

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **COOMBE HILL INFANT SCHOOL**

Kingston-Upon-Thames

LEA area: Kingston-Upon-Thames

Unique reference number: 102567

Headteacher: Mrs S Hobhouse

Lead inspector: Mr G Timms

Dates of inspection: 14-17 June 2004

Inspection number: 255877

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

© Crown copyright 2004

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

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	270
School address:	Coombe Lane West Kingston-Upon-Thames Surrey
Postcode:	KT2 7DD
Telephone number:	020 8942 9481
Fax number:	020 8949 7496
E-mail address:	chi@rbksch.org
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr I Kellett
Date of previous inspection:	3 March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Coombe Hill Infant School has 270 pupils, all of whom attend on a full-time basis. This represents an increase in the size of the school since the last inspection. Although there is a range of ability, and particularly in children's communication, language and literacy skills, overall the attainment of most children when they enter the school is broadly in line with that expected for their ages. There are 58 pupils on the register of special educational need. This is above average overall when compared with schools nationally. Four of the pupils have a statement of special need entitling them to extra support. The main needs are speech and communication difficulties, with some having learning and physical difficulties. There is a wide range of children from different minority ethnic backgrounds and pupils at the school speak over 20 different languages. This is very high. Altogether, 126 pupils receive extra support with their learning due to English not being their first language. The proportion of parents who claim their entitlement to free school meals is below average, although this may be affected by the fact that the local education authority does not provide hot meals and the socio-economic background of most children is above average. The school was awarded the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21038	Mr G Timms	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Physical education
16472	Mrs C Stormonth	Lay inspector	
1963	Mrs S Raychaudhuri	Team inspector	English Design and technology Religious education English as an additional language
32181	Mrs M Coles	Team inspector	Science Geography History Music Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

PBM Brookbridge & Bedford Ltd  
PO Box 524  
Cheadle  
Staffordshire  
ST10 4RN

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

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>11</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>30</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The school's effectiveness is excellent** and it provides very good value for money. Pupils achieve very well, given their attainment on entry to the school, and by the age of seven standards are often well above those expected. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The school is excellently led and managed by the headteacher and governors, and there is a very clear focus on raising standards. Pupils have excellent attitudes towards school.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are well above average.
- Pupils make very good progress and all achieve very well.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual development is excellent, and moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- A significant proportion of the teaching is excellent.
- The quality and deployment of the support staff are excellent.
- The extra activities to enrich the curriculum are excellent, as is the school's inclusion<sup>1</sup>.
- The care and welfare provided for pupils are excellent.
- The links with parents and with other schools are excellent.
- The pupils' work is too often untidy and poorly presented, and does not reflect the very good content.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher, and the governance of the school, are excellent.

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection. The key issues have been remedied and, particularly in information and communication technology, standards have risen. The accommodation has been much improved, training for staff has been very effective and the increased provision of a high number of support staff is having a very positive impact on standards.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

**Pupils' achievement is very good.** This is not fully reflected in the above table but is evident throughout the work of the school. In 2003, when compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, standards in reading were below average. This was due to a cohort that had a high proportion of pupils who were still learning English as an additional language or who had special educational needs. Standards in writing were average, while in mathematics, standards were well above average. Children in the Reception classes achieve very well. The majority of the children are on course to attain the national goals for early learning by the end of the Reception year and many are likely to exceeding it. The current Year 2 pupils are on course to do better in the tests than was the case in 2003, especially in reading and writing. When children enter the school, most have a broadly average attainment on entry. However, their skills in communication, language and literacy are often below those typically found because of the high proportion of children at an early stage of

<sup>1</sup> Inclusion refers to the arrangements made by the school to meet the different learning needs of pupils whatever their gender, ability or background.

learning English as an additional language. These children make very good progress but need more time to catch up with national expectations and this has an impact on the test results in Year 2. The evidence of the inspection shows that current standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are well above average, while standards in religious education, information and communication technology, and art and design are above average. Standards in mathematics are particularly strong and consistently so. This is due to the very effective teaching and the very good subject leadership. These very good standards in mathematics are evident among all groups of pupils and there are no differences regarding gender, ability or ethnic background. **Pupils' personal qualities are very good.** Their attitudes are excellent and behaviour is very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is very good.** Teaching and learning are very good overall. There are excellent relationships between pupils and teachers. A further major strength is the quality and deployment of the wide range of support staff, particularly in the support for more able pupils, pupils with special educational needs, or those with English as an additional language. The curriculum is very good and there is excellent enrichment through the very good range of clubs, trips and visits. The care and welfare offered to pupils, and the links with parents and other schools are excellent.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management is excellent. The governance of the school is excellent, and the governors offer the school an extensive level of support and challenge. They have a clear strategic vision for the school. The decisions they make, such as the excellent provision of support staff, are very effective and have a positive impact on standards of achievement. All statutory requirements are fully met. The headteacher offers an excellent level of leadership and management. She has a strong focus on raising standards while maintaining the very good caring ethos. Senior teachers and subject leaders offer very good leadership and their work has had a very good impact on standards and on the improvements made since the last inspection.

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

The parents' views of the school are very positive. They like the arrangements made for children to start school and they feel their children enjoy being there. They also believe the school is well led and managed. The inspection supports these views. A few pupils do not think other children always behave well but overall they are very happy with the school and almost all say they have to work hard and they are trusted to do things on their own, reflecting the very good independence given to them.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The school has a very good school improvement plan, reached through a very effective system of self-evaluation. In addition to ensuring that this plan is put into practice, the most important thing the school should do to improve is enhance the presentation and tidiness of pupils' work.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement is very good in all years, regardless of gender, level of attainment, special educational need or minority ethnic background. Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science, and above those expected in information and communication technology, religious education and art and design. Most children in the Reception classes will achieve or exceed the expected early learning goals by the end of the school year.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The early indications of the 2004 test results are that standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved compared to 2003.
- Standards evident from the inspection are well above average in the core subjects<sup>2</sup>.
- Standards in information and communication technology have much improved and pupils' good skills are used throughout the curriculum.
- Where standards and achievement in the non-core subjects<sup>3</sup> can be assessed, they are consistently above that expected for the ages of the pupils.
- The untidy presentation of much of the pupils' work does not reflect the often very good content.

#### Commentary

1. In the Reception classes, children achieve very well and standards are above those normally found in this age group. This is consistent through all of the nationally agreed areas of learning. The achievement in communication, language and literacy skills is particularly strong given the often low attainment on entry to the school, but achievement is also very good in children's personal, social and emotional development, their mathematical development, their knowledge and understanding of the world, their physical development and their creative development. This is due to the very good provision in Reception, especially the well-planned teaching and careful assessment that enables all children to be well provided for and to make very good progress.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.9 (17.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.2 (15.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.6 (18.9)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 90 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. In the national tests of 2003, standards were average in reading, above average in writing and well above average in mathematics. Although reading standards fell slightly this is a consistent picture over recent years of above and well above average standards. The early indications are that standards have risen further this year and that the 2004 results will be better.
3. When compared with schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds, results in 2003 were below average in reading, average in writing and well above average in mathematics. This

<sup>2</sup> The core subjects are English, mathematics and science.

