

# INSPECTION REPORT

**COLNE ENGAINE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Colne Engaine, Colchester

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115135

Headteacher: Mrs J James

Lead inspector: Mrs Laura Sparrow

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Inspection number: 255865

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	111
School address:	Green Farm Road Colne Engaine Colchester Essex
Postcode:	CO6 2HA
Telephone number:	(01787) 222717
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Leggett
Date of previous inspection:	May 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in a rural village outside Colchester and is smaller than average. Currently 111 boys and girls aged five to 11 are on roll. A below average percentage of pupils (1.8%) is eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (7%) is lower than most other schools and only one pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The number of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the normal time of admission is 6%. There are no pupils from ethnic minority groups. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is variable from year to year but, generally, it is above average. Most of the pupils attending the school are drawn from the village of Colne Engaine and live close by in privately owned houses. A few also travel some distance from neighbouring areas. Almost all children in the reception class have experience of attending local pre-school provision. The school attained the 'Investors in People' award in 2002.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19382	Laura Sparrow	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Information and communication technology Science Art and design Special educational needs
32655	John Bostock	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
31319	Dorothy Hunter	<i>Team inspector</i>	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Mathematics Design and technology Physical education
15023	Ali Haouas	<i>Team inspector</i>	English Geography History Music

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school with many very good features.** Overall, standards achieved are above the expected level and pupils make good progress. An outstanding climate for learning is created in which all members of the school community are included in the life of the school and this encourages almost all pupils to achieve well. Good, and often very good, teaching and a very good curriculum engender excitement and strong motivation for pupils to give of their best. The school provides good value for money and finances are well managed.

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

- Pupils attain good standards in English, mathematics and science by age seven and good standards in English by age eleven.
- Good teaching helps all the pupils to value learning highly and achieve well.
- The pupils' excellent relationships and personal development make a powerful contribution to their individual achievements.
- Very good leadership from the headteacher, ably supported by key staff and governors, results in good leadership and management overall.
- An excellent climate for learning stimulates pupils' desire to achieve well.
- Very good provision for the Foundation Stage enables the youngest children to have a very positive start to their education.
- A very rich and imaginative curriculum captivates pupils' interest and links subjects well.
- The oldest pupils' skills in displaying information and following up on what has been learned in science experiments are not developed sufficiently.
- The roles of subject leaders are not as well developed as they could be in some areas.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not being used widely enough across the curriculum.

Since the last inspection, improvement has been good. The key issues of the last report have been tackled well. There has been a complete change of staffing, and a new headteacher and chair of governors; there are also other new governors, and together they form a strong whole-school team. The quality of teaching and learning (particularly in Years 3 and 4 and the Foundation Stage) has improved significantly and is now good. The quality of the curriculum and provision in the Foundation Stage is very good and these areas have become strengths of the school.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

**Overall, pupils are achieving well** and they make good progress through the school. Most children achieve, and are likely to exceed, the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception. In the 2003 national tests, standards at age seven were above average in reading and well above average in writing, but well below average in mathematics, compared to similar schools. However, the small numbers in each year group and the variation in learning needs of cohorts each year affect results significantly. Inspection evidence indicates that considerable improvement has been made this year and recent unpublished information suggests that standards at age seven are

now above expected levels in mathematics. Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 showed that compared to similar schools, standards were well above average in English and science, and above average in mathematics. Standards achieved during the inspection are above expected levels in English, history and art and design by the end of Years 2 and 6. In ICT, geography and physical education, they meet expectations. Standards are above expected levels in mathematics, science and design and technology by the end of Year 2, but are in line with expectations by the end of Year 6. Changes to teaching staff for the oldest pupils have resulted in some gaps in learning. For example, their skills in applying what they have learned from science experiments and in displaying information are not developed well enough. Pupils are confident in using ICT, but progress is constrained by a lack of space and some aspects are not tackled often enough. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and most achieve well and meet their targets. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good**, which is evident in **very positive personal qualities, attitudes to learning and behaviour**. They show deep respect for the school community and value what the school provides. Relationships are excellent and there is a genuine appreciation for learning. Attendance is very good and no one has been excluded.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education, including teaching and learning, is good and the curriculum is very good.** Throughout the school, teaching is good, and is often very good. A particular strength is the way English is taught across all subjects. Teachers' relentless excitement and passion for discussion enrich learning activities. Very good questioning skills and high expectations help pupils to understand what they need to do to learn. Lively approaches, which connect subjects together, captivate pupils' interest. The curriculum is planned very effectively around agreed themes, with very good links, for instance, through literacy, history, music and art. Very good after school provision and many clubs, including some that older pupils organize, enhance learning. Visits to museums and galleries enliven study. Many good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their independence, and they are cared for very well. Effective provision for pupils with SEN promotes equality of opportunity and enables all pupils to feel fully included in the life of the school.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**The leadership of the headteacher is very good; the school's management and governors are effective.** The head has an exceptionally clear vision and is determined that the school should continue to improve further, following a period of significant change. The governors are well led by a committed chair and they ensure all statutory requirements are met; through playing an active role in evaluating its performance, they have a good picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. An enthusiastic leadership team enable good management of the school. However, although subject co-ordinators are effective and have the skills to lead improvements, some have not had enough time to see that developments are integrated consistently into all school procedures.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Almost all parents have very positive views of the school and recognise the high standards of care provided, and pupils' good achievements. A few parents of older pupils would like homework to be set more formally, and the school is reviewing both this and procedures for marking. Inspectors found that the school provides a good range of support for parents. Pupils feel very well cared for. The school is at the heart of the community and links with it are very good.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Strengthen subject co-ordinators' roles in leading further improvements.
- Develop the oldest pupils' skills in using and displaying information for work in science.

- Extend the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, pupils are achieving well and are attaining good standards in many subjects. They achieve good standards in English in Years 2 and 6. They exceed expected levels in mathematics and science and design technology by age seven and attain average standards by age eleven. In ICT, geography and physical education, they achieve broadly average standards by Years 2 and 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils attain above average standards in English by age seven and eleven.
- Standards in mathematics and science are above average by age seven and average by age eleven.
- Standards in art and design and history are good throughout.
- Standards in national tests in comparison to similar schools are well above average in English and science.
- An uneven trend in girls and boys' achievement has been tackled successfully.
- Small cohorts of pupils with different learning needs and an uneven pattern of teaching in Years 5 and 6 have affected pupils' attainment in mathematics and science.

