

# INSPECTION REPORT

## CHERRY HINTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND INFANT SCHOOL

Cherry Hinton

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110801

Headteacher: Mrs D Brading

Lead inspector: John Messer

Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> November 2003

Inspection number: 255773

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant School  
School category: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 3-7 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 178

School address: High Street  
Cherry Hinton  
Cambridge  
Postcode: CB1 9HH

Telephone number: 01223 568834  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Rev. Chris Boulton

Date of previous inspection: June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Children attend the nursery class either for the morning or afternoon sessions. There are a further six classes in the school, two for each year group. Pupils come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. Most children arrive at school with standards of development that are below average. Most pupils are from white English speaking families although around a fifth are from ethnic minority backgrounds, which is above the national average. The mother tongue of a large proportion, around 17 per cent, is a language other than English. Pupils speak 19 different languages. This is a high number. A small proportion, around 3 per cent, are at an early stage of learning English. An average proportion of pupils, around a fifth, are entered on the school's record of special educational needs and of these a small number have statements of special educational need because they need considerable help with their learning. The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school part way through this stage of their education is above average. As this school has spare capacity, children are sometimes placed here whilst waiting for a place in their oversubscribed local schools. The school received an Activemark Award in 2001 in recognition of its performance in physical education and a Healthy School validation in 2003 for its work in encouraging healthy life styles.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15477	John Messer	Lead inspector	Mathematics, art and design, design and technology, English as an additional language.
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18360	Cecelia Davies	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, English, music, religious education.
27523	Graham Jones	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, geography, history, special educational needs.

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

**This school provides pupils with a sound standard of education and a well developed curriculum in a caring, friendly and happy environment.** Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school has faced significant difficulties in recent years, associated with a falling roll and marked changes in the characteristics of pupils entering the school. There are now more pupils who arrive at the school with very limited English speaking skills and fewer pupils with above average levels of attainment. Consequently, although pupils achieve satisfactorily, the standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 2 have fallen in recent years. However, there are now signs of an improvement and standards have begun to rise. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is good and sometimes very good so that children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress.
- The school provides an exceptionally caring learning environment and parents greatly appreciate the family atmosphere.
- Pupils attain standards in physical education that are above average and health education is taught well so that pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and living.
- The school organises special creativity weeks, visits and events which make a good contribution to pupils' enthusiasm for learning.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- Lunchtimes are especially well organised and staff extend pupils' learning particularly well by providing a good range of activities during the lunch period.
- Teachers in Years 1 and 2 do not always expect enough of pupils so that many do not produce enough work.
- Teaching in Year 1 is sometimes unsatisfactory because pupils are not always well managed and so they do not learn enough.
- Although pupils attain standards in writing that are broadly average, there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise writing skills outside English lessons.

The school's effectiveness has been maintained at a satisfactory level since the last inspection. Standards in writing and in physical education have improved. The six key issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been addressed but teachers' expectations of pupils are still too low in some classes. The school is still trying hard to involve parents more closely in supporting pupils' progress in reading and has met with some success. The roles of co-ordinators have been developed well and now teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated more effectively. Behaviour is now managed more consistently. The attainment of children on entry to the school is significantly lower than at the time of the last inspection.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

**Pupils' achievement is satisfactory** overall and it is good in the Foundation Stage so that most children are on course to attain the goals that children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Against the background of children's falling standards on entry to the school, it has managed to maintain standards at similar levels to those found at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils are likely to attain average standards in nearly all subjects by the end of Year 2. This is not reflected in national test results. The school's performance in national tests in 2002 was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's performance improved in 2003 and inspection findings indicate that this improving trend is likely to continue. The 'similar schools' comparison should be treated with caution as it is only based on the proportion of pupils who take free schools meals. It does not take into account other factors, such as the transient nature of the school populati

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	C	E	D	E
writing	D	E	E	E
mathematics	D	E	D	E

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average*

**Pupils' personal qualities are good overall, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** Pupils have good attitudes to their work; they are eager to please and keen to succeed. They are confident and discuss their work sensibly. They enjoy coming to school and attendance and punctuality are good. All, including those with special educational needs, those from ethnic minorities and those whose home language is a language other than English, work and play happily together. Pupils' behaviour is good.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory.** Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage. The substantial majority of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is at least satisfactory but there is a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching in Year 1 that impedes the pace of pupils' learning. There were examples of very good teaching for children in the reception year. In Years 1 and 2, teachers' expectations of pupils' performance, especially that of the more able pupils, are sometimes too low. The school provides pupils with high levels of care and the partnership with parents is good and supports pupils' learning well.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.** The headteacher and governing body are fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses as well as the external factors that have caused a decline in the numbers of pupils attending the school. This has led to a decline in income and until recently in staff morale. There is a commitment to improving the standards that pupils attain and the action taken to enhance learning has been satisfactory. The school is emerging from a difficult period that was not of its own making. There is a renewed confidence and energy about the school. The financial difficulties described in the last inspection report have been resolved successfully. The work of the governing body is satisfactory. It provides sound support and has managed to conserve money prudently so that the school can, for the next few years, maintain a nursery and six classes despite the falling income.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with the education provided for their children. They particularly appreciate the good arrangements that help their children to settle happily into the nursery class. Pupils are proud of their school and they do not want anything changed.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in Year 1.
- Raise teachers' expectations of pupils' performance.
- Provide more opportunities that allow pupils to practise their writing skills.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and most attain average standards. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average but they achieve well in the Foundation Stage so that most attain average standards by the end of the reception year.

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

- Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve well and make good progress.
- The standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are beginning to improve after a decline in recent years.
- Across the school pupils achieve well in physical education so that by the end of Year 2 most attain standards that are above average.

#### **Commentary**

1. When children start school in the nursery they are at widely varying stages of development. Several are already advanced learners who speak clearly and have a reasonably wide vocabulary. Others have very limited language and communication skills. This was noted during discussions with children when several spoke in a relatively immature way, framing sentences such as, 'Me get it'. Others answer questions with single words rather than in a series of words. An increasing number of children arrive at the school with little or no spoken English. The nursery and reception classes are warm welcoming learning environments where all children flourish. Their communication, language and literacy skills develop rapidly because there is a strong emphasis on teaching speaking as well as early reading and writing skills. Their good achievement in this area of learning helps them to achieve well across the curriculum so that, by the end of reception, most attain the early learning goals in each area of learning. This is because teaching is consistently good and the Foundation Stage is led and managed well by the co-ordinator.
2. As a result of this good start in the nursery and reception classes children are prepared well to start work on the National Curriculum in Year 1. Their achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but is somewhat uneven. They achieve better in Year 2 than in Year 1 because the teaching for the older pupils is always at least satisfactory and is often good. There is scope for accelerating pupils' achievement and raising the standards they attain by improving the consistency and quality of teaching and by expecting more of pupils. Most of the pupils in Year 2 are on course to attain average standards in nearly all subjects. In physical education most attain standards that are above average because the school has worked hard on developing pupils' skills in this subject. There has been a concerted effort to develop pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles, the value of regular vigorous exercise and healthy eating. In consequence pupils' achievement in this area of the curriculum has been good.
3. There is a marked difference between inspection findings concerning standards and the school's performance in national tests. Inspection findings show that the standards most pupils attain in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average whereas test results indicate that standards are well below average when compared with similar schools. This is because test results in recent years have been affected by several factors. There has been a higher than usual proportion of pupils whose attainment on entry to the school has been below average. The school has more pupils who arrive at school without being able to speak much English. It is not uncommon for pupils to arrive at the school part-way through the school year. These pupils have often suffered interruptions in their learning caused by changing schools and have standards that are below average. In many such cases there is insufficient time available between their arrival at the school and the time they are due to leave at the end of Year 2, to

