

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BUXTON JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Buxton

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112521

Headteacher: Mark Spencer

Lead inspector: Jo Cheadle

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> July 2004

Inspection number: 255688

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	223
School address:	Mosley Road Buxton Derbyshire
Postcode:	SK17 9DR
Telephone number:	01298 22156
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Uprichard

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Buxton is a medium-sized, community junior school for boys and girls who are 7-11 years old. It has 223 pupils organised in eight classes. Most of the pupils live near the school. The school serves families from a range of social circumstances but, taken together, these are similar to the national picture. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. Overall, pupils' attainment when they join Year 3 is close to that expected for their ages. Forty-five pupils, an average proportion, have been identified as having special educational needs. Most of these have moderate learning difficulties, but a few have speech and communication needs. Nine pupils, a well-above-average proportion, have statements to outline particular special needs. Almost all pupils are from white British backgrounds, and none is learning English as an additional language. The school is involved in local and national initiatives that support its development, including the Primary Leadership Programme, beginning to be part of the Healthy Schools Initiative, and sports' developments with the local high school.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23233	Jo Cheadle	Lead inspector	Science, geography, history, information and communication technology, special educational needs
9053	Viv Phillips	Lay inspector	
32306	Simon Molony	Team inspector	Mathematics, art and design, design and technology, religious education
32308	Sue Molloy	Team inspector	English, personal, social and health education and citizenship, music, physical education

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

#### **Buxton is an improving school with clear strengths. Its effectiveness is satisfactory overall.**

Good developments and improvements have taken place since the last inspection and there is a good capacity for further improvement. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory and, by the end of Year 6, standards meet the nationally expected levels. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and was good or better in a significant number of lessons observed during the inspection. Leadership and management of the school are good. The governors provide good support, challenge and advice. The school uses its finances wisely and provides satisfactory value for the money it receives.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has a fervent approach to ensuring that all pupils do as well as they can
- Staff and governors work very effectively as a team, are enthusiastic in their roles and are committed to improving the work of the school and standards attained by pupils
- Teaching in Year 6 is of a consistently good standard and, consequently, pupils' results in national tests are improving
- Work is not always matched well enough to pupils' needs and so they do not make enough progress in some lessons
- There are high levels of care, support and guidance shown to all pupils; pupils' welfare is at the heart of all that the school does
- The classrooms and other teaching areas are too small, which has a negative impact on teaching and learning in many lessons

The school was last inspected in 1998 and good progress has been made since then. The curriculum now includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and, therefore, meets statutory requirements. The work of governors also meets statutory requirements. Positive developments have encouraged effective leadership in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) and, as a result, standards have improved. The school now has a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, and this is enabling useful planning for the future. The school's improvement has been carefully steered by a very capable headteacher who has built positive staff morale.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

**Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.** Last year, the results of national tests were above average overall because the year group had a large proportion of more able pupils. By the time these pupils reached the end of Year 6, they had made satisfactory progress. Normally, attainment on entry to the school is in line with nationally expected levels. Standards in the current Year 6 are above expectations in English and mathematics, owing to good teaching in these subjects, particularly in Year 6. Standards are close to expectations in most other subjects. Given their starting points, most pupils achieve satisfactorily to reach standards that are, overall, in line with national expectations. Year 6 national test results are improving because, each year, more pupils are reaching the expected levels, or higher. Bearing in mind their starting points, pupils who have special educational needs achieve satisfactorily.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are fostered well.** Pupils, both boys and girls and pupils with different abilities, develop positive attitudes to school and learning. This is because the school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which helps pupils to develop confidence, get on with each other, learn in a positive environment and enjoy their time at school.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils.**

**Teaching is satisfactory overall and has many positive features.** Teaching is consistently good in Year 6. Teachers have good knowledge of a range of subjects, generally plan lessons well and make effective use of resources. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning successfully. In some lessons, however, work is not matched well enough to the needs of some pupils because teachers have not given enough consideration to how well pupils learned in previous lessons. On occasion, pupils' do not learn effectively because the teacher talks for too long.

A satisfactory curriculum is adequately enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities. The school is working hard and is currently reasonably successful in catering for the full range of ability of its pupils, including those with gifts and talents. Procedures to check how well pupils are doing are well established, but not enough use is made of this information to change what is taught and improve pupils' progress. Very good attention is given to pupils' care, health and safety. The school's internal accommodation is a real hindrance in ensuring that pupils learn well. Nearly all classrooms are too small and have inappropriate layouts. Some classrooms have to be used as walkways to others, and the library is part of a corridor and is too small. Outside accommodation is very good, although not always used to its full potential. The school has good relationships with many parents and satisfactory links with the local community. Partnership with the infant school is effectively promoted to aid pupils' transfer and progress.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.** The headteacher's leadership of the school is very good. His very positive vision and aspirations for the school are shared clearly and precisely with the staff and governors, who are committed to making the vision a reality. Other key staff also lead their areas effectively. They have been given the opportunity to develop their own leadership skills and recognise the contribution they must make to whole-school developments and raising pupils' achievements. Governance is good. Governors are knowledgeable, highly supportive and play an increasingly useful role in planning the school's future. Management is satisfactory. Long-term developments are planned carefully and day-to-day business is very efficient. In some subjects, however, there is not enough checking on the quality of teaching and learning so that weaknesses are identified and tackled. Administrative staff provide a very professional and friendly welcome.

