to their emotional needs and encourage them to develop their self-esteem through a well structured PSHE programme.

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

The school's partnership with parents and the community is good. Links with other schools are very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents appreciate that staff make themselves easily accessible to them.
- The school provides good quality letters and information for parents.
- Parents are welcomed into school and several help regularly in lessons.
- The school has very good working relations with other primary schools and the local middle school.
- Pupils' annual reports lack consistent information on the standards pupils have reached.



## Commentary

35. As with the previous inspection report's findings, almost all parents have positive views about the school and the education that it provides. Inspectors endorse the positive views of parents. The headteacher and other teachers make themselves accessible to parents and informal consultations are easily arranged. Reading record books and homework diaries are available for communications between parents and staff and this helps strengthen relationships between families and teachers. The school is thorough when dealing with concerns or complaints and takes advice from the local education authority when needed.

36. A wealth of information about the school is available from the good quality newsletters. Parents receive information about the curriculum at the start of each term. Reports inform parents about the work that pupils have completed and their attitudes, but are not always clear about the levels that pupils have reached in each subject.

37. Many parents support their children well at home by sharing books with them and helping them with their homework. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to annual reviews and are kept fully informed of their children's progress. A few parents help in lessons on a regular basis. Others give of their time and help on trips. They enjoy the experiences, are clear about their roles and are appreciated by the staff. The school has satisfactory arrangements to gain parents' views; for example, by providing drop-in sessions about once a month. The Parent Teachers Association successfully raises funds through events such as quiz nights and car boot sales. The association involves both parents and staff and this is an improvement on what occurred before. The association has been able to fund extra activities, books and equipment and has helped to create a strong school community. It has also helped to organise charity fundraising by the pupils.

38. There are close links with the neighbouring playgroup: their children visit the school regularly for assemblies and other events. Staff visit other playgroups and offer to visit enrolled children's homes before they come to the school. Because of this, the school knows a great deal about children before they start in school. The links with other schools are very good and the school plays an active part in the 'pyramid', a group that connects professionals from a number of local schools and organises joint training and sports days. Very good links with the middle school supports the transfer of pupils, by providing opportunities to visit and gain an understanding of what the next stage of schooling will be like. In addition, pupils are visited by staff from the middle school. Links with the community and a wide range of visits and visitors provide good enrichment of the curriculum and support pupils' personal and social development as well as widening their experiences and giving them opportunities to learn about the needs of others.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, overall.** The headteacher has shown sound leadership in the relatively short time since her appointment, under difficult circumstances, during which she has had a high level of teaching commitment. She is focused on raising standards and has a good sense of purpose. The sound management and leadership of other key staff reflect not only the work they have undertaken but also the short time they have had to be effective. The governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and help to shape the vision and direction of the school, which is in a period of change.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides the school with sound leadership; she has a developing vision and is committed to improvement.
- Good emphasis has been placed on uniting the team and developing the school as a community.
- Leaders are good role models for other staff and pupils and newly qualified teachers are well supported.
- The school development plan does not say to what degree standards are to be raised or how success will be evaluated.
- The Foundation Stage lacks clear leadership.
- The governors are supportive and help to shape the direction of the school, but are not yet fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses.
- Finances are managed efficiently and are used well to support pupils' education, particularly those with special educational needs.

### Commentary

39. The headteacher and her staff work hard and are committed to the success of the school. The headteacher is relatively new to headship. She has been open-minded in seeking support from the local education authority to assist in areas of concern such as raising standards. Her current teaching commitment is too demanding, and insufficient time is left to focus on areas to be improved. The requirements for Reception aged children, for example, were not identified as an area requiring attention. The difficulties caused by the new building have created considerable challenges of both a physical and academic nature, but the headteacher has worked diligently to ensure that staff, pupils and parents have been well supported throughout.

40. Managing the change has been a priority. A good team spirit has been nurtured and staff provide good role models for pupils. The headteacher has rightly identified the importance of creating a well balanced and informed team, with a common purpose, as the basis for raising standards and improving progress overall. There are two newly qualified teachers in this small school. They feel well supported and very much part of the team.