#### Commentary

1. Children enter the Foundation Stage with average to above average attainment for their age. All achieve well in the Early Learning Goals. By the end of the Reception year, most are likely to achieve all the Early Learning Goals and many are on course to exceed them. Some are already working within the first year of the National Curriculum. Over the year, standards in mathematical and physical development represent good achievement and in all other areas, achievement is very good.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.1 (16.2)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	17.4 (15.9)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.7 (18.6)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.0 (29.4)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.5 (27.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.0 (28.2)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. In 2003, standards by age seven were well above average in reading and very high in writing, but below average in mathematics compared to all schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools, reading was above average, writing was well above average, but mathematics was well below average. Inspection evidence and recent unpublished test results suggest that much improvement has been made in mathematics this year across the school as a result of changes to the curriculum and a strengthening of the quality of teaching in the subject.

3. The standard of work seen during the inspection confirms that currently, as a result of very good teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2, a majority of the pupils are on course to exceed the expected levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science by age seven.
4. In national tests taken by age eleven in 2003, standards were well above average in science, and above average in English and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, however, standards were well above average in English and science, and above average in mathematics.
5. Observations of lessons and pupils' work in Years 3 to 6 during the inspection confirm a picture of improving achievement, particularly in English. However, the current Years 5 and 6 have experienced an uneven pattern of teaching which has affected their progress, particularly in mathematics and science. Changes to the curriculum, more consistent approaches and good teaching are having a positive influence. Pupils in Year 6 are on course to meet expected levels in mathematics and science, and are likely to exceed them in English. Achievement in the junior classes is generally good and, particularly in Years 3 and 4, many pupils make rapid progress as a result of very good teaching.
6. Pupils' skills in numeracy are improving across the school, although the evidence of this is not yet fully reflected in their test performance. Most are able to share methods to solve problems and can pose questions for each other, for instance in Year 3, where they find solutions by applying their knowledge of perimeters. Almost all pupils read fluently and with good expression, and they write confidently, expressing their ideas effectively for a range of practical purposes. Their good skills in literacy are reflected by good achievement and a high quality of speaking and listening in lessons.
7. Attainment in ICT broadly meets expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. However, some aspects are not developed well enough because the limited number of computers and the small size of the ICT suite constrain how often they are used. Pupils' skills are not as secure in data handling and controlling devices by age seven and eleven as in other areas, for instance, word processing.
8. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in geography and physical education meets expected levels. Pupils exceed expected levels in history and art and design. In design and technology, by the end of Year 2 they exceed expected levels and they are on course to meet them by the end of Year 6.
9. Differences in the size and composition of small year groups, as well as their individual learning needs, are reflected in the school's attainment trends. An uneven trend of different attainment for girls and boys is being tackled successfully. In lessons seen, girls achieve equally as well as boys. The school's targets are very challenging, but they fell short of being met in 2003.
10. Set against their achievements upon starting school, pupils with SEN are achieving well. A few gifted and talented pupils have extended challenges set for them in some lessons, for example, English, but not others, although they may be capable of achieving more. Although they are well catered for overall, work set in some subjects is not distinct from that for higher attaining groups.

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

Pupils' attitudes to school are **very good** and they behave very well. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is very good and their cultural development is good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils have excellent relationships with each other and very good relationships with staff.
- Pupils are very willing to take an active part in school life, and demonstrate maturity
- The excellent environment for learning promotes pupils' very good attitudes and an eagerness to learn.
- The school sets very high standards for pupils' conduct, and behaviour is very good.
- Attendance is very high.

## Commentary

11. The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible, and gives them a very clear understanding of the principles that distinguish right from wrong. Behaviour is very good. Pupils show respect for teachers and assistants, and for different occasions, such as assemblies and lunchtime. Older pupils show thoughtful consideration and act as very good role models for the youngest, taking care of them at playtimes and lunchtimes and leading them into the classroom at the start of sessions.

12. The school's ethos is one in which pupils' self-knowledge and self worth are developed very well. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Their cultural development is good. The regular assemblies, times of collective worship and lessons in personal, social and health education and citizenship are very effective times for celebration and sharing. The extensive opportunities provided for visits to different interesting places and the talents of specialist visitors to the school promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness very well.

13. Pupils support each other well and play together harmoniously. They applaud others' efforts with appreciation. The school has very good procedures to ensure that pupils do not adversely affect the welfare and learning of others. It has not excluded any pupils.

14. The very good relationships help pupils to develop very good attitudes. These are further encouraged by high expectations of behaviour and application to work and of the need to give of their best. Even the youngest children settle to lessons quickly and focus on their work as a result of the way teachers seize their interest and motivate them to want to learn. In response, pupils have a genuine eagerness to do more, concentrate well and work productively to achieve what is asked of them.

15. Pupils learn independence by taking responsibility for a wide range of routine jobs that they carry out with maturity and of which they feel proud. During playtime, pupils help each other and approach anyone feeling worried or who has no friend to play with, keeping an eye on 'the friendship bench'. The school provides a good range of opportunities to promote individual talents that help foster feelings of self worth. Pupils take these up enthusiastically. Particularly responsible pupils work alongside staff, for example in controlling music, lights and projectors during assemblies, and running lunchtime clubs both indoors and in the playground. Most are very eager to take part in extra-curricular activities.

## Attendance

Pupils' attendance and punctuality are both **very good**.

- Attendance is very good because the school has successfully fostered pupils' enthusiasm to come to school.
- Attendance was very good in 2002 - 2003 and has continued so this year. Few pupils arrive late to school or to lessons and there have been no exclusions.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.6	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The teaching is good throughout, and often very good, and this leads to an excellent ethos which:

- enables pupils to have very good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning;
- effectively promotes pupils' excellent relationships;
- results in pupils' good achievements.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching is a significant strength of the school. The quality of teaching is much improved since the last inspection, and those areas where it was unsatisfactory, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 and 4, are now consistently very good. Teaching is good overall, with a high proportion being very good, and occasionally, excellent.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teachers use a good range of teaching styles to promote active learning.
- Teachers' very high expectations are reflected in pupils' very positive attitudes to learning.
- Imaginative presentation of what is to be learned galvanises pupils' interest.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge; they plan and prepare carefully.
- Pupils collaborate very well and work well independently.
- Assessment and target setting have a positive impact on raising standards in English and mathematics.
- Systematic use of marking to develop pupils' understanding of what they need to do to improve is not developed enough.

### Commentary

16. Teaching is a significant strength of the school and results in good learning. The quality of teaching is consistently very good for pupils in the Foundation Stage and infant classes. Teaching for pupils in the junior classes is often very good.

17. Planning and assessment for the Foundation Stage are of very good quality. The teaching motivates children to settle easily and to achieve well. A strong emphasis is placed on the key skills of speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy in all lessons across all subjects, which promotes pupils' progress and eagerness to learn. Very high expectations and imaginative planning link all of the areas of learning closely together and engender enthusiasm in learning.

