

# INSPECTION REPORT

## CROFTON HAMMOND JUNIOR SCHOOL

Fareham

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116058

Acting Headteacher: Mr P Aitchison

Lead inspector: Mrs H Bonser

Dates of inspection: September 15<sup>th</sup> –17<sup>th</sup> 2003

Inspection number: 255916

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	250
School address:	Mancroft Avenue Stubbington Fareham
Postcode:	PO14 2DE
Telephone number:	01329 664451
Fax number:	01329 663930
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Wood
Date of previous inspection:	June 1 <sup>st</sup> 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school draws most of its pupils from the neighbourhood with many of them coming from advantaged backgrounds. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above average overall. Six per cent of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs, mainly as a result of learning difficulties. This is below the national average. At present, none have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is also below average. Very few pupils come from ethnic minority groups and none are at an early stage of acquiring English. There is a relatively small movement of pupils in and out of the school between Year 3 and Year 6. The post of headteacher is vacant at present. The deputy headteacher was appointed to act in that capacity in July 2003, following the absence since February and subsequent resignation of the previous postholder. The school received a School Achievement Award in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22870	Hilary Bonser	Lead inspector	English; religious education; design and technology; art and design.
11575	Catherine Fish	Lay inspector	
19916	Deborah Kerr	Team inspector	Science; history; music; special educational needs;
27225	Anna Sketchley	Team inspector	Mathematics; information and communication technology; geography; physical education.

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA  
Herringston Barn  
Herringston  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT2 9PU

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The school's effectiveness is satisfactory** and it gives sound value for money. Standards are high and pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching, but further improvement has been hindered by shortcomings in leadership and management. The current acting headteacher, who was appointed in July, leads the school satisfactorily.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science and pupils do well because they are well taught, although there are inconsistencies in approach.
- Pupils develop very positive attitudes to their work as they move through the school and this makes a considerable contribution to their good achievement.
- Music and physical education are particular strengths of the school and the very good extra-curricular activities contribute to pupils' success in these areas.
- There is no shared vision or clear strategic planning to provide focused whole school priorities for effective improvement.
- Weaknesses in communications result in a lack of cohesion between groups within the school community.
- The lack of monitoring and evaluation of classroom practice leads to inconsistencies in some aspects of teaching and learning.

At the last inspection the school's effectiveness was judged to be good. Since then, the school's improvement has been unsatisfactory overall. Although high standards in the core subjects and pupils' good achievement have been sustained through the hard work of teachers individually, there has been little focused development and key issues from the previous report have not been tackled effectively. In particular, the key issue relating to the development of monitoring and evaluation has not been addressed and the other, relating to the improvement of teaching and learning, only partially.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A*	A	C
mathematics	A	A*	A*	A
science	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 whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Achievement is good overall.** Boys and girls of all levels of attainment do well in relation to their standards on entry to the school. In 2002, several results were in the top 5 per cent in the country (A\*), although those in English fell back to some extent, as there were less higher attaining pupils in the year group in that subject. The unconfirmed results for 2003 show continuing high standards, with some improvement in English from 2002. Standards of the current Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science. They are also well above average in music and above average in physical education. They are average in other subjects that were inspected.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall.** Their attitudes and attendance are very good and their behaviour is good. The

school promotes pupils' social development particularly well, helping pupils to show a good level of maturity by the time they leave the school.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.**

**Teaching and learning are good overall**, with some very good teaching seen in each year group. Teachers use a good variety of methods and resources to provide interesting and challenging lessons. This encourages pupils to try hard and learn well. However, teachers work in different ways because there is no general agreement about, for example, marking pupils' work or how to make the best use of the considerable skills of the teaching assistants. As a result, opportunities are lost to further improve the rate of pupils' learning.

The curriculum is enriched very well, especially through activities such as the 'Enrichment Hour', the very good extra-curricular opportunities for sport and music and good links with the community and other schools. This motivates pupils well and makes them keen to learn. However, past work shows that in the last two terms of Year 6, the breadth of pupils' work and the opportunity to do well is reduced in some subjects by the amount of time spent on preparing for the national tests.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are satisfactory**

Leadership is satisfactory. The acting headteacher, with good support from the senior managers, works hard to ensure that there is a good learning environment and high expectations of pupils continue to be met after a difficult period for the school. As yet, there is no prioritised plan for whole school development. The day to day management of the school is satisfactory but a programme of monitoring and evaluation has still to be put in place. The work of the governing body is satisfactory. Most governors are recently appointed but work hard to inform themselves about the school and they have developed a clear and appropriate view of what is needed to move the school forward.

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

Parents: parents are reasonably satisfied. They feel their children enjoy school, are helped to settle in well, expected to work hard and treated fairly. However, they are particularly concerned about the lack of information they receive about their children and feel the school does not take enough account of their views. The inspectors found weaknesses in communication in a number of areas. Pupils: most know an adult they can go to if they are worried and feel that they have to work hard and learn new things in lessons, although they are not always interesting. They feel that other children do not behave well. The inspection team found that behaviour was good overall.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

1. establish a shared sense of direction that is reflected in rigorous whole school planning to improve achievement further;
2. monitor and evaluate classroom practice to further improve teaching and learning;
3. ensure clear lines of communication between all members of the school community.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

**Achievement is good for boys and girls of all levels of attainment. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well above average by the end of Year 6.**

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the core subjects have remained well above average since the last inspection.
- Boys and girls of all levels of attainment do equally well because they are taught well.
- Standards are well above average in music and above average in physical education.
- Standards in information and communication technology, history and geography have fallen back to average since the last inspection because not as much time is spent on these, especially in Year 6.

#### Commentary

##### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.1 (31.0)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	30.1 (31.3)	26.7 (26.6)
science	32.2 (32.3)	28.3 (28.3)

*There were 66 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 were lower in English in that year because fewer pupils reached the higher Level 5. This was because of a higher proportion of pupils with language difficulties in that year group, some of whom had joined the school since Year 2. The unconfirmed test results for 2003 show an improvement in English and continuing high performance in mathematics and science. Standards have kept pace with national trends since the last inspection and remained high. Over the last three years, results show that boys and girls perform equally well.
2. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school in Year 3, based on Year 2 test results, is above average overall, varying in some year groups to well above average. The school tracks individual progress from the Year 2 tests through the annual optional national tests and other assessments. Analysis of this information and value added data from the local education authority, as well as lesson observations, show that most boys and girls, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, achieve well overall by the time they leave the school.
3. Pupils' rate of progress is generally more consistent as they move through the school than at the time of the last inspection, except in writing which is better in Years 5 and 6 as a result of the very good teaching. Some pupils make more rapid progress in Year 6 due to the very strong emphasis that has been placed on the core subjects in this year group in preparing for the national tests. This, however, has hindered pupils' achievement in some other subjects as less time has been spent on these and accounts for the fall back in standards in information and communication technology, history and geography since the last inspection. High standards and good achievement have been sustained in music and physical education as good, often very good, teaching in these subjects and their high profile in the curriculum is supported by a very good range of extra-curricular activities in which many of the pupils participate.