41. The school development plan identifies areas requiring attention and how they will be achieved, but the degree of improvement needed is not stated and, therefore, success towards specific goals cannot be measured. Goals are not specific enough. Aspects such as the co-ordination of the Foundation Stage and its curriculum are not identified in the school's development plan and these require attention in order to raise standards and improve children's achievement. There is no evidence that the application of the race equality policy is monitored and the outcomes reported to governors and parents regularly. From observations, pupils from ethnic minorities are seen to be well integrated into the life of the school, but there is no collated evidence about the standards that they reach.

42. Pupils with special educational needs are provided for well. The headteacher, who herself is a specialist, is supported by a visiting special educational needs co-ordinator from the local education authority and, together, they offer considerable expertise to the school. Recommended procedures are carefully followed and record keeping is systematic. Funding for pupils with special educational needs is targeted well for their benefit.

43. The governance of the school is improving and governors are becoming better informed about their roles and responsibilities. They are friends to the school and, more recently, have developed their role by challenging the senior managers to be accountable for their decisions. All governors undergo training and are valued for their own areas of expertise. The governors care about the success of the school and are moving quickly to realising the importance of raising standards and their role in achieving this.

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

<b>Income and expenditure (£)</b>	
Total income	279,757
Total expenditure	221,610
Expenditure per pupil	4,176

<b>Balances (£)</b>	
Balance from previous year	3,263
Balance carried forward to the next	61,411

44. There is sound financial management with a recently appointed finance governor. Procedures are clear and are used to support the school's intentions. Governors are well aware of the budget position and the needs of the pupils. The high carry-forward figure is the result of funds from the 'Hagley review', the reorganising of the local schools into primary schools. There are appropriate plans in place to use this money effectively. There has been no local educational authority financial audit since 1997.

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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

45. There were 15 children of Reception age during the inspection. Most of these children transfer from pre-school settings, many from the nearby playgroup, into a mixed-age Reception/Year 1 class. They enter school with levels of attainment that are above average, make sound progress and, by the end of their Reception year, reach above average standards in communication, language, literacy and mathematics. They make slower progress in their personal, social and emotional development and reach average standards. There are no Reception-aged children with special educational needs.

46. In spite of considerable difficulties due to the expansion of the school, staff have successfully maintained a bright and welcoming environment throughout the year and have ensured that the children have access to a small outdoor area while using the large school playground at break times.

47. The quality of teaching, overall, is satisfactory. Questions are asked which extend the children's thinking and encourage them to make a verbal contribution to whole-class sessions. Relationships are good, and ideas which develop children's interest are fun. The teacher and the support staff give clear instructions and expect children to behave well. Where teaching is less successful, lessons are over-directed. This results in children being given too few opportunities to make choices and become independent. This has an effect on all areas of learning, in spite of the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum, introduced in September 2003, which expects children to 'think for themselves and enjoy self-chosen challenges within a structured environment'. Assessment is good and well managed, producing a working visual record of children's progress. However, time at the end of a lesson or session is not used well to bring the children together, reflect on the purpose of the session and consolidate learning. This time is not used sufficiently to assess together what has been learned and celebrate achievements.

48. The headteacher is leading the Foundation Stage in the co-ordinator's absence and has plans to provide training for all Foundation staff, in order to raise awareness of expectations and improve the levels of expertise. There have been many changes nationally since the last inspection, so improvement is difficult to judge. The Foundation Stage curriculum is now a requirement for all schools and, although it is planned for, it has not yet been fully implemented. An exciting development is the new building, which will include a classroom for Reception children from September. This gives the school the opportunity to focus on this age group and develop it as a separate key stage.

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

Provision in this area is **unsatisfactory**.

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

- Children's social interaction and relationships are good.
- Children have a good level of confidence and self-esteem.
- Children are not encouraged to be independent when selecting or carrying out activities.
- Too few opportunities are given for children to plan, make choices and think for themselves.