18. Teachers present subjects with freshness, relentless energy and imagination. Much of their infectious enthusiasm excites the pupils and enables them to engage quickly with their tasks. Most lessons proceed at fast pace with each minute well used. Adults are well focused on extending pupils' learning through skilful questioning and insistence on pupils thinking carefully about what they have observed. In Year 2, for example, pupils tested and recorded their responses to different objects in order to distinguish between their five senses and were encouraged to think about 'how?' and 'why?'. Pupils often are reminded of expected learning outcomes, and these are used as a focus for later review and assessment. Teachers place a very high value on pupils' speaking and

listening skills. Praise and encouragement underpin an emphasis on the pupils' use of technical vocabulary and this supports the rapid development of their subject knowledge and understanding. Another strong feature is the way that pupils are challenged to take risks in working things out, explain their ideas or to expand upon what others have said; for instance, in Year 6, they suggested a range of factors which might affect how shadows are formed. Support teachers and teaching assistants provide very good models and expect pupils to reflect upon their thinking, for example, about why the sun appears larger than other stars in the sky. This aids progress, particularly for pupils with SEN.

19. Teachers foster very good relationships and have very high expectations of their pupils, who they manage very well. A wide variety of teaching styles and very high levels of challenge result in pupils' very positive attitudes, and good behaviour and progress. Pupils enjoy extensive opportunities to work collaboratively and are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, for instance, when they test sounds at various distances in the playground and present their findings to the whole class in Year 2. High quality display in classrooms supports pupils in working independently, with prominent focus on rules for independent work, subject vocabulary and learning objectives.

20. However, planning for some subjects does not include specific expectations for the oldest pupils at the higher levels, or the most able in other year groups, for example, in mathematics, science and ICT. A few pupils are capable of applying what they know to recording and refining investigational work, and to using fine measurement, but they are not often expected to do so.

21. Assessment and target setting are helping to raise standards in English, but they are not as well established in mathematics or other subjects. Teachers make effective use of statutory and other tests to assess and monitor progress. Broad learning targets in literacy and numeracy are identified for groups, reviewed regularly and shared with pupils and parents.

22. Marking does not support pupils well enough in knowing what they can do to improve or in evaluating progress towards their learning targets. The information provided in the school's tracking and assessment system is not being used systematically to set intermediate targets for groups in relation to shorter term or unit planning. The school is in the process of reviewing its marking policy and recognises a need to develop this area.

23. Homework is used effectively for supporting learning and complements thematic work. The school is in the process of consulting with parents on procedures for its distribution and collection.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons**

<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very poor</b>
1	10	6	7	0	0	0

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

### **The curriculum**

The school provides a **very good** and effectively planned curriculum that meets pupils' academic and personal needs. A wide range of additional activities, including very good provision for sports and the arts, provides enrichment. Accommodation and resources are both satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a very rich and innovative curriculum for all pupils.
- There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good.
- The school provides a full range of additional activities that enhance pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning.

- The school building is well maintained and provides a stimulating learning environment.

## Commentary

24. The curriculum is broad, balanced and carefully and imaginatively planned to promote pupils' high achievement. It meets statutory requirements, including provision for religious education and collective worship. All subjects meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and a very effective programme for the development of personal skills and social responsibility is planned and delivered through all subjects. A distinctive strength is the imaginative way in which opportunities for links across different subjects, and direct experiences through visits and visitors, are used to enthuse pupils and increase their motivation. Speaking skills are promoted effectively throughout the curriculum and good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' skills in research, questioning and enquiry.

25. All pupils have good access to the full curriculum, including activities organised outside the school day. Boys and girls participate on an equal footing in most activities on offer and the school is particularly good at responding to pupils' different learning styles. Pupils are effectively exposed to experiencing different cultures through work on Indian dance, different aspects of art drawn from a variety of cultures and links with a Malawi school. Reception children are encouraged to reply using 'oui' or 'non', and pupils in Year 6 are taught French or German. The school has effectively worked to develop creativity in the curriculum. This is particularly seen by a range of projects in the arts involving artists and professional designers, and in the way the school has been proactive in capitalising on the local cluster of schools and arts festivals to promote pupils' participation and add to the excitement of learning. A wide variety of out-of-school clubs enhance pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning. These range from dance, netball, recorders and gardening to draughts. The school provides a wide range of sporting activities, with many parents and governors providing support and coaching in netball, basketball, cricket, athletics, cross country running and swimming. Pupils have opportunities to participate in a wide range of competitions with other schools.

26. Activities such as these help to cement the excellent relationships in school, providing a good basis for pupils' personal, social and health education. The school's excellent ethos fosters both sharing and caring.

27. Although many of the classrooms are of a small size, the accommodation is used creatively and allows all subjects of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage to be taught effectively. The school buildings are very clean and well maintained, and provide a stimulating learning environment, but space is at a premium and limits what can be done. Many eye-catching displays and photographs describe the life of the school very well and are supported by a very wide range of pictures, prints and three-dimensional objects and artefacts. Resources throughout the school are generally of good quality except in ICT where the number of computers is insufficient.

## Care, guidance and support

The school cares for its pupils **very well**. It provides pupils with **good** support, advice and guidance and takes **good** account of pupils' views.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults in the school take very good care of pupils so that they feel secure, safe and highly valued; this helps them to learn effectively.
- The welfare of pupils is ensured by the careful and detailed precautions the school takes.
- Induction of pupils into the school is carried out sensitively and well.
- The school manages arrangements for routine health and safety matters in a thorough way.

## Commentary

28. The staff's very good relationships with pupils underpin a happy learning environment in which the pupils feel secure. All pupils are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school. The pupils trust the staff and are confident that their views are valued. They have good access to adults they know to whom they can turn. Parents are pleased with the individual care given to their children.

29. There are very good and detailed procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. Child protection arrangements, risk assessments and training are in place and reviewed regularly. A good example of the school's careful approach to promoting pupils' road safety awareness is the promotion of 'safe walking'.

30. Good arrangements are made for children to settle into school. Teachers make visits to children at their playgroups and nurseries during the summer term, and induction visits and invitations to story times in school are provided for the children. Reception children are helped to settle in gradually. Year 6 pupils act as 'buddies' for the reception class. They take responsibility for playing with them during breaks and accompanying them into the classroom afterwards.

31. Systematic management of health and safety enables the building and attractive grounds to be well maintained and safe. Regular checks and maintenance of equipment are carried out and the whole area is free from litter. The 'willow walk', adventure trail, and seating provide shady areas for pupils to enjoy.