- Standards in the current Year 6 remain well above average in English, mathematics and science and pupils continue to do well in spite of the lack of focused whole school development in response to the previous inspection. This is mainly the result of further improvement in the good quality of teaching and learning since that time because of the hard work and commitment to high standards of individual teachers, some of whom are new to the school. Other factors include the well-planned setting of pupils for English and mathematics, the provision of extension groups and other opportunities for higher attaining pupils, especially in Year 6, and good provision and support for pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils across all year groups. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are used effectively by individual teachers although there are differences in approach. The good behaviour and very positive attitudes that most boys and girls have towards their work also contribute to their achievements.

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

The pupils' attitudes to school are very good and their behaviour is good; there have been no exclusions. Their attendance and punctuality are very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning help them to achieve well.
- Pupils work and play well together and respect each other.
- Attendance is very good, despite many parents taking holidays during term time.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development.

### **Commentary**

- All pupils, regardless of their backgrounds and needs, enjoy being in school, and are eager to learn. They show high levels of concentration, enthusiasm and interest, particularly when the tasks set involve a practical element. Good examples included a Year 6 physical education lesson on accurate passing skills and a Year 3 mathematics lesson where pupils were excited about making three digit numbers and solving problems. Where pupils were a little restless in lessons, this was mainly because teachers were still establishing their high expectations with their new pupils.
- The choice of activities for pupils outside lessons is very varied, with something to engage and enthuse every pupil. The wholehearted commitment of those who choose to take part in sporting activities, which results in the school teams doing exceptionally well in local competitions, engenders a sense of pride in the whole school. Likewise, the performances of the school's musicians are thoroughly enjoyed by all who hear them and considerably enhance the life of the school. Pupils particularly enjoy the weekly 'Enrichment Hour' activities and their use as a reward for consistent good behaviour is beginning to have positive effects and thus performs the dual role of broadening and enhancing pupils' learning and recreational activities, and acting as a powerful incentive to develop self-control.
- The way that pupils work and play well together ensures that the school is a calm and friendly place. In lessons, the pupils know that working together can help produce good results. For example, a Year 5 music class discussed and agreed the finer points of their performance and this contributed to the very good achievement in the lesson. Playtimes are much enjoyed, with pupils involving themselves in games such as football or tag with enthusiasm and usually, good humour! They take pleasure in each other's company and involve themselves fully in the games and chatter. The good relationships that develop between the pupils and the staff help to promote learning because the pupils know that the staff are there to help them. The development of respect for others starts early and pupils are helped to develop a good sense of community and mutual support. This was seen in personal, social and health education lessons and assemblies. Year 3 pupils were able to say something nice about the 'special

friend' in their class and in the Praise Assembly the achievements and successes of individuals and groups were applauded by all.

- The high level of attendance at school shows clearly how much the pupils enjoy coming and this regular attendance helps them to reach the high standards they achieve. This is all despite the fact that a number of parents take holidays during term time. The school actively discourages parents from doing this and carefully monitors the amount of holidays taken. It issues the dates of statutory tests early in the school year and follows up any request for holiday leave during these dates; most parents are careful to avoid these times.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.6%	School data	0.1%
National data	5.4%	National data	0.5%

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

- Although no incidents of bullying were seen or reported to the team, there is a perception amongst some parents and pupils that there are significant levels of bullying and misbehaviour. There are some incidents where there is genuine and persistent bullying of an individual or group of pupils and these are usually resolved satisfactorily by staff through discussions with those concerned and the involvement of parents if needed. On the other hand, some cases reported to staff verbally or recorded by the school are more to do with differences of opinion, minor fallings out between friends or someone having a difficult day. Currently there is no clear definition of bullying agreed with parents and staff. There have been no exclusions from school in recent years.

**Ethnic background of pupils**

*Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	246	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

- The provision for spiritual development has improved since the last inspection. Teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to find out for themselves, particularly in subjects like science, in which pupils develop enquiring minds and an excitement in learning. The high quality provision in music helps pupils develop an aesthetic appreciation, and planning shows that class 'circle time' and personal, social and health education lessons are used well to help pupils reflect and to consider the feelings of others. Some of the religious education lessons seen were of high quality and helped pupils understand the importance of faith and worship in many people's lives. Pupils are confident that the school helps them learn right from wrong. They value the fact that bad behaviour is not tolerated and lessons run smoothly - 'It is really important to behave well so that we don't waste lesson time', one Year 6 pupil explained. The behaviour policy is implemented more consistently than at the time of the last inspection, which contributes to pupils' good behaviour.
- The school has a wide range of strategies in place to foster pupils' social awareness. These contribute very well to their sense of social responsibility and good level of maturity and many parents are appreciative of this. Termly 'team challenges' have operated successfully for some

time and pupils value the opportunities to work with children from other age groups and classes. Year 6 pupils talked enthusiastically about last term's 'Coke Can Challenge'. They understood the importance of ensuring the younger pupils were fully included in the activity. All Year 6 pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility around the school and pupils throughout the school contribute to charity fund raising activities and understand the need to help others less fortunate than themselves.

- The school has begun to address the weaknesses in promoting pupils' cultural understanding noted in the previous inspection and it is now satisfactory, although more could be done to raise pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity of their own region. Pupils' understanding of their own cultural heritage is good and is promoted well by visits to places of cultural interest.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good overall, with strengths in teaching and learning, enrichment of the curriculum and the care and support given to pupils.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall across the school. The assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and often use a good variety of methods and interesting contexts for learning which help to make pupils keen to learn.
- Most pupils concentrate very well and try hard and this helps them to learn well.
- Inconsistencies, arising from the lack of a whole school approach in some aspects of teaching, hinder pupils from improving their rate of learning further.
- Although teachers assess pupils well during lessons, procedures across the school are inconsistent and marking is not used effectively.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11	14	3	0	0	0

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

- The overall good quality of teaching and learning has improved further since the last inspection. There have been some changes in the teaching staff since that time. In the lessons seen, there was no unsatisfactory teaching and the amount of good and very good teaching has increased. Improvements also include greater consistency in implementing the behaviour policy, an area criticised in the last report. However, other recommendations, especially in the way that teachers deploy their teaching assistants, have not been fully addressed. There is still too much variation over how closely class teachers plan and work with their teaching assistants to enable them to make full use of their considerable skills to support pupils' learning.
- The improvement in the quality of teaching has depended on the commitment, expertise and high expectations of individual teachers rather than on focused, concerted whole school action, as there has been no monitoring and evaluation of classroom practice on which to base this. As a result, there are also inconsistencies in planning and assessment and, for example, in the

teaching of writing, which affect the continuity of pupils' learning as they move through the school and prevent them from achieving even better than at present.