## Commentary

49. Reception staff welcome the children into school. Throughout all the changes experienced recently, staff have ensured that the children are safe and secure. Children know their routines and sit together happily for registration. They work well together, negotiating and listening to one another's views, particularly in 'circle time'. Many children have already developed a good level of confidence and self-esteem, which is evident in their good relationships and willingness to join in class discussions. However, by the end of the year their achievement is unsatisfactory in relation to their above average levels of attainment on entry to school. This is because they are not involved in activities which promote their independence, such as 'self-registration', or in 'planning with their teacher' at the beginning of the day. Although they behave well, few opportunities are given for them to make choices and work independently. Overall, children will meet most of the expected Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year and teaching is satisfactory overall.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good questioning encourages children to concentrate and reply thoughtfully.
- Children enjoy stories told to them in a large group.
- Opportunities to practise and develop speaking and listening, reading and writing skills independently are not sufficiently provided for within the classroom organisation.

## Commentary

50. Children's communication, language and literacy skills are well developed when they enter the school. By the end of the Reception year, children exceed the expected goals and their achievement is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory.

51. Clear instructions and well focused questioning enables most children to respond thoughtfully and make sound progress. For example, in response to 'Why is it hot?' a child replied, 'It's the summer: summer is a season'. Lower attaining children answer questions in whole-class sessions, groups, or during a story because of the encouragement they are given. However, few opportunities are given for children to talk together, act out situations or make choices through regular role play or through other creative activities.

52. Children read together in planned reading groups with support and enjoy whole-group story sessions using the 'big books'. However, time to snuggle up and enjoy a book, to develop a love of reading individually or with their friends, is not planned for within the day. Children are familiar with a good number of letter sounds and some children use them in their reading and writing.

53. Practising the basic skills of writing in the Reception class is fairly formal: there are too few opportunities given to practise and develop these skills, and experiment with sounds and words in regular, planned play situations. Children do not make the progress they could because of this over-directed programme of work.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff make learning about numbers fun.
- The subject is well resourced.
- The way in which children are taught is not always appropriate.

### Commentary

54. Teaching is satisfactory, overall. Standards are above the levels expected when children begin their Reception year. In the lessons observed, children were taught in ability groups. They ordered up to ten cones and higher attaining children filled containers with up to 15 objects found around the room, but they were unsure what to do when the task was completed. Higher attaining children's work shows that they record addition to 10 and have worked on pattern and shape. However, although resources are good, there is not enough emphasis given to the structured, practical aspect of mathematics, where children explore and learn through planned activities and in small groups. Whole-class activities do not always provide sufficiently for all children to achieve, at different levels, as well as they could. However, achievement is satisfactory, overall, and most reach levels beyond those expected by the end of the Reception year.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

55. It was not possible to make a judgement on provision in these areas of learning, as insufficient evidence was seen during the inspection. In the area of children's **knowledge and understanding of the world**, photographs show children testing ice on a snowy day and making sandwiches in food technology. Photographs include a journey by train and a visit from the Fire Service. Religious education is taught through a planned programme of work, and stories, such as 'Handa's Surprise', are used and developed in assembly to promote an understanding of different cultures. Children's **creative development** is inhibited by over-direction in this area of learning. It is acknowledged that during the inspection there was no running water on this side of the building and the small adjacent room was not suitable for children to work in on their own. However, even taking these factors into consideration, opportunities for children to explore, make choices and use their imagination freely are limited. For example, the Post Office role-play area was not seen to be used during the course of the inspection. Children's **physical development** is promoted through activities in the hall and the small secure outdoor area, where children use a range of resources, including sand and building blocks. A larger, self-contained outdoor area is included in the plans for the new building for the Reception class.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are not high enough.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils speak well.
- Targets set for individuals are helping to guide their improvement.
- Topics are well chosen to catch pupils' interest.