bring their attainment up to average standards. Nevertheless the school's performance in national tests standards improved in 2003. The school's assessments of pupils show that the school's performance is likely to improve further in 2004 and again in 2005. Inspection findings agree with the school's assessments that most pupils in Year 2 are likely to attain average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of this school year.

4. Pupils whose mother tongue is not English make sound progress in developing communication, language and literacy skills so that they achieve as well as all the other children. However, those who have joined the school at times other than the nursery are unlikely to attain average standards by the end of Year 2. This is one of the factors that affects the school's results in national tests.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.9 (14.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.9 (12.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.5 (14.1)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. When compared with schools that have a similar proportion of pupils who claim their entitlement to free school meals, the school's performance was below average in reading and mathematics and well below in writing. However, standards are rising because the school has identified areas for improvement, such as writing, and has implemented strategies to improve standards. A rigorous programme for teaching phonics has, for example, been implemented and the school places a strong emphasis on developing early reading and writing skills.
6. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational needs, is satisfactory in each year group. They are suitably supported and appropriate work is planned to help them learn as well as might reasonably be expected. Their achievement and the progress they make is similar to that of all the other pupils because teaching assistants make a significant contribution to their learning. Across the school the very good relationships between pupils and adults support learning well. The midday supervisors work well with children at lunchtimes and many interesting activities are provided. Supervisors coach children informally in games skills and skipping, for example. Children have a good variety of apparatus and equipment available, which they play with productively. Large groups, for example, worked co-operatively on creating a complex road system for toy cars. Others played imaginative dramatic games in the well-developed learning areas, such as the gazebo. Here they pretended to be characters from everyday life and enjoyed playing 'hospitals' and 'mummies and sisters'. These lunchtime sessions are exceptionally well organised and make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' social and language skills as well as broader areas of learning. They make a strong contribution to pupils' overall achievement.

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

Pupils have good attitudes to work and play and generally they behave well. They have good attendance rates and go to school happily. Their spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good; they are learning to respect each other and to appreciate the difference between right and wrong.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance rates are above national averages and are improving.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes demonstrate consistently good values and attitudes.

- Pupils are especially friendly and co-operative during playtimes, when behaviour and attitudes are consistently good.
- Occasionally older boys misbehave during some lessons and can disrupt learning.
- Relationships are very good throughout the whole school community.

## Commentary

7. Pupils say they like school. Their parents also believe that children are happy in the caring environment provided by the school. With the support of the educational welfare service the school works consistently to monitor and promote good attendance. Punctuality is good and very rarely do pupils arrive after nine o'clock. They are very settled in the nursery class where pupils behave sensibly and calmly and get involved in all that is organised for them. Their confidence and maturity develops well in the reception classes so that they are on course to attain the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development by the end of reception.
8. Pupils are very co-operative when playing outside on the playground, where pupils feel safe and very contented. Behaviour is generally good in most lessons but there are occasions when a small minority of older boys finds it harder to conform to teachers' expectations all the time. The headteacher takes the time and gets involved in talking to naughty children outside classrooms so that any disruption is minimised. However, usually pupils work well in pairs and help each other out. Adults encourage and praise good attitudes and pupils know that when their achievements are good they will be rewarded.
9. Personal development is very well promoted throughout the school and through spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision. Standards of behaviour are very good during assemblies when pupils listen and enjoy stories, which demonstrate positive values such as sharing and being kind to each other. The very appropriate 'Our Caring School Rules' are displayed around the school. Older pupils are learning through a project called 'Promoting Alternative Ways of Thinking' – or 'PATHS' – about how to express and recognise comfortable and uncomfortable feelings and how to think positively about themselves and their relationships. Pupils value fair play. They often collect for charities including special parcels for less fortunate children at Christmas time.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	4.7
National data	5.4

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.*

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	144	1	0
White – any other White background	11	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	4	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

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

The school provides a sound quality of education. Most teaching is satisfactory and a high proportion of it is good, although there is some unsatisfactory teaching. The curriculum and links with parents are good, and the provision for pupils' care, welfare and guidance is also good.

#### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory but within this overall picture there are considerable strengths as well as clear areas for development. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

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

- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good.
- Overall nearly half the teaching is good and occasionally it is very good.
- Teachers do not always maintain high enough expectations of pupils' performance.
- There is a significant degree of unsatisfactory teaching in Year 1.

#### **Commentary**

##### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2 (6%)	14 (40%)	16 (46%)	3 (9%)	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. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good and often imaginative. This helps children in these classes to enjoy their learning and to achieve well. In one good lesson, on

teaching children the relationship between letters and the sounds they represent, the teacher dressed as 'Mrs Jolly' to the delight of her audience. This promoted a great enthusiasm for learning and helped the children to understand and remember the basic strategies they need to apply to reading and writing. In the nursery the nursery nurse dressed in a beautifully crafted owl costume and entered the classroom on her knees, hooting a greeting to the children. Such imaginative teaching helped to encourage excitement in learning. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is well structured so that children are led step by step towards learning new skills. In a very good music lesson for children in reception, for example, the teacher started the lesson with an activity that required great concentration and promoted a very quiet beginning to the lesson. This set the tone for work on clapping rhythms which led naturally to using instruments to copy rhythmic patterns. An excellent review session towards the end of the session involved a puppet, Daisy, who really had not been paying attention. Consequently the children had to explain to her all that they had learned about how to create an even, steady beat. This provided a good opportunity to practise speaking and listening skills and also reinforced learning. The management of the children was very good and children developed a serious, business-like approach to their learning.

