

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DUNNINGTON C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Dunnington, near Alcester

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125762

Headteacher: Mr R T Lee

Lead inspector: Ian Knight

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2004

Inspection number: 256005

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	104
School address:	Dunnington Alcester Warwickshire
Postcode:	B49 5NT
Telephone number:	01789 772200
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Gascoigne
Date of previous inspection:	15 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small, voluntary-aided, Church of England primary school, serving the village of Dunnington in Warwickshire and the immediate area. The surrounding area is generally one of above average socio-economic standing. Almost all pupils are of White European backgrounds. The few who are not are either Chinese or of mixed heritage. Few pupils have special educational needs. The needs identified include specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional or behavioural difficulties, speech and communication difficulties and autism. No pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is low. Children join Reception with the full range of attainment, but overall, it is above that found nationally.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23031	Ian Knight	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics; information and communication technology.
1311	Barry Wood	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
3751	Trudy Cotton	<i>Team inspector</i>	The Foundation Stage; science; art and design; design and technology; music; physical education.
22657	Mark Madeley	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special educational needs; English; geography; history.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The school's provision is satisfactory**, and it offers satisfactory value for money. In Reception, children achieve well because of good teaching; elsewhere in the school, satisfactory teaching leads to satisfactory achievement. The school has a very positive ethos; pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave very well. The school is led and managed soundly.

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

- Children achieve well in Reception.
- Pupils are articulate, confident speakers, and they read with very good understanding and great pleasure.
- Pupils are very eager to come to school and are keen to learn; the school's very positive ethos encourages them to behave very well.
- Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is much improved and is now good.
- Assessment data is not used effectively enough to set rigorous individual targets and set work closely matched to the needs of all pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write in all subjects of the curriculum.
- Co-ordinators are not in a position to carry out their monitoring role effectively enough or to act on the outcomes of such evaluation to raise achievement.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Standards have risen in English, ICT and history and have been maintained in other subjects. The quality of teaching has been broadly maintained. Progress on the key issue regarding ICT has been very good, and the role of the governing body has improved significantly. The school established its priorities, so that schemes of work have been completed but limited progress has been made on the issues concerning assessment and the role of the co-ordinator. There is evidence that a wider range of teaching methods is now employed. The buildings are substantially better: cramped, temporary classrooms have been replaced by airy, permanent ones and the hall is complete.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A\* - very good; 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 in the school is satisfactory.** A grade of A\* in the table above indicates that the school was in the top five per cent nationally. Children in Reception exceed the expected goals and achieve well. Standards remain above national expectations in Years 1 and 2 in the core subjects of English and mathematics, as well as in ICT, history and geography. This represents satisfactory achievement, based on their previous attainment and the challenge they meet in class. In Year 6, standards are above expectations in the same subjects. These standards are lower than in the table above; the school uses 'booster' classes for revision and these had not started at the time of inspection. This again represents satisfactory achievement. Throughout the school, standards in

speaking and listening and also in reading are high, but writing is weaker because pupils have too few opportunities to write other than in English lessons.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are progressing very well.** Attendance is very good. Throughout the school, pupils show very good attitudes and behave very well.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching is satisfactory.** Strengths in teaching include the very positive relationships in class that allow lessons to proceed without interruption. Teachers use methods that engage and encourage pupils well and, as a result, pupils work hard and productively. However, in many lessons, all pupils have the same work and this restricts how much some pupils can learn. Although pupils have targets for improvement, these are vague, and the marking of completed work does not always help pupils to improve.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, and good in Reception. It provides well for pupils with special educational needs. Good procedures are in place to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety in a positive atmosphere. The school maintains good links with the community and other schools. Links with parents are satisfactory.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.** The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership and is soundly supported by other staff. His pastoral vision, shared by all staff, is particularly strong. The school is managed satisfactorily, but the development of self-evaluation is at an early stage. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and supports senior managers effectively, but it does not have a big enough role in challenging the school. All statutory requirements are met.

