

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CROWMOOR PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Shrewsbury

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123391

Headteacher: Mr R Russell

Lead inspector: Mr T Richardson

Dates of inspection: 3 – 5 November 2003

Inspection number: 255934

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	263
School address:	Crowmere Road Monkmoor Shrewsbury
Postcode:	SY2 5JJ
Telephone number:	01743 235549
Fax number:	01743 243129
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Harris
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is above average in size with 263 boys and girls on roll, between the ages of three and eleven. Almost every pupil is of white British heritage, and most live in an area of social disadvantage. The school serves a large housing association estate in an area of social disadvantage, and the proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is above average at 28 per cent. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery is well below average, especially in their communication, language and literacy skills. No pupils are at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs (mainly for speech, behavioural and literacy difficulties) is above average (29 per cent). Four pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, and a small proportion of pupils are in the care of the local authority. The school's population is relatively stable with 19 pupils leaving and 9 entering the school other than at the usual times of admission. Twenty seven children attend the nursery, part time, each morning and afternoon, and the school has nine pupils in Years 1 and 2 who attend the language class, for children with speech and language difficulties. The school is involved in the 'Schools for Health Programme'; is working towards accreditation as an 'Investor In People'; has successfully attained the 'Artsmark' (silver) and the '2001 Activemark' for sports. The school was awarded a 'DfES Achievement Award' in 2001 and pupils' art work has been displayed at the West Midlands Show.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16500	Mr T Richardson	Lead inspector	Science, art and design, music
11041	Mr M Moore	Lay inspector	
22092	Mr D Watts	Team inspector	English, ICT, design and technology, physical education
8316	Ms J O'Hare	Team inspector	Foundation stage, mathematics, geography, history, religious education
18206	Ms E Mildner	Team inspector	Special educational needs, the language class

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 is **very effective** and pupils achieve very well over their time in school. This is due to very good teaching, learning and leadership. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve very well in mathematics and science, show good achievement in English, and some of their art work is outstanding.
- The quality of teaching is very good and pupils work hard and enjoy learning.
- The headteacher and governors make sure that school developments are directed to improving the quality of education for the pupils.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent, very good care and guidance are provided, pupils show very good attitudes to their work, and are happy in school.
- Behaviour is managed very consistently and pupils behave very well as a result.
- The curriculum is enriched with a very good range of activities, including the arts and sports.
- The school buildings and grounds are stimulating and attractive and motivate the pupils to work hard, and care for their school.
- Good provision is made for pupils with speech and communication difficulties in the language class.
- Pupils' achievements in English are limited by the lack of planned and regular opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills in all subjects and classes.
- The satisfactory curriculum in the nursery and reception classes is too formal, too soon, and has insufficient emphasis on children learning through structured play.
- Despite good provision for teaching cultural awareness, pupils can be better prepared for everyday life in our diverse society.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The key issues have been addressed effectively and more has been done to extend the curriculum, enhance the environment, and improve the quality of teaching. Standards have risen in English, mathematics and science, and school development continues to be focused on raising further the standards in English.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	E	D	B
mathematics	C	D	B	A
science	B	D	B	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 **very good**. Children enter the nursery with standards well below average, especially in their communication, language and literacy skills. Good achievement takes place in the foundation stage, and most children go into the Year 1 class with standards that have improved to below average in the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. In Years 1 and 2, good achievement takes place and, by the end of Year 2, most pupils have reached average standards in mathematics and science, although standards in reading and writing are still below average. Pupils show good achievement in Years 3 to 6. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in mathematics and science, and the work in pupils' books indicates that standards are close to

average in English. The reason for English results being lower than mathematics and science is that pupils continue to have delayed development in their vocabulary and speaking skills and this limits their understanding of texts and the creativity of their writing. Standards in art are very high because all pupils benefit from being taught techniques and skills in a small group with a highly competent art specialist.

Pupils develop **very good** personal qualities. Their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good**. Pupils have very good attitudes, are punctual to lessons and are keen to learn. They behave very well, in and out of class, and care for each other. Attendance rates are satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **very good**. The quality of teaching is **very good**. Pupils' work, and the long term achievement of the pupils, shows that teaching and learning are usually consistently good, and this builds into a very good learning experience over the pupils' time in school. Where teaching is best, there is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and pupils learn to use correct vocabulary and explain the reasons behind their thinking. Teachers manage behaviour very well and this leads to pupils applying themselves very well to their lessons and being very productive. Lessons are planned very well and teachers have high expectations for what pupils can do. Also, pupils gain new knowledge and skills very well because lessons are interesting and teachers are knowledgeable about how children learn.

The curriculum is good and enriched very well with a wide range of activities including residential experiences, outings, cinema and theatre visits, clubs and a strong emphasis on sports and the arts. These provide experiences for pupils that motivate them, raise self-esteem, and boost their achievement. There is very good provision for the care, welfare and safety of pupils, and the views of pupils are valued. The school has good links with its parents and the community, and very good links with other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher provides very good leadership that leads to improvements in the quality of teaching and raises standards. Governance is very good and key staff and subject co-ordinators provide good leadership. The school and its finances are managed well.

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

Most parents state: their children like school; are treated fairly and expected to work hard; teaching is good; and children make good progress. They find the school approachable and led and managed well. Parents are encouraged to help their children at home. Most pupils state: they like school; find out new things in lessons; get help when they are stuck; and have to work hard. Also, teachers show pupils how to improve their work, are fair and listen to their ideas; adults are approachable; and pupils are trusted to do things on their own. Some pupils would like other children to behave better but inspectors judge that the school is doing all it can to improve behaviour.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Make sure that pupils systematically develop and extend their speaking and listening skills in all classes and subjects.
- Make sure the foundation stage curriculum has more emphasis on children learning through structured play.
- Make sure pupils are prepared more thoroughly for everyday life in our diverse society.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Standards in a number of subjects are average at the end of Year 2, and above average by the end of Year 6. Achievement is very good over time, and pupils achieve consistently well in the foundation stage, Years 1 and 2, and in Years 3 to 6.

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

- Standards in art are well above average.
- Standards are rising in science and mathematics, and are above average.
- Pupils achieve well in English.
- Pupils achieve very well over their time in school.
- Standards are above average in physical education and aspects of religious education.
- Standards are at least average in all other subjects.
- Pupils' test results are not as high in English as in mathematics and science.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children enter the nursery class with development that is well below average, especially in their communication, language and literacy skills. They are taught well and show good achievement so that, by the time children enter Year 1, their attainment has improved to be below average. Children do best, and achieve well, in developing their personal and social development, their communication and language skills, and their mathematical ability. This is because the curriculum emphasises the key skills of reading, writing, number, speaking and listening. Achievement in the other areas of learning (knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development) is satisfactory because teachers give less emphasis to developing children's inquiry and investigation skills through play experiences.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.7 (13.6)	15.7 (16.0)
writing	12.3 (13.2)	14.6 (14.5)
mathematics	15.4 (14.7)	16.3 (16.6)

*There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. In Years 1 and 2, pupils currently show good achievement and their attainments rise from below average in Year 1, to be broadly average by the end of Year 2. The 2003 national tests show that the pupils previously in Year 2 attained standards in reading that matched the national average, and were above the average for similar schools. Attainment in mathematics was below the national average (and matched the average for similar schools), and attainment in writing was well below average. Inspection findings are that the current Year 2 pupils have average standards in mathematics and science but are just below average in their reading and writing skills. Analysis of the work completed by the previous Year 2 shows that their writing skills were at a higher level than the test results indicate, and below average for their age. The good achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is due to the consistently good quality of teaching and learning provided, and the support given to pupils with special educational needs.