11. The quality teaching in Years 1 and 2 is uneven; most is satisfactory and there are examples of good teaching in Year 2 but in Year 1 teaching is less effective and some of the teaching is unsatisfactory. Good teaching was seen in Year 2 in English, mathematics, science and physical education. The good lessons shared common characteristics. They were carefully planned and the teachers had identified clearly the new skills to be taught during the course of the lesson. Questioning strategies were used well to assess pupils' understanding and good discussions were encouraged, as, for example, whether the three trolls in the traditional tale were good or bad characters. Questions were modified for different groups so that all could experience success. Good review sessions towards the end of each lesson helped to reinforce and consolidate pupils' learning. At the end of a numeracy lesson, for example, pupils explained that they had learned that it is possible to add numbers in any order but that it is easier to start with bigger numbers whilst when subtracting you always have to start with the larger number. One more advanced learner accurately observed that when subtracting you could in fact start with a smaller number but that the answer would be a minus number. Across the school relationships between teachers and pupils are very good, which encourages pupils to explore their understanding by contributing their thoughts and opinions freely. It also helps pupils to learn in a comfortable, supportive environment. It encourages them to ask questions when they are unsure about anything and to enter fully into discussion sessions.
12. Where teaching is less effective and where it is unsatisfactory pupils do not learn enough. There are clear reasons for this. Where teachers did not provide precise explanations of what they wanted pupils to do, an element of uncertainty slowed the pace of learning. This was noted in several lessons in Year 1 where initial explanations were unclear and pupils were uncertain about what they had to do. In a numeracy lesson, for example, pupils were confused about how to tackle the task presented to them. Where behaviour was not managed effectively, the pace of learning slowed because the teacher had to spend time dealing with the poor behaviour of a small minority. In a music lesson, for example, pupils were asked to make sounds that might be made by different animals and this activity led to silly behaviour and time wasting. Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of producing are sometimes too low. This applies particularly, but not exclusively, to the more able pupils who are on occasions asked to repeat skills that they have already mastered rather than being required to move on to the next steps in their learning. There are occasions when too little is expected of all pupils and little recorded work is produced. Pupils occasionally spend far too long sitting on the carpet engaged mostly in listening to the teacher rather than being actively and purposefully occupied in meaningful tasks. As a result little recorded work is produced. These passive periods also contribute to a lack of opportunity to practise skills, especially writing.
13. The teaching of pupils whose mother tongue is not English is satisfactory. A specialist teacher visits each week and concentrates on providing assistance for those pupils who have been identified as being most in need of support. She also provides good advice to teachers so that

they can provide appropriate assistance in lessons. In many lessons teachers are careful to develop the speaking skills and the understanding of these pupils. In one English lesson, for example, the teacher paid close attention to examining the meaning of words in the story being read by the class. In another lesson, however, the teacher used the word 'transparent' in passing and missed the opportunity to ensure that all the pupils had a clear understanding of what the word meant. Such missed chances to develop understanding impede pupils' language acquisition generally and especially that of those whose mother tongue is not English.

14. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers to promote learning, and are used appropriately to support pupils with special educational needs as well as other groups of pupils in each class. Their work is planned and organised to enable them to give sound assistance. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory.
15. The assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory. Work is marked regularly and teachers discuss work with pupils and make suggestions about how to improve. Careful records are kept concerning pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers have an accurate picture of each pupil's particular stage of development. This information is, for the most part, used satisfactorily when planning work for pupils, although the information is not always sufficiently detailed to match work precisely to individual needs. It is more effectively used for whole class targets such as, 'To know by heart all pairs of numbers with a total of 10'.
16. Teachers plan lessons carefully and most lesson plans are clear about what new skills, knowledge and understanding are to be taught during the course of each lesson. Plans show how work will be broadly matched to pupils' widely differing stages of development. Although this helps to promote an appropriate match between the tasks provided and pupils' learning needs, the modifications are not always sufficiently precise to ensure that the learning needs of all groups are satisfied. Consequently work is sometimes too hard for lower attaining pupils and does not stretch the more able pupils enough.

## **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is good and is enriched well by a good range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A well planned and thoughtfully developed curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes ensures that these children enjoy a broad range of learning experiences that help them learn in a step by step way.
- Well developed planning frameworks help teachers to plan series of lessons that cover the National Curriculum in a sequence of successive steps.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum and generate an enthusiasm for learning.
- There is carefully planned provision for personal, social and health education.
- The well-resourced library encourages the enjoyment of books.
- Curricular plans do not always include sufficient guidance about how to provide activities that extend the learning of the more able pupils.

## **Commentary**

17. The school has developed a broad curriculum in which all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and this meets statutory requirements. Sufficient time is allocated for each subject and religious education is taught according to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. There are policies and schemes of work in place that promote progression in learning, but these frequently do not provide enough guidance to help teachers to plan for and extend the learning of higher attaining pupils. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are being used effectively by teachers to improve pupils' learning. Recently, the headteacher has begun

to forge promising links with the junior school, to which most pupils transfer at the end of Year 2. These help to promote a continuum in pupils' learning so that their learning builds cumulatively.

18. In the Foundation Stage, the relevant and interesting curriculum is carefully planned so that meaningful connections are made between the six areas of learning. For example, children in the nursery were involved in a topic about owls. They made 'owl' cakes, listened to stories about owls, and worked together to produce a large collage. They thought of interesting words to describe pictures of owls and what they would like to find out about owls. The culmination of the project was a fascinating visit of some owls to the classroom, giving the children first hand experiences and so making learning more relevant. A common theme in the reception classes was woven around the subject of 'toys' and this helped to make meaningful links between the different areas of learning. A visitor brought toys from the 1950s that she had played with as a child and this stimulated great interest. The outdoor curriculum and environment has been improved since the last inspection and is used well to support children's learning.
19. The school provides a good range of visits and visitors to the school that enhance the curriculum and extend pupils' learning in a variety of ways. An artist visited the school, as part of art creativity week, and helped pupils to weave a wigwam made from natural materials. Also as part of the week, musicians visited the school and generated great enthusiasm for music making. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 took part in a story-telling activity that encouraged speaking and listening and made the stories 'come alive'. This activity was part of 'book week'; the school regularly organises theme weeks that add to pupils' enjoyment of school life as do the football, gymnastics and recorder clubs.
20. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The clear policy and scheme are being amended to incorporate work that the school has undertaken as part of a local education authority pilot scheme. Parents have been consulted and the policy and practice reflect the caring ethos of the school. Participation in the Health Promoting School Initiative and visits from the Life Education Mobile Bus raise awareness of how to stay healthy and how to make personal choices about healthy eating. Aspects of personal, social and health education are taught as discrete topics in weekly 'circle time' lessons. These are special times when pupils gather together, sit in a circle and discuss personal and social issues. As a result of the good provision pupils achieve well in this area of the curriculum.
21. The special needs co-ordinator, teachers and teaching assistants work well together as a team. There are useful procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' achievements in the targets set for them and the requirements of their statements of need. This information is used in devising individual education plans that are regularly reviewed with pupils, parents and the teaching assistants. Teaching assistants are fully involved in the pupils' academic and personal development and provide effective support.
22. There is spacious accommodation that is kept very clean and tidy; the floors sparkle and school is very appreciative of the excellent work done by the caretaker. The large grounds are attractive, with colourful wall murals as well as good playground markings that pupils enjoy playing on. Particular features of the accommodation are the large hall, a designated music room and a library that is well organised with books colour coded so that pupils can easily find what they want. Throughout the school, attractive displays stimulate pupils' interest and show them that their work is valued. Resources are of good quality and quantity. They are accessible and teachers generally make effective use of them to support pupils' learning.