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

The vast majority of parents think the school does a good job and are pleased their children attend it. Some feel that the flow of information from the school could be improved, and a few feel that children are not treated fairly or that work is not challenging enough. Inspection findings indicate that information for parents is satisfactory. Whilst planning does not always challenge everyone in the class, inspectors saw no evidence of unfairness. Pupils are very happy with the school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure that assessment information is used in curricular and lesson planning, so that all pupils in each class are challenged at the appropriate level, thus improving achievement.
- Plan more opportunities for writing in subjects other than English.
- Enable co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate the school's work in order to ensure that levels of challenge are appropriate, and so that good practice can be shared and weaker practice reduced.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement in the school is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6 and good in Reception. Standards in English and mathematics are above national expectations throughout the school.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in Reception achieve well overall and very well in communication, language and literacy.
- The school attained high standards in the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6.
- Progress in writing is hindered because pupils do not write enough in subjects other than English.
- Pupils achieve well in ICT.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are supported well.

#### Commentary

1. In the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2003, the school achieved standards that were well above the national average in reading, and average in writing and mathematics. If the comparison is restricted only to schools with a similar intake in terms of the take up of free school meals, then standards in reading were above average, but standards in mathematics were below average and writing standards well below average. In writing, few pupils attained the higher Level 3 in the test. There has been no secure trend to recent results, but the groups of pupils involved are small and some fluctuations are to be expected year on year. There are no tests in the other core subject of science, but teachers' own assessments indicate that standards are generally in line with those from other schools nationally, but less good when compared to those of similar schools.

2. In the table below, one 'point' represents approximately the progress expected in a term. The expected Level 2 is represented by 15 points and the higher Level 3 is represented by 21 points.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.1 (16.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.5 (13.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.8 (15.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. In the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2003, standards were rather better. In each of English, mathematics and science, standards were well above the national average. If the school is only compared to those with similar results in the Year 2 tests four years previously, then standards are still well above average in mathematics and science, but very high, that is, in the top five per cent of schools nationally, for English. A glance at the distribution of levels makes the reason clear: high numbers of pupils gained the higher Level 5 in tests. Again, group sizes are too small for trends to be meaningful. However, over the last few years, girls have consistently done better than boys. This is a national trend, but in this school, the gap is even greater.

4. In the table below, the expected Level 4 is represented by 27 points; the higher Level 5 is represented by 33 points.

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

<b>Standards in:</b>	<b>School results</b>	<b>National results</b>
English	29.4 (28.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.6 (28.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.6 (29.0)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

5. However, test results cannot tell the whole story. They relate to only two year groups and a few subjects in tests taken almost a year ago. In particular, they give little information on *achievement*, that is, are these pupils doing as well as they should? Inspection evidence can fill some of these gaps.

6. Children enter the Reception class with attainment above that which would normally be expected for their age. Good, well-planned teaching, especially in the area of early speaking, listening, reading and writing skills, allows them to make good progress and by the time they end Reception they exceed the expected goals in all areas, being well above expectations overall in communication, language and literacy. The progress they make, particularly in the basic skills, coupled with the levels of challenge that they meet in class, means that these children have a flying start and achieve well.

7. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and by the end of Year 2, observed standards are above those expected nationally in English, mathematics, ICT, history and geography. In English, speaking, listening and reading standards are higher than those in writing. Standards are in line with expectations in science and music. In science, pupils have too few opportunities to record their findings in meaningful ways because too many worksheets are used. This depresses pupils' attainment in the area of scientific investigation and practical science. In mathematics, workbooks are used that do not require extensive writing and much of the recording in other subjects is on worksheets. All this depresses writing standards and is a factor in the poor showing of writing in the tests last year compared with reading. The lack of challenge in the planned tasks that involve writing in other subjects means that pupils have started in Year 1 with standards above expectations and finished Year 2 in a similar position, representing satisfactory achievement.