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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3 (25.2)	26.8 (27.2)
mathematics	28.1 (25.8)	26.8 (27.0)
science	29.4 (28.0)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Good achievement is also evident in Years 3 to 6, and the attainments of the pupils rise from being average in Year 3 to above average by the end of Year 6. The 2003 national tests show that the Year 6 results in mathematics and science were above average (and well above the average for similar schools). The test results in English were just below average (and better than in most similar schools). Again, analysis of the work in pupils' English books shows that most pupils were working in class at average levels, and higher than the test results suggest. Pupils achieve well because they are taught well. In particular, the quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very good and these teachers place a strong emphasis on pupils learning to understand and use more complex vocabulary and sentences. Many pupils, including those with special educational needs, benefit from working in small groups with assistants to extend their reading and literacy skills. There are also good quality booster classes provided to help pupils revise and discuss scientific concepts and these all help to raise standards in the core subjects. Another factor is the varied and interesting extra-curricular activities that help to make learning fun and give the pupils success that motivates them to want to learn more in their lessons.
4. Recently, the school has worked very hard to raise standards further in English. However, this work is not as successful as in other subjects. This was investigated thoroughly by inspectors and the key to future success was judged to be a greater emphasis on speaking and listening skills. Pupils throughout the school were heard to use a narrow vocabulary, and to find difficulty expressing their thoughts with clarity and fluency. This is because children enter the nursery often with poorly developed speaking skills and not all teachers provide sufficient opportunities in lessons for pupils to learn new words and to practise using them in their conversations. Some teachers do this well, and it was noticeable in these lessons that the pupils achieved well and felt more confident in their knowledge. The school has clear plans and assessment procedures for teaching reading and writing in every year group, but has no policy or structure for teaching pupils to use higher order speaking and listening skills. As a result, pupils often read sentences they do not fully understand and are unable to enliven their writing because they lack the necessary vocabulary.
5. Standards in art are very high because every pupil has regular opportunities to learn skills and techniques by working in a small group with an art specialist. The work of the artist in residence also helps to create an atmosphere where pupils want to do well in art and have pride in their success. In other subjects, standards in aspects of religious education are above average in Year 2 and Year 6; above average in Year 6 in physical education; and average in Year 6 in design and technology, geography, history and ICT. Insufficient music lessons were seen to judge standards in the subject.

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

Pupils' attitudes to their work and their school are very good. Their relationships and behaviour are very good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Attendance is good and punctuality is very good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy coming to school, work hard and display very good interest in school life.
- Pupils behave consistently well and there is a very high quality of relationships within the school.
- The school stimulates in pupils a desire to learn.
- Pupils have a very good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others.
- Although attendance is satisfactory, procedures for improving and promoting attendance could be further developed.

## Commentary

6. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are very interested in school life. They are keen to learn, relate very well to adults and enjoy the company of visitors. The inspection team was impressed by the friendliness of the pupils, who were very pleased to show them around school. The pupils expressed pride in their work, their achievements and the school building.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	6.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

7. The current attendance figures show an improvement on those given above and attendance rates are broadly satisfactory. However, despite this improvement, and the lack of unauthorised attendance, the school should continue to improve its procedures for promoting good attendance.

### Ethnic background of pupils

### Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
246
1
2
1
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

8. Pupils behave well both in and out of lessons, they listen with interest, are keen to answer questions and work well together and collaboratively. The view of the overwhelming majority of parents, that behaviour is very good, is shared by the inspection team. Bullying at the school is very rare and there have been no permanent exclusions during the past ten years, even though the school has admitted pupils who had been excluded from other schools.
9. The very caring ethos provided by the school stimulates in pupils a desire to behave well and they are fully aware of the high expectations of behaviour that the school has. Relationships between pupils, peer groups and pupils and adults are of very high quality. Pupils show a good respect for each other's views and have a very good knowledge of the principles to enable them

to distinguish right from wrong. Pupils care for their own property and other people's property. Computers and books are treated with care and the school has no graffiti or vandalism.

10. Children achieve well in the foundation stage in their personal and social development and most of them meet the expected goals in this area of learning by the end of reception. Older pupils enjoy being given responsibility and help in school in a number of ways. The school council provides a useful forum for pupils to discuss their views for school improvement and development with teachers. Year 6 pupils help in a 'Peer Reading Partnership', Year 4 pupils take responsibility for the wildlife conservation area and Years 1, 2 and 3 pupils help in the library, look after equipment and enjoy helping in the 'Womble' litter scheme.
11. Overall, the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies are regularly held and meet statutory requirements. Many residential and day visits are arranged to theatres, art galleries and outdoor pursuit centres. The art specialist and artist in residence provide a unique opportunity for pupils to develop their artistic skills, and live theatre groups are invited into school. Through strong relationships within school and the clearly defined code of behaviour, pupils' moral and social development is very good. Pupils develop very good appreciation of cultural traditions, are tolerant of differences and respect the faiths and beliefs of others. However, discussions with pupils show they are naïve about the cultural diversity of Britain and are unaware, for example, that there are Asian communities in nearby towns and cities. Inspectors, therefore, judge that the preparation of pupils for life in our multi-cultural society could be further developed.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and this leads to the very good achievement of the pupils. The curriculum is good and enriched very well with extra-curricular activities. The care, welfare and safety of pupils are very well addressed, and the school has good links with its parents.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Year on year, pupils experience teaching and learning of at least good quality and this builds into a very good learning experience over their time in school. The quality of assessment is good and pupils build successfully on their previous knowledge.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 2, 5 and 6 is consistently high.
- Teachers manage behaviour very well and this leads to pupils applying themselves very well to their lessons and being very productive.
- Lessons are planned very well and teachers have high expectations for what pupils can do.
- Pupils gain new knowledge and skills very well because lessons are interesting and teachers are knowledgeable about how children learn.
- Speaking and listening skills are not taught consistently in every class.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10 (22%)	28 (62%)	7 (15%)	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.*