#### Commentary

56. Standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection, particularly in writing. In 2000, overall results in the Year 2 National Curriculum tests were well above the national average, but in 2003 they were average in reading and below average in writing. School records show that the results in 2003 were affected by the higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs in language in that small year group, August birthdays and pupils new to the school. In the present Year 2, standards are average in reading, but below average in writing. Standards in speaking and listening continue to be above average through the school. At the last inspection, standards in Year 4 were above average overall. Standards in the newly introduced Year 5 are above average in reading, which is similar, but average in writing, which is slightly lower than before. The achievement of all groups is at least satisfactory at present, with no evident difference in the achievement of boys and girls.

57. The school has taken well informed action with a view to raising standards, and there are signs of improvement. Each class has a daily session of reading practice and instruction, and these times are well organised. Detailed assessment procedures have been introduced to give a clearer picture of pupils' needs in writing. The information is used to set targets for individuals. Pupils have a copy of their targets so they know what they need to do next. They understand these targets and want to do well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through the school because the work set for them is well planned to match the targets in their IEPs. Teaching assistants help these pupils with their work and encourage them to take part in class discussions, with a particularly good example of this noted in the Year 1/2 class. Higher attaining pupils in Year 4 are challenged well because they join Year 5 for English lessons.

58. Pupils make a sound start in learning to write so that, by the end of Year 1, most write simple sentences with correct punctuation and correct spelling of common words. However, pupils in Year 2 do not have enough opportunities to write at length. They write few long pieces of work, such as stories; more able pupils are underachieving because not enough is expected of them. Some pupils in Years 3 and 4 write too slowly, partly because they have not learned joined handwriting. Although key spellings are taught separately and tested throughout the school, pupils do not learn to check their own work for accuracy, and the use of dictionaries is inconsistent. Writing develops well in Year 5, where more time is allowed for pupils to plan, revise and correct their work. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of different effects to influence the reader, such as dramatic speech and detailed description. Overall, teachers are conscientious in marking written work, but impact is lost because pupils are not given enough time to react to marking by correcting errors and doing further work.

59. Pupils like reading. Daily reading time is used well to coach individuals and small groups. Year 2 pupils have secure skills in sounding out unfamiliar words. The reading books for younger pupils are adequate, although the scheme is not consistently extended with a range of books from

other sources to widen their experience. The choice of books for older pupils has been improved, and this has caught their interest. By Year 5, all pupils read silently with considerable concentration. They read aloud with expression and explain the meaning of the text in detail.

60. Most pupils speak well, using a good range of vocabulary and correct sentence patterns. Good relationships ensure that pupils are confident to speak in class discussions and to a larger audience in school assemblies. Most are able to explain complex ideas in all subjects. At times, pupils in Years 3 and 4 do not listen carefully enough, but teachers react firmly to keep their attention. Teachers are good listeners, spreading their questioning widely so that all are included. In the Year 5 class, video recording was used very effectively to stimulate lively performance readings of 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'.

61. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with one very good lesson seen in Year 5. Pupils achieved well in this lesson because instruction was brisk and energetic, and a stimulating range of practical activities kept them fully involved. Generally, lesson plans are detailed with clear targets. A good feature of the teaching is that different tasks are planned for groups of higher or lower attaining pupils. Topics are stimulating and often very imaginative, holding pupils' attention well. Teachers use the board effectively to note key points. Teachers and teaching assistants are quick to give encouragement and advice, so that a good work rate is maintained. Time is used well, but it was a weakness in otherwise satisfactory lessons that it was not made clear how much written work was expected or when it was to be completed and checked. Pupils' exercise books show that when a different task is set in each successive lesson, then, over time, more able pupils in particular do not produce enough work at a high enough level.