8. Further satisfactory teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 result in observed standards being above expectations in writing, mathematics, ICT and history and well above expectations in speaking, listening and reading. Standards in science are again in line with expectations. An analysis of completed work shows that in most lessons, including science and mathematics, tasks are not varied enough for all in the class to be challenged at exactly the right level in every lesson. Also, marking does not always indicate to pupils how to improve or whether their work reflects their potential, and this combination of factors means that achievement is currently satisfactory. These reported standards appear to be lower than those achieved last year in tests. However, the school uses nationally recommended 'booster' classes in the period immediately before the tests, and these had not started at the time of the inspection.

9. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs receive good quality support and, as a result, are enabled to achieve well, compared with their previous attainment. The number of such pupils varies considerably from year to year and this has an effect on overall trends in standards. The school has a register of pupils considered to be gifted or talented, but at the moment this concentrates mainly on those particularly able academically and does not include gifted artists, actors or athletes as yet. Although there is provision through the extra-curricular programme, for example, the 'Children's University', gifted or talented pupils are not routinely identified in teachers' planning and do not usually have more challenging work. Consequently, although they attain well, their achievement is satisfactory.

10. Standards in ICT are much improved over the last inspection, when they were a key issue for action. The school took very good and thoughtful action to address this issue, with the result that standards are now better than would be expected throughout the school.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils' good personal development is supported effectively by the school's good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils' attendance is very good and they are punctual to school and to lessons.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Reception develop very good attitudes and behaviour.
- Attitudes and behaviour in the classroom and around the school are very good and give pupils an enthusiasm for learning.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and totally trust the headteacher and staff.
- Pupils build very good relationships with each other, working and playing together with confidence.
- The school's good spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is effective in shaping pupils' personal development.
- Pupils want to attend school consistently and on time.
- The provision for pupils' multicultural education does not give pupils a sufficient appreciation of the cultural diversity of modern Britain.

### Commentary

11. Since the last inspection, attendance at the school has consistently been well above the national average. In the present year, one in ten pupils has exemplary attendance, but one pupil in twenty has poor attendance. Pupils' overall attendance in most classes is very high, but the attendance in the Year 5 and 6 class is only average because of illness. Unauthorised absence is minimal and holidays taken during the school terms are well controlled. In spite of some parents having to make significant daily journeys to the school, punctuality is good at the start of the school day.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.9	School data	0.1
National data	5.2	National data	0.2

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

12. Children in the Reception class respond very well to the good teaching and quickly show independence and enjoyment. They understand the classroom routines and want to listen to their teacher. They are enthusiastic to have a go at the many activities; they quickly gain confidence and skills, and are always determined to do their best. Children develop very good attitudes and behaviour, so that they make good progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development.

13. The school's aims are communicated well to all pupils, and they have a very good understanding of the headteacher's and staff's expectations. From their flying start in the Reception class, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are maintained at a very high level. Most pupils show very good attitudes and behaviour and there are only a few incidents of immature classroom behaviour, usually associated with a few pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class. Pupils show consistent progress in their levels of confidence, enthusiasm and concentration and, by the age of eleven, most are self-disciplined and mature beyond their years. They realise that hard work will bring them success, and they look forward to the challenge of their new secondary school. Pupils with special educational needs or challenging behaviour disorders are few in number, but have no effect on the orderly learning in classrooms; they are indistinguishable in attitudes and behaviour from other pupils. The school has not needed to exclude any pupils recently.

14. Around the school, pupils are calm, behave very well and are polite to adults. They relax and play safely together without fear of bullying or harassment. They value each other's differences and contributions, both in the classroom and in the many clubs and activities. Pupils are given meaningful responsibilities and they show obvious respect for their environment, of which they are justifiably proud. In the school's daily assemblies, pupils show their enthusiasm by singing tunefully and engaging with the teacher in a sensitive exploration of issues.