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

There are many good features in the care, guidance and support offered to pupils. Processes for seeking pupils' views are satisfactory overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are happy that their children are well looked after and that staff are very caring towards pupils.
- Induction arrangements for the youngest children are very good.
- Procedures for child protection, for first aid and for ensuring good standards of pupil behaviour follow good practice and are properly overseen.
- Governors and staff meet very regularly to monitor aspects of the school including the school's policy for inclusion.
- Health education is taught well and pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and living.

## **Commentary**

23. The school provides an exceptionally caring learning environment and parents greatly appreciate the family atmosphere. Parents are very satisfied that their children are well looked after and say that there is always a good dialogue with the school if there are any issues of concern. Parents believe that pupils are treated fairly and given equal opportunities. There is special praise from many parents for the way young children are settled into the Nursery class where communication is a real strength and supervision very good. Home visits are offered to all families and taken up by many.
24. Governors play a significant role in ensuring good standards of health and safety throughout the school and in monitoring many aspects of care and well-being. Staff have a good understanding of the pupils' widely varying backgrounds. They pay close attention to the needs of individuals and treat all pupils fairly. New arrivals with limited English speaking skills are treated sensitively, for example, and are welcomed into the school community. Pupils understand daily routines and follow rules sensibly. There have been improvements in staff training in many areas, for example in behaviour management. All staff, including the secretary and the caretaker, help to promote good behaviour by praising politeness and quietly discouraging misdemeanours such as running in corridors. Procedures at the start of the morning have been reviewed by the headteacher and guidance for pupils at this time of the day is no longer an issue. Clearly stated arrangements for child protection are in place and staff work together in pupils' best interests. The site is kept clean and well maintained including the outside environment, which supports pupils' physical and social development well. Professionals from outside agencies including a community nurse are involved in supporting many pupils beneficially.
25. Pupils are sensibly encouraged to eat healthily and to look after themselves and each other. Teachers listen to pupils informally throughout the day and take their opinions on board. Through, for example, target setting, their views are being increasingly sought.

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

The school's links with parents are good overall. There are satisfactory partnerships with other schools and with the community.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are loyal to the school and recognise its strengths and the challenges it now faces. It has a very supportive parent teacher association.
- Parents' and carers' views are sought and action taken on board to implement changes and developments to their satisfaction. Procedures to resolve any concerns are very effective.
- The school is developing stronger links with the junior school for the benefit of pupils.

## **Commentary**

26. Parents are generally happy with the school and praise ongoing improvements. Good communication keeps parents informed well about children's progress and about school life generally. Parents are more involved in pupils' learning than at the time of the previous inspection. Many opportunities are given to all parents to come into school to discuss with teachers any issue of concern and to review progress. They are very involved through the PTA in raising money for the school and in organising very successful social events. This good support is much valued by the staff.
27. The headteacher upholds the value of good pastoral care and as part of the school's caring, all embracing ethos, listens attentively to parents and works hard to maintain productive links. Parents respect the headteacher and say she is approachable and always willing to listen to their views. Procedures to resolve concerns are effective. The school knows there are still a minority of parents who, for whatever reason, are sometimes reluctant to come into school but the staff continues to seek ways to encourage all parents to get involved. A small minority of parents, however, continues to feel that they are not well informed. The school knows that with increasingly more families from abroad there is also a need to work more closely with translation services. On balance parental involvement is good.
28. The partnership with the junior school is being developed. The two headteachers meet regularly and links are being promoted for the benefit of pupils. For example teachers from the two schools share data and some training needs are being jointly met. Links with other schools, for example, in physical education, are in place and are satisfactory. Many students from local secondary schools, colleges of further education and the university complete work placements in the school. This broadens pupils' contacts with adults as well as providing developmental opportunities for the students. Community links are satisfactory. Visitors, for example, the local policeman, visit regularly and children visit local shops on organised days to promote their learning. Links with the parish church are well established. There is, however, a feeling from a group of parents that the school could do more to promote itself within the community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership, governance and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher provides determined leadership and is supported well by staff, governors and parents.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A welcoming ethos has been established by the leadership and the school and all pupils are supported strongly in their personal, social and emotional development.
- A good sense of teamwork has been established and staff are keen to improve standards.
- The school development plan does not explain clearly how proposed initiatives are expected to raise standards, nor how the impact of initiatives will be evaluated.

## **Commentary**

29. The headteacher provides sound leadership. She works in liaison with the deputy headteacher and staff to promote a climate for learning that helps pupils to learn satisfactorily. All pupils are warmly welcomed to the school and the school is largely successful in meeting the needs of all. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good and promote good teaching and children's good achievement. All subjects are managed at least satisfactorily. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs, and for those whose mother tongue is not English, is also sound.
30. The governing body ensures that the school fulfils all statutory duties and that it has a good range of appropriate policies to guide its work. Policies that promote sound support for all pupils are adhered to and race equality features strongly. The school is very successful in embracing

all pupils and high levels of racial harmony are evident. Governors are closely associated with the school and have a good grasp of its strengths as well as areas for development. They are fully aware of the challenges that have faced the school in recent years and have supported the school well during a difficult period. They have been instrumental in helping the school to develop renewed confidence and a will to improve standards. A particular barrier to school improvement was the falling school roll. This was caused partly by a fall in the birth rate locally and partly by parents taking their children away from this infant school to all-age primary schools in the locality when the partner junior school was placed in special measures. This caused a lowering in the profile of pupils in each year group because it tended to be the parents of the more able pupils who withdrew their children. Parental confidence in the partnership between the infant and junior school is now secure.