12. The lessons observed during the inspection were predominantly of good quality. Pupils' work and the long-term achievement of the pupils show that teaching and learning are usually at least of this quality. This is a good improvement since the last inspection that is due to an improved focus in the school development plan on raising quality, the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and the teamwork between teachers in planning the curriculum.
13. All staff manage behaviour very well. They follow the school's behaviour policy consistently and place an emphasis on valuing what pupils do and praising them when they behave well. As a result, lessons are very orderly, pupils generally listen to information very attentively, and the class is able to focus on learning without interruption. In a design and technology lesson in Year 1, for example, the teacher presented the activity in an exciting way so that the pupils, including some with behaviour difficulties, were very keen to take part. The teacher then managed the behaviour of the class very well so that the pupils kept their interest and were very productive in making their model beds.
14. Teachers expect the pupils to work hard and to build their learning from what they already know. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 5, the teacher planned to develop the understanding of improper fractions in sequential small steps of difficulty. Each new step was introduced using the interactive whiteboard, and the teacher checked carefully that pupils knew what to do before taking them on to the next step. As a result, pupils gained pleasure and confidence in knowing how to change and compare fractions, and this led them to want to try even harder to solve the tasks set. Teachers also include the information from assessment and individual education plans well in their lessons. The pupils with special educational needs are supported well and teaching assistants help them to be included and achieve well in their lessons. The assessment information in English and mathematics is detailed and of good quality and this helps teachers to set relevant and challenging targets for the pupils to attain. However, whilst the procedures and use of assessment in other subjects are not yet of this quality, the school is working to improve them and teachers ensure that there is no negative impact on pupils' learning and achievement.
15. In some classes, teachers place a strong emphasis on helping pupils to develop their vocabulary and give effective opportunities for the practising of speaking skills. For example, in a science lesson in Year 6, the teacher asked questions of the class and asked pupils to share their answers with each other before replying. The pupils were also encouraged to reflect and refine their explanations, and report back what others had said. These opportunities led the pupils to extend their thinking and be able to report succinctly their views on how sound may travel from source to the ear. In part of a literacy lesson in Year 2, the teacher helped the pupils to realise how they could make their sentences longer and more interesting by adding new ideas and colourful adjectives. However, this emphasis on promoting improved speaking and listening skills is not applied consistently in all classes.
16. School leaders promote good teamwork between teachers so that they plan the curriculum together and are keen to share best practice with one another. Literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school, and teachers place a good emphasis on addressing the basic skills of writing, reading and number in lessons other than English and mathematics. Whilst computer skills are taught well in ICT lessons, pupils could have more opportunities to develop these further by using computers more often in all subjects.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good and is very well enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The school's accommodation and resources for learning are good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good overall.
- Good provision ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum, clubs and other activities organised by the school.
- The curriculum is very effectively enriched through the arts and educational visits.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is good; it enables the pupils to grow into mature and responsible members of the community.
- The school has a good match of teaching and support staff, who all work as an effective team.
- The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources is good overall to meet the needs of the curriculum.
- The foundation stage curriculum is satisfactory but is insufficiently linked to the Early Learning Goals for children of this age.
- There is no policy or structure for teaching pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills in all subjects.
- Better use could be made of ICT, and more reference books could be provided, to support learning in all subjects.

## Commentary

17. The school has made good improvements in curriculum provision and learning opportunities since the previous inspection. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented well, and teachers now have good guidance for every subject so that they can plan lessons to build on what pupils already know and avoid unnecessary repetition as pupils move through the school. As a result, the curriculum is broad and well balanced. In addition, provision has been enhanced by assistants taking small groups of pupils for extra work with literacy and reading skills, and the headteacher provides a booster class for Year 6 pupils in science. Music is now taught by a specialist teacher, and the provision of an art specialist is directly responsible for the very high standards of pupils' art work.
18. The school makes good provision to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Girls, for example, are enthusiastic members of the football club. The school tracks the standards and progress of groups of pupils systematically. As a result, teachers are able to identify and work to improve the different patterns of achievements between boys and girls. In addition, the school is totally committed to making sure that every pupil gets the best deal possible and works with success to remove any barriers to pupils' learning. Good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education, and they learn to become good citizens through taking part in the school council. The provision for learning outside the classroom is very good and results in a greatly enriched curriculum. For example, the very strong emphasis on the arts leads to exceptional work being produced by the pupils. In addition, the residential visits, open to all pupils in Years 3 to 6, very effectively develop their personal and social education. The work on display around the school, following the visit to Shell Island, shows pupils' achievements across all subjects. Developing the wildlife area of the school and observing growth is another example of the enriching provision for the pupils. There are numerous clubs, sporting activities and extra-curricular activities for pupils, providing them with very good opportunities to take up an interest and to mix socially with others. All these factors contribute successfully to the pupils' academic and personal development.
19. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers make sure that the targets identified in the pupils' educational plans are addressed in lessons and use assistants well to make sure these pupils are included in lessons and achieve as well as they are able.
20. While the curriculum is good overall, there are some weaknesses. The foundation stage curriculum is satisfactory but is not sufficiently based on the principles of the recommended Early Learning Goals. It is too formal, particularly in the reception class, and there is insufficient emphasis on play, imagination and creativity. Standards in English in Years 1 to 6 are not rising

as fast as in other subjects because there is no planned and structured guidance for the teaching of speaking and listening skills. Also, computer skills are taught well in ICT lessons, but computers are underused to support learning in other subjects.

21. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. A particular strength is the noticeable team spirit among staff, which contributes greatly to an effective learning environment. Accommodation is good and well maintained by the site manager and the cleaning staff. Classrooms and corridors are very well used for displaying pupils' work attractively, thereby enhancing the internal appearance. The quality of resources is good and well used by pupils and staff. However, there is a lack of library books and reference texts which limits pupils' independent learning.

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

The school's arrangements for pupils care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Provision for advice, support and guidance are good. The school takes good account of pupils' views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are very good.
- The extent to which each pupil has a trusting relationship with adults is excellent.

### **Commentary**

22. The school provides a happy, safe and secure environment where pupils learn with confidence because of the good support that they receive from staff. The child protection policy is comprehensive and detailed. The child protection officer is well aware of his duties and has cascaded training to all other members of staff. Health & safety audits are carried out regularly and school procedures for risk assessment on school visits are meticulous and thorough.
23. Pupils spoken to during the inspection week confirm that they feel safe and secure in school, know who to go to for advice and support and feel that staff know them well and care for them. Pupils are well supervised both at lunchtimes and at break. Lunchtime assistants not only supervise the pupils but also join with them in their structured play activities. Pupils with special educational needs, including those in the language class, are given good levels of support and are integrated well into school activities. Their progress is monitored well, but some of their individual education plans could be more specific. The good support they receive enables them to make good progress.
24. Relationships at the school are excellent. The advice and care given by adults is of high quality. Pupils trust adults and because of the excellent relationships they gain considerable confidence and self-esteem. Induction arrangements for new pupils are good. All pupils are invited to visit the nursery class prior to their admission. Parents and children have a personal interview with both nursery staff and headteacher. Parents are allowed to stay with their children for their first few days and each child settles very quickly into the routine.
25. The school involves pupils well through seeking, valuing and acting on their views. The school council is used as a useful forum where pupils discuss with staff ideas they have for the benefit of the whole school. For example, the girls' toilets have recently been refurbished after representation from the council members and school rules were drawn up after consultation with pupils.

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

Links with parents and the community are good. Links with other schools and colleges are very good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents' views are valued and acted upon.
- Complaints regarding any concerns are dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Some reports are not sufficiently personalised for each pupil.