15. It is the existing strengths within teaching and learning that have helped to sustain standards and achievement in spite of this. Teachers use an effective variety of ways to interest pupils in their learning, including the good links with the local community, a good range of resources and close links between subjects, through the topics studied. Good use is also made of teachers' particular areas of expertise, both in the way that the teaching groups are organised and to extend pupils' interests both in and out of school. However, there are not enough opportunities for them to model or share good practice with colleagues.
16. Teachers organise and manage their teaching groups well and generally match work well to pupils' differing needs so that they feel challenged by it. There was considerable agreement among pupils in the questionnaire and in talking to them about their work, that they learn new things in lessons. Parents agree that their children are expected to work hard. It is evident from comparing pupils in Year 3, who have just joined the school, and older pupils that teachers are successful in helping both boys and girls to develop very positive attitudes to their work, a good level of concentration and a keenness to improve what they can do.
17. The good relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school help to motivate pupils well. Teachers listen to and value pupils' ideas, helping them to develop their confidence in expressing them. Good examples were seen of teachers using good subject knowledge and questioning skills in whole class sessions to extend pupils' thinking, reflecting high expectations of their skills and understanding. They take care to include and involve boys and girls of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs.
18. Many of these features were illustrated in a very well taught English lesson for Year 5 pupils, who were writing, in role, about their experiences as evacuees. This motivated them well as they were clearly enjoying their work in history on this subject. The teacher effectively modelled ways of improving text, using pupils' ideas but making them think hard by asking, for example, 'Why is that better?' She encouraged pupils to apply their new knowledge to improving very well chosen examples of their work from the previous lesson. She used skilful questioning to constantly challenge them to refine their responses or to suggest new ways of portraying feelings of fear or excitement through their choice of words, as in, 'Then another sentence spilled out'. The use of time limits then helped pupils to settle quickly and enthusiastically to their task of redrafting their own introductory paragraph. They did this very well because they now knew exactly what to do to improve it.
19. There were many lessons where teachers successfully assessed pupils' learning and responded accordingly. For example in a Year 3 mathematics lesson the teacher intervened when she realised that some pupils were choosing numbers that were too hard to work with in their task. The lesson was modified appropriately and this helped lower attaining pupils to succeed. Teachers are also particularly skilled at using a short time at the end of lessons to question pupils about what they have been learning and ascertaining from that information the level of the next lesson. However, a wealth of information about what pupils know and can do is not shared with other teachers.
20. Assessment in the core subjects is sound and this contributes to a successful match of work and pace of learning to pupils' needs. However, except for pupils with special educational needs, this information is not used for individual, or group targets for pupils, which restricts the responsibility they can take for their learning and the knowledge of how well they are progressing. The same can be said for marking. This is generally a tick or comment of praise. There is no comment for pupils to use to develop or improve their work. Some foundation subjects have systems for recording pupils' progress after each unit of work. Although this enables teachers to make an informed judgement in pupils' annual report to parents, the information is generally not passed to the next teacher. Some subjects have no assessment procedures in place. This remains a concern since the last inspection.

## The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. While it is enriched very well through additional opportunities, a lack of breadth in Year 6 limits pupils' learning in some subjects. There is a good level of resources for learning and accommodation is satisfactory overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good provision for extra curricular opportunities in music and sport and the weekly 'Enrichment Hour' substantially enhance the curriculum for pupils.
- The school has effective strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy which contribute significantly to the high standards in English and mathematics.
- Good provision for pupils with special educational needs means that they achieve as well as all other pupils.
- There is an inappropriate balance between subjects in Year 6, which restricts achievement in some subjects.
- The effect of the noise levels, caused by accommodation constraints, makes concentration difficult in some lessons.

### Commentary

21. The very good provision for extra curricular activities, especially in sport and music, plays a significant part in the enrichment of the curriculum. Through this provision pupils extend their skills in music through the choir, school productions and instrumental tuition. They are enabled to reach particularly high standards in sport, winning many leagues and tournaments against schools in the local area. The weekly 'Enrichment Hour' allows them to follow a variety of interests, such as bird watching, golf, first aid and craft activities, which enhance the normal school curriculum. All of these pursuits present good opportunities for the development of pupils' personal, social and health education. Pupils develop a good team spirit and an ability to listen to each other and co-operate and work well together which improves their learning. Considerable emphasis is placed upon health and fitness throughout the curriculum and visitors such as the school nurse and the local police are all involved in the school's well thought out personal, social and health programme.
22. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are used well throughout the school. They are also used effectively to support pupils' learning in other subjects. Teachers are well trained and their good command of the subjects and a good balance of activities within lessons helps to maintain the high standards in these subjects.
23. Good attention is given to ensuring that the needs of boys and girls of differing levels of attainment are met and are included fully in all aspects of school life. Pupils who have special educational needs have full access to the rich and varied curriculum that the school provides. Teaching assistants play a particularly valuable role in ensuring they are fully included in the lesson, by adapting work for them. In literacy and numeracy particularly, the extra support significantly helps their progress in acquiring the basic skills of reading, writing and number. Individual education plans identify the next steps of learning for each pupil and teachers and teaching assistants review these termly with the special needs co-ordinator and with parents. The strategy of using an extra teacher to boost the learning of both the less able and more able pupils, and the high level of training currently being undertaken by the teaching assistants, is very successful and makes a significant contribution to pupils' good achievement and high standards.
24. The school provides a satisfactory overall range of curricular opportunities for pupils which meets statutory requirements. Subjects are well planned on a termly basis, enabling pupils to develop their skills and understanding progressively as they move through the school, in spite of inconsistencies in the planning of individual lessons. However, in Year 6 much time is taken

in revision for national tests and there is a high time allocation for physical education. As a result, not enough time is spent on religious education, history and geography to allow pupils' to build on previous learning and this limits how well they can achieve and the standards reached. This has arisen because there are no formal monitoring procedures in place for the curriculum.

25. Despite several improvements made to the accommodation since the last inspection report, the open plan aspect of the shared areas outside classrooms continues to be a source of disturbance. An acceptable noise level within one lesson still often makes it difficult for teachers and pupils in adjoining learning spaces to hear each other and sometimes slows the pace of lessons. The small hall is inadequate for indoor physical education. Outside provision is very good and the school makes sound use of its facilities.

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

The school takes good care of its pupils and ensures their welfare, health and safety well. It provides good support and guidance for its pupils and involves them in its work and development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The personal care given to pupils ensures they feel secure and are able to get on with their learning.
- The school makes good use of its good knowledge of all aspects of their development to help them make progress. However, curricular targets are not set for pupils.
- The school council is effective and involves all pupils.