62. The management of the subject is satisfactory and is led by the headteacher during the absence of the co-ordinator.

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

63. By Year 5, pupils are confident in reading for information. Their factual accounts are generally well structured and they know how to use paragraphs. However, planning in other subjects does not consistently highlight opportunities to develop literacy skills or set tasks linked to current literacy targets, so that time is used more efficiently. As a result, written work produced in subjects such as geography, history and religious education is often too brief. Occasionally, pieces are more fully developed to good effect, as in the biographies of Alexander Graham Bell written by Years 1 and 2 in a history topic. Marking does not consistently identify weaknesses, such as incorrect spelling of key words. Library accommodation and stock are limited, restricting pupils' opportunity to find information for themselves. This is partly due to the temporary library accommodation during building works. Information and communication technology was used well in a poetry lesson where a video had been made earlier of three pairs of pupils demonstrating how to read aloud to an audience. It was an effective motivator.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Whilst test results are well below average, there are also some pupils who achieved very well.
- Standards are not as yet high as they were at the last inspection, but are improving.
- The quality of teaching is excellent in Year 5.
- The overall quality of teaching is very good and pupils know what they have to do to improve.
- Higher attaining pupils achieve well in mathematics in Years 3 to 5.
- Pupils' work is exceptionally well presented.
- There is little recorded evidence of investigative mathematics.





## Commentary

64. In 2003, standards in the National Curriculum tests in Year 2 were well below both the national average and those of similar schools. These results are accounted for by this being a small cohort consisting of pupils who had recently joined the school, were the youngest in their year group, with August birthdays, or who had special educational needs. However, a higher than expected number of pupils reached the higher Level 3, with one pupil working with an older age group. This is not reflected in the results. In this cohort, there are almost twice as many boys as girls. Boys reached higher standards than girls in 2003, although in some previous year groups the reverse has been true. Standards were slightly higher in number than in other aspects of the subject, with shape, space and measurement and investigative mathematics being well below average.

65. In the present Year 2 standards are average. This is not as high as in the last inspection when they were above average, but in both inspections the findings have been higher than the test results. In the present Year 5 standards are average, overall, with a significant number of pupils reaching above average standards half-way through the year. There was no Year 5 class at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily, overall.

66. The quality of teaching and learning is very good, overall. In Year 2, the teacher plans work very well for two age groups and a range of abilities, introducing them to mathematical vocabulary very well. Pupils offer suggestions on compiling a block graph, using a tally, naming axes and even suggesting a scale of numbers. They are keen to read information from the graphs and because of praise they not only answer, but also ask questions. Pupils from ethnic minorities are integrated well and enjoy contributing to lessons. The very good adult/pupil ratio enables all pupils to make good progress and the higher attaining pupils are challenged very well. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and make good progress.

67. In Years 3 to 5, teaching is very good, overall, and ranges from satisfactory to excellent. Where teaching and learning are excellent, as in Year 5, pupils are given a very challenging mental task at the beginning of the lesson which sets the standards expected. They thoroughly enjoy the challenge and have developed a real enjoyment and understanding of the subject, knowing how to use different strategies to find answers. For example, they have an excellent understanding of how to subtract in different ways and use the method that is most suitable to solve a given problem. They think mathematically, particularly the higher attaining pupils. Pupils also enjoy working with a partner as this helps, as well as challenges, them and they achieve well through discussing their ideas. Lower attaining pupils are well supported and work at a level suitable for their needs.

68. Higher attaining pupils from Year 4 work successfully in the Year 5 class for mathematics. Work is matched well to their needs and their levels of attainment. In the Year 3/4 class, lower attaining pupils are supported very well indeed, but more could be expected of some of average attaining pupils who are ready to work independently before the rest of the class. Assessment is not always used well and the pace of teaching is, at times, too slow.

69. The presentation of pupils' work throughout Years 3 to 5 is exceptionally good. Pupils keep a record in the front of their exercise books of the work they cover, and so are aware at which National Curriculum level they are working. This is a useful tool for monitoring pupils' progress and assessing what they can do. Whilst most aspects of mathematics are covered well, little evidence was available of investigative mathematics, other than in the Year 5 lesson observed. There are also, therefore, fewer opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in this subject by explaining their investigations. Pupils reached well below average standards in this area of mathematics in the national tests last year, but this level was not reflected in the above average standards being achieved in the Year 5 lesson.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

70. Mathematics is used particularly well in other subjects, and ICT is used well to support mathematics across the school. In all classes, computers were used during mathematics lessons to support mathematical teaching. Graphs are used in geography, for a traffic survey and for climate graphs, in design and food technology where measurement is needed, and in science, where mathematics is used extensively in different ways.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership and monitoring of science are good.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Continuity from one science unit to another and the assessment of pupils ensure that pupils are taught at the right level.
- Writing and recording in some classes require improvement.
- The marking of pupils' work is not consistent throughout the school.