31. Governors have a good understanding of their specific responsibilities and the chair of each sub-committee writes a clear summary of its work in the governors' annual report to parents. The governing body holds the school to account for the standards that pupils attain and understands the barriers to improving results in national tests that have existed in recent years. The school has been largely successful in resolving the key issues raised at the time of the last inspection, although teachers' expectations of pupils' performance, which are sometimes too low, remains an area for improvement.
32. The curriculum is managed satisfactorily. Clear planning frameworks are in place to promote sound coverage of statutory National Curriculum subjects and religious education. The school has a satisfactory development plan to guide improvements and to focus resources on those areas that have been identified as being of high priority. Appropriate priorities have been identified, such as raising standards in writing. Subject action plans are not always explicit about the intention to raise standards. The plan for developing ICT, for example, makes no mention of standards; the success criteria are only that computers will be used appropriately and that information will be gathered to inform the school's progress. The headteacher, the deputy, the head of the Foundation Stage and subject co-ordinators monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching regularly although not frequently. The school's self evaluation demonstrates that the headteacher concurs with inspection findings that the quality of teaching is satisfactory. However, the school development plan does not describe any concerted effort to improve the quality of teaching across the school. Each co-ordinator has a budget for improving standards in their subjects and action plans are closely linked to budgetary planning. This helps to promote the efficient use of resources.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	357 727
Total expenditure	357 592
Expenditure per pupil	1 892

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	49 656
Balance carried forward to the next	49 791

33. The school has accumulated a substantial underspend that represents around 14 per cent of its income. This has been accumulated deliberately as part of the school's long-term strategic plan to maintain staffing levels and the current class structure despite a falling income. The fall in the amount of money that the school is allocated is caused by a drop in the number of pupils attending the school. The school has been successful in creating relatively small class sizes in most year groups together with appointing a good number of support assistants. Hence the number of adults supporting pupils' learning is higher than would be found in most schools. The expenditure per pupil is broadly average. The governing body is prudent in its approach to expenditure. It ensures that the principles of best value are followed and that the school finances are spent wisely.

34. In view of the satisfactory teaching, pupils' sound achievement and the average standards that pupils attain by the end of Year 2, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** and is one of the strengths of the school. Children are happy and enjoy coming to school. There is a nursery class in the morning and a different group of children attends the nursery class in the afternoon. There are two reception classes where pupils attend full time.

Children start nursery class, in the September following their third birthday, with attainment that is below average overall but which covers the full range from high to low. They all make good progress as they develop a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well because the teaching is good and the curriculum is well planned to provide a wide range of interesting, relevant activities that are well matched to their learning needs.

A strength of the provision is the high level of inclusion evident throughout the Foundation Stage. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported and integrated. There is effective teamwork between teaching assistants and teachers, ensuring that children's needs are met well. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the needs of young children and shows good leadership skills. Good provision has been maintained since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure improvement in the outdoor environment and to develop strong links between home and school. Parents are valued as key partners in their child's education.

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

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

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

- There is a very well co-ordinated approach to personal, social and emotional development by all members of staff.
- Very good relationships help to make sure that children feel confident and happy.
- Throughout the Foundation Stage good emphasis is placed on the development of these skills and every opportunity is taken to promote independence.

#### **Commentary**

35. Teaching is good. All members of staff are kind and caring, ensuring that children settle quickly into school. Many good opportunities are provided to promote personal, social and emotional development. Children are expected to clear up after themselves, which they do without much prompting. They work well in small groups and in the nursery they are already beginning to work independently without adult support. This continues to be developed in the reception classes. For example, when playing with the train set they took turns; when filling containers with sand they managed not to spill much on the floor. Children share resources well, settle to tasks without fuss and behave sensibly. The great majority of children are well behaved and teachers help children to understand the 'right' way to act. Register monitors take their responsibilities seriously, walking sensibly to the office. Children are likely to attain the expected standard by the end of reception.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to develop speaking and listening skills.
- Teaching is good and promotes effective learning.
- Reading skills are taught well.

## Commentary

36. Good teaching in this area of learning means that children achieve well. By the end of the reception year nearly all children are likely to achieve the early learning goals specified in national guidance. Emphasis is placed on speaking and listening from an early age and this contributes positively to the standards attained. Imaginative and interesting methods are used to help children learn letter sounds. For example, when the teacher transformed herself into 'Mrs Jolly' to teach letter sounds, the children's interest was totally engaged and they concentrated hard. When she became the class teacher again she asked what Mrs Jolly had taught the children. They were eager to explain and this provided an excellent opportunity to assess how effectively the children had learned their sounds. They enjoy taking part in whole group sessions in the reception classes to practise letter sounds. The role-play areas are well resourced and teaching assistants often engage children in conversations in these areas. Children have ample opportunities to share books so, for example, children in the nursery could enjoy sharing a book with pupils from Year 2. A writing area in each classroom with a wide range of pens and pencils encourages the development of writing skills.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a good range of practical activities to support learning.
- Teachers have a good understanding of how children learn effectively and seize on ways of developing ideas that have been initiated by the children themselves.
- Adults in the nursery take every opportunity to develop mathematical understanding well, and as a result, children achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception.
- Teachers in reception do not always sufficiently challenge the more able pupils.

## Commentary

37. Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception. Children are likely to attain the expected standard by the end of reception. In the nursery mathematical concepts are often taught in a practical way that involves children and promotes good learning. The teacher grasps opportunities to build on children's own interests. In one session, for example, pupils started comparing the sizes of their shoes. This developed into an activity where pupils became interested in drawing around their feet and hands and comparing sizes. The teacher immediately began planning the introduction of a class shoe shop to extend learning and develop this initial interest. They make repeating patterns with beads and use mathematical language such as 'more' and 'less' when cutting long strips of paper in the class 'office'.
38. In reception, the majority of children say numbers in order up to ten and perform actions such as clapping and jumping to match the number. Opportunities are missed to extend learning by matching the right number of objects to the numeral and to write numerals. Some useful incidental mathematical experiences are provided when counting the number of children present, completing the calendar each day and using money in the class shop.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- First hand experiences and good teaching mean that children enjoy finding out for themselves.
- Staff use questioning effectively to enhance the children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

### **Commentary**

39. Achievement is good in this area of learning because teaching is good. All adults ask challenging questions to develop the children's understanding, for example, when working with a small group of reception children to explore toys and how they work. Children are likely to attain the expected standard by the end of reception.
40. A wide variety of activities help children to learn about the natural world. In the nursery, children were learning about owls. At the end of the project, owls were brought into the class so that children could observe them at first hand. When making 'owl' cakes children learned, through discussion and observation, that materials change when they are cooked. The activities planned for this area of learning emphasise again the way that all areas of learning are developed effectively alongside each other.
41. The use of information and communication technology is well integrated into activities and skills are developing appropriately. Children use the mouse confidently to click and drag objects around the screen or click on icons to make an educational game work. Good opportunities are provided for sand, water and small world play.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards. Only one hall session and no outdoor sessions were observed during the inspection, therefore no judgements can be made about teaching. Opportunities to work outside are fewer than are found in most Foundation Stage classes. Children were observed in classroom and at playtime and indications are that children are on course to meet the expected goals by the end of the reception year. In the one taught lesson observed, reception children moved with confidence and demonstrated a growing awareness of space. They knew that there is a need to cool down after muscles had been exercised.

Children develop their manipulative skills well by handling dough, scissors, brushes, and a variety of mark-making material and they manipulate small construction equipment with dexterity.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers plan good activities to develop skills in a wide range of interesting activities.
- The teaching of music in reception classes is a particular strength.