32. Teachers know pupils well and respond conscientiously to their personal and academic needs. In lessons, staff often provide information and highlight success which helps children to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

33. Through assemblies, the school council and class discussion, the school seeks pupils' views about school life and the world around them. Staff frequently start lessons with searching questions and elicit pupils' ideas. The school council takes its responsibility for suggesting improvements seriously. Recently, it was decided that selling popcorn at break times should be introduced as a healthy snack alternative.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with the community are **very good**. Partnership arrangements with parents, and other schools and colleges, are **good**. Parents are well informed by the school and contribute well to children's learning.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works very well with organisations and individuals in the community to actively support the pupils' development.
- Parents support pupils' learning very well.
- Very good links with other schools provide support for teachers and ensure that transfer of pupils to the local secondary school is effective.
- Parents are well informed about the school's activities and their children's progress.

## Commentary

34. The school has created wide-ranging links with the community, which enable pupils to extend their learning and interest in many ways. Visits to museums, galleries and gardens support pupils' curriculum understanding, for example, of Anglo-Saxon and Tudor England. Trips to learn about the work of the emergency services and to activity centres enhance their social and personal

development. There are growing links with the local church, and different visitors to assemblies and the classroom support pupils' spiritual and moral awareness. The school's sports teams receive coaching from local professionals, parents and governors. The pupils support several charities, including a school in Malawi, through fund raising.

35. Many parents work in school to support teachers, help with trips and assist with clubs. Workshops for parents are held which enable them to better support their children at home. Homework is often given, but a few parents of older pupils would prefer more formal work to be set. The school is currently reviewing its arrangements in consultation with parents.

36. Links with a local consortium of schools enable staff training on developments, for example, a recent 'Arts Alive' project. Transfer of pupils to the local secondary school is well managed and includes visits and 'taster days' for pupils in Years 5 and 6.

37. Regular newsletters provide information about work that pupils are doing. Letters inform parents of clubs, trips and changes to arrangements. Meetings to discuss the progress of pupils are held twice each year and further discussions take place in the summer term. Records, achievement profiles and annual reports are informative and include individual advice for the pupils' continuing progress.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Governance, leadership and management are **good** overall. The well-respected head teacher provides very good leadership and has created an excellent ethos for learning where everyone is valued and included. The governors are effective and ensure that the school complies with all the statutory requirements. Management systems are good and everyone knows what their own responsibilities are. Good procedures are in place for checking how well pupils are progressing but these are not always used effectively to set challenging work for the most able, and the role of some subject leaders needs to be developed further.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The head provides a very clear vision for the future of the school.
- All pupils are valued as individuals and fully included in all activities.
- There are good systems for checking how well the school is doing in each subject although these are not always effectively used.
- More rigour is needed in the monitoring and evaluation of some subject leaders' areas.
- Governors' understanding of the school should be further built upon.

### **Commentary**

38. Governance is good. Governors are well led by the Chair, who works very closely with the head, staff and others to ensure that they maintain an effective structure where all contribute to the strategic development of the school. They consider their own developing needs as governors and have identified the most suitable training to help them to be as effective as they can be. They understand their role clearly and most know the school well, having a very good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for development. A planned programme of focused visits involving governors is in place, but not all governors attend. It gives them a clear understanding of how well the school is doing and supports the work of the small group that is developing the evaluation role of the governing body.

39. Governors reflect carefully upon the ways community issues impact on the school and how they should deal with them. They try to be proactive and are exploring ways to create more teaching space because of proposed residential development in the area. With the help of the head they analyse and understand the information the school receives about its standards compared with all



schools and with similar schools. This enables them to ask searching questions about how the school is tackling the challenges it faces in raising standards. They are fully involved in school improvement planning and in monitoring progress towards the targets the school sets for improvement. They ensure that statutory requirements are fully met and have arrangements in place to ensure that disabled access is provided during the next phase of building in the summer of 2004.

40. The governing body has a clear committee structure, with agreed terms of reference and delegated powers where necessary to ensure that governors work efficiently and effectively. They utilise the expertise of individuals in the governing body very well. With support from a very effective administrator, finances are managed well and spending patterns are monitored carefully. The principles of best value are both understood and applied, which enables the school to provide good value for money. All recommendations from the last financial audit have been implemented.

41. Overall leadership is good. The headteacher has successfully led governors and the staff through a period of significant change. Her excellent knowledge and understanding of the school enable her to provide very good leadership. She has created a climate of mutual trust and respect that leads to pupils growing in maturity and self-assurance as they move through the school. They relish responsibility and carry out tasks they are given with great care. The head shares her vision with the senior management team and staff, and a good professional relationship with them has helped her in the school improvement work, which is evident in the school. There have been many staff changes in recent years, which have contributed to the school's development of a more creative approach to learning. However, a few very skilled and talented staff still lack confidence in their subject leadership roles. Senior staff carry many responsibilities. However, they do not always have adequate time or the subject expertise for some areas, for example, ICT.

42. Management is good. The school has good systems for checking how well it is doing and uses these to identify its main priorities for improvement. It is developing more detailed use of a target tracking system to make sure that pupils are achieving as well as they might. Senior staff analyse the information from the results of the national tests for seven and eleven-year-olds to establish clear priorities for improvement. The school development plan fully reflects these priorities and the school identifies staff development needs, through effective performance management, to ensure that staff development relates closely to whole-school development issues.

43. Subject leaders have clearly defined roles in checking the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects and in providing effective support to colleagues. Their co-ordinator files are comprehensive and clearly outline various roles and responsibilities. Subject leaders are allocated some time to check how well their subject areas are doing and the results of these checks are used to identify specific priorities for development. There is a lack of rigour, however, in ensuring that some agreed procedures are consistently followed throughout the school. For example, individual pupil targets are set in some subjects but not in others, so the needs of the most able are not always met.

44. Day-to-day management of the school is efficient. The teaching and non-teaching staff work very closely to ensure that a calm and orderly climate is maintained at all times, and this contributes well to the learning environment of pupils. Administrative staff provide very effective support to the whole-school community and contribute well to its ethos of a high regard for learning.