### **Commentary**

71. Standards in science are well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 5. These Year 2 judgements are similar to the results of the teacher's assessments in 2003. Pupils' achievement is good across the school. Pupils in Year 2 successfully identify the way in which sound is generated, describe what they hear and record their observations. By Year 5, pupils use scientific terms to describe changes in materials, such as evaporation or filtration, and describe methods to separate simple mixtures. They achieve well because the teaching is good and the subject is well organised, led and managed. Pupils' books are monitored to ensure that the curriculum is being taught consistently, and the co-ordinator talks to pupils to identify any possible gaps in their scientific knowledge.

72. Teaching is good overall and sometimes very good for the older pupils. Teachers are confident and well supported, with a good level of expertise. In the better lessons, pupils are challenged to think in scientific terms and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are included in the discussions. Pupils are tracked to ensure that aspects of science are built systematically through the units of work and any weaker areas quickly identified. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the support and the practically based units of work.

73. Science is taught systematically through the school, ensuring that all aspects of science are met sufficiently often in order to build pupils' knowledge year-on-year. In pupils' books, investigations show the use of ICT and mathematical elements in calculations and the recording of results. In one lesson, the use of ICT provided a very good visual representation of an experiment that the pupils would undertake later in the week.

74. The presentation in pupils' books requires attention in the way investigations are recorded and work is presented. The subject is not used well to promote pupils' writing skills. When looking at pupils' books, it is clear that they are working at a high level, and in lessons they answer their teacher's questions based on a good level of scientific knowledge. This accounts for the standards found in science being higher than in writing and mathematics, especially for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils behave well, concentrate and co-operate fully throughout lessons. Pupils say they enjoy science.

75. The marking of pupils' work is good in some classes, but this is not consistent throughout the school. Where there is good practice, the linking of marking to the lesson objectives involves pupils well in their own learning and shows them how to improve.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision for ICT is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There has been very good improvement in ICT since the previous inspection.
- Standards in ICT have improved and are now average.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Information and communication technology is used well in other subjects across the school.
- The co-ordinator has a very good level of expertise and provides very good leadership and support.

### **Commentary**

76. Standards in ICT were an issue at the time of the last inspection. However, there has been significant improvement recently and pupils in Years 2 and 5 now reach average standards and achieve well. Although the teaching, planning, resources and leadership have significantly improved, there are still gaps in pupils' knowledge.

77. Teaching is good overall. Information and communication technology is used well in other subjects throughout the school and a good range of examples is seen in displays and portfolios of work, representing good achievement. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 identify objects that need instructions and 'cut and paste' their investigations using an encyclopaedia on a CD-Rom. In the one lesson seen, pupils in Year 3 and 4 were interpreting information to construct bar charts. This was an introductory lesson to a programme of continuous work throughout the week. This strategy also took place in Year 5, although the lesson was not observed. Resources and activities were designed and organised well and there was good attention paid to technical language, which was used confidently by both pupils and teachers. More able pupils in Year 4 are challenged in their work as they join Year 5 pupils for their ICT lesson, focusing on building a database. However, at times, the less able pupils in Year 3 did not understand the written task sufficiently well and required further guidance in order to progress. Pupils enjoy ICT and look forward to their next lesson.

78. The leadership and management of ICT are very good. The co-ordinator has a very good level of expertise and enthusiasm for the subject. He provides a good level of support to other staff and this results in pupils making good progress. There is an ICT club which extends pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils have used 'Movie Maker' to produce a film about their school.

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

79. In other subjects across the curriculum, ICT is used effectively to enhance and extend learning opportunities. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson a projected image using a laptop computer provided an effective scientific demonstration concerning the changes of materials. Here the very good level of expertise and use of resources extended pupils' knowledge and understanding efficiently and effectively, being appropriate for all pupils and their level of scientific knowledge. Information and communication technology was also used well in mathematics, art and design, and in geography lessons, where the Internet was used.