### **Commentary**

42. Attainment in creative development is satisfactory and children achieve well. Most are likely to attain the expected standard by the end of reception. They benefit from good teaching that encourages them to try out different activities. Children draw and paint confidently with

increasing control of a range of tools. For example, children in the nursery work together to produce a large collage of owls, drawing around their hands and colouring the shapes brown to represent feathers. Work on display included good autumn leaf prints and paintings.

43. In reception children go to the designated music room for a lesson. Teaching is good and one very good lesson was seen. Teachers have high expectations of what children will learn and most achieve well. Lessons are well planned and teachers expect high standards of behaviour. Children respond well, joining in sensibly with activities and treating instruments with care. They clap, tap and use claves to play a beat of a rhyme or song.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment and record keeping are used effectively to set individual targets for improving pupils' writing.
- There has been a significant improvement in standards of speaking, listening and writing since the last inspection.
- Leadership by the co-ordinator, who has introduced a range of activities and initiatives to raise standards, is good.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills and there is a lack of challenge in writing, particularly for more able pupils.

#### Commentary

44. Standards in national tests in 2003 were well below average but a high proportion of pupils in the year group has special educational needs. From the work sample and work seen in lessons, it is clear that pupils' achievement is satisfactory and it is likely that, by the end of Year 2, most will attain average standards. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress due to the effective support provided by learning support and teaching assistants. The school has identified the need to improve speaking and listening and no effort is spared to develop these skills throughout the school, resulting in an improvement since the last inspection. Most pupils speak confidently and make themselves understood but the learning of some younger pupils is restricted by their limited vocabulary. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily. The school encourages the use of drama activities to help pupils to communicate confidently, for example 'hot seating', when a pupil takes on the role of a book character and other pupils ask questions.
45. Standards in writing are rising slowly but teachers do not always expect enough of pupils. When pupils write freely in the writing corner of their classroom, they often produce better work than when a teacher directs them to use a prepared writing framework demanding only a few words or sentences. Spelling is taught systematically throughout the school and pupils achieve well. As at the time of the last inspection, standards in reading are satisfactory. Attractive book corners, good library provision and the support given by parents at home encourage pupils' interest.
46. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers make effective use of the National Literacy Strategy for planning their lessons. A good feature of the four lessons seen was the way teachers shared with pupils at the start of lessons details of what they were about to learn. Consequently pupils knew what they were being asked to assimilate. In the first part of lessons, pupils achieved well when teachers were working with the whole class. However, when pupils were working independently in the activity part of the lesson, they did not always achieve as well because teachers expected too little of them. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils spent more time drawing a picture of a character or a setting than writing words or phrases. As a result, pupils did not produce the quality or quantity of writing that they were capable of doing. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and benefit from having good quality resources. For example, there is a large selection of attractive 'big books' for sharing as a class, attractive book and writing areas in each classroom and a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books from which to select their book to take home.
47. The teaching of pupils whose mother tongue is not English is satisfactory and these pupils make sound progress in developing English speaking skills. Several come from countries where there is much more emphasis on oral work than on reading and writing. As a result their

reading and writing skills tend to lag behind their speaking abilities. Teachers are aware of their needs and usually dwell on the explanation of meanings of everyday words. However, there are occasions when too much understanding is presumed and teachers do not question sufficiently to check on levels of comprehension or develop a deeper understanding. Teachers receive and apply good advice from the visiting specialist teacher who assesses pupils' progress thoroughly and maintains a good overview of provision.

48. There is good leadership for English and the co-ordinator has drawn up a detailed action plan that clearly states activities to be undertaken in order to bring about improvements and raise standards. Procedures for checking on pupils' progress are good. Half-termly pieces of writing are completed, assessed and areas for improvement noted. Pupils have targets that they can refer to in lessons to improve their writing. Detailed records are kept of pupils' progress in learning to read 'key words'. Frequently there are comments or indications in marking to help them improve their own work.
49. During the inspection, a book week event was taking place. Pupils from Year 2 read to children in the nursery. It was an enjoyable experience for all, with the Year 2 pupils gaining confidence from the opportunity to share a book with a younger child. Teachers read stories to different classes and in the entrance hall there was an attractive display including teachers' comments about their favourite book. Such activities help to promote a love of books as well as being effective in helping to raise standards.

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

50. There are good opportunities for pupils to extend and use their speaking and listening skills in other subjects. The use of writing to support learning is, however, underdeveloped in history, geography, science and religious education.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and this helps them to learn.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' performance are frequently not high enough.

#### **Commentary**

51. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and most are likely to attain average standards by the end of Year 2. Standards since the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils develop a sound understanding of number. Many can count to a hundred and most have a sound understanding of addition, although subtraction causes difficulties for lower attaining pupils. All pupils use mathematical language and understand terms such as 'more than a litre', 'less than a kilogram' as well as 'shorter' and 'heavier'. Most can identify simple regular two-dimensional shapes and higher attaining pupils are confident in explaining their properties. Most are gaining a reasonable understanding of how to identify three-dimensional shapes, such as cubes and spheres. The more able pupils confidently described a triangular prism as having five faces. Most develop a good understanding of money. All strands of the National Curriculum programmes of study are taught but there was little evidence of pupils conducting surveys or organising the data that results from gathering statistics. There was equally little evidence of computers being used systematically to support teaching and learning.
52. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Within this overall picture there are strengths as well as weaknesses. Teachers use apparatus well to demonstrate number patterns and how to count using a number line. Humour is used well, as was seen in displays of red hearts that included the combinations of numbers that add up to ten and were described as 'numbers that love each

other'. This makes a good contribution to pupils' positive attitudes to the subject. In several lessons and in the scrutiny of pupils' work it became obvious that there are occasions when teachers do not expect enough of pupils. In lessons the work was modified for the different groups in the class but not always enough to stretch the more able pupils sufficiently. A sample of the work of pupils in Year 1 revealed that they are expected to write very little. Also in Year 1 explanations were not always clear, pupils did not always know what was expected of them and their behaviour was not managed effectively. This impeded pupils' learning and limited their achievement. However, the very good relationships that were evident in most lessons enhanced learning.

53. The school analyses assessment data well to identify pupils' specific learning needs. Clear curricular targets emerged from the most recent analysis. It revealed, for example, the need to concentrate on ensuring that all pupils had a thorough understanding of all the different combinations of numbers that made ten. It is clearly helpful to identify areas of weakness and to concentrate on teaching them thoroughly. However, teachers tend to concentrate on such areas with the whole class and for a proportion of pupils this is not necessary because they have already mastered the processes and are ready to move further on in their learning.
54. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is experienced, has a good understanding of the subject and provides good advice for colleagues. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented and teachers have clear guidance on how to teach skills sequentially. The co-ordinator monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching and learning across the school but opportunities for classroom observations are infrequent. Also the work that pupils produce is not monitored enough to identify areas for improvement. The subject features in the school development plan and there is a firm commitment to raising standards.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

55. A wide range of opportunities are provided for pupils to practise numeracy mathematical skills in other subjects. Pupils consolidate their understanding of shape and space when using construction kits to build models. They gain a deeper understanding of measuring quantities of solids and liquids in cooking, as well as the need to measure time accurately and consider temperature settings carefully. Such experiences add extra dimensions to their learning.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils' attitudes are good and they show interest and enthusiasm.
- There is good emphasis on experimenting and investigating.
- Opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to write about their findings.
- Computers are not used enough to support and extend learning.