## Commentary

26. Thirty-nine per cent of parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire. The overwhelming majority thought that their children like school and are making good progress, parents are kept well informed about how their children were getting on, and that staff seek the views of parents and take account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed.
27. The school's links with parents are good and the information provided to parents is of good quality. The school brochure is well produced, parent friendly and contains useful information about school policies and curriculum. In addition, the school provides regular newsletters giving up to date information about events and news items. School reports are provided annually, which give detailed information about what pupils have studied, the grades awarded and targets to be achieved. Some reports, however, are produced by computer and are not sufficiently personal.
28. The school produces two booklets for parents of reception children giving good information to enable them to develop their children's reading and writing skills. There are two parent evenings, one in the autumn term and one at the end of the school year and, in addition, parents know that they can come into school at any time to discuss their children's progress. The school has an open door policy and the headteacher and staff have a visible presence in the playground each day to talk to parents if necessary. In addition, the headteacher holds regular surgeries at school where he is available to meet parents to discuss specific queries or problems. The school promptly contacts parents if they have cause for concern or wish to praise pupils. The school also arranges special presentation evenings for parents of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils to advise them on the requirements for national tests.
29. The school has very good mechanisms for transferring pupils to the next stage of their education. The head of Year 7 at the secondary school comes in to meet pupils and French teachers from the same school give regular lessons to Year 6 pupils. Pupils also attend for a taster day during their final year.
30. Parents are warmly welcomed into school and help in a number of ways. They assist on school trips, accompany pupils on residential visits, help on the 'Impact Project', and assist with productions and school sports. The school sends questionnaires to parents at regular intervals and parental views have been acted upon in improving behaviour and deciding homework policy. All parents are members of the Parent Teachers Association, which has recently been reformed. Although small in number, the members are active and the PTA holds many social functions such as Red Nose Day, Bring & Buy Sales, Discos and Christmas Fayres, and raises considerable sums for the benefit of school funds. Their efforts are greatly appreciated by the school.
31. The school has good links with the community. Strong links are held with the local Baptist Church and pupils use the facilities of Shrewsbury Football Club, Shrewsbury Rugby Club and Cricket Club and have joint arrangements with the Belmont Art Centre. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make up and distribute food parcels for local senior citizens at harvest time and pupils are active supporters of local charities. The school has very good links with other schools and colleges. The headteacher meets regularly with other primary schools to discuss items of mutual interest. Regular meetings are also held with the heads of the many secondary schools. Also, the secondary school orchestra and band regularly give concerts at school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher and the governance of the school are very good. The leadership of other key staff, and the management of the school are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides very good leadership.
- The governing body are very effective and have a very good understanding of the school's performance.
- The monitoring and development of teaching are good and this contributes to the very good teaching and achievement.
- Teamwork among the staff is strong and a very positive ethos has been created.
- Financial management is good and the school provides very good value for money.

### **Commentary**

32. The governing body is very effective and extremely well led by a capable chairperson. The governors provide good support and appropriate challenge to senior staff. Governors have a very good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are proud of the school's achievements in mathematics, science, art and sport and are very much aware that standards in English could be higher. Statutory duties are fulfilled.
33. The headteacher provides very good leadership and direction for the school. His shared vision and aspirations are firmly based on providing high quality teaching so that all pupils can achieve their best regardless of ability, background, or gender. Crowmoor is an inclusive school where all pupils are valued. Parents rightly have much confidence in the school.
34. Teamwork among the staff is very good and there is a strong commitment to raising standards and to providing a high quality education. The headteacher and staff have created a very positive and stimulating environment for pupils to learn where expectations of care, learning and behaviour are consistently high. Leaders are very good role models for pupils and other staff. Teachers work in teams to effectively plan and review the curriculum. The leadership provided by the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 co-ordinators is good and so is the leadership of the core subjects. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has a clear vision of her role and is establishing regular monitoring with class teachers of pupils' targets as well as the level of support pupils should receive. She is new to the role and continuing to make sure that pupils achieve well and their needs are met.
35. The management of the school is good. There are effective systems in place to help ensure that the day to day running of the school is smooth. The administrative assistant, at the front of the school, is experienced, friendly and efficient. School self-evaluation is good. The monitoring and development of teaching are effective and this contributes to the very good teaching. The headteacher, senior staff and local education authority consultants have observed teaching and provided constructive feedback. National Curriculum test results and other assessment data are analysed well and strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning are identified. This information is used effectively to guide future improvements in planning and teaching. The monitoring of attendance data, however, is less effective. Performance management procedures are good and are effectively linked to priorities such as raising standards in reading and writing. The school also makes good use of the local educational authority's advisory and consultancy services for evaluation and development.



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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	706,620
Total expenditure	707,080
Expenditure per pupil	2,195

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	1,910
Balance carried forward to the next	1,450

36. Financial planning and management are good and support the school's educational priorities for development. Appropriate use is made of ICT financial systems and grants for specific purposes are effectively used to support teaching and learning. Careful planning and monitoring helps to ensure that the school applies the principles of best value very well. The school provides very good value for money.

### **THE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE CLASS**

Provision in the Speech and Language class is **good**.

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

- The skilled work of the speech and language therapist on a daily basis results in good progress for the pupils against their personal special educational need.
- Pupils' academic achievements are maintained whilst they are in the class.
- The teacher and the therapist establish a very good partnership with parents.
- The recording and analysis of academic attainment is not sufficiently detailed to assess the progress pupils are making.

#### **Commentary**

37. The class currently has eight pupils up to age seven who have severe difficulties with speech and language. The pupils make good progress in overcoming those difficulties through skilled daily speech and language therapy as well as a strong focus on language development in literacy lessons and other class activities, both formal and informal. Pupils' progress in speaking and listening is good. The teamwork between the teacher, the therapist and the teaching assistant establishes a supportive atmosphere in the class which gives the pupils confidence to express themselves and persevere with overcoming their difficulties.
38. Pupils' achievement in literacy is good and in numeracy satisfactory. Levels of attainment are individual to each pupil but when pupils return to their local schools they are generally able to keep up with their peers. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers know the pupils well and are able to focus individual work to meet each pupil's needs. In literacy lessons, teachers make good use of interesting books which successfully encourage good speaking and listening to reinforce the work done by pupils in their therapy. Lesson plans, however, lack detail of learning objectives so pupils are unsure of what they are going to learn and how well they are doing. The class teacher liaises very well with teachers in the mainstream classes where the pupils spend the afternoon. Because of this, pupils are able to integrate very effectively, making new friends and benefiting from the full curriculum with their peers. Whilst records of what pupils do in literacy and numeracy are kept, there is currently no assessment against national criteria which would give a measure of individual progress. As a result, the achievement of each pupil may not always be recognised.
39. A very good partnership with parents has been established. This is fostered by both the class teacher and the speech and language therapist, who maintain a daily diary link book with parents. Their open and helpful approach encourages parents to understand the work of their

child and be able to help them at home. Parents have trust and confidence to share their concerns and ask for advice. The partnership between the teacher and the speech and language therapist is effective in running the class on a day to day basis and in reporting to the termly review meeting which decides future placements to and from the class. Since the last inspection, the class has maintained its effectiveness in supporting individual pupils with their specific speech and language difficulty and preparing them for assimilation into mainstream classes.