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

Parents say the staff are very approachable, and the school is well led and managed, with good teaching leading to good progress. A few do not feel fully informed about how well their children are doing, but parents have no major concerns because their children like school. Pupils enjoy the friendly atmosphere and fun activities.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are

- Ensure that, through good teaching and a well-planned curriculum, work is well matched to pupils' needs so that they make as much progress as possible
- Improve the internal accommodation

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in subjects

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 6, they reach standards that are in line with nationally expected levels overall. Pupils achieve well in Year 6, particularly in English and mathematics. Bearing in mind their starting points, pupils who have special educational needs achieve satisfactorily. The past achievement of some pupils, particularly boys, has affected the overall standards they reach by the end of Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in developing literacy and numeracy skills and make good gains in Year 6, which enables them to do well in national tests
- Some pupils have not made enough progress in their earlier learning, and so they do not reach the standards they should by the end of Year 6
- By the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are better than expected
- Standards in reading have improved and pupils' reading skills are now a strength
- Standards in design and technology are better than expected
- Standards in ICT have improved, but pupils do not use and develop their skills enough through work in other subjects
- Pupils make good use of their investigative, experimental and creative skills, which has a positive impact on the development of their personal and social skills
- Cramped classrooms affect how well pupils achieve in many lessons

#### Commentary

1. The school's results in national tests have improved steadily over the last two years. A higher proportion of pupils than the national average are now reaching the expected Level 4. There was a marked improvement in results for 2003, especially in English. Results have improved because the school has focused specifically on ensuring that pupils who join Year 3 with the expected level of attainment reach the expected standard by the end of Year 6. The consistently well-planned and effective teaching in Year 6 has been instrumental in ensuring that results have improved. However, because in past years the needs of some pupils were not always fully met, they did not make enough progress before they reached Year 6. Despite making good progress in Year 6, it is sometimes impossible to make up the necessary ground to reach the expected level. This is particularly the case for some lower attaining boys.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (25.7)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.9 (27.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.5 (26.8)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. Since the last inspection, standards in mathematics, design and technology, ICT and religious education have all improved. In mathematics and design and technology, standards are now better than expected levels. These improvements have come about because work for each subject is clearly planned and subject managers have focused well on improving standards. Standards have also improved in reading as a result of a very effective whole-school development project. Not only has the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level or above in Year 6 increased (93 per cent in the 2004 tests), but pupils' attitudes to reading and their use of reading skills in other subjects is now very positive. This is encouraging standards to improve across the curriculum. Although pupils have better ICT skills than at the time of the previous inspection (standards now match the nationally



expected level overall), there are some aspects of ICT work that are more developed than others and some pupils have not learned the skills they should have learned in year groups prior to Year 6. This means that skills need to be taught in the final year at school, when pupils should be using these skills as a matter of course to aid their work and improve standards in other subjects. There was insufficient opportunity to make definite judgements about music, where standards were considered to be lower than expectations at the time of the last inspection, but inspectors witnessed pupils' singing skills, which were at least in line with expected levels.

3. Developments within the curriculum have focused well on the encouragement of pupils' creativity, investigation and experimentation skills, and the use of initiative. As reading skills improve, pupils have yet another tool that enables them to access new learning independently and think for themselves. In science, design and technology, mathematics and English, these skills are put to good use and this positively influences standards attained. The school is now harnessing pupils' good attitudes and allowing pupils increased opportunities to learn through first-hand experiences. As they do so, levels of confidence and self-esteem grow and pupils begin to learn from each other and with each other. In many lessons during the inspection, achievements were clearly hampered by cramped and inappropriate classrooms. Opportunities to work on group activities, to carry out an ongoing experiment, to think quietly and rehearse ideas, to revise a learning point that was not consolidated in a previous lesson, to make the best use of the computer as an aid to learning and to test out creative thoughts are limited by the lack of room available.

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

Pupils' attitudes are good and they behave very well. Their other personal qualities develop well as a result of good provision, overall, for spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. There are no exclusions. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality good. These factors offer a secure basis for achievement and represent good improvement since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Behaviour is of a consistently high standard that allows teaching and learning to be successful in spite of cramped classrooms
- Pupils are responsive, keen to please and happy to work hard, which helps them to make progress
- Relationships are very good and ensure that pupils treat others with care and respect because of the school's high expectations of behaviour, concern for people's feelings and knowing what is right
- Year 6 pupils enjoy responsibility and thrive on chances to show independence
- Spiritual and cultural awareness, though satisfactory, are not fostered as powerfully as pupils' other personal qualities

### **Commentary**

4. As parents indicated, pupils behave very well in school because they know exactly what is expected and try hard to follow the example set by staff and by mature pupils. They are proud when praised for trying to do their best, including the effort made by individuals to concentrate when this does not come easily. In the best lessons, pupils of all ages and backgrounds listen very carefully and follow instructions to the letter, although attention wanders sometimes when teachers talk for too long. Classrooms are small and difficult to organise for a stimulating mix of different activities. Pupils make the best of this and, when required, move to the carpet, to different tables and for a good view of the board, with minimal fuss. This ensures that valuable teaching and learning time is not wasted on reorganising groups and providing access to resources. Pupils display very good self-discipline, which is matched with thought for others, so playtimes are lively and harmonious with no sense of people being harassed or left out. As a pupil wrote, "Everyone's there for other people and there is no-one bullying".
5. Pupils are very clear that they like school and enjoy the 'fun' activities in and out of lessons, particularly in art, physical education and mathematics. As a result, they are very keen to see more competitive sport, better use of the field and more trips that draw together threads from the

curriculum with lively, practical activities. They respond well to good teaching and persist with work they find difficult, if it is presented imaginatively to inspire them to think, produce ideas or find their own solutions to problems. In a very good lesson focused on sound patterns in poetry, pupils of all abilities were stimulated to have a go with their own writing after sitting enthralled listening to the teacher reading a well-chosen poem expressively. As yet, although pupils are motivated well to work hard, they have not developed a desire to learn that sustains them fully in less successful lessons.