### **Commentary**

26. Policies and procedures covering health and safety and child protection are well used to ensure the pupils' welfare. All teaching and support staff, particularly the teaching assistants who move through the school with their year group, know the pupils well and work hard to meet their individual needs. There was considerable agreement among pupils that they know who to turn to if they need help. Although most pupils start in Year 3, anyone arriving at a different time settles quickly because they are made welcome by both staff and pupils. Careful induction procedures are in place both when joining from the infant school and on transfer to secondary school that support pupils well as they move between schools. The pupils feel well cared for and supported. Nearly all indicated that generally they like school and enjoy the new things they find out in lessons. In speaking with pupils it was evident that they enjoy their learning and are eager to do their best.
27. Personal development is monitored informally by class teachers, but this is greatly enhanced by the knowledge that teaching assistants have of the pupils. They are quick to spot changes, identify problems and are able to offer support where this is needed. Parents speak particularly highly of the care given by them. Academic assessment data is used to identify pupils' needs in English and mathematics where it is used to set pupils, and to focus support where it is needed. However, the information is not used to set individual targets for pupils in their learning. This means that pupils do not have their own objectives to work to in their lessons, which would further sharpen their learning. Parents are also concerned about the lack of information they receive on how their child is doing; the setting and discussion of targets would help keep them better informed. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early on and their progress is monitored carefully. The school works very closely with outside specialists such as the educational psychologist and members of the special needs advisory service, and acts on their advice to ensure that pupils with special educational needs receive the best possible help whilst they are at the school.
28. The school council is drawn from all classes. A teacher chaired a meeting seen because of the newness of the council team. Councillors were all involved in discussing how they are the link between their peers, through class discussions, and the governors who are invited to attend

meetings. In the past, the school council has acted as a forum through which, for instance, the development of the school grounds has been discussed and decided. Suggestions by councillors during the meeting suggested that the pupils have good ideas about how the school could be improved and that their views are valued.

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

Links with parents are sound. There are good links with both local schools and community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school uses the local community well to enhance and extend learning opportunities for pupils.
- The good links the school has with the infant and secondary schools used by most pupils ensure a smooth transfer between them.
- There is insufficient information for parents about how their children are getting on, especially if there are problems.
- A shortfall in communication between the school and parents leads to a lack of a shared understanding about bullying and behaviour and frustration about lack of information generally.

### **Commentary**

29. The pupils respond well to the stimulus provided by the local community. The local beach was visited recently by Year 4 pupils to create sculptures, which were in turn used by them as the inspiration for the start of a story. A local tea party for older local residents held by pupils in Year 5 enables them to gain an insight into what life was like in times gone by, as well as developing respect and understanding for the views of others. A further link in Year 6 gives pupils a valuable insight into the working of local government. The school supports a local charity each year, as well as national and international ones, all of which encourage pupils to consider the plight of others and to raise money for them. The local community police officer, fire service and speakers from outside agencies all help to promote an understanding of how a community works and an awareness that they are part of it.
30. Links with local schools are now good. A period of stagnation in relationships with local cluster schools has ended and these links are now being redeveloped to the benefit of the pupils. For example, there are currently joint music days between primary schools as well as choir and recorder sessions with the secondary school. Some older, higher attaining pupils visit the secondary school for science lessons. The very smooth transfer of pupils between the same site infant school is very much appreciated by both parents and their children, who all spoke enthusiastically about the ease with which the move had been made. The transfer to secondary school is equally smooth, although parents would welcome the chance to make a visit to the school earlier in the academic year. The fact that pupils achieve well and reach high academic standards in addition to being well prepared personally and socially contributes significantly to their smooth transition to secondary education.
31. Parents would welcome more information about how their children are doing. Many feel particularly that they are not informed of any problems until a formal meeting or the annual report arrives. Whilst the teachers are willing to see parents to discuss any problems, parents do not feel they always have the information to recognise when their child is not making enough progress. With no targets set for pupils and no mention of targets or areas for development or improvement identified in otherwise good annual reports, parents are not informed well enough. Parents really appreciate the meetings held prior to residential trips and would also welcome meetings to discuss other aspects, such as curriculum areas.
32. The inspection team saw no evidence to support the concerns expressed by parents about bullying and behaviour. However, it is clear that the school has not agreed with parents, through

a frank and open discussion, what it means by bullying and what is acceptable behaviour, to enable a joint approach.

33. The full involvement of parents is needed to clarify this matter so that the procedures and actions taken are appropriate to the incident. Since the last inspection, links with parents have been hindered by weaknesses in the quality, frequency and consistency of information they have received, leaving many parents feeling unwelcome in school. The school is aware of this and over the last few months has begun to address the situation.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall. The leadership of the acting headteacher and the management of the school are satisfactory. However, issues and difficulties that have not been addressed since the last inspection have hindered further school improvement. The governance of the school is sound.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A united senior management team is working hard and successfully to ensure the school operates as an orderly community, enabling high expectations and standards for its pupils to be maintained.
- Governors are taking an increasingly active role in the life of the school.
- The school does not have a clear vision and plan of action, which makes clear the priorities for future development.
- Poor communication hinders effective teamwork.

### **Commentary**

34. Since the departure of the headteacher in February 2003, the acting headteacher and senior staff have worked hard and successfully to keep the school focused on maintaining high standards and good achievement for its pupils by ensuring a good learning environment to meet their differing needs. During this time, the senior management team has concentrated on addressing weaknesses as they have become apparent - ensuring all legal requirements are met, for example - and developing teams with clear lines of responsibility. Teaching assistants are now kept well informed about issues relating to pupils with special educational needs through a weekly meeting with the co-ordinator, and all appreciate this positive effort to value their contribution to the work of the school.
35. The lack of a clear vision and comprehensive school improvement plan to implement it has been a barrier to any significant development since the previous inspection and this remains an important priority for the school to address. The current document is a compilation of curriculum development plans drawn up by subject co-ordinators. There has been no attempt to prioritise developments so staff are unclear where to channel their energies or target future spending.
36. All staff are willing to give time and energy to the school well beyond the school day, as the wide range of extra curricular provision demonstrates. It is this commitment that has been instrumental in ensuring standards have been maintained during the recent period of transition and readjustment. However, although some improvements have been made, poor communication between different groups within the school community still makes effective teamwork difficult. Many parents feel frustrated by lack of information. Not all staff feel equally valued in the school and a poor flow of information reduces the effectiveness of skilled support and administrative staff.
37. Governors are very supportive of the school and carry out their statutory duties satisfactorily. They are now fully involved in the drawing up and review of policies. Most of the governors are relatively inexperienced as they have been appointed mainly in the last two years. The new



Chair has used this opportunity well to provide a shared sense of purpose for the governing body by drawing up a vision statement with them. They are committed to the principles of inclusion and high achievement for pupils. In the last six months, governors have begun to visit the school to see and report on specific aspects of its work, as well as receiving reports from co-ordinators. This helps to inform their clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and of what is needed to continue to take the school forward. This is particularly important as they prepare to appoint a new headteacher for the school. It is also enabling them to develop some aspects of their role, such as strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation, in a more structured and pro-active way. At present, although they are willing to challenge and debate with senior staff in the school, they do not always have the experience or information they need to do this effectively.