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

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

40. The overall provision for children in the foundation stage is good, with particular strengths in the important areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. The children enter the nursery with attainment that is well below average. The teachers and support staff emphasise the development of social, language and mathematical skills as the foundation for all learning. As a result, children achieve well, particularly in these areas of learning. Children enter Year 1 with below average attainment in all the areas of learning, except in personal, social and emotional development where they achieve very well and meet the expectations for their age.
41. Satisfactory improvement has taken place since the last inspection, and the school has recently provided a separate reception class, rather than mixing the children in with Year 1 pupils. The curriculum is satisfactory. However, it lacks opportunities for children to make decisions for themselves, or to initiate activities through imaginative and stimulating play, and this limits their independent learning. Currently, leadership is satisfactory as the provision has successful outcomes for the children. However, there is no overall co-ordinator for the foundation stage and teaching and learning are often biased towards the National Curriculum rather than having a strong emphasis on the Early Learning Goals.

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

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

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

- Children achieve very well so that most meet the goals expected for their age by the end of reception.
- Teachers and classroom assistants ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued; adults and children respect one another and this helps children's learning.
- The present curriculum is too formal, particularly for children in the reception class.

#### **Commentary**

42. Children in the nursery and reception classes understand what is expected of them. They co-operate well with the staff, are thoughtful, and care for one another. For example, in the reception class, one of the children hurt herself and another spontaneously hugged her, to make her feel better. Children learn quickly what is fair, because the quality of teaching is very good. Staff in the nursery class provide clear routines and procedures for taking turns. In the reception class, the staff successfully build on this and have high expectations of behaviour and manage the children very well. In both classes, there is a calm and productive atmosphere that helps children to learn. Teachers and assistants in both classes ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued. All adults provide very good models. These factors result in mutual respect, which is conducive to children's learning. However, the curriculum in the reception class is too formal and children do not have sufficient opportunities to extend their social and personal development through imaginative and creative play experiences.

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

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

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

- There is good teaching, especially for developing children's language skills.

- In both classes, teachers and assistants take care to promote good listening habits.
- Children enter Year 1 with below average standards in reading, writing and speaking; this is good achievement compared to their very low standards on entry to the nursery.
- There are not enough opportunities for children to further extend their speaking skills.

### Commentary

43. Good teaching in both classes promotes the development of communication and language skills. The nursery teacher ensures that children listen carefully, by insisting that they look at her when she is telling a story or when giving instructions. She effectively consolidates children's new vocabulary by providing them with opportunities for hearing it in different contexts. The 'show and tell' sessions help the nursery children to tell others about what they have done. The teacher often encourages the children to use new words, phrases and sentences, when showing others what they have made.
44. The teacher in the reception class uses a variety of strategies effectively to develop speaking and listening skills at the same time as reading and writing. For example, when reading the Bear Book, she very effectively held their attention when re-reading the story, by starting to read words from the end rather than from the beginning. They were delighted in being able to correct her and to remember new sounds and new words. The teacher and the assistant followed this session by providing the children with further opportunities to consolidate these skills. Both adults engage the children in talk, through skilful questioning. The very good relationships that exist help the children to feel confident and motivated to communicate.
45. The quality of teaching and learning is good, and achievement is good. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to develop their imaginative play. This limits their role-play and the opportunities for them to practise using new words and phrases.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and children achieve well.
- Teachers make good use of number rhymes and songs.
- There are insufficient practical opportunities to further extend learning.

### Commentary

46. Children enter the nursery with standards well below average. They are taught well, show good achievement, and enter Year 1 with attainment below average. Children acquire appropriate mathematical language and become reasonably competent with numbers. In the nursery, higher attaining children were observed investigating the number 7. The teacher encouraged them to draw items or to collect objects numbering 7 in total and seized the opportunities well for the children to count different numbers whilst working. In the reception class, children thoroughly enjoyed their number songs, where they were able to count backward from 10, when 'buying their currant buns'. The teacher provided the children with good strategies to look at numbers that are more or less than another. They soon recognised that 6 was more than 4, and by using domino cards, the children soon sorted the numbers into matching sets.
47. The teaching of mathematical development is good overall, but the planned curriculum limits the practical opportunities for children to extend their learning. In the reception class, there are too few opportunities for imaginative play so that children can observe numbers and patterns in the environment and their daily routines.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use the immediate environment well to teach children about the world.
- There are insufficient opportunities for children to learn from first hand experiences.

### Commentary

48. Teaching and achievement are satisfactory. Teachers use the immediate environment well to teach the children to observe changes in seasons and the growth of plants in the Wildlife Garden. In the nursery, the children learn about Poppy Day, and use a computer program to draw poppies. They learn that trees lose their leaves in the autumn and observe the weather on a daily basis to describe the changes from day to day. In the reception class the children visited the local church and learnt about worship and what people do when praying. Teachers seize opportunities to discuss different events in children's lives, such as birthdays and celebrations. Both teachers, for example, used 'Bonfire Night' as a good starting point for extending children's understanding of customs. However, children are often told what to look for and what to think about and this limits the depth of their investigation, and stops them 'discovering things for themselves'. Also, there are too few structured play activities that encourage the children to explore, observe, solve problems, make decisions and encourage their critical thinking.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in both classes have regular opportunities to use outdoor play equipment, which helps to improve their physical skills.
- The learning for reception children is limited, because lessons are too formal.

### Commentary

49. Children achieve, and are taught, satisfactorily in this area of their development. The nursery and reception children use the outdoor equipment regularly, which helps them to improve their physical skills and co-ordination. They use wheeled toys and tricycles, showing appropriate control. In the reception class, children change into their PE kits, often without help, and fold their clothes tidily before lining up. In the hall, they show good balance when using the apparatus. However, they are following the National Curriculum rather than foundation stage activities. This limits the children's creativity and their engagement in the tasks. In both classes, children enjoy being involved in action songs, and participate enthusiastically in these activities. There are other opportunities for children to develop their physical skills, and construction kits and puzzles, pencils, scissors and crayons, are used effectively to help improve their finer control.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve satisfactorily in this area of their development.
- There are too few opportunities for children to be involved in imaginative play.

## Commentary

50. Children achieve satisfactorily in their creative development. In the nursery, children use different resources to make pictures. They enjoy using paint, scissors and glue to express their ideas and represent familiar objects. For example, when gluing their pictures into their Big Books, one child happily sang 'Here we go round the mulberry bush' and another joined in, adding words such as 'This the way we glue our work', successfully engaging his imagination. However, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, and staff do not always provide sufficient opportunities for children to explore, discover and express their creativity. While there is a corner for a 'café', there are too few opportunities for spontaneous creativity or imaginative play.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because they receive good teaching.
- Standards are below average in speaking and listening, reading and writing in Year 2.
- Assessment and target setting in reading and writing are good.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- There is no assessment system for speaking and listening.
- Opportunities for pupils to acquire and apply speaking and listening skills are not consistently planned and provided for.