<sup>3</sup> The non-core subjects are information and communication technology; art and design; design and technology; geography; history; music; physical education. Religious education is an additional subject.

represents considerable achievement for the pupils. Many start school with a low level of communication, language and literacy skills, either due to their special educational needs or because they are at an early stage of learning English. The school works hard with these pupils and because of that they achieve very well and make very good progress to attain the results they do.

4. Standards in information and communication technology have improved greatly since the last inspection and are now above those expected. In this subject, pupils achieve very well. The very good improvement has been the result of staff training, improved resources and very good subject leadership. Pupils use computers and other hardware confidently and, in a range of different subjects, as tools to aid their learning. Standards in religious education are above average. Pupils achieve well because the teachers are knowledgeable and confident in teaching the subject in a way that captures the interest of young pupils. In art and design, standards are also above average and pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of how to use a range of media and materials. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make judgements about other subjects, although from a sample of pupils' past work, standards in geography and history are also often above those expected.
5. Many pupils with special educational needs are on course to attain nationally expected standards in reading, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 and this reflects their very good achievement. Their success is largely due to the quality of teaching and support they receive and the well-planned curriculum provided for them at an appropriately challenging level. Higher-attaining pupils achieve very well, as is evident in the high proportion exceeding nationally expected levels in the tests. For example in 2003 in mathematics, 41 per cent of pupils exceeded the nationally expected level and this is 12 percentage points more than did so in the majority of other schools.
6. Pupils with a first language other than English make very good progress and achieve very well. This is true whatever their level. The school analyses these pupils' results in the national tests carefully and identifies their needs in mathematics and English. There are no significant differences between the performances of these pupils and their peers.
7. Although the pupils' work is of a high standard, when recorded on paper or in books it is not always very carefully presented. Handwriting is untidy and the work is often not well set out. Pupils show they are capable of improving this as their best work shows, but teachers too often take untidy and poorly-presented work as acceptable.

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

Attitudes to learning and to school are excellent and behaviour is very good. Aspects of personal development, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are also very good. Attendance and punctuality are good and improving. This area has been strengthened since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Behaviour is usually very good both in lessons and around the school.
- The ethos is very positive and the mission statement and school aims are fully reflected in the school's work and practice.
- A huge number of visits and visitors, special multicultural and subject days and other extra-curricular activities enrich and extend pupils' personal development significantly.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, with some exceptional opportunities for spiritual development.

## Commentary

8. Pupils are very keen to come to school and are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life. They confirmed to inspectors how lucky they feel to be at such a 'great school'. They are full of praise for the fun and interesting lessons they enjoy, the 'amazing' adventure playground and the kind and helpful staff. Pupils have a real desire to learn and succeed. They work hard under close supervision, feel exhilarated by achievement and are justly proud of their work, although good habits of presentation have not been developed sufficiently.
9. Pupils are helpful, friendly and consistently behave very well. Playtimes are lively and pupils amuse themselves well. Older boys are occasionally boisterous but are good-natured. Pupils show reverence during assemblies especially during prayer and really enjoy singing hymns. Bullying and other forms of harassment are rare and are simply not tolerated. When any pupil raises a behaviour concern, it is dealt with seriously and pupils are very pleased about this. There have been no recent exclusions.
10. The pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds, including those with a mother tongue other than English, have excellent attitudes to school and learning. This has a very positive impact on their achievement and the very good progress they make. Pupils with special educational needs behave very well because members of staff consistently have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The school's ethos and approach to behaviour management means that there are very few instances of inappropriate behaviour.
11. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved from good to very good since the last inspection, representing very good improvement. Provision for pupils' spiritual development has improved very significantly. The very good ethos of the school helps to promote spiritual development. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to reflect on important themes in lessons and assemblies. Acts of collective worship give pupils the time to reflect on what they have been learning. In assemblies, pupils and staff regularly sing together whole-heartedly with enthusiasm, filling the hall with joy and resonance. The spirituality of these occasions is moving. Subjects such as English, science, religious education, music and art and design make a very good contribution. Many opportunities exist for pupils to marvel at the wonder of living things and creations in art and music.
12. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good. Pupils have a very clear understanding of right and wrong; they show respect for people and property because teachers and teaching assistants ensure that pupils develop good manners and behaviour. They consistently draw pupils' attention to the behaviour policy and the 'Golden Rules' of the school. The mutual respect that exists between staff and pupils reflects the emphasis staff place on the importance of working together. By working together, the pupils grow to appreciate the similarities and differences between children of different backgrounds. Provision for cultural development is also very good. Pupils not only learn about their own culture but also have opportunities to experience the rich range of cultures around the world. This is more extensive now and deeply embedded in the work of the school. For example, the school celebrates 'International Week' every autumn and pupils learn about different countries and their traditions. Different languages are celebrated in signs and books throughout the school.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.5	School data	0.0
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.*

13. The school promotes good attendance and punctuality very well. Attendance has improved in the past year and is now above the national average with no unauthorised absence. Nearly a third of authorised absence, however, is attributable to holidays being taken in school time, despite the school's best efforts to discourage this. Most pupils arrive at school on time and timekeeping during the school day is very good. Pupils are developing the important life skill of being punctual very well.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good. Very good teaching enables pupils to achieve very well and make very good progress. The very effective curriculum provision supports their learning with excellent opportunities for enrichment.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school. This is true in most of the subjects inspected and has a very positive impact on pupils' achievement. Assessment of pupils' work is very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good range of experience and expertise among the staff.
- The teachers' subject knowledge is strong and there is excellent use of a range of different strategies to get the best from different pupils.
- The members of the support staff are of excellent quality and they are used very effectively.
- The very good teaching is based on excellent relationships between adults, and between adults and children.
- Assessment is very good and effectively used in planning appropriate work.
- Teachers are using information and communication technology very effectively to support learning in a range of subjects.
- Teachers sometimes accept work that is untidy and poorly presented.

## Commentary

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (9%)	21 (49%)	15 (35%)	3 (7%)	0	0	0

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

14. The quality of teaching is very good overall, taking the lesson observations and evidence from children's work into account. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and 93 per cent was good or better, with over half of the lessons observed, 58 per cent, being very good or excellent. This is a stronger picture of the quality of teaching than is found nationally. The

members of staff have a wide range of experience and expertise, and the sharing of this, through staff meetings and training activities, is very effective.