6. Parents and pupils commented on how friendly everyone is and how important this is for feeling happy and secure in school. Pupils are welcoming and good-natured. Their humour helps forge a cheerful atmosphere in classrooms and at play and, in one case, enough confidence to include an amusing reference to inspection in their poem 'Afternoon ends'. High quality relationships make a difference to pupils' levels of trust, willingness to 'have a go' and mutual support. This underpins learning very well.
7. Older pupils have very good opportunities to take responsibilities such as anti-bullying mentors, house captains and election officers, which they enjoy and take very seriously. The maturity of Year 6 pupils was evident during the school day and in the way they stepped in to help each other during rehearsals for the school production when leading cast members were absent visiting their new school. They relish the chance of showing initiative at work and play: 'I like the way my teacher organises things and is very confident that pupils are old enough to do things independently'.
8. The school weaves strong support for pupils' moral and social awareness through its daily life, the way teachers interact with pupils, and in experiences on trips, including the residential visit to the Whitehall Centre. It results in consistent, explicit encouragement of related skills and understanding. In contrast, the school fosters spiritual and cultural awareness less systematically. Chances are missed to fascinate and inspire pupils in lessons and through different experiences of faiths and cultures. Pupils express disappointment in stories in assembly that rarely "sound as if they are meant for (pupils) over 7 years old". Magic moments do occur, as in Year 5 when the 'Willow Pattern' story enabled pupils to feel and show remarkable empathy for the characters.

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

Authorised absence	
School data:	94.0
National data:	94.2

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	0.5
National data:	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Teaching, the curriculum and assessment procedures are all satisfactory. Good links with parents and other schools have a positive impact on school developments and pupils' learning. The school affords pupils high levels of care and welfare, so they work in a productive, happy and secure environment.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and there are clear strengths that enable pupils to learn well in many lessons. In general, teachers make satisfactory use of the information they gather about how well pupils are doing; this helps them to make plans for future learning. There are some examples of very effective use of assessment information, which help pupils learn quickly.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good in Year 6 and there are many examples of good and very good teaching throughout the school; there are, however, too few opportunities for teachers to learn from each other's good practice
- Teachers have good knowledge of a range of subjects, generally plan lessons well and make effective use of resources
- In some lessons, work is not matched well enough to the needs of some pupils because teachers have not given enough consideration to how well pupils learned in previous lessons
- Teaching assistants successfully support pupils' learning
- Pupils learn basic numeracy and literacy skills effectively and this enables them to make more progress in other subjects
- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and help them to behave well
- Pupils do not learn effectively when teachers talk for too long

### Commentary

9. All the teaching observed was at least satisfactory and the proportion of good and very good teaching has increased since the last inspection. Improvements to teaching have been good overall, and all teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge to do their job well. Good and very good teaching was observed in lessons throughout the school, but teaching was consistently of a high standard in Year 6. In this year group, the outstanding feature of teaching is the teachers' very thorough knowledge of the individual needs of pupils and a determined response to meet these needs through the provision for very appropriate work. As a result, pupils learn well in Year 6 and gain experiences, knowledge and skills that prepare them very well for future education. While there is clear evidence that many teachers have significant strengths, there are too few opportunities for them to see each other in action and learn as a team. The school has, within its own resources, the means of improving all teaching so that learning is consistently good and pupils achieve well.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (4%)	7 (23%)	4 (13%)	18 (60%)	0	0	0

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

10. A common strength of teaching is good subject knowledge. This is clear from teachers' detailed planning, which often covers the eventuality of questions being posed by pupils that may take learning one step further. It is very obvious that, if teachers do not know enough about an aspect of a subject, they find out. This gives them an added push to seek the right resources to support pupils' learning, and these resources are generally well used. Where teaching assistants are available, they are effectively guided and used to make maximum impact on pupils' progress. However, the school's decision to use teaching assistants in Year 3 only means that necessary support for

individuals in other classes is seriously lacking and this affects learning. This is particularly noticeable for older pupils who have special education needs, and lower attaining ability set-groups. While the teacher may have a very clear understanding of pupils' needs, and makes use of an individual learning programme, it is often unrealistic to expect that the needs of all pupils can be met in a lesson without the support of a well-guided teaching assistant who pursues particular targets for an individual or group. Moreover, the school's effective approach to teaching basic skills in literacy and numeracy is not supported by the current situation because, if pupils need to revisit basic skills learning in Years 5 and 6, which is often the case for lower attaining pupils, there is no flexibility to provide extra adults to teach groups.

11. Teachers have a great respect for the pupils and care about them very much. Pupils know this and respond respectfully in return. Although some pupils find it hard to behave well all the time, teachers deal with this in a very calm and positive manner so that pupils learn how to behave and their self-esteem and confidence are not thwarted. It is all credit to teachers' effective classroom management skills that good behaviour is maintained because, at times, the sheer frustration of working in a cramped space is visibly seen on the faces of the older pupils in particular. However, pupils have learned what is expected of them and there are very few occasions when frustrations result in poor behaviour. At times, when teachers talk for too long, pupils can become restless and their attention wanders. While this does not generally affect their behaviour, it is very obvious that they have switched off to learning and their overall achievement will be affected. Teachers often talk for too long with the best of intentions; they want to make sure that everyone knows exactly what they must do and can work confidently and independently. However, it is sometimes not recognised that repeating instructions to the class can result in individuals slipping into a daydream where they actually forget what they already knew.
12. In a number of lessons observed, even though learning was satisfactory, the work was not matched well enough to pupils' needs. As assessment procedures have improved, teachers have been able to gather a good range of information about what pupils know and can do. The next step – transferring this information into a plan of what pupils need to learn next – is in its early stages, but there are good examples of where this is done very effectively, as in Year 6. Teachers recognise this as an area for improvement and are very keen to teach pupils exactly what they need to learn to make good progress.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory and is appropriately enriched by activities outside lessons. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in ensuring that all subjects of the National Curriculum are now taught. The match of teachers to the curriculum is satisfactory, as are resources for learning, but the accommodation and the number of support staff are unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All subjects are well planned, with an appropriate focus on developing skills in English and mathematics
- In some lessons, the curriculum is not appropriate to the needs of individual pupils
- The curriculum for design and technology is good
- There are not enough support staff to ensure that pupils always learn effectively
- The school's internal accommodation is unsatisfactory
- There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education

### **Commentary**

13. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and there are well-planned schemes of work for all subjects. Attention has been given to raising standards in mathematics and English, and this focus on the development of core skills is improving standards across the board. This is especially the case in reading, where a school-wide project has been successful in raising standards by the end of Year 6. The curriculum for design and technology has improved very well since the last inspection. Then, standards were below expectations, but now pupils attain standards

that are better than would be expected by the end of Year 6. The school gives suitable regard to providing equal access to what is taught. However, curriculum development is not yet firmly based on ensuring that what is taught is entirely appropriate to individual needs. The school is aware of this and, because there is now a solid base to work from (the curriculum is now fully in place, which is good improvement since the last inspection), future developments are already planned to ensure that work is better matched to the needs of all pupils.

14. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Pupils are supported by useful individual education programmes, and general class work is often adapted well to help them reach their targets. Where teaching assistants are available, they are used effectively to support pupils who have special educational needs and other groups of pupils. However, there are not enough teaching assistants to support the increasing number of pupils who require specific help, or to support pupils across the full range of abilities. Moreover, because the school's internal accommodation is inappropriately designed, there is too little space in classrooms for teachers or teaching assistants to work with individuals without disturbing the rest of the class or causing the already cramped conditions to be even more cramped. In some classrooms there is not enough room for the teacher to move between pupils without disturbing others. Practical activities and creative and investigative work are severely hindered by the accommodation. The school has a well-established computer suite and large and attractive grounds.
15. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. The school has a good programme of work for sex and relationships education and to teach about healthy living and drugs abuse. The good work done in personal, social and health education throughout the school contributes to the majority of pupils being socially confident and emotionally mature young people when they leave the school.
16. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities suitably enriches the curriculum. Specialist music teachers give lessons for a range of instruments, and the school has an orchestra and choir. The orchestra has participated in the Buxton Well Dressing Festival and other local events. The choir sings at the local church at Christmas time. Although the current provision is satisfactory, the school recognises there are further opportunities for greater involvement in arts' activity within the community. There is a sports' club for pupils in Years 3 to 5, a lunchtime jogging club, a Year 6 football club and a table-tennis club. In addition, a computer club is popular with Year 6 pupils. Older pupils participate in an annual residential trip.

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

The school gives a high priority to caring for its pupils' welfare, health and safety, which it does very well. It gives satisfactory support to pupils in the way it uses assessment information to track and guide their progress. The school is good at inviting pupils to express their views, taking note of their suggestions and acting on these. The overall quality of care for pupils has improved well since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school takes great care of pupils' everyday well-being so they feel safe and happy
- Relationships are very good, fostering a high degree of trust that ensures pupils have someone to turn to when necessary
- At its best, support for different groups of pupils focuses sharply on helping them to do as well as they can, although it is not linked consistently to particular steps pupils should take to improve
- Pupils' views are valued and have a real impact on changes made in school life, although chances for them to be involved in assessing and improving their own learning are more limited

### **Commentary**

17. The school is concerned for the welfare of all pupils, regardless of abilities and home circumstances, so it does all it can to ensure that they are happy, free from harm and grow in confidence. It has the required policies and procedures in place, including arrangements for child protection, to guide its pastoral work successfully. It takes particular care of pupils who are unwell,

with meticulous attention to providing enough staff with up to date first aid training. Staff know families and children and their different needs very well. This helps to ensure that the school safeguards and cares for all its pupils very well.

18. Pupils are very confident that they can get help when they need it: "I can go to a teacher or a friend if I'm worried". They praise the friendly relationships in school that inspire trust, so if appropriate "would go to anti-bullying mentors". As a result of this very positive, supportive atmosphere, pupils settle in well, feel secure, are happy to ask questions and are comfortable about asking for help if they need it.
19. The school has improved the way it tracks pupils' progress, although the resulting information is used with different degrees of success. This is because plans for what different pupils are expected to learn are not fine-tuned automatically to take into account recent progress and the next set of activities. This leads to useful encouragement and general support from teachers and assistants, but not always the decisive help an individual needs to make a real breakthrough in a subject. In the most successful lessons, where work matches different needs closely, the advice pupils receive is often just right for rapid progress. This was seen in a Year 3 literacy lesson when the teacher was very precise about the importance of correct spelling for first rate written work so used lots of prompts and written reminders of key spelling rules on the board. "I like the way if you're stuck on a spelling you get help very quickly".
20. Reports and school documents lack comments and contributions from pupils. This is a missed opportunity to involve pupils further in their learning and the school's life. The school has an active school council whose representatives are elected in the autumn term and which has influenced how bullying is dealt with, changes in school dinners and resources for play. All pupils are encouraged to contribute to question and answer sessions in class so feel that their views are important. Year 6 pupils persuaded staff to give a boy a chance to stand in for an absent classmate: "Come on! Let him have his moment!" which they did. The fact that adults listen to children makes them feel involved and appreciative – "My teacher is amazing!"

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

The school has fostered a good partnership with parents successfully. Its links with local schools are good. Links with the local and wider community are satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has worked hard to strengthen links with all parents by good efforts to consult them and involve them more in its life
- The school has made good efforts to forge effective links with the infant and secondary schools to help pupils settle well when they change school
- The school is very well aware of what it needs to do to strengthen links with the local and wider community and has already taken steps to improve these and their impact on pupils' achievement
- Information for parents is generally of good quality although, as parents said, formal documents are often dull and unlikely to inspire volunteers to come forward to do more for the school

### **Commentary**

21. Parents praised the school for the work it has done to make them feel welcome. They think the school does a good job and has created a good working partnership with them. The headteacher and other staff are readily available to them before and after school. "There is always a warm welcome and friendly, efficient service at the front office". The school has checked parents' levels of satisfaction and suggestions for improvement and taken action to respond, with changes to homework, better toilets and playground facilities and more clubs. To deal with different views about uniform, a new logo and sweatshirt were introduced after discussion with the school council. The school recognises that further work remains to be done to help parents who are more reluctant to become involved with school events and their children's learning and to ensure that homework is

managed well enough for everyone to value it. Parents say that their queries are dealt with thoroughly and think highly of the school for its kindness and compassion in handling problems.