#### Commentary

51. National Curriculum test results for Year 2 in 2003 were well below the national average in both reading and writing. These results were well below average when compared to similar schools. Test results are low because there is a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. In the National Curriculum tests for Year 6, the school's results were below the national average. These results, however, were above average when compared to similar schools. Standards in the current Year 6 are higher than last year's test results as this is a higher attaining year group. Standards in Year 2 are lower than those reported during the last inspection but the school's intake has changed with a higher proportion of lower attaining pupils entering the school. Standards in Year 6 are similar to those reported in the previous inspection.
52. Throughout the school, most pupils, including those with higher attainment, are achieving well because of the good teaching they receive. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well because they are supported effectively by teaching assistants. Across the school, girls perform better than the boys in reading and writing. The school is aware of this gender difference and is exploring strategies to raise boys' achievement such as providing books that are more appealing to boys and using ICT. For example, pupils in Year 3 use the Internet to find out about the different characters on Mary Rose, the Tudor ship. They word process interesting accounts of the characters and follow the text more closely when the characters 'speak' to them.
53. Standards in speaking and listening are below average in the current Year 2 and broadly average in Year 6. In Years 1 and 2 pupils listen well to their teachers and to others but many are not confident and articulate speakers. In some cases poorly spoken grammar is not corrected or correctly repeated by teachers. Whilst there are some examples of teachers providing good opportunities to develop speaking and listening, these are not consistent across the school. In the main, planned opportunities for pupils to discuss in pairs, small groups or make oral presentations to a group or class are too few. The school has appropriately focused its attention on raising achievement in reading and writing in recent years. However, insufficient emphasis has been placed on speaking and listening. Pupils therefore do not have sufficiently well developed language skills which form a foundation for developing reading and writing.
54. In reading, standards are below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. The teaching of reading is effective and the school has made this a priority for improvement. A commercial reading scheme for Years 1 and 2 is well displayed for easy access and this is used well. Guided reading is good. Pupils are organised into groups of similar ability. The teachers are good role models for reading; they promote new vocabulary and check pupils' understanding through effective questioning.

55. Standards in writing are below average in Year 2 and broadly average in Year 6. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of writing opportunities including factual, poetry, and stories. The quality of writing produced in lessons by this year's and last year's Year 2 pupils is better than the national test results indicate. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 write poetry, letters, biography and suspense. The teaching of handwriting is good and by the end of Year 2 most pupils produce well-formed letters, which are correctly joined. Some older pupils use ICT well to draft and edit their writing and to enhance the presentation of their work.
56. The quality of teaching is good overall with examples of very good teaching. Lessons are well planned and structured and pupils are clear about what they are to learn. Teachers' explanations are clear and informative and pupils gain new knowledge. Work is well matched to pupils' different attainments so that they are suitably challenged. Teaching assistants are well trained and effectively deployed. They make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those with special educational needs. The ends of lessons are used well for pupils to review and share their learning. Targets and learning objectives are revisited so pupils can assess their own learning and teaching points are reinforced. In the best lessons, teaching is lively and enthusiastic. Expectations and levels of challenge are high. The lesson proceeds at a brisk pace. The assessment of reading and writing is good and the target setting for writing is very good. Writing targets are very well matched to pupils' different attainments. However, the school has no similar systems for assessment and target setting in speaking and listening so pupils and teachers are unaware of what is done well and what could be improved.
57. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator left the school last July but the key stage co-ordinators are effectively overseeing English. The headteacher, co-ordinators and local educational authority consultants have monitored lessons and this has led to improvements in the quality of teaching. National Curriculum tests results and other assessment data are effectively analysed and strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning are identified. This information is used well to guide future planning and teaching. Effective monitoring and evaluation procedures ensure that the school has a clear understanding of its performance. Resources are good. They are well organised and accessible, although the supply of reference books is not as plentiful as it could be.

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

58. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory overall. The school is not sufficiently planning the development of language skills across the curriculum and so opportunities to develop speaking skills through subjects such as science and PE are often missed. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 apply their writing skills well by producing clear written accounts in science and history. Opportunities for personal study and research in subjects such as history and geography are insufficient.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

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

- Standards in mathematics are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. The pupils achieve well in mathematics in each key stage; over time, this amounts to very good achievement.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, and often very good.
- Assessment is thorough and supports precise target setting; pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve.
- The pupils thoroughly enjoy mathematics and behave very well in lessons.
- The two co-ordinators are enthusiastic and manage the subject well; they are pivotal in raising standards.



- There is an insufficiently strong focus on the development of mathematical language in some classes.
- The pupils use mathematics well in other subjects, but information and communication technology is under-used to support learning in the subject.

## Commentary

59. There has been very good improvement in the provision of mathematics since the previous inspection. Standards have risen and pupils achieve very well over their time in school. Children begin nursery with mathematical development that is well below average. They achieve well and enter Year 1 with attainment below the national average. In Years 1 and 2, pupils also achieve well and, although their test results in 2003 were still below average, they have made their knowledge and understanding much more secure. National tests in 2003 show that the pupils in Year 6 attained results that were above the national average. This is a very good achievement. Inspection findings show that the current Year 2 pupils have average standards in their class work and understanding, and that the current Year 6 are likely to, once again, attain results that are above average for their age.
60. Evidence from an analysis of pupils' work and from lesson observations indicates that pupils in Year 2 recognise number patterns in a hundred square. They show competence in applying the four rules in problem solving and use these skills when working with measurements. The pupils recognise three-dimensional shapes such as a rhombus and a parallelogram. As they move through the school, the teachers build on pupils' knowledge and understanding well, so that, by Year 6, the pupils show clear understanding of percentages and fractions, including decimals, which they apply to problem solving. During the inspection, the pupils were observed using protractors with accuracy when drawing angles. They confidently classified quadrilaterals and sorted them into sets correctly.
61. The quality of teaching and learning is good and examples of very good teaching were also observed. Teachers make learning fun and the pupils respond accordingly. The pupils in Year 5, for example, achieve very well through the high quality of their teacher's input, the lively presentation and the way humour is used to good effect. Pupils delighted in their successes and responded to the challenges set by the teacher. In Year 2, the teacher set a very good tone for learning, starting purposefully, with a quick fire session on counting. This immediately alerted the pupils to the task in hand. The different activities were challenging, and well matched to the pupils' needs. Throughout the school, teachers' thorough planning, based on assessment information, is an additional factor in pupils' good achievements. Teachers also make sure that all pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their mathematical targets.
62. While the pupils in some classes develop accurate mathematical language, as observed in Years 2, 5 and 6, opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to use mathematical language effectively, for example to explain their strategies or to provide reasons for their answers. In a very good lesson in Year 5, the teacher used appropriate mathematical terms, which the pupils also applied. This led to one pupil to express his conclusion that 'an improper fraction is where the numerator is bigger than the denominator'. Similarly in Year 6, the pupils soon began to use mathematical terms such as 'adjacent' when describing properties and angles of shapes.
63. The subject co-ordinators' enthusiasm ensures that all teachers are confident in their teaching and that the pupils enjoy their work. The scheme of work provides clear guidance for teachers and they use it well so that work is effectively matched to the pupils' needs and abilities. The co-ordinators have clear and very effective procedures for assessing pupils' achievements and progress. Results of the national tests are analysed and findings used to address identified weaknesses. In addition, the two co-ordinators also analyse achievements by gender and ability and use the information to provide learning programmes that meet the pupils' differing needs and interests.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to apply mathematical skills in other subjects. This is seen in science, where pupils revise by analysing and interpreting tables and graphs, and in geography when the pupils used spreadsheets and pie charts to record investigations on water. As yet, computers are under-used to support learning in some lessons. However, the use of interactive whiteboards in Year 5 and 6 provides very good support in the subject.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well over time.
- The attainment of pupils is below average when they enter Year 1 and rises to be above average by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The curriculum is planned well with a good emphasis on pupils using experiments and investigations.
- Booster classes for pupils in Year 6 help to raise standards.
- Assessment does not show how well individual pupils achieve or what they should do to improve.