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

<b>Income and expenditure (£)</b>	
Total income	379,083
Total expenditure	344,867
Expenditure per pupil	3,213

<b>Balances (£)</b>	
Balance from previous year	39,062
Balance carried forward to the next	34,216

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

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

Current provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and is a strength of the school. This is a much improved picture since the last inspection. Children are prepared very well from the time they enter the Reception class for transfer into Year 1. They begin school in the year in which they become five years old, and by the summer term all attend full time. Attainment on entry is above average this year although there is evidence that attainment has been average in previous years. All children achieve very well because the teaching is very good. There is challenge and high expectation in lessons with activities which are clearly matched to the needs of individuals. There is also good evidence of very clear planning, based on the six recommended areas of learning, which provides a rich curriculum where activities are designed to weave together the various areas of learning. The very effective Foundation Stage co-ordinator works very well with the classroom assistant, and both provide excellent role models for the children. Monitoring of progress is very good, and careful assessment across all areas of learning is ongoing by all who have contact with the children. The accommodation and resources are good.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well because of the very high expectations of staff, the very good teaching and the careful monitoring and assessment of their progress.
- Every opportunity is taken to foster the children's development so that they make good progress and achieve well.
- Supportive relationships are being established so that the children's self esteem is raised and they feel confident and happy.

### **Commentary**

45. This area of learning is particularly well taught and, by the end of the Reception year, the majority of children are likely to have exceeded the expected levels. Most are able to conform to the high expectations of the staff and the good role models of the adults mean that they know what is expected of them. Children are confident to talk and are self-assured in their activities. They are very caring of each other, and support those with specific needs so that they can be fully included in all activities. They are interested and eager in their learning, many can stay on task for long periods of time and they are motivated to succeed even when not directly supervised.

46. The adults constantly encourage children and praise their efforts publicly so that all can feel successful. They intervene when necessary with good questioning, which extends learning, and they encourage the children to take a pride in their work. There is consistency in routines so that children know to put up their hands, take turns and listen to others, valuing individual contributions. Children share well and support each other. There are very supportive relationships so that all the children feel secure and confident to seek help when required.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in communication, language and literacy is very good.
- Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop children's language skills.
- Activities are varied and motivate children to achieve well.

### Commentary

47. Teaching in communication, language and literacy is very good. Children make good progress and many should exceed expectations in this area by the time they enter Year 1. They listen well. A strong feature of teachers' planning is the attention to constant questioning, explanation and activity designed to widen children's vocabulary. Adults continually talk to children and the provision of imaginative activities helps them to think and choose appropriate language to describe what they are doing.

48. Books are readily available and children take them home regularly to be shared with adults. They understand how to use books, and are motivated to read and enjoy them. Good emphasis on learning the key words helps children in their reading. When teachers read stories, children listen avidly and are drawn into the imaginative world described. There is very good emphasis on the teaching of sounds and children make good progress in sound recognition, learning through rhymes, and sound and picture games. Constant reinforcement from adults helps the children to recognise sounds, match them to letters and begin to build simple three letter words. They have opportunities to write incidentally, for example, in the role-play areas where they write shopping lists and notes from the baby clinic, and they are beginning to sequence their ideas with confidence. Higher attaining children in the Reception class can copy by either writing over letters or copying words from a card, and some make good attempts to spell words on their own. Staff ensure that pencils and crayons are held correctly and that letter formation, including joined script which is taught as part of the handwriting scheme, is accurate.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good in this area of development.
- Teachers take every opportunity to promote mathematical development in all activities.
- Teachers plan a wide range of activities to ensure that children achieve well.

### Commentary

49. Teaching is very good in this area of learning, with a wide range of interesting activities planned to promote mathematical understanding. Children are able to count and use numbers to ten, and many can count to fifty. They write numbers and simple sums. The most able can partition numbers to ten in a variety of ways. Adults question children and constantly use a variety of mathematical terms, such as 'above', 'below', 'one more than', 'one less than', 'tomorrow' and 'yesterday' in many incidental ways to help extend their vocabulary. Children are developing a good understanding of problem solving and, when putting cake shapes into a box, some can see that by turning shapes around more could be fitted in. They know the main colours, can recognise two and three-dimensional shapes and are beginning to develop an understanding of their properties.

For example, they know that a triangle has three sides and that cuboids have rectangular faces. Many can sequence patterns and make symmetrical patterns using the computer. By the end of the Reception year, many are likely to exceed expectations for this area of learning.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Planning provides a wide range of activities to promote learning.
- Teachers question the children well so that they develop a sense of time and place from an early age.
- Children are familiar with computers and confident in their use of them.

### **Commentary**

50. Teaching is very good. Very good provision extends children's knowledge and understanding well so that they make good progress, and many are on course to exceed the levels expected of them by the time they reach Year 1. Teachers encourage children to consider their place in the world and 'what makes me, me'. Their writings and drawings show the value that adults place on discussion and the care with which they nurture children's spiritual awareness.

51. The outdoor classroom is an excellent learning resource, where the road and village area have been developed with realistic resources, giving children opportunity to practise road safety as they cross the zebra crossing on the way to visit the baby clinic. Children explore the local environment and could recount their science walk in good detail. They have the opportunity to use a computer in the classrooms and have group learning sessions in the computer suite, which encourages their confidence in using programs independently. They are eager to talk about their activities and can move the mouse with dexterity, open programs and choose colours and tools appropriately.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All children benefit from well planned activities.
- There is good use of physical activity to extend learning in other areas.
- Children are encouraged to make the most of outside play experiences.

52. Children enjoy physical activity, both indoors and out, and make good progress so that it is likely that many will reach or exceed the expected goals by the end of the year. Children have access to the outdoor play area, and use it well, and make the most of opportunities for physical development. The resources are good, with ride-on toys, prams and some low level climbing equipment available. The outdoor classroom is organised very effectively as a flexible environment that enhances children's play and other development opportunities.

53. In lessons in the hall children pay good attention and are responsive to teachers' expectations. They move around well and use apparatus competently, showing a good understanding of safety aspects. They are aware of direction and the teacher's use of language continually reinforces mathematical and positional vocabulary. They work independently or with partners well, and concentrate so that they make good progress in acquiring skills such as catching and throwing a ball.

54. Children have good opportunities to develop fine motor skills in a variety of activities in the classroom. They use scissors, thread beads, build with construction toys and handle brushes, crayons and play-dough confidently.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good planning gives many opportunities for creativity in a variety of situations.
- Children are aware of the expectations and produce careful work.

55. The activities planned in the Reception class allow for children to develop their imagination well, so that by the end of the year they will have made good progress and many will have exceeded the expected goals in this area. Role-play is encouraged so that children can develop their imagination, and the thematic approach to teaching gives them many opportunities to enact traditional stories as well as playing out life situations, such as being the school 'lollipop' lady. Children have opportunity to paint and to colour, as well as use scissors and glue to make models and sculptures. All of them enjoy singing in a range of activities. They use a wide selection of percussion instruments to sound out the beat and rhythm, and take turns to conduct small groups as they make music. They clearly enjoy this, and concentrate well, so that the quality of their work is good.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Overall provision for English is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- The quality of teaching and learning are good, and often very good, and as a result pupils achieve well.
- Speaking skills in the subject and across the curriculum are promoted effectively.
- Marking of written work is not sufficiently focused on providing guidance on how work can be improved.