22. The school has worked well with the infant school to find ways of ensuring that pupils' transfer is smooth and their progress sustained. To this end there has already been a combined meeting for governors of the two schools and joint social activities such as last year's Fun Day. Literacy and numeracy co-ordinators meet, and the schools have produced a common writing assessment booklet. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils enjoyed 'taster' days at the secondary school, which now has sports college status so links are strengthening further. These positive relationships and good links help to build pupils' confidence and a firm foundation for secure progress.
23. The school has been astute in planning for more extensive community links because the head teacher has expertise in how this enriches pupils' experiences. He is overseeing thorough groundwork, including potential links with a city school to extend awareness of cultural diversity. The school knows it also has scope for a more active role in its local community whose reputation for valuing the arts is very high. Pupils have taken part in the Well Dressing Festival, performed in musical events and plans are in hand for sharing more music and other activities with local senior citizens. The local football club uses the school site and the athletics club takes an after-school club regularly.
24. The school is committed to better communication so a web site is under construction. It has not made the most of notice boards, written material and publicity to inform and involve parents fully. Although parents have a good idea of what is happening in school, formal documents such as the prospectus and governing body's annual report are not as lively as those produced in many other schools. The lack of contributions from pupils reduces their appeal for parents. Annual progress reports give a clear picture of general progress, usually in parent-friendly language. For example, "X has really come alive in mathematics this year and has shown every sign of enjoying the subject immensely".

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The school is well led. The headteacher provides very good leadership and the work of key members of staff is effective. Governance is good. Management is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school evaluates its performance very well and makes good plans to improve
- The school's finances are very well managed
- The headteacher is a very successful leader
- Leadership and management of English, mathematics and ICT are good
- There is too little monitoring in other subjects, to help identify strengths and deal with weaknesses in pupils' learning

### **Commentary**

25. The governing body, led by a very knowledgeable chair, plays a significant role in shaping the direction of the school. Governors are actively involved in the school's work, from financial management to curriculum development, giving time to work closely with curriculum managers and the headteacher. They know the school very well and play a full role in strategic planning. This has provided a sense of full involvement and is a very good model for the future. School self-evaluation is very important to the headteacher and governors and action plans are regularly discussed in governors' meetings. As a result, governors have identified that the school is increasingly focused on pupils' learning. Policy decisions are grown from discussions, analysis of data, LEA reports and national trends. Governors ask searching questions so have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
26. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. In the two years since his appointment, he has brought stability to the school and instilled a renewed sense of confidence and teamwork. His energy and enthusiasm are infectious. He has very successfully shared his vision for the school with staff

and governors, and gained their unanimous support. Plans are sharply focused, with high expectations that things will improve quickly. A good example of this is the identification of the need to improve reading motivation as a key factor in raising standards across the curriculum for all pupils. In response, the deputy head and the standards manager created a very effective reading project, which is already having a marked impact on standards. The leadership of other key members of staff is good. There is a clear, shared vision for improvement across all areas of the school.

27. The management of the school is satisfactory overall, and the headteacher provides a strong management framework. He rigorously monitors the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics and English and uses the school's performance management procedures to set targets for teachers' personal development and school improvement. The regular tracking of pupils' achievements, making teachers accountable for the pupils' progress, is an important development. Subject managers' checking on the quality of teaching and learning is good in English, mathematics and ICT. There are good examples within these subjects of effective procedures that have led to realistic and systematic improvement. Management is satisfactory in other subjects and for pupils who have special educational needs. Although action plans have been drawn up for development, at the moment there is insufficient checking on the quality of provision in these subjects, which would enable the school to identify areas for improvement with certainty. However, the school has correctly identified that this practice needs to be developed. This is a strong foundation for sustainable improvement.
28. The school's finances are well managed. The finance committee carefully monitors school expenditure and prepares structured draft budgets based on identified needs. This has enabled the school to maintain appropriate levels of teaching staff and ensure improvements identified are fully funded. Governors and school staff have a good understanding of how to obtain the best value for their spending.

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	538,044	Balance from previous year	24,388
Total expenditure	544,963	Balance carried forward to the next	17,468
Expenditure per pupil	2,444		

29. In 1998, when the school was last inspected, management was sound, subject monitoring by co-ordinators was unsatisfactory and governance was satisfactory. In all areas, leadership and management are better than six years ago. Good improvement has been made in the governance and leadership of the school.



## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS**

### **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2**

#### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is good.

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

- Pupils achieve well in English overall and do well in national tests
- Speaking, listening and reading skills are well developed
- The quality of teaching is good and pupils learn well
- Work in some year groups is not always well matched to the needs of individuals because assessment information is not used consistently to support planning
- Leadership and management of the subject are good

#### **Commentary**

30. In the 2003 national tests, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level or above was much higher than the national average. Attainment at the higher Level 5 was very good and improved the school's scores significantly. Compared with schools with pupils of a similar ability on entry, the tests results were average. Historically, girls have done better than boys in national tests, but in 2003 boys and girls did equally well. Test results have improved since the last inspection.
31. Standards in Years 3 to 5 are in line with national expectations. Work seen during the inspection shows that, in the current Year 6, standards are above expectations. This is because of very good teaching in this year group. Current achievement of pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, is good overall and in some lessons very good.
32. Most pupils in all classes are confident speakers, showing levels of attainment that are often above expectations for their age. This is evident both in lessons and during informal discussions between teachers and pupils and pupils themselves. They listen attentively and speak clearly, with well-developed vocabulary, and are confident to share their ideas with others. During a reading workshop in Year 6, pupils discussed their feelings about the book in a mature and perceptive way, giving reasoned explanations for their views. Opportunities to develop these skills are planned for effectively in all lessons. Pupils read well. The average and higher attaining pupils use a full range of strategies when reading, helping them to gain understanding and to read with expression. They enjoy reading, read at home and at school, and express opinions about books, authors and characters within books. Standards are being strengthened by the introduction of a reading project to develop pupils' interest in reading and improve reading skills. Within these sessions, pupils read a wide range of texts including fiction, plays, poetry, brochures and leaflets. They use ICT to find information by asking the right questions and scanning for the particular piece of data. Recent evaluations of the project are very positive, particularly concerning pupils' attitudes to reading. Pupils say that the reading sessions are among the most popular of lessons. New reading schemes supplemented by 'real books' have been introduced to form a graded class library for home school reading. This ensures that pupils read books with sufficient challenge. In writing, pupils are taught a wide range of skills to strengthen and extend sentence structure, widen vocabulary and expressive language, and develop awareness of the different forms and purposes for writing. Examples were seen of stories, letters, poetry, recounts and informed arguments. Good habits are being taught and reinforced in handwriting and, by Year 6, pupils have developed a fluent, joined style. However, pupils' books in some year groups show that work is not always matched well to pupils' abilities and all pupils carry out the same activities. As a result, writing does not develop as quickly as it should.
33. Teaching is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use skilful questioning to elicit thoughtful responses from pupils. Where teaching is good or better, teachers ensure that all pupils are challenged to achieve well and tasks within the lessons are given clear time frames. In an excellent Year 6 lesson, the teacher inspired pupils with a highly effective range of methods and high expectations. Achievement was outstanding in this lesson because every pupil was carefully