15. The teaching staff and the wide range of support staff provide very good value for money. They work very well together as a team and relationships are strong. The planning often involves non-teaching staff, and this helps ensure they are clear about their role and the focus for their work. The members of the support staff get on very well with the children. They are aware of individuals' strengths and weaknesses and are knowledgeable about the pupils' personal and social circumstances.
16. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and expertise in teaching pupils of this age. In the Reception classes, teachers are very familiar with the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the needs of children, many of whom who are under five. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is very good. Behaviour management is very effective and lessons have a good pace with all children fully engaged in learning.
17. In Years 1 and 2, teachers are equally knowledgeable about the early years of the National Curriculum. They use a range of strategies as appropriate for a given task. They are also aware of the learning styles of different pupils. The best planning, for example, takes account of whether the lesson is best taught in a visual, aural or practical way. The developing use of role play and other activities in Year 1 shows a growing awareness of how the best practice from the Foundation Stage can also have value in the early stages of the National Curriculum. A particular strength of the planning is the cross-curricular links made by teachers. These enable pupils to see how subjects are connected, and how the learning in one subject can have a positive impact on the learning in another. This is particularly strong in information and communication technology where there are very good links to most other subjects. Teachers are using computers and interactive whiteboards with growing confidence and considerable success.
18. The overall quality of the teaching of pupils with a mother tongue other than English is very good. Class teachers and the specialist staff work very effectively to offer the necessary support for these pupils. The teaching consists of language support given in the class, linked to the class work. However, there are occasions when pupils at an early stage of learning English are not given sufficient support and encouragement to speak in whole-class sessions.
19. The assessment of pupils' progress is very good, and is well used in planning their next work. In the Reception classes, very effective use of sticky notes is made for day-to-day observations and specific learning moments. At other times, a particular focus group is assessed during an activity and the adult involved records this for the teacher. In time, this builds into a detailed picture of the children's progress. Assessment procedures in Years 1 and 2 are also very effective and the information is used well by teachers when planning lessons. The school uses good procedures for assessing pupils with English as an additional language. This assessment is carried out regularly and information is used for allocation of support and setting targets. The school's assessment arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are very good and pupils' individual progress is carefully tracked each term. This means that on pupils' individual education plans, targets are closely matched to their specific needs. As a result, teachers are clear about what pupils need to learn to improve.
20. Teachers' planning for pupils with special educational needs is leading to activities that are very well matched to individual pupils' needs and this helps them to develop their basic skills well. Teachers use highly effective questioning to enable pupils to participate fully in lessons and make very good progress. The excellent training provided for teaching assistants enables them to be highly effective and skilled in supporting pupils with special needs in class and in withdrawal sessions. Members of the support staff are generally used very well by class teachers and as a result they make a significant contribution to the progress pupils make by helping them to concentrate fully on their work and contribute to discussions.

21. On too many occasions, teachers accept work from pupils that is untidy and poorly presented. This sometimes relates to the pupils' handwriting skills or the way the work has been recorded and set out. At times, the storage of worksheets does not encourage pupils to take sufficient pride in their work. This is an important issue for improvement as the poor presentation often hides some effective and high quality learning. Most pupils are very productive and apply themselves to their work well.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is very good. It provides very well for all pupils. The opportunities for enrichment are excellent. The resources and accommodation in the school are very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum opportunities fulfil all statutory requirements and provide very good links between subjects so that experiences are connected.
- The school provides a broad and rich range of enrichment experiences of exceptional quality, which help to enhance pupils' learning and personal development.
- Provision is very good for pupils with special educational needs.
- This is a very highly inclusive school where all pupils' needs are met.
- The accommodation and outdoor provision are very spacious and imaginatively developed.

## **Commentary**

22. Curriculum provision in the Reception classes is very well structured to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make very good progress. There are very good learning opportunities in all six areas of the national framework for children who are under five. Staffing is of a high calibre with excellent support from teaching assistants, parents and students to enhance the learning and achievements of the children.
23. The curriculum for Years 1 and 2 provides a very good framework for learning. The statutory requirements for all subjects are met, including those for religious education and the daily act of collective worship. The school's new computer suite, the well-planned information and communication technology curriculum, and the appropriate time allocated are leading to very good provision for this subject overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school has developed appropriate schemes of work in all subjects using national guidelines. Very good, detailed, long-term and medium-term plans set out work that builds on pupils' previous learning and become more demanding as the pupils get older. Units of work for each subject have appropriate amounts of time allocated to them. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There are very good links in all subjects so that literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are used to enhance pupils' learning.
24. This is a very inclusive school. It ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language, and the gifted and talented, have equal access to the curriculum and are fully involved in all aspects of school life. The members of staff funded by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant are effectively deployed and have a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Two part-time teaching assistants provide very good support throughout the school. The teacher responsible for pupils with English as an additional language and class teachers ensure that the pupils know and understand the specific language required for the lesson. The quality of this support is very good.
25. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. They enjoy access to the full range of curriculum opportunities. The organisation of the provision for special education pupils is very good. An able special needs co-ordinator and very experienced and skilled teaching assistants support the pupils very effectively. Because of early identification and focused

teaching, both in class and in small withdrawal groups, pupils make very good progress. These pupils have individual education plans to support their learning. The targets are well matched to their needs and are reviewed regularly, and these pupils achieve very well.

26. The school's provision for the enrichment of the curriculum is excellent. The opportunities for learning outside the school day are extensive. There are many clubs, educational visits, visitors and events linked to learning. The school runs six weekly after-school clubs including science, sewing, indoor games, computer and sports clubs. There are regular visits to local areas of interest and many workshops and theatre events in school, including theatre groups supporting science and literacy. Museum workshops support history, and international music and dance workshops enrich pupils' arts experiences. The local community is welcomed and much use is made of the talents and expertise of parents and the community to enrich the learning of pupils.
27. There are enough well-qualified and experienced teachers to meet the curricular demands of the age range and a good number of well qualified and skilled support staff. The school has appropriate, spacious classrooms and internal facilities and teaching resources. The new building and computer suite have further enhanced its provision. The external environment is very good. The playground and site are very well developed with new decking, an outdoor stage and an adventure playground as well as expansive grass, tarmac, shaded and quiet areas. The school has use of a swimming pool on site, which it shares with the junior school. The site and accommodation are safe, pleasant, well maintained and help to enrich the pupils' play and learning experiences. The school has maintained and improved upon its high levels of provision in this aspect.

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

The care and welfare of pupils and the arrangements for their health and safety are outstanding. The school provides very good support, advice and guidance for pupils based on the monitoring of their achievement and personal development. Pupils' views are valued highly and form part of school improvement. This aspect has improved since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The care and guidance provided for students is a key strength of the school and helps pupils achieve their best.
- Pupils confirmed strongly how much they value the excellent relationships they develop with all staff.
- The arrangements for child protection and for children in public care are outstanding.
- An active student council helps to gauge pupils' opinions and gives them a voice in the school.