### **Commentary**

56. Overall standards in English are above those found nationally. A majority of pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress by the time they leave school. Work seen during the inspection shows that, at the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above average and achievement is good. This is due to the consistently good quality of teaching, the thorough monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress to ensure that they are doing as well as they can, and the very good quality of leadership and management of the subject.

57. Pupils speak confidently and express themselves clearly. They listen attentively, both to their teachers and to each other. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are used well across different subjects and enable pupils to practise their skills, for instance, when they share ideas in pairs in English, mathematics and science lessons. Pupils respond enthusiastically and carry out discussions maturely, as a matter of routine. A good example of this was seen in Years 1

and 2, where pupils worked in groups as they discussed what was needed for the 'Mad Hatter's Tea Party'. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 impersonated escapees from the 'Great Fire of London' and rehearsed their roles as a way of preparing for their writing later in the lesson.

58. Pupils read well, with fluency. They read aloud confidently and with good expression. Well-planned teaching of reading in groups helps pupils to make significant gains in comprehension skills. Pupils' writing is varied and well promoted across the curriculum, for instance, in history, where study of the Anglo-Saxons is used creatively to stimulate writing for different purposes and audiences. However, the presentation of work and handwriting is not always as good as other aspects of the subject.

59. Teaching and learning are good overall, and often very good. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of English, often reflected in the range of methods used. Planning of lessons is thorough and detailed. Clear objectives are used to focus learning and assess pupils' achievements at the end of lessons. A distinctive strength of teaching is the use of partners to enable pupils to 'brainstorm' ideas and to promote speaking and listening skills. This was reflected in a lesson in Years 5 and 6 where demonstration, work involving pupils' sharing their own ideas and whole class discussion preceded the writing of 'nonsense' verses. Pupils are provided with high levels of challenge. Teachers use questions imaginatively to assess how well pupils have grasped what is being taught.

60. One area where teaching is less effective is in the marking of pupils' work. While pupils know about their targets and may receive oral feedback, they are not being supported with adequate written guidance with a view to helping them to know how to improve their work.

61. Information and communication technology is used well to support literacy work in the subject, for project work and for developing pupils' skills in carrying out research.

62. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a very good knowledge of the subject and evaluates standards and progress well in order to improve the quality of provision. She has a clear overview of the subject, and clear targets for improvement are identified and followed through. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

### **Literacy across the curriculum**

63. Pupils' literacy skills are promoted well across the curriculum. These are well supported by the strong emphasis in the curriculum given to linking different areas of learning and the prominence given to promoting speaking skills. Class discussions and the use of pupils talking in pairs and groups are common features of many lessons. Opportunities for pupils to collaborate are well promoted and they respond to these in a very positive way.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good, and sometimes it is very good
- Investigative learning is a strong feature of lessons.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and show interest in mathematics.
- The subject leader needs to develop her leadership skills further.

## Commentary

64. Pupils' achievement in mathematics in national tests presents a mixed picture, particularly by age eleven. The small numbers in each year group, and the variation in learning needs of cohorts each year affect results significantly. In 2003, standards achieved by age seven were below average compared to all schools nationally and well below average compared to similar schools. Boys achieved better than girls, but comparatively few pupils reached the higher levels.

65. Standards achieved in national tests by the end of Year 6 were above average, with average numbers of pupils reaching the higher levels. Taking account of their attainment in Year 2, standards in Year 6 were above average when compared to similar schools nationally.

66. Over the last four years, girls' achievement has risen steadily from being below the boys, and they performed better than them in the 2003 national tests. Pupils with SEN are well supported by teachers and support staff and achieve well.

67. During the inspection, the standards of work seen are generally good across both the infants and the juniors, with many pupils working at levels above those expected for their age. Pupils in Year 6, however, are working in line with expectations. For these pupils, many staff changes and an unsettled pattern of teaching over several years have caused some gaps in learning. More recent improvements in teaching and curriculum have had a positive influence across the school, but these have not yet been reflected in national test results.

68. In all the lessons seen, teaching was good overall, and very good in the infants and lower juniors. Strengths include:

- carefully planned lessons with clear learning intentions;
- clear explanations to ensure all pupils understand the activity;
- teaching which engages pupils;
- good emphasis on correct mathematical vocabulary;
- teachers encouraging pupils to 'have a go' and not fear failure;
- good support from classroom assistants.

69. Teachers motivate pupils well. They provide many opportunities for them to focus on numeracy skills and to apply the mathematical concepts they have learned in investigations. This emphasis on investigative learning makes pupils think and apply their knowledge and understanding in problem solving activities. In the best lessons, teachers make very good use of questioning and allow pupils to work both independently and collaboratively so that they can clarify their ideas and thinking. They enjoy their lessons, are eager to share their thoughts and participate well in solving problems set for them. They learn from each other and are able in Year 2, for instance, to tell the clock times using Roman and Arabic numbers, having worked out the Roman symbols from the numbers they are familiar with. In Years 3 and 4 pupils use and share many methods to solve mathematical questions which they generate for each other, such as how many matchsticks would go round the table; they solve this by applying their knowledge of perimeters. In Years 5 and 6, pupils understand and can work out an equivalent mileage in kilometres and can relate this to fractions and decimals.

70. The national strategy has been embedded well into the teaching scheme. This enables all aspects of mathematics to be fully covered and provides a good basis for assessment. Information and communication technology is used to create graphs and charts but little other evidence was seen of computers being used to extend learning. Tracking of pupils' achievement from year to year is a feature of the scheme, but staff do not make enough use of this to inform short-term targets for groups of pupils. Marking which tells pupils how to improve is inconsistent across the school and it does not build on the good questioning in lessons. The subject leader shares her good practice very effectively, but needs to develop confidence in ensuring that planning and monitoring are consistent across the whole school. The policy needs to be updated to take account of the investigative focus of learning. Resources are sufficient for current needs.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

71. Pupils take good advantage of the many opportunities to consolidate and extend their mathematical skills across the curriculum. Graphs and tables are used to record data in geography and science and to measure materials in design and technology. In geography, for instance, when trying to calculate the number of leaves on a tree, they count the numbers of leaves on a quarter of it and then use this information to gauge the total number. In design and technology they make 'nets' of shapes to translate into houses and tents.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in classes are good and pupils achieve good levels of knowledge and understanding.
- Investigational work and fair testing are very well embedded in lessons.
- More opportunity is needed for the oldest pupils to interpret data, display their findings in different formats, and to apply what they have learned as the basis for further enquiry.
- Extended challenges should be provided for the highest attaining pupils.