## HUMANITIES

Geography and history were sampled by looking at pupils' work and observing one lesson in geography. There was not enough evidence to judge the quality of provision.

80. In **geography**, work in pupils' books shows that standards meet national expectations for Years 2 and 5. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in surveying local traffic, using their numeracy skills to tally and chart types of transport. They accurately label maps of Britain and other countries. Pupils in Year 5 use the Internet to research weather patterns, and those with higher attainment write detailed accounts of the needs of travellers in different climate zones. Pupils of all abilities are included well because findings are recorded in different ways: drawing, diagrams, charts and maps as well as written accounts. Teaching was satisfactory in the one lesson seen. The lesson was well planned and resourced, challenging pupils in Year 3 and 4 to find out about weather conditions in different parts of the world, using atlases. They showed strong interest in the work, although the complexity of the task made it difficult for some to collaborate effectively.

81. No lessons were seen in **history**. Work in pupils' books shows that standards meet national expectations in Year 2 and are above expectations in Year 5. Pupils in Year 2 show a considerable understanding for their age as to the causes of the Great Fire of London and why the fire spread. Their written accounts are generally brief, but they are given enough time, such as on the topic of communication, to write detailed biographies, for example of Alexander Graham Bell. A broad study of Anglo-Saxons in Years 3 and 4 produced well-founded understanding. All pupils respond well to imaginative tasks such as creating an advertisement for a house. Lower attaining pupils are well supported by worksheets, although tasks are not always hard enough for pupils with the potential to reach higher standards. Pupils make good progress in Year 5, where coverage of aspects of Victorian life is thorough. Pupils are challenged to interpret evidence from different sources and to make detailed comparisons between conditions then and now. Higher attaining pupils achieve well, writing detailed accounts and drawing on evidence from several sources.

### Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above expectations in Year 2 and Year 5.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

### Commentary

82. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of the Easter story. Events of Palm Sunday, as seen through the eyes of an onlooker, are recorded well through imaginative writing. In discussion, they show good background knowledge of Christian traditions and beliefs. Much of their written work is brief, although it is accurate in recording facts and retelling Bible stories. Whilst the written work observed in class contributed well to pupils' literacy skills, their books show that there are missed opportunities for developing writing and ICT skills through this subject. Pupils in Year 5 have a good understanding of Christianity and a broad understanding of the main features of other world faiths. They identify significant similarities and differences between the customs and beliefs of these faiths. Their factual records are accurate, using technical terms correctly. They often show insight into the spiritual significance of religious practices and comment sensitively on them in relation to their own experiences and developing values. Through the school all pupils achieve well.

83. Teaching is good overall and one very good lesson was observed. Teaching is well planned and resourced. In the very good lesson, pupils' attention was held effectively by challenging questions that probed their recollections of precise detail of a recently visited church. This was followed by a stimulating set of slides showing a different church they are to visit soon. Pupils with

higher attainment made perceptive suggestions as to which features differed and why. Similarly, other teachers give a clear lead in instruction and discussion, showing strong personal commitment to the subject. They use resources well to demonstrate specific points and focus pupils' attention. As a result, pupils respond sensitively and with respect. A weaker element of an otherwise satisfactory lesson in Years 3 and 4 was that pupils of all levels of attainment were given the same worksheet and, as a result, some achieved too little because they talked instead of writing. School assemblies make a good contribution to pupils' understanding, mainly of Christian worship but with reference to the beliefs of other faiths. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

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

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were sampled during the inspection, so no judgement on provision is possible.