38. There are no formal self-evaluation processes to identify key priorities for raising standards and achievement further. No systematic monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum or classroom practice has been put in place in response to previous key issues to promote consistency and ongoing improvement in teaching and learning. The review undertaken by the senior management team as part of the preparation for this inspection shows a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Some action has already been taken to enhance pupils' learning by re-deploying teachers across year groups to provide a better balance of expertise to help address the imbalance of the curriculum for older pupils.
39. The acting headteacher has ensured that the performance management of teachers is now fully in place, although appraisal is not yet established for all other school staff. However, the effectiveness of performance management, and, to some extent, of staff training, is limited by the lack of clearly identified school priorities on which to focus them. Although this also makes efficient financial planning and management difficult, in decisions about staffing and other resources, the governing body are very clear about obtaining value for money, judging, for example, the effectiveness of spending decisions on support staff by the impact on standards and achievement in the national tests.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	640565
Total expenditure	637982
Expenditure per pupil	2512

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	23766
Balance carried forward to the next	26349

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

### **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 2**

#### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Standards are high and pupils achieve well in all aspects of the subject because teaching is good across the school and most pupils are keen to learn.
- Good use is made of opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to practise and extend their literacy skills.
- Not as many pupils reach the higher Level 5 in writing as they do in reading, partly because their rate of progress varies as there is not a common approach to teaching.

#### **Commentary**

40. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and speaking and listening. This judgement takes into account work seen from the last school year as well as that of the current Year 6 pupils. By the time they leave the school, boys and girls of all levels of attainment achieve well in relation to their attainment on entry to Year 3. This is clear from the way that the school carefully tracks individual pupils' progress from annual and national tests as well as from their work. However, the progress pupils make in their writing in Years 3 and 4 is not as rapid as in Years 5 and 6.
41. A number of factors contribute to pupils' good achievement. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and very good in Years 5 and 6, where several teachers use their considerable expertise in the subject to extend pupils' learning very effectively. A very good example of this was seen in a lesson for a group of higher attaining pupils in Year 6. The teacher developed pupils' skills of applying of the characteristics of Laurie Lee's writing in their own work through very good comparisons with other writers such as Dylan Thomas. She questioned pupils skilfully, inviting discussion and evaluation of their own and each other's efforts in a way that constantly raised their expectations of what they could do. Boys and girls worked diligently to improve the quality of their writing, using descriptive phrases such as, '--- a three and sixpence a week cottage with a courtyard'.
42. Well-used opportunities for drama, role-play and discussion help pupils to become articulate, expressing their ideas well and using a wide vocabulary. The way that teachers value pupils' responses and often question them well to develop their initial thoughts also contributes to this. Teachers generally use guided reading well to introduce pupils to new authors and extend the range of their reading experience, which contributes to the high standards in this area. In a very well taught literacy lesson for average attaining pupils, the range of pupils' reading and their good knowledge of fictional characters was evident as they discussed which of these they choose as a basis for writing a diary extract. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and help them to respond well to this by the effective and consistent way they manage their pupils, keeping up a brisk pace in lessons and setting work in interesting contexts. As a result, most pupils listen and concentrate very well and try hard to do their best. This helps them to learn effectively.
43. The way in which teaching groups are organised also contributes to pupils' good achievement as it helps teachers to match work appropriately to their needs. Teachers' own assessments and annual test results are used to place pupils in each year into two main ability groups for lessons. In Year 6, a part time teacher is deployed well to take a weekly extension group for higher attaining pupils, providing very effective additional challenge for them. Highly skilled

teaching assistants and support staff are deployed appropriately to lead smaller groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, who need additional support. However, the effectiveness of their work is limited in some groups where teachers do not involve them enough in their planning.

44. This illustrates one of the inconsistencies within the overall good quality of teaching that prevent pupils from making even better progress through the school because it affects the continuity of their learning. Teachers use the national literacy strategy appropriately to plan a comprehensive curriculum. However, there are other inconsistencies, especially in the use of different strategies for helping pupils to improve the quality of their writing, such as guided, shared and modelled writing and in the marking of pupils' work. This is the main reason that fewer pupils reach the higher Level 5 than in reading. It reflects the lack of whole school agreement and focus on some aspects of teaching that has arisen largely because there has been no systematic development of the monitoring and evaluation of classroom practice since the last inspection to identify priorities for improvement. This limits the role of the co-ordinator, whose leadership and management is thus only satisfactory overall. It also means also that existing good - often very good practice - is not shared through the school. High standards and good achievement have been sustained since the last inspection by the hard work, skills and high expectations of teachers working individually or in year groups, rather than moved on even further through concerted whole school action.

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

45. Teachers make good use of the current topic for pupils to apply the literacy skills they are learning in English lessons in other contexts. This interests and motivates pupils well and provides good support for their learning in other subjects. Examples include pupils writing recounts and letters in role as evacuees in the Second World War and play scripts about the Nativity. Teachers also extend pupils' vocabulary well in subjects across the curriculum by ensuring that they understand and use subject terminology correctly.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The national numeracy strategy is well embedded, contributing to good teaching and learning overall.
- The teaching of mental strategies is a particular strength, ensuring that pupils can use their numeracy skills successfully in other areas.
- Good parental involvement means that pupils are benefiting considerably from work they do at home.
- There are too few opportunities for older pupils to develop their own strategies for solving problems.
- Teachers' marking does not indicate how pupils could improve their work.

### **Commentary**

46. Standards in mathematics are well above average and have been consistently maintained since the last inspection. Test results show that almost two thirds of pupils reach the higher Level 5 by the end of Year 6. The achievement of all boys and girls is good as a result of the good, and sometimes very good teaching that pupils experience, coupled with encouragement from home.
47. The school has ensured that teachers have received good training opportunities in the national numeracy strategy. The skills they have acquired and the dedicated time given each day to

mathematics means that pupils' learning is systematically built upon and this helps their good rate of progress. The teaching of mental mathematics in particular is a strength of the school. Younger pupils, for example, had digit cards to enable them all to participate in a mental starter at the beginning of a lesson. They were expected to use these to add hundreds, tens and units mentally. When explaining their answers, pupils showed that they could use a variety of ways to solve the problems posed and were keen to explain their individual approaches. The teacher encouraged and supported them in their efforts so that they felt confident to 'have a go'. The mental starter often supports the main learning activity so that pupils have the chance to practise number skills that they will need later in the lesson. The school has produced a very helpful booklet for parents, when helping their children at home. This ensures that parents, pupils and the school all place a strong emphasis upon pupils' ability to successfully manipulate numbers mentally.