included in the discussions and all ideas were considered thoughtfully, both by pupils and teacher. As the lesson progressed, pupils grew in confidence and were excited about their learning, becoming engrossed in their own writing as they drafted a paragraph. Their work resulted in pupils learning and using complex sentences and manipulating clauses to achieve different effects. In general, lessons are well planned and all teachers share learning objectives with pupils. These are then reviewed in the discussion at the end of the lesson to see how well pupils have learned. As a result, teachers and pupils have a clear idea of how well they have done and areas where they need further attention. In a very good lesson in Year 3, pupils sat in hushed silence while the teacher read the poem 'Morning' by Grace Nichols. They were enthralled and enthused to write their own poem using onomatopoeia. All pupils achieved very well because the teacher effectively recognised and responded to their individual needs. Teachers mark work regularly and sometimes offer advice for improvement. However, pupils are not given time to respond to the comments and improve their work. Self-assessment and working with a partner to evaluate work is beginning to be used and pupils are encouraged to proof read and edit their work. The good strategies for teaching literacy skills have a direct effect on pupils' good attitudes to English. They behave very well when they work as part of a group or independently. They persevere with tasks and have very positive attitudes to reading and writing activities.

34. Leadership and management of English are good. The quality of teaching and pupils' work has been checked rigorously to identify current standards and priorities for development. Procedures for tracking pupils' progress are in place, but not yet used consistently. A good action plan shows what the school is currently doing to raise standards, and future priorities have a clear sense of direction. The library has been improved since the last inspection and reading trolleys are available in all classes. As it is situated in part of a corridor, however, the library is not the most attractive of spaces and not a good example of the school's positive emphasis on developing good reading habits. In general, the school's desire to stimulate pupils' imagination and creativity in spoken and written word is restricted by a lack of space in classrooms, which limits the sort of activities that teachers can plan.

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

35. The development of language and literacy across the curriculum is good. Pupils' achievement in language and literacy is particularly good through personal, social and health education, design and technology, history and geography. In a good design project on making pop-up books, pupils researched different styles, identified their audience, planned and wrote their stories and evaluated the outcome. The school has made good progress in developing English provision since the last inspection; as a result, achievement, particularly of older pupils, has improved and there is evidence of high standards in English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have risen consistently since 2001 and higher attaining pupils do particularly well in national tests
- Teaching and learning are good overall
- The subject is well led and managed
- There is insufficient flexibility in the curriculum to meet the learning needs of all pupils

### **Commentary**

36. National test results have improved steadily over the past three years. In 2003, more pupils reached the expected level or above than the national average, and the large proportion of pupils who gained the higher Level 5 positively influenced results. Standards in the current Year 6 are better than expected levels and pupils achieve well. This is because teaching has improved throughout the school as a result of a clear focus on raising standards. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, though opportunities are sometimes missed to challenge and extend the highest attaining pupils and to ensure that lower attaining pupils have work that is well matched to

their ability. Some lower attaining pupils, including those who have special educational needs, do not achieve well enough in lessons because there are not enough teaching assistants to provide additional support for their learning.

37. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers' planning for lessons is thorough and often highly detailed. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. Learning intentions are usually shared effectively with the pupils at the beginning of lessons and teachers often successfully revisit the learning intention toward the end of lessons to assess the pupils' progress. Resources are used effectively to support learning. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, as are relationships between teachers and pupils. Teachers have good knowledge of pupils' attainment in statutory and optional tests and this information is used well to plan future learning. Teachers do not, however, use their ongoing knowledge of pupil's progress as effectively to plan and design tasks that are well matched to pupils' ability. Where teaching is very good, teachers maintain a lively pace and actively involve pupils in practical activities. Where teaching is satisfactory, but has weaknesses, groups of pupils are often inactive for a significant period of time and their progress is limited. In lessons throughout the school, pupils work in groups organised by ability. Where these arrangements are most successful, teachers plan work that reflects what the pupils already know, understand and can do and what they need to learn next. In some lessons, however, pupils in different ability groups do the same work and on occasions work is too hard for some pupils and too easy for others.
38. The subject is well led and managed, which has made a significant contribution to the good improvements in mathematics since the last inspection. Test results are analysed carefully, and the outcomes used to focus on improvements for the coming year. Group targets for pupils' attainment have been introduced, together with effective systems to track their progress through the national curriculum levels. Teachers' planning is monitored half-termly but, unlike last year, there has been little checking on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. Opportunities to improve teaching and learning further are, therefore, not being pursued rigorously enough.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

39. Although standards are above expectations in mathematics, the use of these skills to aid and improve work in other subjects is currently satisfactory. The use and development of mathematics skills are not planned consistently in work in other subjects.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- National test results improved considerably in 2003
- Good attention is paid to the development of investigative and experimental skills, but the lack of space in classrooms significantly affects standards in some aspects of practical work
- Pupils are enthusiastic in science and their efforts with extended research are admirable