### **Art and design**

84. One lesson of art and design was observed in Year 5 and the sketchbooks of pupils in Years 3 to 5 were examined. In Year 5, art and design, especially art history, is taught well, with the result that pupils gain a good amount of background knowledge. In the lesson observed, the quality of teaching and learning was generally good, and resources were used well to inspire pupils, who discussed different portraits from the Baroque period. They then drew a portrait of their partner, who demonstrated a particular emotion. They were encouraged to draft and redraft their work, but evidence of them doing this was not actually seen. Information and communication technology was used well, with a digital camera and then a PhotoShop program used on the computer, where images could be changed, to produce similar portraits. Pupils worked competently with cameras and on computers. Pupils' sketchbooks show drawings of closely observed objects such as fruit, sometimes as seen through a viewfinder. They learn to mix different shades of colour and, during a walk through the village, draw what they see and complete rubbings. In Year 5, they have studied how to show contrast in pictures: rough and smooth, shiny and dull, straight and curved. They also know how to show movement and shade using pencils of different thickness. Sketchbooks are used well to practice teaching points. Apart from the lesson observed, there was no other evidence across the school of pupils being introduced and inspired by famous artists. Little artwork was on display.

### **Design and technology**

85. One design and technology lesson was observed and work on display was examined. Pupils had designed and made, as part of their project on the Tudors, a chair for a king or queen. Some of these were very imaginative, with pupils using a wide variety of materials, including fur and feathers. They were well designed and their sketches showed a good amount of detail and were labelled well. In Years 3 and 4, pupils were making money containers. The quality of teaching and learning was good and pupils achieved well. Pupils developed their skills well, working independently, using needles and thread. They focused well on their tasks and were also well supported by teaching assistants. Over four weeks, pupils had produced a variety of designs and learned different skills. The session at the end of the lesson was used well to evaluate their work and assess what they had found easy or difficult. Work scrutiny shows that older pupils have studied structures, and higher attaining pupils present their work very well indeed. Food technology is also covered well. For example, pupils completed research to find out the most popular ingredient to flavour biscuits with, then made them, and designed and made packaging for them. They evaluated their work very well. Evidence shows that the teaching of design and technology is thorough, and pupils show clearly how they can improve their products. Overall, teaching and learning in the subject are very good.

## **Music**

86. Two music lessons were observed, one in Years 1 and 2 taken by the class teacher and another in Years 3 and 4 taken by a visiting specialist. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in this subject. In both lessons teaching and learning were good and pupils reached above average standards, which is an improvement on the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in these lessons and achieve well, learning to take their turn with the other pupils. In Years 1 and 2, pupils thoroughly enjoy their music lessons. In the lesson observed, they enjoyed playing their own rhythm on different metal 'instruments' made from kitchen utensils. They are also able to copy a given rhythm correctly. A significant minority of pupils recognise different instruments of the orchestra when listening to music and enjoyed demonstrating how they are played. This, however, was not followed up as well as it might have been in order to teach those who did not already have this knowledge. In Years 3 and 4, pupils played four groups of 'instruments' made from junk materials; those you pluck, boxes with elastic bands; those you beat, drums made from cylindrical containers; and those you shake, containers filled with different beans or seeds. Again the lesson was very much enjoyed and groups of pupils played rhythms, coming in and stopping at the right time, as they followed a score. However, pupils tended to play their instruments when they were asked not to, during the first half of the lesson, as the teacher did not insist on their good attention until later in the lesson. This resulted in the pace of learning being slower than it could have been.

## **Physical education**

82. One lesson was observed in Year 5. In this lesson pupils were developing dodging skills and achieved satisfactorily. Teaching and learning were very good, with skills coached well and pupils reaching above average standards. Clear instructions were given and demonstration was used very well to show pupils how the skills practised should be used when playing as a team. They could throw better than they could catch. Physical education is planned for in all classes. Planning shows that in Years 1 and 2 pupils play running games, use apparatus safely and play cooperative games, using a bat and ball, to improve their sending and receiving skills.

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

87. Personal, social, health and citizenship education makes an effective contribution to pupils' attitudes and personal development. A published scheme of work is used to give teachers detailed guidance. Pupils in all classes have the opportunity to explore issues of concern in regular structured discussions called 'circle time', and throughout the curriculum. Sex and relationships education and drug awareness are included at an appropriate level. A range of visitors develops pupils' understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship. Values are promoted through this programme. The school is working towards 'healthy school' status, and younger pupils benefit from the national fruit scheme.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<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	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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