48. Although the practising of mental strategies is strong throughout the school, in the upper years there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas for solving problems through mathematical investigation and so increase their confidence and gain a fuller understanding of the rules of number. Work in pupils' books indicates a heavy reliance upon exercises from text books in the main part of the lesson rather than pupils learning from first hand situations and practical experience.
49. Lower attaining pupils achieve at the same good rate as others because they are well provided for and supported in their learning. Teachers in Year 3 used their teaching assistant very effectively to work with a small group, drawn from both classes, who were finding it difficult to understand a concept. The good use of an extra teacher when grouping pupils of similar ability in the other year groups throughout the school also enhances achievement because it allows teachers to plan appropriately challenging work for smaller groups of pupils. In a Year 6 class, for example, higher attaining pupils made nets for more complicated shapes than the rest of the class, such as a variety of pyramids and cuboids. In such ways, the differing needs of pupils are met effectively.
50. Work for all pupils is well prepared which means that lessons start promptly and move at a brisk pace, ensuring that pupils do not waste time. Teachers continually assess pupils' learning throughout the lesson by skilful questioning and intervention whilst they are working. This is an important factor in the good progress that pupils make within lessons. However, the marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. For the most part, work is ticked with the occasional comment of praise but offers insufficient help to pupils to tell them what they could do to improve even more on their already good achievement.
51. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Resources are of good quality and used well to support pupils' good achievement. Their progress is consistently tracked from year to year but expectations, although high in lessons, are not shared with pupils in the form of written targets for them to achieve over a period of time. This prevents them from taking responsibility for the speed of their own learning. However, although the school has a good understanding of standards in the subject overall and pupils' work is sampled, there is insufficient monitoring of the standards of teaching which would help to develop pupils' good achievement still further. This remains a concern since the last inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

52. Opportunities to use mathematical skills are carefully planned into other subjects. Pupils are expected to use their numeracy knowledge in other areas of learning, for example, when using computers to create graphs in science and geography. Examples of this were seen in pupils' books when they conducted traffic surveys and constructed graphs from information gathered about themselves in science.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are high and pupils achieve well
- Scientific skills are taught well through practical activity and experimentation.
- The subject is very well resourced with equipment, visual aids and books.
- A well-balanced curriculum ensures all aspects of the subject are taught.
- Teachers' marking is inconsistent and does not tell pupils how they can improve.

### **Commentary**

53. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of each of the main strands of the subject and their scientific skills of planning a fair test, using scientific equipment and recording their findings in a variety of ways are well practised. As a result, pupils learn to think scientifically and can apply their knowledge and skills readily to new ideas and concepts. They achieve well as they move through the school as a result of the many opportunities for practical work in all areas of the subject. This good achievement was particularly evident in the work of Year 3 pupils last year when pupils had many opportunities to experiment and record their findings in writing, diagrams and charts. In their final year, pupils spend a considerable amount of time revising for the national tests for eleven-year-olds and this contributes significantly to the very high proportion reaching the higher levels in the tests.
54. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and some very good teaching was seen. Teachers plan activities that stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils want to contribute to the lesson, ask questions and find ways of solving problems for themselves. This was particularly evident in a very good Year 3 lesson on the apparent movement of the sun over the course of the day. The teacher capitalised on a clear sunny day to help pupils find out through a series of observations how their shadows changed over time. Pupils were fascinated to discover that when they sat in a circle, some had shadows in front of them and some had them behind their backs. Higher attaining pupils were keen to explain what they already knew about the 'spin' of the earth, and lower attaining pupils enjoyed measuring their shadows and discussing with their partners how they had changed. Teachers value the opportunities the subject presents for pupils to work collaboratively and discover the wonder of the natural world, and the subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.
55. The school is well-resourced with books, videos, computer programs and visual aids for science, and teachers use them well to make learning interesting. In an effective Year 5 lesson on the earth in space, pupils enjoyed researching for themselves facts about the solar system. Higher attaining pupils used a good range of library books and the computer-based encyclopaedia, whilst lower attaining pupils researched the Internet with the aid of a classroom assistant. Pupils of all abilities are well catered for in lessons and both teachers and classroom assistants ensure pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the lesson. Information and communication technology is well used in science, both as a tool for research and as a means of recording data to produce graphs and charts. Some Year 6 pupils working on a unit about the body were particularly fascinated by a high quality program that helped them learn about the intricate formation of the skull, whilst others worked on a data-base to produce graphs showing the relationships between the sizes of different body parts.
56. The subject has been well managed for some time and this has ensured that there has been a relevant, practical and balanced curriculum in place, which gives good support to teachers. Lack of opportunities for formally monitoring teaching and learning has meant that some inconsistencies in provision have not been identified. Some teachers mark pupils' work comprehensively, but others give pupils very little written feedback to help them improve their

work. Nevertheless, the high standards in the science have been maintained since the previous inspection and the school is well placed to continue its success in the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Detailed planning for each half term supports teaching well and ensures that information and communication technology skills are taught and used as a tool to enhance learning in other subjects.
- The technician and the computer suite are used well to improve pupils' skills.
- Teaching is good, often very good, but too few opportunities for control technology and insufficient use of classroom computers mean that pupils achieve satisfactorily overall.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to engage in independent learning through and in information and communication technology to raise achievement.

### **Commentary**

57. Standards in information and communication technology are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory over time. This has fallen back since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be above average, although national requirements have changed to some extent since then. The last inspection found that pupils' progress was faster in the upper years than in Years 3 and 4 but it is now judged to be similar across the school. This can partly be attributed to the very good subject knowledge teachers now have and also because the curriculum is very well planned.
58. The last inspection found that using the computers for the purposes of communication and handling information were better developed than control technology and this remains an outstanding issue. However, the school has recently purchased a new, appropriate control program and currently Year 6 are being successfully introduced to its use in small groups during the lunch period. This is one example of the good use of the skills of the school's technician and is preparing pupils well for their project on 'Fairground Rides' in the summer term.
59. From pupils' work and lessons seen during the inspection, teaching and learning are good overall and sometimes very good. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they could because they do not spend enough time using the resources provided. During lesson times, computers in classrooms are often not in use to support lessons. There are not enough opportunities provided for pupils to use computers to learn independently. Despite most pupils having computers at home, the use of them for homework is not explicitly planned or encouraged. Although lessons in the suite are short, its use is well organised, enabling teachers to have a timetabled slot as well as being able to bid for extra time for their class.
60. Both the teachers and the technician have very good subject knowledge, which enables them to give pupils clear instructions when learning new skills. Lessons are well organised, follow detailed planning and move at a brisk pace. All of this helps pupils to make good gains in their learning during lessons. On talking to pupils, they were interested, enthusiastic and confident. During a very good lesson on learning to use the spell check facility, pupils' literacy skills were well used and tested. The teacher had high expectations and had organised different tasks that were accurately matched to the level of pupils' skills, including a challenging extension task for higher attaining pupils.
61. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory but have been limited by too few opportunities for monitoring of teaching and pupils' standards of work. A strength is the planning of the curriculum, both to help pupils develop their skills progressively and to use them

to support learning in other subjects. Assessment procedures are in place but their use is not monitored sufficiently and as a result they are used inconsistently.