### **Commentary**

28. The school has a fully inclusive approach to helping pupils in a very supportive and caring community. Each class has high numbers of staff, helpers and other adults, and pupils receive a great deal of individual attention. Pupils feel that they would always have someone to turn to if they were ever worried or troubled. Highly effective monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development enables any underperformance or unhappiness to be detected quickly. Those pupils are helped to resolve issues and improve their work. This boosts confidence, self-esteem and improves the quality of learning and school life.
29. There is very good support for pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who have English as an additional language, who are well integrated into the life of the school. Pupils with special educational needs are very well cared for throughout the school. They are fully integrated into all aspects of school life and are able to discuss any concerns they may have with teachers, support staff or lunchtime supervisors.

30. Pupils receive very good support and guidance in their work by effective use of assessment information. Marking is helpful and the advice given encourages improvement. Pupils are helped to be aware of their learning targets and know what to do to achieve them. Pupils with special educational needs, or who have English as an additional language, are monitored closely and receive the attention they need to make very good progress.
31. All the requirements are fully met for child protection and for children in public care. Pupils are monitored and supported very sensitively. Pupils with a range of medical needs are catered for very well. When pupils are ill or injured, they receive a high level of care and attention. All the risk assessments and routine checking systems for health and safety throughout the school are thorough and issues are addressed swiftly.
32. The arrangements for helping children start and settle into school are very good. Individual arrangements are made to ensure that all children settle quickly and happily. Mid-term arrivals are well catered for and pupils are assigned buddies who help the newcomers master school routines and establish friendships.
33. Pupils raise issues and share ideas with their class council before their class representatives channel these to the full school council. The school is keen to listen and act upon suggestions. The organised football during playtime and litter patrols came about in this way. Pupils also like sharing their thoughts in class discussions and feel that they can talk to their teachers and classmates easily and openly.

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

The links with parents are excellent. The school is held in very high regard and is oversubscribed. Links with the local community are very good and the school's links with other schools are excellent. This aspect is markedly better than it was at the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are warmly welcomed into school as an important part of the school community.
- The school works very closely with parents to support learning and ensure pupils' happiness, and is very approachable whenever there are any concerns.
- A huge number of parents help in school in a variety of ways to enhance learning and improve school life.
- Outstanding links with other schools and colleges bring many benefits.

### **Commentary**

34. Parental support for pupils' learning and for the wide range of school activities is excellent. Parents feel a great sense of partnership based on highly effective two-way communications and mutual trust. All parents who responded to the questionnaire and the many spoken to during the inspection felt great confidence in the school across all aspects. Parents praised the literacy and numeracy meetings and the spin-offs they gained for their children's learning.
35. A language support network ensures that parents of pupils with English as an additional language are included in school activities and their children's learning. The school maintains very good links with parents from ethnic minorities through the nominated governor and staff, who encourage parents to visit the school and participate in school activities. Translation and interpretation services are arranged for them wherever needed.
36. The school has established very effective links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. The views of parents are actively sought through regular meetings with teachers and the co-ordinator for special educational needs, so that parents are kept fully informed about the progress their children are making.

37. School reports are good and arrangements for consultation are very good. Mid-term reports with targets accompany termly discussions with teachers to fully involve parents. Curriculum information, class letters, newsletters and daily opportunities to talk to staff keep parents fully in touch with school activities and their children's learning. Many parents are voluntary helpers and provide high quality support in the classroom and for reading and other practical activities. The parents' association is an example of excellent practice. It provides a very busy and entertaining social calendar and raises large sums that significantly benefit learning. Parents' views are regularly surveyed formally and informally and form an important part of continuous school improvement; parents appreciate this aspect.
38. Links with the local community are very good. The school makes very good use of local resources such as museums, a local farm and churches to enrich learning. Many locals are welcomed to share their skills and experiences and local services such as the fire service, health professionals and police enhance personal, social and health education. The school gets involved in local activities and takes part annually in a country dancing festival. Local businesses sponsor events such as the very successful summer fair and summer concert. There is a good relationship with the local residents' association and many local groups use the school for lettings.
39. Links with the feeder pre-school groups are very good and help to provide a happy and effective transfer to school. Links with the junior school are excellent and ensure pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their education. Ongoing links with a special school are excellent for the dual-registered pupil. Links with Kingston University are also excellent; students who come for teacher training have some outstanding opportunities for teaching practice and support pupils' learning very well.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are excellent overall. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and very effective. The leadership of senior staff is very good. The governance of the school is excellent. These real strengths have a very positive impact on pupils' achievement.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The governors offer the school an excellent level of support and challenge.
- The headteacher has a very clear focus on raising standards of achievement while maintaining the caring ethos of the school.
- The subject leaders have had a major impact on improvement since the last inspection.
- Support staff are very well managed and deployed.

### **Commentary**

40. The governing body is very well organised and has effective and efficient systems in place for supporting and challenging the school. Governors have a very clear vision for the school and a very good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in provision. They regularly monitor the work of the school through visits and reports from governors, as well as from staff and the headteacher. They are very aware of the data analysis carried out by the school and how this reflects the success of the school. There is a good system of committees and working parties, and all statutory requirements are met.
41. The leadership shown by the headteacher is excellent. She has worked very hard since the last inspection to raise standards further but also to maintain the very warm and caring ethos that existed. She has managed the growth of the school well, and the improvements to the accommodation have been very effective in providing better resources and a much improved learning environment for pupils. Together with her senior staff, the headteacher analyses test results and other assessment information closely and the priorities that arise are used to

inform the school improvement plan and future developments. There is a very effective ethos of continual improvement.

42. The subject leaders are very effective in leading and managing improvement in their subjects. For example, in mathematics, the leadership has resulted in consistently high standards over time, while in information and communication technology the very effective leadership of the previous and the present co-ordinator has resulted in very good improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinators in most subjects monitor the work of other teachers, either through observations of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work or of teachers' planning.
43. The members of staff who support pupils with English as an additional language are very effectively managed by the school. The members of staff are very clear about what needs to be done in this aspect of work. Leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. The co-ordinator liaises very effectively with staff to ensure that pupils receive appropriate levels of support so that they can make progress in their learning. The very good systems and organisation in managing special needs throughout the school ensures that pupils' needs are identified as early as possible, that appropriate support is put into place, that progress against targets is monitored closely and that pupils achieve as well as their peers.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	859,819
Total expenditure	861,633
Expenditure per pupil	3,191

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	42,533
Balance carried forward to the next	40,719

44. The governing body, together with the school bursar, plan and monitor the budget very effectively. Important decisions are taken only with sufficient information, and are based closely on the priorities in the school improvement plan. This ensures that the spending has a positive impact on standards and the pupils' learning. This is most evident in the provision of non-teaching staff, which clearly provides excellent value for money. Overall, the school ensures best value throughout.