#### **Commentary**

56. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and by the end of Year 2 most are likely to attain average standards. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils do particularly well in the investigative and experimental strands of the subject. From an early age most enjoy being involved in conducting simple practical experiments into such topics as how bubbles are formed and the best mixture of soap and water for making them. Pupils are especially excited about making discoveries and observations such as these and have good attitudes to the subject. They enjoy learning and as a result they concentrate well and try hard. They respond well to their teachers and work well together in groups. With very few exceptions, they are well behaved so lessons are orderly and good-natured.

57. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and there are examples of good teaching. In the best lessons teachers plan and prepare well, making suitable use of teaching assistants to make sure that everyone participates fully. They have a good understanding of the achievements and needs of all the pupils and provide work that interests them, giving clear instructions and encouraging attention to detail. However, expectations of what pupils can achieve are frequently not high enough. For example, tasks are not always sufficiently demanding for higher attaining pupils and experiments are not sufficiently challenging for them. In one lesson, for example, pupils enjoyed studying the warp, weft and structural pattern of materials through a microscope but opportunities to develop learning through sorting, classifying and researching the outcomes of observations were missed.
58. Teachers do not make enough use of computers, nor do they often require pupils to make written records of their work. Although some good use of computers was seen, for example in using a computerised microscope to observe materials closely, such enrichment of learning experiences is not consistent across the school. The school's practical approach to the subject tends to emphasise recording in pictorial or diagrammatic ways. This is not extended to include more writing in pupils' own words, so opportunities are missed to make a contribution to developing literacy skills or increase the overall level of challenge that pupils encounter.
59. The subject co-ordinator was appointed in September 2003 and so far has not had time for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. She has an appropriate vision for the development of the subject and a clear understanding of the required areas for development. These range from the need to increase staff confidence in teaching the subject to the development of the school grounds to provide an extension to the learning environment.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management of the subject are good, with clear vision for future improvements.
- Computers are not yet used systematically to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

60. A satisfactory number of computers have been provided in all classrooms and also in a small computer area set aside for teaching and using computer skills in small groups. These are used satisfactorily to promote sound achievement so that, by the end of Year 2, pupils attain average standards. Pupils use word processing to present written work and produce class charts of favourite colours, for example. Standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection.
61. Teachers have sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and give clear, effective demonstrations and instructions. Pupils are responsive and enthusiastic and work willingly. Teachers usually match tasks appropriately to pupils varying stages of development. The subject is taught systematically. Teachers regularly introduce appropriate programs and new skills to the whole class and teaching assistants subsequently take over and supervise small groups as they practise the new skills and extend their learning. Teachers keep a close check on pupils' use and experience of computers in order to ensure full coverage of the statutory curriculum. They accomplish this by creating good class books that include samples of pupils' work and provide a clear record of pupils' achievement.
62. The curriculum co-ordinator has worked hard to bring information and communication technology in the school to its current status. She has made good use of the time that is set aside for monitoring and reviewing the school's work in this subject. Most importantly, however,

she has a clear view of improvements that need to be made and has initiated satisfactory plans to address them. The subject action plan does not, however, focus explicitly on how the school seeks to improve standards, evaluate pupils' progress and demonstrate that standards have been raised.

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

63. Although pupils acquire a sound grasp of skills they do not always have enough opportunity to apply their skills in other subjects. While there are some good examples in subjects such as science and history, information and communication technology is not a planned feature of most lessons. In science, pupils used a microscope connected to a computer to make observations; in history some useful reference work was seen where pupils had gathered information about the life of Queen Elizabeth I from a CD-ROM encyclopaedia and also drawn pictures of her using a painting program. Such stimulating and informative use of computers is, however, not generally extended into other subject areas.

### **HUMANITIES**

History and religious education are reported in full below. Pupils' work was analysed in all humanities subjects. Three personal, social and health education lessons and assemblies contributed to inspection findings. Teachers' plans were studied and discussions with subject leaders confirmed that good planning frameworks are in place and that standards since the time of the last inspection have been maintained at average levels in each of the subjects. No lessons were seen in **geography** because it was not being taught at the time of the inspection, but pupils' work on display and discussions with them indicate that standards are average and an appropriately broad curriculum is being taught in both Years 1 and 2.

#### **History**

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

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

- Teaching is stimulating, especially when pupils are encouraged to explore an intriguing selection of objects from the past.
- Pupils are too infrequently required to make written records of the results of their investigations and research.

#### **Commentary**

64. Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory and there are examples of stimulating activities that arouse great interest. The achievement of the majority of pupils is satisfactory and they attain average standards by the end of Year 2.
65. In a lesson in Year 1 about objects from long ago, pupils were asked to imagine what various items from the past might have been used for. They examined a washing dolly and suggested that it might be a plunger but, on further investigation, realised that it was made of an inflexible metal. They deduced that it must be for some other purpose. They handled and examined many such objects closely and enjoyed being 'detectives'. The teacher used good questioning strategies to extend their thinking, 'What is it made of? What might it be for?' They thought that a heavy shoemaker's last might be an anchor until they noticed that the extensions were shaped like shoes so the object was probably for hanging up shoes. Pupils then gained valuable first-hand experience by actually using a washboard to wash material. Teaching was stimulating but no books were available to help pupils with their research and no writing was required so opportunities to extend literacy skills were missed. However, a great deal of enthusiasm was generated. The analysis of pupils' work confirmed that generally there are too

few opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills to record the results of their studies. Most pupils work hard and are productively involved in lessons. They show interest and co-operate well with each other and with their teachers. They are keen to track down information and the older pupils demonstrate satisfactory research skills in their work, for example in finding out about Queen Elizabeth 1 from a CD-Rom encyclopaedia. However, there is scope to extend the use of computers to support teaching and learning. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education subject is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership is provided by the enthusiastic co-ordinator.
- A new planning framework provides good guidance and is linked well with procedures to assess pupils' learning.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils develop their recording skills.