15. Pupils' personal development is good and the school has strengthened many aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Provision for spiritual education is good, whilst that for moral and social education is very good. Pupils' cultural education is overall satisfactory. All components strengthen pupils' sense of pride and fulfilment in their school life, although teachers do not systematically plan opportunities in all subjects. The school develops pupils' sense of belonging to the 'Dunnington family', their self-esteem, their curiosity and questioning skills particularly well. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and pupils learn about, and have respect for, the celebrations and beliefs of other faiths. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and the boundaries for good and bad behaviour. From the Reception class onwards, they are challenged by their teachers to think about issues such as bullying and friendship, or faith and hope. Pupils develop very good relationships with adults and show high levels of trust and respect for their teachers and other adults. They want to discuss issues with each other and they appreciate each other's contributions. Pupils willingly accept meaningful responsibilities to support adults; older pupils are enthusiastic to help younger pupils or pupils new to the school. The school is energetic in the local community and pupils have pride in their own cultural roots and traditions as well as an appreciation of art, sport, music and theatre. There are few minority ethnic groups represented in the school, and the school finds it difficult to give pupils effective practical experiences of a wide range of other cultures and the cultural diversity of modern Britain.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching is good in Reception, founded on a good curriculum. In the rest of the school, teaching, learning and the curriculum are satisfactory. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school provides well for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Links with the community and other schools are good, and links with parents are satisfactory.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** in Reception and **satisfactory** elsewhere in the school.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in Reception gives children a flying start so that they achieve well, especially in communication, language and literacy.
- Relationships in the classrooms are very positive; pupils want to do well.
- Teachers use a variety of methods to encourage and engage young minds.
- Assessment data and marking are not used well enough to set tasks that consistently challenge all pupils in the class.
- Time is not always used to its best advantage in classes with two age groups.
- Writing is not taught enough in subjects other than English, hindering pupils' learning.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 23 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3	11	9	0	0	0

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

16. Teaching and learning in Reception are good. As a result, children make very good progress, especially in the essential skills of early reading, writing, speaking and listening. This comes about because of well-planned lessons, based on a very good understanding by staff of the curriculum for this age group and the needs of such young learners. Expectations are very high, challenging children to do their very best, based on the outcomes of good assessment procedures. As a result, children work hard and productively. Behaviour management is discreet but very effective, successfully setting in place the 'Dunnington Family', valued by pupils and parents alike.

17. The 'Dunnington Family' is also evident throughout the school. The single most striking feature encountered on entering any classroom is the quality of relationships. Adults and pupils have high levels of respect for one another, and this enables the very good behaviour management to be effectively invisible. As a result, pupils, especially in Years 3 to 6, are highly motivated self-starters in lessons. They work hard and enjoy working co-operatively in groups.

18. At the last inspection, teachers did not use a wide variety of methods in the classroom. This was partly because the classrooms were too small to envisage activities that would need more freedom of movement. This issue has been addressed through the building of new classrooms, and teachers are released from such shackles. A number of lessons inevitably follow a similar pattern, for example, the daily literacy and numeracy lessons. However, other learning is carried out using research from the library or Internet, and producing collaborative works. For example, during a history project on the Second World War, junior pupils were able to speak to local people who had lived through that period, and they made their own short films on the importance of carrying gas masks and other wartime messages. This film project brought together their skills of writing, acting and ICT, as they used digital video cameras to record their work. Whilst the acting in the resultant films is immature, the enjoyment and application of those taking part is very clear.