### Commentary

72. During the inspection, only one lesson was seen in each of the infant and the junior classes. Judgements about pupils' achievement and progress are based on discussions with pupils and the subject leader, scrutiny of pupils' work and displays in classrooms and around the school, and teachers' planning. Standards at age seven are above average and achievement is good. At age eleven, while pupils' knowledge and understanding of science are often above expected levels, their skills in displaying findings and applying what they know in order to investigate further are not developed as well. Overall, they are on course to meet expected levels by the end of Year 6.

73. By age seven, pupils are familiar with the investigative process and can use it appropriately. They are able to make observations and carry out simple tests, and can record their findings in different ways. By age eleven, pupils have acquired sound investigative skills, and a majority achieve well. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. Almost all have an understanding of variables, and can set up and conduct their own simple experiments. They can make their own decisions about investigational work and record their findings informally. However, the oldest pupils' skills in using fine measurement, working out relationships between variables and displaying information in different ways are not used as a basis for further enquiry.

74. Teachers' lively presentations captivate their pupils' interest right from the start of each session. Pupils know what they need to achieve and they respond enthusiastically to well focused instruction. The lessons are fast paced and teachers review learning objectives frequently. Questions are well structured and teachers insist that pupils explain their ideas. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to consider how to investigate. In Years 5 and 6, although pupils are encouraged to work together in mixed groups, work is not planned specifically for a few of the very highest attaining older pupils. A result of this is that these pupils are not always being given adequate support to achieve at the highest levels. Although a few are capable of applying what they know to recording and refining investigational work, they are not often expected to do so.

75. Adequate time is given for pupils to make observations and share ideas. Teachers' subject expertise and confidence in raising challenging questions and responding to pupils' queries help them to learn well. In Years 1 and 2, for instance, the teacher's skilful questions enabled pupils to understand that sound decreases as the distance from the source is increased.



76. All the pupils enjoy science, investigate keenly and collaborate well in groups. They are eager to share resources while they carry out their work. They take pride in presenting findings to each other and listen well.

77. The subject leader is new in post and has a clear overview of what needs to be done, based on an effective action plan that is underway. This includes monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. Assessment information is collected for each pupil and evaluated regularly. This is assessed against standardised examples and the outcomes are used to plan next steps in learning. The subject leader has evaluated the school's performance and is acting on the outcomes. Science focus weeks are held across the school to capture pupils' interest.

78. Pupils use the Internet in many ways to research information for topics in science and this contributes well to their knowledge and understanding. However, the skills of the oldest pupils in using ICT for databases and graphing information, and in using measurement devices, are not strongly developed. In the infant classes, pupils collect information about food and store this information on the computer.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

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

- Teaching and learning are satisfactory.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about learning and work with confidence.
- Some aspects of the subject are not developed well enough.
- The computer suite is cramped and provision across the school is limited.

### **Commentary**

79. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Judgements are made from observing pupils working in pairs and in groups in the ICT suite and classrooms, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work and displays around the school. Most pupils attain expected levels at age seven and eleven, and all pupils, including those with SEN, make satisfactory progress and achieve a reasonable level of competence. Almost all pupils collaborate well, share resources and provide advice and support for each other while they remain absorbed in their tasks. While they work in pairs or independently, most demonstrate good attention to detail and achieve well.

80. Even the youngest pupils are able to log on and select appropriate folders and programs on the screen. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good level of skill in using the keyboard to write and are able to paint pictures of castles, for example, to illustrate fairy stories. They use a digital camera and can control a device, directing its movement along the ground. All pupils carry out their work with good application and demonstrate high levels of confidence when they are working with computers. Often they demonstrate enthusiasm when using ICT for a range of purposes, for example, when pupils in Year 3 write letters to a building company to enquire about the properties of soundproofing. Most are eager to produce work to a high standard, for example, when they create special effects to depict the surface of gaseous planets, using a paint computer program, in Year 6.

81. Junior pupils understand the usefulness of ICT and show confidence in word processing letters and other writing, designing and painting pictures and patterns for project work, taking digital photographs, and constructing graphs and tables for work in different subjects. They have some experience of controlling devices, but their skills are not strongly developed. Many pupils use the Internet to find information for personal research, for instance, reading about the planets they are studying, and they can copy texts in order to produce informative reports.

82. Although the school's provision has been extended, a considerable lack of space in the computer suite and a limited number of computers in most classrooms constrain progress. A lack of up-to-date machines to support a digital projector restricts both staff and pupils' ability to prepare and use slide presentations. Where ICT is used for subject teaching, for instance to examine the outstanding features of the Taj Mahal, it enhances learning well. Teachers have received national training in the teaching of ICT and show increasing levels of expertise and confidence.

83. At the current time the school does not have an ICT subject leader but an able classroom assistant makes a significant contribution to supporting pupils' achievements. Although the curriculum is planned to enliven and extend work in different subjects for each year group and the requirements of the subject are met, some aspects are not developed well enough. Recording and displaying information, creating slide presentations, and controlling devices require greater emphasis, particularly for the oldest pupils. A new system for the assessment of pupils' skills has been introduced recently and provides a good basis for identifying how well pupils are progressing in relation to planned units of work.

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

84. Effective use is made of ICT to support skills in history, geography and design and technology, for instance, to illustrate booklets and topic folders. Older pupils undertake research that combines word processing and graph work to produce books in science outlining the findings from experiments related to force. However, some aspects of ICT are not developed sufficiently across the curriculum. There are good links with literacy and numeracy.

### **HUMANITIES**

85. In humanities, no teaching of either history or geography was seen. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. However, evidence from discussion with pupils, and analysis of their work, shows that in Years 2 and 6 standards in **history** are above average and in geography they are **average**.

86. In history, emphasis is put on enabling pupils to develop a sense of the past. For instance, pupils in Year 2 ask and answer questions about important events in their lives and compare their own experiences with those of their parents and grandparents. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of life in the times of the Ancient Egyptians. This and other topics are used effectively to enhance and promote literacy skills and personal research. For example, pupils impersonate different characters, writing diary entries of an archaeologist, and a journalistic writing about a tomb robbery.

87. In geography, pupils in Year 2 demonstrate good skills in using a simple map to find directions from their house to school. They develop awareness of their parents' jobs and familiarity with the school grounds, and learn where they might find mini-beasts locally. In Year 6, pupils develop a good grasp of how the local environment is affected by humans. They produce arguments for or against the erection of a mobile phone mast on the school field and do research on contrasting locations of wildlife.