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

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

45. Provision for children in the Reception classes is very good. Children enter the Reception class with broadly average attainment overall, although the significant proportion of pupils at an early stage of learning English means that standards in communication, language and literacy are often below those of the other areas of learning. There is good liaison with local nursery settings and this ensures that both children and parents are well prepared for starting school. Children make very good progress through the Reception year and they firmly develop and consolidate their skills. This prepares them well for the next stage of their schooling and the requirements of the National Curriculum. They achieve well in all areas of learning due to the very good teaching and the excellent quality and deployment of the support staff and other helpers. By the time they leave the Reception class, the majority of the pupils have achieved the expected early learning goals, and many have exceeded them. Activities are well matched to children's needs, following from the very effective assessment of their progress carried out in detail by teachers and other staff. The annotation of children's work shows how well staff know the children, both on a personal level, but also with regard to the special needs or stage of English language development. The provision is very well led and managed by the co-ordinator. The improvement since the last inspection has been significant.

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

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

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

- The teachers ensure that all activities are used effectively to support children's personal, social and emotional development.
- The start of morning and afternoon sessions, and specific discussion times, are used well to give children opportunities to talk about concerns and events in their lives.
- Children work and play very well together.

#### **Commentary**

46. Achievement is very good and standards are above average. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Role-play areas are very effective and very well used by staff to develop children's skills. Very effective links are made with other areas of learning. For example, when playing in a simulated rainforest, children learn about caring for the environment, while role-play in an area simulating a castle results in creative work as children devise their own coats of arms. Children are involved in school improvement issues. They are surveyed about what they like and dislike about school, and they take part in the school council. These opportunities give them an early understanding of citizenship, and helps develop their confidence and self-esteem.
47. In lessons, children play and work together well. There is little bad behaviour and all children understand the need for sharing and co-operating with others. All adults in the classes reinforce this learning. At break-times, adults often arrange games, songs and rhymes to encourage the children to play together. In one class, children finished the day with a song about friends. A range of activities supported work on friends, such as small resources used to tell a story about friends and creative work to make something for a friend.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use displays of key vocabulary well.
- There are good opportunities to write for different purposes.
- Teachers teach phonic skills well, making good use of a range of resources.
- In all activities, the adults promote good speaking and listening skills.

### Commentary

48. Achievement is very good and standards overall are above average. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Because of the very good teaching and activities offered, most children are on course to attain or exceed the national goals early learning, with a significant proportion exceeding them. Most children are well on the way to writing their own name on entry to the school. As the year progresses their general writing skills improve though some children have difficulty forming recognisable letters. The teachers provide a lot of opportunities for writing for different purposes. For example, children write letters, reports and invitations. Higher-attaining children are able to write clear words and recognisable sentences by half way through the year, although the less able are still working hard to trace over the teacher's writing.
49. One of the strengths in the provision is the very good labelling and use of key vocabulary in displays in classrooms and around the school. This ensures that children are surrounded by the written language and helps them become more familiar with it. Higher-attainers recognise rhyming words and use them to help decipher meaning in a text. Teachers devise good resources to help with children's reading by, for example, emphasising the shape of words using home-made word cards. When introducing phonic work about a blend such as 'tr', teachers make very good use of props and puppets. This encourages children to listen more carefully and to join in sounding the letters and learning the new words. When children start group activities these are very well matched to their prior learning so that all children are sufficiently challenged.
50. When adults work with children, either individually or in small groups, they encourage talk between children to help develop their speaking and listening skills. Children are often asked to explain why or how they did something in other subjects such as mathematics, and this not only consolidates their learning in the subject but also provides very effective opportunities for speaking.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- In one excellent lesson, children learn to measure length accurately.
- The teachers provide a good range of practical activities to extend children's skills over the year.

### Commentary

51. Almost all of the children are on course to attain the expected early learning goals, and a significant number are likely to exceed them. This is due to the very effective, well-planned teaching. The workbooks used by teachers are used effectively to develop skills in number and

shape, space and measures. Clear progress is evident over the year. For example, most children are able to add and subtract to nine early in the year. As the year progresses they learn to sequence numbers, work out missing numbers, the names of common two-dimensional shapes and, by May, can create simple charts to represent information in a graphical form. For example, they create pictograms of favourite farm animals as a class activity. Higher-attaining children are confident with much higher numbers and can subtract from numbers to 20, although less able pupils are still not secure in number recognition later in the year.

52. Water is used well through play activities to teach children about volume and capacity. The work in one lesson was carefully observed and assessed by a teaching assistant, providing the teacher with a good record of children's individual understanding. In an excellent lesson on measuring length, very good links with the rainforest topic resulted in the teacher creating lizard measuring sticks. These were used in practical activities, while higher-attainers moved on to using a ruler and centimetres. There was very effective learning of important vocabulary as children compared trees or other objects. A further very good link ensured computer software was used to match comparative vocabulary to pictures.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have a good understanding about the variety of life around them.
- The use of information and communication technology has improved greatly since the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

53. Because of the very good provision, including the knowledgeable teaching, most children are on course to attain or exceed the national goals for early learning by the end of the Reception year, with a good proportion likely to exceed them. They are already very knowledgeable about the world around them. For example, they have a good understanding of the life cycles of a number of creatures such as frogs, of farm animals and their young, and of the effects of the weather. The main topic during the inspection, based on the rainforest, resulted in very good learning about nature, different habitats, countries and climates. This was extended very effectively as children searched the grounds for minibeasts, which they studied under magnifying glasses.
54. A great deal of computer use is based on experimenting with art software and children are very familiar with how to change colours and tools to get different effects. They use shapes, and create tiles and three-dimensional pictures. Computers are also used to teach sequencing skills, through activities such as dressing the bear in the correct order. Children use the Internet to retrieve pictures of the rainforest creatures.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The outdoor facilities and resources are exceptional and very well used.
- The planning ensures very good opportunities for children to develop their skills with large apparatus or with smaller more detailed activities.

## Commentary

55. Achievement is very good and children reach standards above those expected. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The Reception classes have easy and safe access to a very good, well-resourced outdoor area. The use of this is very well planned by staff to ensure it is fully and effectively used. Children are able to ride wheeled toys, take part in physical activities with equipment such as ropes and balls, or use the adventure play apparatus. In addition, they can experiment with materials such as sand and water, all of which help the very good development of their skills in controlling tools and media. The areas are very well labelled and partly undercover so they can be used all year.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good opportunities to use a range of materials and media.
- Creative work has a high profile in displays that celebrate children's work.
- Children learn a range of songs and traditional rhymes.

## Commentary

56. Achievement is very good and children reach standards above those expected. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. In work linked to the topic on rainforests, children created some musical instruments designed to recreate rainforest sounds. These are of high quality and very well finished. Other three-dimensional work resulted from the rainforest topic as children used a range of materials to design and make homes for the creatures in the forest. Children are taught a range of songs, some with actions. They have good opportunities to learn traditional rhymes and games such as 'The Farmer's in his Den'.