### Commentary

65. Teachers' assessments for 2003 show that the pupils in Year 2 reached average standards. The 2003 national tests show that the Year 6 pupils reached standards above the national average; this performance is well above the average for schools with similar proportions of pupils with free school meals. Since the last inspection, standards have risen steadily and the current inspection confirms that the pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are expected to do at least as well in the 2004 assessments. This good improvement in the subject, and the very good achievement of the pupils, is due to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum, and the provision of booster classes in Year 6.
66. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. There are strengths in Years 5 and 6, where the quality of teaching and learning is predominantly very good. In most lessons, teachers set challenging activities so that pupils are interested in their investigations and work hard to understand new concepts. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 4, the teacher asked pupils to feel their throats as they spoke. This led the pupils to realise that a vibration was linked to sound and they worked with interest to identify how vibration was linked to the production of sound in a drum, guitar, ruler and loudspeaker. In the best lessons, teachers introduce new vocabulary very well and give pupils opportunities to practise using these new words. This leads to the pupils being challenged to describe their observations and deductions with increased clarity and accuracy. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, the teacher asked pupils questions about how sound travels from a source to an ear. The pupils were asked to discuss their answers with each other before replying, and this rehearsal meant that succinct explanations were given, such as, 'sound waves travel through the air to the ear and are then passed to the brain'. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 use a 'planning board' for the pupils to record their observations and conclusions. The content of these prompts for writing is well thought out and pupils follow a logical sequence in their investigations that leads them to relevant conclusions, as well as learning to use scientific method.
67. At the start of each new topic, teachers find out how much pupils know already and use this information to plan the following lessons so that they build on what the class already knows. At the end of each topic, pupils identify what they have learnt, and teachers use this information

well to make sure pupils have moved on in their learning and understanding. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, the teacher had identified that, although pupils had finished a series of lessons on light, a number of them were still unsure of the difference between a 'light source' and 'shiny'. Rather than start a new topic, the teacher added an extra lesson that helped all the pupils to be much more secure in their knowledge. However, records of how well pupils do, or the National Curriculum Levels they attain, are not kept and teachers are unable to track the progress of each individual as a result. This also means that pupils of all abilities do the same activity in each lesson, at the same level of difficulty as everyone else.

68. Teachers plan the science curriculum together, and the subject co-ordinator manages this process well so that pupils build continuously on their learning and avoid undue repetition of topics as they move through the school. The work in pupils' books shows that the booster classes for Year 6 pupils are good quality revision lessons, with a strong emphasis on the interpretation of graphs and result tables. There is also a clear emphasis on linking cause and effect, such as, 'a toy car will go faster, if it is pushed harder'.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning in the computer suite are good and, as a result, pupils achieve well.
- Pupils show very good attitudes to learning and work well independently or collaboratively when required.
- ICT is not used sufficiently well to support teaching and learning in all subjects.

### **Commentary**

69. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average and most pupils, including those with higher attainment or special educational needs, are achieving well. Standards are similar to those reported during the last inspection. Pupils in Year 1 create sentences using a basic word processing program. They import simple illustrations to their text. Most can print their work but not save it. In Year 3, pupils use hyperlinks to find information on the Internet about life on the Mary Rose in Tudor times. Pupils in Year 6 use graphic modelling to design an advertisement for a space age car. They use a 'drawing tool box' and some use a three-dimensional style.
70. The teaching of ICT seen in the computer suite was good and pupils made good gains in acquiring and applying ICT skills. Teachers' instructions and demonstrations were informative and clear. Pupils were attentive, followed these well and teachers used questioning effectively to ensure that the pupils understood before moving them on. Good opportunities were given for pupils to practise skills and techniques. Pupils worked well at computers either individually or collaboratively in pairs. They showed considerable enthusiasm and interest. Teachers move efficiently between individuals and pairs providing effective direction and constructive feedback. Teachers with computer-linked whiteboards in their classrooms used them well to present their lessons and illustrate teaching points. Most computers in classrooms, however, were underused during the inspection.
71. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory with good features. The co-ordinator is exploring ways of developing boys' reading and writing skills through using electronic text and word processing. The planning of the curriculum is based on nationally recommended schemes and meets all requirements.

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

72. There some good examples of pupils using ICT to support their learning, particularly in English and in history. However, in the main, ICT is not used sufficiently across the school to support teaching and learning in a range of subjects.

## HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in depth and is reported in full below. It was not possible to fully inspect **history** or **geography** and no lessons were observed in either subject. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work in both subjects indicates that standards are in line with expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 and the curriculum is covered appropriately over time.

### Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well over their time in school, with good achievement taking place in Years 1 and 2, and also in Years 3 to 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils enjoy the subject.
- Pupils attain average standards in learning about religions.
- Standards are above average overall, because pupils reach a good understanding of the effects of religion on people's lives by the end of Year 6.

### Commentary

73. Evidence from the lessons and assemblies seen, from talking to pupils and analysis of books indicates that standards in learning about the nature of different religions are average. However, pupils' understanding of the effects of religion on people's lives is better than this, and above average. This area of their religious education is particularly well developed, because teachers provide the pupils with good opportunities for reflection and discussion.
74. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In a very good lesson observed in Year 2, the teacher enabled her pupils to consider other religions, such as Sikhism. She linked this to previous learning with the story of Rama and Sita and the Christian festival of Christmas. In this lesson, the teacher helped the pupils to understand what is of value and concern to others, including those with a faith commitment. The pupils suggested some thought-provoking observations about good and evil and what we can learn from other people's faiths.
75. In the mixed Year 3 and 4 class, pupils have a well-developed knowledge about books that people consider holy. They know that the Koran is very special to Muslims and that all religions have special books. Through careful demonstrations and commentary that the teacher gave, the pupils were enabled to understand why the Muslims treat the Koran with respect, veneration and care. Careful questioning increased pupils' understanding of how faith and belief change lives, as exemplified in the Koran and the Bible. This successfully increased pupils' awareness of the similarities between different religions. Assemblies and daily collective worship help the pupils to make links between their personal experiences and those of others. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, work hard and behave very well in lessons.
76. As the pupils go through the school, they effectively increase their understanding of how faith and belief change lives. In a discussion with pupils in Year 6, it was obvious that they have been building on their previous learning and understanding of different religions. They discussed key features of Judaism and Christianity, for example, and talked about how the subject helps them to understand different religions. The pupils showed deep respect for different religious practices and beliefs. They also understand that people have different codes by which they live their lives. The pupils described the characteristics of a good person as caring, honest,

forgiving, loving, faithful, generous, more willing to give than to receive, for example. It is clear that the pupils know and understand that religion can guide their lives and those of other people.