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

62. The subject is used well to support other areas of learning. For example, pupils have composed music, compiled graphs to illustrate their shopping survey and to record their study of the planets. Year 6 pupils used multi-media software to present their brochures about Lee on Solent and Year 5 pupils have researched the Caribbean for their geography studies. These various projects allow pupils to extend their ICT skills but they also make a considerable contribution to their learning in other subjects.

### **HUMANITIES**

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good resources and varied teaching methods motivate pupils well and contribute to their positive attitudes.
- Good planning by the co-ordinator promotes continuity of learning in most year groups and supports teachers well.
- The amount of recorded work evident in past Year 6 books does not give pupils enough opportunities to build effectively on previous good learning in Year 5.
- The co-ordinator has no opportunity to observe teaching to identify good practice or areas for development in order to improve standards.

### **Commentary**

63. Standards in Year 6 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and boys and girls of all levels of attainment achieve satisfactorily overall, as at the time of the last inspection. Evidence from lessons, past work and discussions with staff indicates variations in pupils' rate of progress between year groups. This is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4, very good in Year 5 where pupils are very well taught, but slows again in Year 6. Last year, for example, there was an over reliance on discussion and oral work in the last two terms and not enough time given to written work to enable pupils to extend their learning fully. This was largely due to teachers' strong focus on English, mathematics and science in preparation for national tests.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but varies from satisfactory to very good. Good examples were seen of teachers using interesting activities to motivate pupils and help them to learn in different ways. They also provide good opportunities for pupils to extend their speaking and listening skills through discussion and drama. In a very well taught Year 5 lesson about the Jewish celebration of Passover, the teacher immediately captured pupils' attention by seating them around a large table that was laid with carefully prepared resources to represent a Seder meal. She used skilful questioning, well informed explanations and drama techniques very effectively to both reinforce and to significantly increase pupils' understanding of the purpose and symbolism of all the artefacts. This fully sustained pupils' interest and prompted thoughtful discussion and responses that reflected the respect the teacher herself showed for Jewish traditions. Teachers regularly use the good links with the local Christian churches of different denominations to base pupils' learning on first hand experience of visits and visitors, although as yet there are no links with representatives of other faiths to extend these experiences.

65. Other strengths in the lessons seen were the good relationships between pupils and teachers and between the pupils themselves. As a result, boys and girls of all levels of attainment were confident in sharing their ideas, secure in the knowledge that both teachers and their peers would value and respect what they had to say. This not only added to pupils' positive attitudes in lessons, but also contributed to the respect they show for the views and beliefs of others. In this way, the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good examples were seen of teachers ensuring that boys and girls of all levels of attainment were fully included in lessons through appropriate questioning and support. In some lessons, however, the pace of the lesson was too slow to hold pupils' interest and tasks were not demanding enough to take their learning forward, or adjusted to their differing needs and capabilities.
66. The co-ordinator provides good leadership through her own expertise and the support she provides for colleagues. She has, for example, drawn up detailed, well-resourced plans for each of the year group topics ensuring that the requirements of the agreed syllabus are covered well and that the content promotes progression in pupils' skills and understanding. However, the management of the subject is only satisfactory because the lack of opportunity to monitor teaching makes it difficult for the co-ordinator to evaluate how effectively and consistently teachers implement the plans, to share good practice or identify weaknesses.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good planning supports teaching and enables pupils to learn necessary geographical skills and make links with other subjects.
- High quality resources stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm for the subject.
- Inconsistent marking, use of assessment procedures and monitoring of teaching adversely affect pupils' standards and achievement.
- The amount of work covered in Year 6 does not allow pupils to achieve as well as they could.

### **Commentary**

67. Standards in geography are average by the end of Year 6 and pupils' achievement is sound. Although pupils achieve well in some year groups as a result of good teaching, in Year 6, insufficient time is given to the subject and pupils do not work in sufficient depth to enable them to do well. Consequently, overall standards are lower than at the last inspection. The school is aware of the imbalance in Year 6 and is working to address it.
68. From the lessons seen and work sampled during the inspection, teaching is good, with some very good examples. The detailed planning for projects and the emphasis upon geographical skills coupled with high quality resources supports teachers well. As a result, pupils take a keen interest in the subject and often make good progress within lessons. In a very well taught lesson about human and physical features, the teacher began by showing a short snippet about St Ives from a video. This caught pupils' interest and was quickly followed up by excellent photographs. The teacher used the correct geographical vocabulary and encouraged pupils to do the same, thereby teaching them to think like geographers. The task of comparing photographs was clearly explained and through mixed ability pairs working together, all pupils were able to complete the task. The lesson was well organised with a brisk pace that maintained pupils' interest and enthusiasm. The planning offered several homework opportunities for research, including the use of the Internet.
69. The well travelled 'Reckless the Bear' makes a significant contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of different parts of the world as he joins them on their journeys both at home



and abroad. The imaginative use of this character has even caught the interest of parents whom he accompanies on business trips! Pupils are encouraged to research the informative records kept of his travels. Recently, he has accompanied a member of staff on a literary trail across Europe and an extremely valuable link is being made to books for pupils to read in the school library.

70. Examples of pupils' past work provided evidence of good links between geography and other subjects. The subject makes good use of pupils' literacy skills and information and communication technology is used for graphs, spreadsheets, charts, diagrams and importing photographs. Pupils' numeracy skills are also evident in the use of angles, coordinates and number when counting for surveys. Mapping skills are well planned for and built upon sequentially from year to year.
71. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory but there are no formal monitoring procedures in place. This remains outstanding since the last report. Due to this, insufficient action has been taken to correct inconsistencies in marking and the use of assessment procedures.

## HISTORY

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good use of visits, artefacts and other resources to bring the subject alive.
- Insufficient checks are made on provision to ensure all teachers mark consistently and give enough time to the subject.