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

88. No lessons were seen in **art and design** during the inspection. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision, but evidence was collected from pupils' work, displays in the classroom and teachers' planning, and from talking with pupils about their learning. On the basis of work seen, standards are above average throughout the school.

89. Over the year, pupils receive a rich and varied curriculum. Work in art and design is integrated into many aspects of study for different subjects and themes, and it is a significant feature of the school's 'creative curriculum'. Skills in observation are very well developed. Pupils are given experience of working with many different types of media and are expected to sketch, paint, work with clay and make models of objects that they are studying. For example, imaginative depiction of Egyptian masks, pyramids and patterns contribute well to the oldest pupils' cultural understanding of rituals.

90. Teachers explore challenging techniques and lively activities, as seen in a very effective display of huge ceiling banners produced as part of an art project linked to other local schools. Work with local artists and visits to museums and galleries enhance pupils' knowledge of famous artists and styles of art. Year 3 pupils produce weavings using Tudor colours, while Year 6 pupils create gargoyles formed out of clay to decorate the outdoor Reception class area.

91. The subject leader brings expertise to the role and has influenced the good standards achieved. Art club gives pupils the opportunity to experience an interesting range of activities. Resources for teaching and learning are good. Computer programs are used well to support learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at age seven are above average.
- Pupils gain good experience of a range of materials and techniques from the time they enter school.
- Pupils in the junior classes evaluate their work well
- Broader coverage of the subject by all pupils is needed.

### **Commentary**

92. At the end of Year 6, standards in design and technology are in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with SEN, achieve satisfactorily. Although pupils have good skills, lack of guidance in moving the oldest pupils on in learning means that they do not always achieve as well as they might. Standards of many pupils in Year 2 are above expectation because of good teaching about the use of tools, and the wide range of materials that they experience. In the lessons seen, teaching is good, as teachers encourage pupils to develop designing skills by giving clear explanation and appropriate challenge in the activities provided.

93. Design and technology is a strong feature of the 'creative curriculum' embraced by the school. Pupils gain good experience of a range of activities during their studies and have very good opportunities to develop their thinking skills across the curriculum. For instance, in food technology they have considered their favourite foods and have linked their choices with the diet that a child in the Second World War would experience, making comparisons about the healthier options.

94. Pupils in the infant class are able to measure accurately and make realistic plans for achieving their intentions. For example, when making hats for the 'Mad Hatter's' tea party, they helped each other to measure around their heads and were able to transfer this information to card confidently. They worked collaboratively on this activity, designing and making identical hats, using only paper and card, as the task demanded. In making these, they could use a hole-punch, pleat paper to make a fan and cut out circular pieces of paper for the brim, which they stuck on efficiently with sticky tape.

95. Junior pupils evaluate their work and are able to make modifications for improvement. These skills are particularly well developed in Years 3 and 4, where pupils made shapes for tents and analysed the design stage, evaluating the most important features. They made cuboids, reinforcing these with various shapes to make them stronger, and discovered that the triangle was the most effective. In Years 5 and 6, pupils worked in groups to design a space shuttle mobile that was based on mathematical shapes. They collaborated well and many justified their choice of design convincingly. However, many pupils found it difficult to move on into the next phase of work because of lack of intervention from the teacher. This meant that the pace of the activity was lost.

96. The subject leader has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and there is an action plan to develop areas where pupils miss out experiences. For example, the use of controlling devices to extend pupils' learning is not developed well enough. However, the scheme of work provides for progress in learning and good assessment opportunities. Staff use these well, and this leads to very good practice across the whole school in the activities covered. Resources are good and pupils are aware of safety issues when using tools.

97. Two lessons were seen in music, which were satisfactory, so an overall judgement about provision cannot be made. From discussions with pupils and observation of activities across the school, there is evidence of strong emphasis on the subject. Through singing and listening to many different sources of music, pupils develop an appreciation of a wide range of cultures. They develop knowledge and understanding of contrasting styles of music, different instruments and singing. During the inspection, pupils sang enthusiastically in assemblies and during choir practices. In one of the lessons seen, they explored patterns and rhythms and learned about 'ostinato' and repeated notations in motifs. Groups of pupils are learning the recorder, violin and brass instruments. A choir performs on special occasions such as Christmas and Easter.

98. Only one lesson was seen in **physical education** during the inspection so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision. From speaking to pupils and from discussion with the subject leader it is clear that the school works very hard to encourage physical activity both during the school day and in extra-curricular activities, and pupils are able to describe the benefits of exercise clearly. All strands of activity are taught and standards are broadly average by the time pupils reach Year 6. Swimming is taught at a local pool and pupils enjoy the challenge this brings.

99. There is a wide range of after school clubs to develop games skills further and there are good opportunities for competitive sport with local schools which are balanced well with non-competitive activities. Girls and boys in the junior classes enjoy a range of mixed activities such as football, netball and 'Kwik' cricket. Pupils enjoy dance activities and explore movement through music, organising a lunchtime dance club themselves and clearly enjoying this.

100. In the lesson seen, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were developing games skills in the playground with success. There was good modelling of activities and evaluation of individual performance. Expectations were high and the teacher fostered pupils' self esteem and success by choosing 'experts' to show their skill. Their activities were then discussed to help others reach the same standards. Pupils had good techniques and style in their movement, and made good progress in the lesson so that by the end several could catch a ball competently. They concentrated well, responded to the challenges set and listened intently to the instructions given to help them improve.

101. The subject leader has provided support for progress in learning, including a scheme of work, which allows for good assessment of all aspects of the subject. She has received advice and support from the local education authority adviser, and both staff and pupils have benefited from its raised profile. Facilities and resources for physical activity are good, with some additions to provision being recommended by pupils through the school council. The hall and playing field are well used. A clubhouse and a wooden screen provided to act as a goal and marker board in tennis practice enhance playground sports sessions.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

102. No lessons were seen during the inspection so judgements about provision have not been made. The arrangements for personal, social and health education, including drugs education, are **good**. The programme is taught mainly through other subjects. Teachers' planning indicates that good attention is given to this area through developing pupils' understanding of health and diet. For instance, they explore the impact of healthy eating in science, and the importance of exercise in physical education. Pupils are given good support for road safety. Visits, for instance to Kingswood Activity Centre, and visitors such as the school nurse, add to the quality of the provision. Circle time<sup>1</sup>, the school council and other activities provide pupils with good opportunities to share their views and suggest ideas for improvements that they would like to see. These contribute well to their personal development, relationships and confidence.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Circle time' is a planned activity where pupils learn to share their personal feelings with each other and adults.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>1</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	2
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	3

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