77. Development in the subject is led well. Since the previous inspection, the school has developed a new syllabus, with greater emphasis on understanding and learning from religion through reflection about the deeper meaning of life; valid comparisons, therefore, between the two inspections cannot be made.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Physical education was inspected in depth and is reported below. Art and design, design and technology and music were sampled, as not enough lessons and other evidence were seen to inspect the subjects in full.

78. In **art and design**, one class lesson was observed, and the art specialist was seen taking small groups of pupils during lesson times and leading clubs during lunch time. Standards in art were judged by an analysis of the work of current pupils displayed in classes and corridors throughout the school. In addition, discussions were held with pupils, the art specialist and the artist in residence. Good improvement has taken place in the subject since the last inspection, and standards have been at least maintained. The standard of pupils' work is well above average in all years, and some of the older pupils produce paintings, sketches, collage and fabric work of exceptional quality. In all the art work displayed, it is very evident that pupils have been taught how to observe with accuracy and have learnt how to use specific artistic skills and techniques. Pupils state that the art specialist employed by the school is the reason behind their success, and they are delighted that they learn how to do things well and improve the quality of their art work. In addition, the school's artist in residence works with pupils on long-term projects to enhance the outdoor environment. One project has been to improve a play area. This now has mosaics, murals, a 'dream catcher' parasol and a stone circle that transform the area into an attractive haven. Pupils remark how this 'makes them feel good', parents praise this work, and the impact of the involvement with the artist in residence is clearly having a positive effect on the self-esteem and pride of the pupils.

### Example of outstanding practice

**The school's innovative provision for pupils to be taught in small groups by an art specialist is leading to exceptionally high standards and raising the self-esteem of the pupils**

The art specialist takes small groups on a rota, while the rest of the class have art or design and technology, so that all pupils experience individual tuition in artistic skills and techniques. Pupils state, 'she really helps us, we learn how to do things, my art work has really improved' and are delighted that, in these sessions, they complete work to a high standard and feel pride in their success. Class teachers are influenced by the high quality of the specialist's work and make sure that lessons also provide opportunities for pupils to use and further develop their skills. As a result, standards for some pupils are exceptionally high. For example, one pupil's study of the gate to the school's wildlife area overlays the detail of the middle distance with an impression of flowers and grasses in the foreground so that the viewer interacts with the picture at a level that includes 'communication'. Another pupil has used chalks to portray daffodil petals with delicacy and texture, framing the whole as a composition that attracts the eye and leads the viewer to explore every detail. Both of these works compare with the paintings produced by much older pupils in Year 11.

79. One lesson of **design and technology** was observed. The standards of work seen in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average with some outstanding textile work evident in Year 6. Most pupils are achieving well in the development of designing, making and evaluating skills. Standards are similar to those reported during the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2, for example, design and make Joseph's Coat. They make attractive designs using paper patterns and then measure and cut a small coat of Hessian. This is stitched and decorated with felt shapes. In a very good Year 5 lesson, pupils were exploring different musical instruments. The teacher provided a very good selection and used ICT very well to show illustrations of instruments from other cultures and to play sounds. Pupils gained a very good knowledge of different

instruments, their sounds and structure before designing and making instruments of their own. Year 6 pupils in a sewing club produce high quality work including quilts and bags because they receive very good instruction. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has updated her expertise and skills through appropriate training.

80. Two **music** lessons were observed, taken by the specialist teacher, but there was insufficient evidence to make firm judgements on standards, achievement, or the quality of teaching and learning. In the lessons observed, the rhythmical awareness of the Year 2 pupils was above average, and the Year 6 pupils showed average skills of composition. The Year 2 pupils were able to hold a simple rhythm pattern against a steady pulse and played their untuned percussion instruments with accuracy and enjoyment to the rhythm of names. The pupils in Year 6 followed the cues from basic notation and listened carefully to improve their compositions. Since the last inspection the school has made good improvement in music by employing a specialist teacher, who now works with every class. This teacher is enthusiastic, knowledgeable and motivates the pupils well so that they enjoy their lessons and work hard to improve what they do. The sustained quality of this work is likely to have a positive impact on standards throughout the school.

### **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching and learning are good overall, with examples of very good teaching.
- The school has achieved an 'Active Mark' award for successfully promoting physical activity and sport.
- Very good extra-curricular activities and participation in sports tournaments enhance the PE curriculum.
- In some lessons there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to evaluate performance.

### **Commentary**

81. During the inspection, no lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2, so judgements cannot be made about standards and the quality of teaching in these years. By Year 6, standards are above average and pupils achieve well because they receive good teaching and are very enthusiastic about PE and games.
82. Pupils in Year 4 display good football skills. They dribble the ball with close control and pass the ball accurately. In a very good Year 4 gymnastics lesson, pupils developed and refined sequences on the floor and on apparatus which included rolls, turns and jumps. Higher attaining pupils performed cartwheels and hand springs with co-ordination and very good control. Pupils evaluated other's performance constructively and suggested improvements. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate precision and control in gymnastics. Higher attaining pupils improve their performance by adapting and honing skills and techniques.
83. The quality of teaching is good overall with examples of very good teaching. Lessons are well planned and structured. Teachers' instructions are clear and informative and pupils respond to these very well. Pupils are used well to demonstrate their skills and movements to others. Good opportunities are also provided for pupils to practise movement and skills. They apply physical and creative effort and work collaboratively when required. In some lessons, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to review their own and others' work. Opportunities are missed not only for pupils to improve their performance but also to develop speaking and listening skills.

84. The subject is effectively led and managed and this has resulted in good improvement since the last inspection. Physical activity and sports are promoted very well and the school has achieved 'Active Mark' status for its work in this area. Crowmoor participates well in local sports tournaments and has achieved considerable success. In summer 2003, the school won a local basketball tournament in June and both the mixed team and girls teams in Year 5 reached the district Kwick cricket finals. In football, Crowmoor enter both boys and girls teams in local competitions. Sporting success is one of the school's many strengths and its achievements feature prominently in the attractive displays.

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

85. PSHE is discussed in lessons such as science and religious education, as well as in some lessons set aside for the subject. However, too few lessons and examples were seen to inspect the subject in depth. The outcomes of the school's approach are clearly seen in the very good attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development of the pupils. In discussion, pupils speak appreciatively of being able to explore their ideas and values in discussion and circle time. In the past, the school has focused on specific topics such as healthy living and sport, smoking, and healthy eating. Older pupils have the opportunity to have sex education as well as to become aware of the dangers of drugs and alcohol abuse. The school council is effective and enables the pupils to participate in the life of their school, make decisions and have these implemented. This is seen, for example, in the very good improvements of the girls' cloakrooms, which were the direct result of pupils' requests via the council. This is very good preparation for future participation in the democratic processes of this country. However, the school has not yet established secure whole school plans to ensure that the advice given in the National Curriculum guidelines for PSHE and Citizenship is implemented and taught in a developmental way as pupils move through the school.

## **PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

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

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