### Commentary

66. Standards are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils gain an understanding of Christianity and Judaism through following a good scheme of work that has recently been introduced into the school. They understand that harvest is a time of thanksgiving for Christians and that Jews celebrate Sukkot when they build a Sukkah. They are developing an understanding of Christian stories through creating large pictures to illustrate biblical events, as for example, a large collage depicting the feeding of the Five Thousand. The assembly during the inspection on the theme of books interested the pupils when they were shown different bibles, including a massive family bible.
67. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 learned how a baby is welcomed into the Christian community. They enjoyed looking at baptismal artefacts and talk enthusiastically about how babies have been welcomed into their families. Much of the work centres around discussion. From their responses to questions about a video that they watched, pupils are evidently confident to talk about their experiences and higher attaining pupils begin to understand the significance of a naming ceremony. Pupils draw pictures of gifts that could be given to welcome a baby but opportunities are missed for pupils to practise their writing skills.
68. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic about the new developments taking place in the subject. The new scheme has only recently been introduced but already, staff are finding it to be a good support for their teaching. There is a topic for each half term and key questions form the basis of assessments at the end of each unit of work. This represents an effective and manageable assessment system. The school is building up a bank of resources and books to support the teaching of the subject. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology, music and physical education are reported in detail below. Part of a lesson in **art and design** was seen and pupils' work was scrutinised but there was insufficient evidence available to make an overall judgement about provision across the school. The work that was sampled indicated that pupils attain average standards.

### Design and technology

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Food technology is well developed.
- Good opportunities are provided to consolidate number work.

## Commentary

69. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they attain average standards. This is a similar picture to that found in the last inspection. Pupils enjoy the subject and in one lesson became engrossed in winding wool neatly, strand by strand, to create colourful bookmarks. They have a good grasp of the need to create a working drawing that guides the making stage of their work. They designed puppets, for example, that included paper folded in a concertina fashion to create springy legs and arms. The making of the puppets followed the designs faithfully and involved much careful measuring.
70. Food technology is a regular feature of the school week. During the inspection groups of pupils were supervised by a teaching assistant as they designed and made pizzas. These activities are well organised so that all pupils are given similar opportunities to cook pizzas to take home. The pupils understood that they had to follow the recipe carefully. This provided a good opportunity for reading purposefully. The pupils had a good understanding of hygiene and all washed their hands prior to touching ingredients. The teaching assistant referred back to their previous learning when explaining the difference between plain flour and self-raising flour. They gained a clear understanding of the need for accuracy. They mixed grams of flour with millilitres of milk, teaspoons of salt and tablespoons of oil. They decorated their pizzas and put them in the oven at the correct temperature for the prescribed amount of time. This provided a rich learning experience and extended their understanding of numeracy skills well.
71. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but in the cookery lesson opportunities were missed to allow the children to weigh and measure ingredients for themselves. They watched carefully as this was done for them but were not able to gain full benefit from first-hand experiences. Good attention is paid to health and safety considerations and all staff are appropriately vigilant when supervising the use of tools. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

## Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a spacious room for music with an extensive range of good quality tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments
- Teachers do not always provide pupils with activities that will challenge them and fully develop their musical skills.

## Commentary

72. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are average, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Although the school follows a planning framework that describes the different skills to be taught to each year group, the content of the lessons seen in Year 1 and in Year 2 was similar. There was insufficient progression in learning and not enough challenge for the older pupils. For example, both classes were observed recognising long and short sounds and playing them to accompany a song or rap. The older pupils were expected to respond to a sign for long or short sound, which they did with ease.

73. Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory. A minority of pupils do not behave appropriately in music lessons because they are not expected to achieve high standards. Moreover the pace of lessons is slow and they lack stimulating activities. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, too much time was spent managing behaviour. Pupils enjoy playing instruments most handling them correctly and treating them with respect.
74. Music lessons take place in a mobile classroom that provides good space for displaying the wide range of instruments and allowing easy access to them. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. Assessments in the form of 'key questions' take place at the end of a unit of work but as yet, are not being used to inform planning. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to evaluate their own learning. Good opportunities are created to promote music in worship, including a two-year varied programme of music for listening to. An arts creativity week provided a good opportunity for pupils to hear musicians playing in school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision for physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils attain standards that are above average.
- Teaching is good and pupils learn a good range of skills.
- The subject is led and managed well by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who is committed to maintaining the subject's high profile in the school's curriculum.

### **Commentary**

75. Pupils achieve well and attain standards that are above average. The school made a conscious decision to concentrate on this subject because it was felt to be especially in tune with pupils' particular learning needs. In the gymnastics and dance lessons pupils learn how to concentrate and work co-operatively. Teachers maintain high levels of discipline and pupils understand that this is essential to ensure a safe working environment. In games they learn to understand that they must obey rules and work together as a team.
76. Teaching is good because it generates a purposeful approach, a high work rate and includes clear expectations of high quality performance. Pupils have a serious approach to their learning. In a good gymnastics lesson for pupils in Year 2, it was clear that routines had been established well. After a brisk warm-up session, where pupils explained the importance of warming muscles prior to vigorous exercise, the class worked efficiently in teams to set up apparatus quickly. They worked with purpose in a business-like way to create good sequences of movement. The teacher's control was very good and she expected work of a high quality. Pupils worked hard and intensively. All too soon it was time to cool down gently before walking back to the classroom 'like gymnasts'. All classes engage in at least three short intensive sessions each week. The high profile for the subject that has been established clearly promotes good relationships and enhanced levels of self-esteem.
77. Pupils are enthusiastic about the after-school games sessions and darkness fell on two sessions before the final whistle blew. The subject is managed well. There is a tight schedule that promotes full coverage of all strands of the National Curriculum. Resources are good. The school's work to develop this area of the curriculum has been recognised with the award of the prestigious Activemark.

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

Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All adults make a point of explaining the 'right' way to behave in a given situation and provide very good role models.
- There are very good relationships between all members of the school community that support personal and social development well.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills when playing with a wide range of equipment during lunchtime.

## **Commentary**

78. The caring school ethos supports pupils' personal development. The very good relationships within the school are evident in everyday conversations between adults and pupils when they are asked to share, work together and take responsibility.
79. Teaching in all the three lessons seen was satisfactory but discussions with pupils indicated that learning had been effective and pupils have a particularly good understanding of health issues. This suggests that teaching is generally of a higher order than that seen during the inspection week. Pupils achieve well and attain standards that exceed those generally found in similar schools. The subject features strongly in the school's curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on promoting healthy life styles. Good opportunities are provided in 'circle time' for pupils to talk about their feelings and listen to others. Pupils discuss and make their own class rules. Taking part in charitable fund raising such as the British Legion Poppy Appeal and Operation Christmas Child gives good opportunities for pupils to become aware of those less fortunate than themselves and to learn that their help can make a difference.
80. The school has successfully received an award from the Healthy School initiative and provides many good playtime activities to keep pupils active. Lunch times are pleasurable for pupils and adults because of the wide range of games in which all are involved.

## **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	4
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</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	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<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).*