57. In one very good exercise, children used paint or collage to respond to music, through creating work that reflected the happy, sunny nature of the music. Colour is used well in, for example, pictures using pink after a story about a cherry blossom tree, or when devising camouflage patterns using a range of media. Very good collages followed on from a story about a greedy zebra, resulting in very effective monotone pictures.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good, which is leading to highly motivated pupils and very good learning.
- Pupils' achievements are very good and standards are well above average.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are supported very effectively so that they make steady progress and achieve very well.
- Literacy is promoted very effectively through all subjects of the curriculum, contributing to the improvement in writing.
- The subject is very well led and progress is carefully monitored.
- Presentation of work in books is not as good as it should be.

## Commentary

58. Overall, standards in English are high. They are well above average in both reading and writing and above average in speaking and listening. There are several reasons why standards are high and have improved since the last inspection. The headteacher and the co-ordinator have been tracking standards with great care and monitoring teaching. Using the information gained from tracking and monitoring, the school has taken steps to narrow the gap between reading and writing. For example, it has encouraged improvement in reading by introducing early morning reading and a very good range of books to attract pupils to reading. Pupils not only benefit from reading books but also enjoy meeting authors who are invited to talk to them. Another strong feature is the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. There is very efficient teamwork amongst the members of staff, who know their pupils very well.
59. The current high standards are evident in Year 2 lessons, where pupils very confidently applied their research skills in finding information on different countries with interest and enthusiasm. Because of the high expectations of their teachers, they have learnt to present the information in their own words.
60. Teaching is highly stimulating and, as a result, pupils are active learners who engage and achieve very well in tasks. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 1, pupils were studying the story of the Hare and the Tortoise. The teacher very skilfully linked the work to the sports day by dividing the class into two halves, one was the Hare and the other was the Tortoise. Imaginative teaching required the pupils to create a drama, acting out the Hare and the Tortoise race, and to learn about good sportsmanship which contributed to their personal development. A key feature of all the lessons seen was the way teachers shared the learning intention at the start of each lesson. Consequently, the pupils knew what they were expected to learn.
61. Achievement in writing has improved as the school has been developing this aspect of English for some time. Opportunities to write for a variety of different purposes are very good across the school. By Year 2, pupils use correct grammar and punctuation well, and produce very good quality writing. Spelling is also developing very well. In handwriting, although pupils learn to use joined-up writing from an early age, the presentation of work in books is often untidy. The use of information and communication technology is good in English, where both pupils and staff use it effectively to enhance teaching and learning. Teachers work very effectively with teaching assistants so that pupils with special needs and those at an early stage of learning English make very good progress throughout the school. However, there are some minority ethnic learners who lack confidence in speaking in a large group.
62. Teachers use assessment very well to check pupils' reading, writing and spelling skills and this is another factor leading to very good achievement. Their assessments are used to set targets which pupils are expected to achieve by the end of each year. Very good improvement has taken place since the last inspection as standards and teaching have improved from good to very good because of the very effective leadership of the subject.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. Language and literacy are promoted very well through other subjects of the curriculum. For example, in mathematics, pupils are encouraged to explain how they have worked out the sums, and in science, pupils record their work using a range of written methods. There are many examples of teachers using lessons like history, geography, religious education or science to develop reading, writing and research skills.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well above average standards have been consistently maintained over time.
- Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well.
- The work on time makes a valuable contribution to pupils' understanding of other cultures.
- The quality of the teaching is very good.
- Very good use is made of information and communication technology.
- The recording of pupils' work is too often untidy and poorly presented.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

### Commentary

64. The pupils make very good progress during the year, and a scrutiny of their work shows how their achievement improves. For example, in Year 1, higher-attaining pupils starting the year with simple calculations to 20 are confidently working with much larger numbers later in the year. The average ability pupils who were adding to 10 in September with support are able to add three numbers by the spring. During the inspection, Year 1 pupils were learning about time. They learned the order of days of the week and months of the year, as well as terms such as midday and midnight. This work contributed very effectively to their cultural development as the classes have excellent displays of clocks showing the time in the home countries of the pupils and adults at the school. This led to some valuable discussions about what people in different time zones would be doing at the time of the lesson.
65. In Year 2, very good progress is made over the year. Much of the work extends pupils' skills through problem solving. For example, early in the year work on coin recognition ensures a basic understanding, and this is then used in a range of shopping-type problems. In lessons, pupils use addition and subtraction to make their own calculations and to solve problems.
66. The teaching is very good overall and has a very positive impact on standards of achievement. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and in a third of lessons, it was very good or excellent. Teachers question pupils well and through this technique they encourage pupils to explain their thinking and how they arrived at answers. This consolidates their learning very effectively and also helps other pupils to see how problems can be solved. One of the major strengths of the teaching is the deployment and use of the support staff. Often but not always they work with less able groups or with pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. Their input ensures that these pupils are able to take a full part in lessons and make progress equally as good as their peers. The use of plenary<sup>4</sup> discussion sessions at the end of lessons was often very good and used effectively to consolidate the learning. Teachers shared lesson objectives at the start and often returned to these at the end of lessons to see how much progress had been made.
67. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to support the teaching and learning in mathematics. Teachers use computers to prepare worksheets and to plan lessons. In one very good example, they used digital images of the pupils to make the worksheets more personal. They make very effective use of the Internet and other resources on the interactive whiteboards to display and explain concepts to the pupils. The pupils use computers confidently to complete calculations. They can program robots to turn in different directions and use computers to manipulate two-dimensional shapes on the screen.
68. Targets are set and pasted into pupils' books as a reminder. When marking work teachers often annotate to show how it can be improved and, particularly in Year 2, these comments are

---

<sup>4</sup> Plenary refers to parts of lessons when all of the pupils work together to share ideas.

followed up and it is possible to see the pupil eventually correcting the error. The marking also often offers praise and explains what has been well done. However, on too many occasions teachers accept work that is poorly or untidily presented, and this detracts from the often good content.

69. The very good leadership of the subject has had a direct impact on the continuing high standards. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable about how best pupils can learn, and she ensures that the subject is resourced appropriately and that teaching and learning are continually monitored. Very good links with parents have resulted in an evening meeting for a large number who wanted to learn more about the modern methods of calculation. A school governor is linked to the subject and monitors it effectively, reporting to the governing body on strengths and weaknesses in the provision.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

70. Teachers ensure pupils use their mathematical skills well in various subjects. Numeracy skills are used in creating ways of presenting data in science and geography lessons. For example, the results of a survey of traffic outside the school were presented in this way.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are high standards of attainment as a result of very effective teaching.
- The very thorough planning ensures that work is matched to pupils' capabilities.
- There is very good use of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in lessons.
- There is a wide range of stimulating opportunities for observation and investigative work; this helps to extend pupils' learning.
- Excellent pupil attitudes and behaviour result in positive and enthusiastic learners.
- Highly skilled teaching assistants provide excellent levels of support for all pupils.
- Unsatisfactory presentation often detracts from the quality of the content in pupils' work.