### **Commentary**

40. More pupils reached the expected level or above in national science tests last year (2003) than in previous years. This meant that the school's results were above the national average, but below average compared with other schools where pupils started with similar levels of attainment. This is indicative of the steady improvements that have been made in the provision for science since the last inspection. There is now a much clearer focus on the standards that pupils achieve and whether these standards are good enough. Tests results for 2004, although not verified at present, indicate that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level has been maintained and this is positive. Inspection evidence, however, shows that standards in the current Year 6 are close to expectations and that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. A clear improvement in science has been the attention paid to the development of investigative and experimental skills. Pupils confidently pose questions for investigation and have a good understanding of how experiments must be organised to reach reliable conclusions. They set their work out clearly and accurately so that results can be analysed and conclusions drawn. Answering their own questions or hypotheses through investigation is ensuring

that pupils reach higher standards in many aspects of science work. However, opportunities to carry out practical work are seriously affected by a lack of space in most classrooms. Most importantly, it is virtually impossible to carry out an ongoing experiment where results are gathered over a period of time because there is no room to leave equipment and test subjects in a safe place.

41. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. At times, lessons that are planned well turn out to be satisfactory in delivery. This is because teachers cannot teach the lesson in the way they would like to, owing to lack of space. This was clearly exemplified in a Year 3 lesson where pupils were learning about materials that are translucent, transparent or opaque. The teacher had prepared very good resources to allow pupils to demonstrate their existing knowledge about shadows and light. She used this opportunity to check how well pupils had understood from the previous lesson, and worked with those who needed more support. She used an example given by one group, who had moved further on in their understanding, to improve the learning of the whole class. However, the effort that went into teaching this lesson was far greater than the reward, simply because there was not enough room to work in groups, move between desks and make the best use of resources. The teacher managed the lesson very well and pupils achieved well, but it is difficult for teachers to put this much effort into each lesson and, therefore, overall standards are inevitably affected. The limitations of the accommodation do not dampen pupils' enthusiasm for science and they approach testing situations with great gusto. Older pupils are very keen to take their learning further by researching in their spare time and at home. Projects completed at home are used well by teachers to aid learning for all in lessons. Pupils behave very well in lessons and are keen to learn.
42. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. A focus on improving pupils' experimental and investigation skills has brought about good results and this will continue to be a priority. However, management has not yet established a clear enough understanding of how well pupils are doing in all year groups, or provided the necessary challenge and support for teachers so that they can improve pupils' levels of attainment. This is essential to ensure that pupils make effective progress in all lessons and that achievement is good rather than satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

Provision in ICT is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's computer suite is well equipped and effectively used
- Pupils are confident in their use of computer hardware and programs, but do not always use their growing skills to aid and improve work in other subjects

### **Commentary**

43. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement in the provision for ICT, even though standards remain in line with national expectations, as was reported in 1998. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school has kept abreast of national changes to the programmes of study for the subject and responded well to the increasingly high expectations for the development and application of ICT skills. As a result, teachers' skills have developed and improved and national training opportunities have been used well. Teachers are keen to learn so they can teach more effectively and, therefore, standards are being maintained at the nationally expected levels. The school has a well-equipped computer suite and a good range of programs and resources that develop understanding and skills. Teachers use the suite regularly and effectively to teach new skills. Pupils' work demonstrates good application of skills for a given purpose. However, while pupils are confident and capable of demonstrating these skills on request, they do not always make the best use of them when working independently and in other subjects.
44. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. As teachers' skills and confidence grow, they provide more stimulating and challenging ICT tasks for pupils, which engage their interest and enthusiasm and have a positive impact on achievements. The subject is well led. Leadership is strengthened by good skills and knowledge, a candid and realistic overview of the subject's strengths and weaknesses, and many ideas of how to improve the provision. Managing these ideas into a coherent plan of attack with clear targets and expected outcomes is the current priority. Management is satisfactory and is

largely in response to problematic situations rather than long-term plans. Management is acutely aware that knee-jerk response to technical hitches often interferes with time for subject development and there are plans to employ a technical support assistant in the future.

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

45. ICT skills are used and developed satisfactorily across the curriculum. This is, however, still an area for improvement because pupils do not always make the best use of their, often good, ICT skills as a tool to help learning in other subjects. In many lessons, this is because computers are not readily accessible, due to lack of space in classrooms for spontaneous movement. Generally, however, the use and development of ICT in other subjects is not consistently planned for.

### **HUMANITIES**

46. Due to inspection priorities and limited time, work in **history** was not inspected in detail. From work samples and discussions with pupils, it is evident that the full programme of study is covered and pupils develop a suitable understanding of events in the past, why they happened and the consequences of their occurrence. The subject is suitably planned and regularly taught.

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is satisfactory.

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

- The curriculum is well balanced between learning geographical facts and investigating geographical issues
- Pupils learn effectively from residential opportunities, but not enough use is made of the local environment to support learning
- Work on environmental issues effectively supports pupils' personal and social development and aids their understanding of good citizenship

#### **Commentary**

47. By Year 6, standards in geography are in line with expected levels and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. They have suitable opportunities to compare their local area with places further a field. They learn geographical facts through the development of practical geographical skills that they put to use in investigations and research projects. Pupils learn about physical geography, such as the different climates of the world, and some aspects of human geography, such as population movement around the world. They have too few opportunities to study the way different people live around the world, but this is an improving aspect of the school's approach to multi-cultural themes. Good use is made of residential opportunities for pupils in Years 6 to apply their geographical skills and knowledge in a practical setting. They understand the relevance of the skills they have been taught in school by putting them into practice in real-life situations, such as using direction and following a map. These opportunities also positively promote pupils' personal and social skills. Through work about the environment and man's impact upon it, pupils develop a clear understanding of good citizenship and their role in protecting the world.
48. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Standards and the quality of teaching have been satisfactorily maintained since the last inspection. There is now a clear programme of study to support teachers. The subject is appropriately led and managed and sufficient attention has been given to keeping the provision at a satisfactory level, despite not being a priority development area for the school in the past two years. A firm foundation has now been built from which to make further improvements, and one of the school's priorities is to develop a much more imaginative approach to the use of the rich local environment for more frequent local studies and research.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is satisfactory.