### Commentary

72. It was only possible to see one lesson in history. Standards of work in pupils' books are broadly average and pupils in Year 6 are likely to attain average standards if they cover the curriculum planned for them. Evidence from last year's Year 6 pupils' books shows that not enough time was given to the subject towards the end of the year because so much was spent on practising for the national tests in English, mathematics and science. However, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and it is good in classes where enough time is given to the subject.
73. A strength of the provision is that teachers give pupils good opportunities to learn from first hand experience and practical activity, which brings the subject alive. Each year group has an opportunity to visit a place of historical interest. Year 4 pupils visit a Tudor village, for example, and Year 5 pupils hold a 1930s tea party to which elderly people who have lived through the era are invited. Pupils ask them about their experiences during the war and enjoy looking at their souvenirs, old photographs and other memorabilia. Work in pupils' books last year shows what a successful occasion this is. One higher attaining pupil had clearly enjoyed talking to the guests and was quite moved by their account of their wartime experiences.
74. Not enough teaching was seen to make an overall judgement on its quality. Teachers make good use of a wide range of resources such as old documents, photographs and artefacts to help pupils pose questions and discover answers for themselves. In the one lesson seen, Year 5 pupils studying Britain since the 1930s enjoyed studying their packs of photographs and quotes from children who had experienced evacuation from the town to the countryside. They worked together sensibly in pairs to discuss the children's feelings and offered mature suggestions about why they might be happy or sad, understanding the mix of emotions they would have experienced. The lesson made a good contribution to pupils' personal development by enabling them to empathise with the feelings of the evacuees, and through the opportunities it presented for collaboration. In this lesson the drawbacks of the open plan building were

particularly apparent as pupils struggled to contribute to the discussion and listen to each other's views against a background of noise from the shared area outside the classroom.

75. Work from pupils' books last year shows that with the exception of Year 6, most teachers cover the curriculum planned for the year in sufficient depth and detail. Some teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support the subject, for example when pupils carried out independent research into their topic on Ancient Egypt. Some teachers mark pupils' work with helpful comments but others do not, so pupils have little idea of how to improve their work.

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

Not enough work was seen in art and design or design and technology to form overall judgements about their provision.

### **MUSIC**

Provision in music is **very good**.

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

- Good use of specialist teaching is made in many classes.
- The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- The school provides excellent opportunities for instrumental tuition.
- Pupils have many opportunities for performing in assemblies and concerts.

#### **Commentary**

76. Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average and have been sustained well since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Many of the class teachers have musical expertise and are confident to teach all aspects of the subject so that pupils receive a well-balanced musical curriculum in lessons. The one or two teachers who are less confident with the subject receive very good help and support when they need it, or make arrangements for their class to be taken by a colleague with expertise. As a result, pupils of all abilities and aptitudes achieve very well.
77. The impact of this very good provision is evident in pupils' enjoyment of the subject, and from their very positive attitudes towards it. A good example of this was clearly demonstrated in a Year 5 lesson in which pupils practised songs to sing at a '1930's' tea party being held in connection with their history topic. Pupils had very quickly learnt the words to some songs of the period. Both boys and girls sang with enjoyment and enthusiasm, taking their roles as performers seriously. They listened carefully to new material, quickly absorbing the mood of the music, and were able to discuss and explain sensibly their responses to it. Pupils with special educational needs take full part in lessons and contribute successfully to them. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond by working sensibly at their tasks, whether individually or in groups. They handle instruments with care and listen to each other thoughtfully. The school is well resourced with instruments so that pupils have regular opportunities to play, and teachers are well organised so lessons move on at a good pace.
78. A very significant factor in the school's success is the provision it makes for free instrumental tuition for a large number of pupils. At the time of the inspection there were places for 52 pupils to learn a wide range of instruments including the violin, brass instruments, piano, guitar, flute, clarinet and drums. The only condition for pupils taking up the opportunity is that they join the school orchestra and so contribute in return to the musical life of the school. In addition to the instrumental lessons taught by visiting teachers, other staff run the school choir and two recorder clubs. Further opportunities for pupils to enjoy and develop their musical skills are

offered through local music festivals, workshops and school performances held throughout the year. The school's commitment to the subject has a positive impact on pupils' personal development as they learn to perform together and to appreciate the importance of music in their own and other cultures. The quality of pupils' singing makes a valuable contribution to assemblies and helps to set a tone that supports worship and quiet reflection.

79. The subject has been well led for some time, and in the temporary absence of a subject co-ordinator, the school has put good measures in place to ensure the subject continues to develop successfully.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is **good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching of physical education is good overall and sometimes very good. Coupled with very good teachers' subject knowledge it leads to good achievement for pupils.
- Assessment is a strength in lessons and helps pupils to know what to do next to improve.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good and the wide variety of extra curricular activities offered to pupils considerably enhances the subject.
- Indoor accommodation is very small with some safety hazards.

### **Commentary**

80. Standards in physical education have been maintained since the last inspection and are above average. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to take part in the wide variety of sports offered to them and this, coupled with good teaching, helps them to achieve well
81. From the lessons seen and looking at records of past work, pupils' experience of the subject covers very good opportunities for swimming, gymnastics, field sports and dance. This is enhanced by after school clubs and teams for football, netball, cricket, rounders, hockey and gymnastics as well as golf and yoga during the weekly 'Enrichment Hour'. Due to the enthusiasm of teachers and pupils, the school has won many tournaments and leagues when competing against local schools, including girls' cricket. There is an impressive array of trophies.
82. Teachers have a good level of expertise as many have completed courses that have added substantially to their subject knowledge. This enables them to teach the correct skills to pupils which helps them to do well. In a Year 6 lesson involving passing and footwork skills, pupils' progress was very good because of the very good teaching they received. Due to very good planning and organisation, all boys and girls were actively engaged in purposeful practice throughout the lesson. The teacher built in successive levels of challenge when introducing the main activity. Pupils were taught how to catch the ball 'into the chin' and then to clap their hands whilst the ball was in the air. Having achieved this, they were expected to touch the ground as well. Several more able pupils succeeded. The teacher gave very clear instructions and demonstrations of the skills the pupils were to learn. A very good link was made to their work in mathematics from the morning when she described how to hold the ball and referred to their hands as being in a perpendicular position. The pace was fast and pupils took part energetically. Working in pairs and teams also made a very good contribution to the development of pupils' personal and social skills.
83. Assessment was a strength of all lessons seen. Teachers travelled around groups and pairs of pupils adjusting skills and making suggestions for improvement. They used pupils to demonstrate to others and asked them to explain what is good about their work and also to suggest improvements. This strategy enables teachers to assess pupils' work and also tells pupils what they need to do next to develop their skills further. However, records of pupils'

progress are not yet formalised and passed on from year to year and standards of teaching are not regularly monitored. This remains an outstanding issue although improvement in the subject has been satisfactory overall since the last inspection.

84. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The school is a part of the 'Active Schools' initiative, which has allowed it to take advantage of inexpensive staff training alongside other local schools. Resources are good and well cared for. Gymnastics lessons are severely constrained by the size and layout of the indoor space. Despite the insistence upon safety by teachers, when working with pupils in the hall, it is cramped and hazardous, slows the pace of lessons and does not allow a class of pupils to use of the full range of equipment available. This limits their rate of progress.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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