### **Commentary**

71. Standards are well above average by Year 2. In the 2004 national tests, it is likely that all of the pupils will attain the nationally expected standards with nearly half of them attaining at the higher levels. This is a further improvement to the 2003 results. The children enter the school with broadly average levels of understanding of the world around them. In Year 2, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, have made very good progress and have achieved very well. This is due to the very good teaching and wide range of experiences which the school provides for its pupils. No differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls as all achieve equally well.
72. The school now provides a well-balanced science curriculum covering all the requirements of the National Curriculum. The quality and range of opportunities for the pupils to use observational and investigative skills are very good and contribute significantly to the standards the pupils achieve. This is an improvement from the position at the previous inspection.
73. The quality of teaching is very good overall although some excellent teaching was observed during the inspection. Teachers use assessment of pupils' achievements very well to inform future plans so that work in lessons meets their learning needs. The more able are challenged and the less able are supported well. In an excellent Year 2 lesson, the teacher's questioning

and exposition enabled pupils to identify sources of information they would use to find out information on snails. The competent use of an interactive whiteboard helped the teacher to remind pupils how to use a search facility and how to access information from an appropriately-selected website. Questioning was constantly challenging pupils to build on previous knowledge of and work on mini-beasts.

74. Activities are very well supported by experienced and talented teaching assistants who are skilled in enabling pupils to discuss and question, thereby maximising their observations. In all science lessons observed, pupils were confident in using scientific vocabulary during their investigative work. In one Year 2 lesson, pupils were able to identify that the shell of a snail “is its skeleton”, that it was called an “exo-skeleton” and they could compare and contrast this with their own skeletons. Good teacher subject knowledge, effective planning and very good organisation and management of stimulating and interesting enquiry-based lessons throughout the school ensured that all pupils were constantly challenged and progressed very well.
75. From a sample of past work of pupils up to Year 2, it is evident that standards have benefited from consistent teaching especially in the area of scientific enquiry. This has had a positive impact on maintaining and improving upon previous high standards for all pupils and especially for higher-attaining pupils. From an early age, pupils’ work shows a good application of prediction and analytical skills and good use of scientific vocabulary in investigations. Lesson observations and work scrutiny show that scientific vocabulary is systemically taught, and that all pupils carry out scientific enquiries and investigations. Presentation of work, however, suffers from a lack of consistently high presentation skills which match the quality of the content. Very good ongoing assessments linked to planning ensure that teachers have a clear understanding of how well their pupils are doing, what they know and understand. Teachers use marking extremely well to praise, challenge and extend pupils’ thinking. Marking and assessment are used well to inform the next stage of learning for pupils including those who need more support or challenge. The school’s ‘pockets’ system of activities provides many independent extension activities for those pupils who complete work, so that all time in school is maximised as learning time.
76. During lessons the pupils’ attitudes to learning were excellent. Pupils are very eager and enthusiastic about the subject. During a Year 1 lesson, the teacher provided a range of high quality opportunities for pupils to test their senses. Pupils were able to test their recognition of sounds and smells, draw and write about their findings and make detailed observations on how light and dark affected the size of the pupils in their eyes. The classroom was constantly alive with the buzz of pupils asking and answering questions and making observations. They were confident in using scientific vocabulary. There was good participation by all the class members including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. They listened respectfully to their teacher and their peers, both in whole-class and group discussions.
77. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and highly skilled. She is imaginative in acquiring resources so that pupils can have a wide range of experiences. For example, there is photographic evidence of pupils examining samples of moon rock borrowed from NASA. She has monitored standards, lessons and pupil achievement and has put into place plans which will help teachers teach and pupils learn better. This has had a significant impact on maintaining and improving upon the school’s very high standards in science. The school has made good progress and has addressed well all the areas of concern raised in the last inspection.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvement since the last inspection has been very good.
- The resources, accommodation and training received have all helped raise standards.
- The teachers are using interactive whiteboards well in all subjects, and make very effective use of digital cameras and other hardware.
- Pupils use a very good range of software for a range of purposes in different subjects.

### Commentary

78. At the last inspection, this subject was at the centre of one of the main key issues for improvement. Since then, a great deal has been done to improve provision and to raise standards to their present above average level. Achievement is very good and the vast majority of pupils are working to their potential. The credit for this improvement goes to all staff, but also largely to the headteacher, governors and senior staff, the previous subject co-ordinator, and the current subject leader who is building on the improvements made so far. She has a very good knowledge and expertise, and has a clear idea of the current strengths and weaknesses, and what she would like to improve further.
79. The accommodation is very good, with a good-sized and well-resourced computer suite. This offers all pupils plenty of opportunities to use computers either in pairs or singly. The improved resources are kept in good order through a contract with the local authority but also through the very good work of a support assistant who helps prepare the computers for lessons and advises over appropriate software. The very good work of the support staff in this subject ensures that all pupils get good hands-on experiences and that the software and hardware are largely reliable.
80. The quality of teaching is often very good, and this is due to the training received, the improved confidence, knowledge and understanding of teachers, as well as the improved resources. Teachers are particularly creative in the use of the whiteboards in all subjects, as a resource and as a very effective way of delivering the curriculum. They use computers to plan lessons, to provide resources and to research information to liven up their teaching. Very effective use is made of the Internet as a resource for teachers and pupils.
81. Assessments are recorded on computers and the school makes very good use of the range of electronic data available to analyse strengths and weaknesses in provision, and to track the progress of individual pupils. A particular strength of the provision is the very good deployment of the high quality support staff in working with pupils. The training they have received has also helped develop their knowledge, confidence and skill to a high level.
82. Pupils have very good opportunities to use a range of software. They have good skills in operating the mouse, use the software confidently and are familiar with the screen instructions, being able to save, open and print their work. Year 1 pupils can represent information graphically. They entered information on favourite sports and created a range of bar charts. Using art software, pupils can produce patterns in the style of Kandinsky. Year 2 pupils are able to use the Internet and word-process to a high level.
83. The teachers provide work appropriately matched to the pupils' prior attainment and experiences. In addition, extra support is provided for the pupils with special needs, or who are at an early stage of learning English. The assessment of pupils' work is very good and provides teachers with a good picture of progress and the success of their teaching.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

84. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is very good and has greatly improved since the last inspection. The use of interactive whiteboards, projectors, programmable robots, digital cameras and computers is extensive across the curriculum. This ensures teachers and pupils are very well resourced and trained in the appropriate use of the equipment. In art and design, science, geography and history, computers are used, especially through the Internet, to research and gather information. In science and geography, data handling programmes are used to present information in a range of ways.