### Main strengths

- The religious education curriculum has a good focus on a range of faiths
- Pupils show maturity in responding to religious issues
- The quality of pupils' discussion of religious matters is good
- The quality of teaching and learning observed was good

### Commentary

49. By Year 6, standards are broadly in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection and the quality of teaching and learning was good in both. Pupils achieved well in these lessons because teachers' subject knowledge was good and they planned their lessons well. Across the school, teachers provide a wide range of stimulating work for the pupils. In Year 3, pupils study different forms of writing in The Bible, demonstrating a good understanding of psalm, proverb and parable. In Year 6, pupils study the role of music in religion and have opportunities to discuss and reflect on various types of religious music. Further work takes place on studying religious buildings and religious books. Pupils speak knowledgeably about the differences between the Qu'ran, the Torah and The Bible.
50. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Management has produced a well-planned scheme of work (currently in draft) that is a mix of the locally agreed syllabus and national guidelines. Teachers' planning is monitored each half-term, but there is no checking on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons, or scrutiny of pupils' work, to identify ways in which pupils' learning can be improved. Resources and books to support learning are satisfactory and reflect the school's approach to developing the pupils' awareness of world faiths.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

51. Although neither **art and design** nor **music** was inspected fully, owing to lack of time and opportunity (the inspection was carried out during the penultimate week of term, when pupils in Year 6 visited new secondary schools and were involved in practice for a final school performance), there were opportunities to hear pupils singing in assemblies and performance practices and witness the first staging of the Year 6 concert. This was a tremendous performance that clearly gave evidence of pupils' enthusiasm, confidence and artistic talents. The singing and acting skills of individual pupils were positively promoted, and the self-esteem of pupils who find other subjects difficult was enormously enhanced as they took starring roles. Singing was generally of a standard better than would be expected at the end of Year 6. Most notable was the involvement and participation of every pupil throughout the whole performance. Boys and girls alike gave of their all. Parents and other members of the audience joined in enthusiastically and were coaxed and cajoled by the stars of the show. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Additionally, artwork is in ample evidence throughout the school and is of an above-average standard. Work on display is colourful, imaginative and very interesting to look at. Creative display techniques are used to maximise the impact of good quality work.

### Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and, by the end of Year 6, standards are better than expected
- The process of designing, making and evaluating is comprehensively covered
- The subject has a high profile in each year group
- Accommodation restrictions hinder projects that are in the process of being made

## **Commentary**

52. Although only one lesson was observed, which was good, it is clear from a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils that very good progress has been made since the last inspection, when the subject was judged unsatisfactory. Pupils experience the full range of the National Curriculum, including work with a wide range of materials. They investigate every day items and see how they can improve them. Standards are better than expectations in most year groups.
53. Based on discussions with pupils and evidence of their past work, teaching and learning are good. In Year 6, pupils design and make a bridge and form a company to do so. Pupils take the roles of managing director, chief engineer and chairman of the board. The bridges produced are the end product of a stimulating process. In Year 4, pupils design and decorate chairs and invite pupils and staff to say whether the design reflects the personality of the owner of the chair. For example, chairs are made for The White Witch from the Narnia stories, Harry Potter and a Native American Indian chief. Year 4 also build toys that incorporate electrical circuits and a pressure switch. In Year 5, pupils make a working model that incorporates a cam. Year 3 pupils design and make puppets, and use mathematical skills well when designing the 'nets' for sweet boxes.
54. Following the last inspection, the subject became a priority for improvement. The subsequent focus on improving teaching and raising standards has been effective. Good leadership and management have had a significant impact on raising standards, particularly the support provided for teachers by better curriculum planning. The subject is well resourced. However, the lack of space in school and classrooms hinders the storage of projects that are being made and the display of finished work.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities
- Encouraging teamwork is a recurrent theme in lessons and supports pupils' learning well
- Large gymnastic equipment in the hall is unsatisfactory in quality and variety

## **Commentary**

55. Standards are close to those expected for pupils' ages and their achievement is satisfactory. Standards are similar to those found at the previous inspection and so satisfactory improvement has been made since that time. In all the lessons seen, there was a good focus on promoting pupils' personal and social development. Pupils co-operated well in paired work and in group activities, taking opportunities to encourage one another to improve by evaluating performance. This supports the school's overall aims and values very well.
56. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall, and was very good in the best lessons observed. In Years 3 and 4, pupils show an awareness of space around them, have reasonable ball control and hand/eye co-ordination, and are developing good skills to play team games. Pupils achieve well because the teaching is planned carefully to build on their developing skills. Teaching in a dance lesson for Year 6 was very good because skills had been built up over a number of weeks and the teacher was very confident and enthusiastic. Pupils had previously worked out a basic dance and this lesson was about injecting more creativity to their performance as groups. Each group of five or six pupils worked as a team to create an original piece of work, which they performed confidently. Pupils were highly motivated and achieved very well. Learning was very good in this lesson because sequences, control and listening skills all improved. Resources are satisfactory. The grounds are extensive and provide good opportunities for outside activities. Large equipment in the hall, however, does not provide the variety and quality of opportunities pupils' need to develop their gymnastic skills. A broad curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to develop skills in a wide range of games and disciplines. A tennis coach provides valuable, extra support and professional development for staff, which improves their teaching skills.

57. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Teaching and learning have been observed as part of the performance management process and teachers' development needs are being addressed. Training by the sports' college has been organised to increase teachers' skills and confidence.

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

58. Only one lesson was seen in this subject and there was no past work completed by the pupils that could be used to evaluate the standards achieved. As a result, it was not possible to make judgements about pupils' achievements or the quality of teaching and learning. The curriculum section of this report evaluates provision for pupils' personal, social and health education as good.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