## HUMANITIES

85. In **geography** and **history**, work was sampled so no judgement can be made on provision. Work samples and displays indicate that standards are above average in Year 2. Progress is good overall and better in Year 2 than in Year 1, reflecting the acquisition and application of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. There is very good use of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology in both subjects. In geography, pupils are able to use computers to generate graphs showing results of places visited on holiday and the results of traffic surveys. In history, they are able to show independent research skills in their work on famous people, and imaginative literacy skills in their writing of Florence Nightingale's diary entry.
86. Only one lesson was observed in geography and history during the inspection. From this lesson, and work evidence from the rest of the school, the quality of teaching and learning appears good. In the lesson, there was good use of authentic Mexican foods to give pupils the opportunity to make observations and discuss their findings. Assessment procedures are very good in terms of assessing pupils' geographical and historical enquiry skills and knowledge.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and, as a result, pupils achieve well and reach above average standards.
- The subject is planned and taught in a stimulating way that helps to develop pupils' imagination and creativity; as a result pupils enjoy the subject and show excellent attitudes.
- The subject promotes respect and interest in different faiths and beliefs, making a very good contribution to pupils' personal and cultural development.
- The curriculum is enriched by visits and the support of visiting experts.
- The co-ordinator provides very enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership and management.

## Commentary

88. Standards of attainment are above those found typically and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well because the teachers are knowledgeable and confident in teaching the subject in a way that captures the interest of young pupils. In the three lessons seen, teaching was good in two and very good in one. Teachers used very good resources and a great deal of imagination to stimulate pupils' interest. For example, when Year 1 pupils dramatised the story of the Good Samaritan, pupils entered into the spirit of the occasion with confidence on the outdoor stage. The discussion at the end of the lesson revealed that they had all made good gains in understanding of who was a good friend in the story. They all summed up that a kind friend was one who cared and shared.
89. The sample of pupils' work showed that the statutory requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are met fully. Literacy is used very well in the subject. Pupils write the story of the Last

Supper with empathy, as well as prayers to God or thank you letters for making the world and the animals they love. Teachers encourage them to learn from different religions. An example of this is 'the Golden Rules' for the school, which pupils have developed from the teachings of different religions. Thus, the subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development.

90. A main strength of the curriculum is the way it builds on and draws from the children's knowledge and experience of the world. There are examples in lessons where pupils share their own religious knowledge. Pupils are involved in many practical activities and visits that help them understand the relevance of special places of worship. The school organises a number of visits to local churches. For example, during the inspection, Year 2 pupils visited the local church, and consolidated their learning about important objects and features of the church by making models of what they had seen inside. Teachers used information and communication technology very effectively to remind pupils what they had seen through photographs on an interactive whiteboard. The school also invites speakers from different religions to explain to pupils the significance of their festivals, bringing artefacts and expertise to help pupils understand the key ideas and to achieve well. These factors enrich the curriculum.
91. Good improvement has taken place since the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator's enthusiasm promotes the subject very well. She is instrumental in introducing pupils to different cultures and traditions through religious education, which are reflected in displays round the school. Leadership and management of the subject are very good.

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

92. Although only a small number of lessons in **art and design** were observed during the inspection, there is sufficient evidence to show that the standards are above average for the ages of the pupils. Pupils are able to experience a range of art and design activities, using different media and materials. Computer use is growing and most classes have produced some artwork this way. Three-dimensional work is common. For example, Year 1 pupils have created very good clay sculptures after studying the work of Henry Moore. In Year 2, pupils printed on fabric using patterns they had designed and then cut into polystyrene squares. The quality of teaching is very good and teachers are making very effective use of the technology available, such as when using Internet resources and video to teach pupils about Henry Moore.
93. Pupils learn about the art of different cultures. In an International Week recently held, they had opportunities to take part in African weaving, making clay masks in African style, and creating Rangoli patterns and Japanese-style paintings. The school gives art a high profile and exceptional work is displayed in the 'art gallery' in one corridor. This work included some inspired by Kandinsky. The use of other artists as inspiration is common throughout the school. Year 2 pupils used Mexican art as a basis for some good Aztec style patterns and pictures that they painted onto paper plates.
94. No lesson was observed in **design and technology** and, therefore, it is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in the subject. Teachers' planning and a scrutiny of displays show the subject is planned and taught systematically. A design and technology week has been planned when each class will work on problem-solving. Pupils gain experience of a range of materials and develop skills of designing and making different objects and evaluating them as required in the curriculum. There are good examples of pupils' work on display round the school. For example, the puppets that were made by Year 2 show how the pupils have used felt and other materials to create them. Some pupils have made moving puppets like 'Jack in the box' or a jumping snake, using plastic cups, string and different types of paper. Design and technology skills are used well in other subjects such as religious education. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 visited a local church and used shoeboxes to make models of the objects inside the church.

95. Only one **music** lesson, and singing in assemblies, was observed during the inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, joined in the singing in assemblies. They sang with great enjoyment and were able to remember all the words and actions of familiar songs. Everyone in the school sang as they entered and left the hall for assembly including all the staff, thereby acting as good role models for the pupils to follow. Pupils sang in tune and kept up the tempo and dynamics of the songs. Some pupils were able to play percussion instruments as an accompaniment to the singing. This indicated that standards were above national expectations for singing. The one lesson observed indicated that teaching and learning were good. The teacher's good subject knowledge and clear explanation and demonstration helped pupils to make good progress. Pupils were able to use a range of percussion instruments to compose their own music, and were able to demonstrate their knowledge of notation and rhythm. Standards in this lesson were above average.
96. The only lessons in **physical education** observed during the inspection were practices for the forthcoming sports day and not representative of the normal physical education curriculum. Because of this, it is not possible to make a secure judgement about overall provision or standards achieved. Pupils took part in the team activities, and in the actual sports day events themselves, with great enthusiasm and enjoyment. The day was well supported by a large crowd of parents and friends, and pupils displayed a satisfactory level of skills in the basic events they were expected to perform. The school is fortunate in having access to a good field, a shared swimming pool and a good level of resources.

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

97. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is good and encompasses all the required elements of the curriculum including relationships education, health education and citizenship. Many elements are interlinked with topics taught in other subjects such as a science topic on growth, which is linked with health education. Citizenship is reinforced well through assemblies, the school's behaviour policy and procedures, and class discussions. This is a very effective part of the school's approach to developing personal and social skills in its pupils.
98. Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and the school environment. The school council members look after the school and make sure that it is litter-free and that children behave and play very well outdoors. They are very proud of their achievement in the creation of the garden with their choice of trees, fruit and vegetables. Personal development is nurtured very well and is very strongly supported by an exceptional range of enrichment activities.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>1</b>
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	1
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>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>1</b>
The governance of the school	1
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	1

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