19. All teachers know all pupils very well and profess to interact with each as an individual. However, this ideal is carried out imperfectly in lessons. Assessment data is not used routinely to set different tasks for different pupils. In most classes, all pupils from one year group attempt one task, whilst all pupils from the other attempt a different one. There is extension work available, but this does not always truly extend the work and offer further challenge. In one mathematics lesson, for example, pupils in the younger age group were able, in discussion, to understand and carry out the task given to the older age group. The outcome is that not all pupils are always challenged at exactly the right level for them in lessons, and this is a factor in achievement being satisfactory, rather than good. In some subjects, for example, English, it is sensible to give the same task to all with an expectation that pupils will respond at their own level. However, in the analysis of completed work, there was little evidence of marking being used to make it clear what quality of response might be appropriate for different pupils, or of targets being set to remind pupils of those expectations. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Work is set with two objects in mind. Firstly, pupils need to be part of the class and do similar work to classmates. Secondly, tasks should be suited to helping them reach their individual targets. Teachers generally do both well, with the significant and skilled help of the learning support assistants.

20. When the tasks set to each year group in a class do differ, the organisation in class does not always allow all to make the best use of the time available. For example, in one lesson, the task for one group was explained, followed by that for the other, but both had to wait for both explanations to be over before actually starting. In other lessons, time was lost in a similar way because the organisation of the lesson was not sharp enough. As a result, worthwhile activities did not lead to good achievement because pupils were unable to work at them consistently enough.

21. The analysis of work and observations in lessons show that pupils are not expected to write enough in different subjects across the curriculum, and this affects their achievement. In mathematics, some books contained many pages of correct answers with no supporting work or notes about methods. In science, too much work is based around worksheets, with only a few

words to be completed by the pupil. In history and geography, also, teachers make too much use of worksheets.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a sound curriculum for its pupils. Provision for enrichment through visits and visitors is satisfactory. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Since the last inspection considerable improvements to the provision for ICT, and in the quality of accommodation, have added to the quality of learning.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Work is not always planned at different levels.
- The curriculum is well balanced and exciting in Reception.
- The preparation for the next stage in pupils' education is good.
- The lack of ready access to outdoor experiences can restrict the free flow of learning in Reception.

## **Commentary**

22. The school provides a balanced, worthwhile curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. Lessons are made as interesting as possible, with good opportunities for pupils to talk about their work, to use computers and to collaborate and tackle problems. Teachers use an adequate range of resources to stimulate pupils and gain their enthusiasm. Lively pockets of creative work, linking learning in art, history and filmmaking, are a particular success. However, the good knowledge and understanding evident in class discussions is not always apparent in the quality of pupils' written work. This is particularly so in science and non-core subjects, such as geography. Improved provision and expertise in ICT since the last inspection have helped to boost attainment in the subject.

23. Sound use is made of visits out, and of visitors to school, such as a 'Victorian Day', to generate interest in different topics. The school provides sound support for learning outside the school day, including residential visits to the Isle of Wight and links with the 'Children's University'. Provision for sport and other activities is good and includes inter-school athletics, football, netball, and a well-attended choir. Within the main curriculum, very good provision for swimming embraces all years from the Reception class onwards.

24. All groups are included in the life and work of the school. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Their needs are assessed accurately. Good individual education plans (IEPs) are written, in conjunction with class teachers, parents, pupils and outside agencies. Teachers ensure that these pupils have access to the full curriculum through tasks that are best suited to their abilities. However, in a number of subjects, including science and mathematics, work is not planned clearly enough to meet the needs of the different age and ability groups in each class, and this can set a ceiling to learning and achievement.

25. Provision in Reception is a strength of the school. An exciting range of experiences ensures that children have a head start with their learning. However, the outdoor environment is not easily accessible, and this can check the free flow of learning between indoor and outdoor activities and limit the amount of outside learning that can take place.

26. In personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils discuss and reflect on important issues, both at a personal and wider level. Pupils are made aware of drug and alcohol misuse, and the programme for sex education is satisfactory. The school fosters good links with a very wide range of pre-school settings, and induction and transfer to secondary schools is well planned.

27. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. The new computer suite is used well and has been pivotal in raising standards in ICT.

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

The school's care, welfare and health and safety procedures are effective. The school provides pupils with sound support and advice, and the involvement of pupils in its work and development is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher and staff are vigilant in protecting pupils from dangers inside and outside the school, so that they feel secure.
- The school's attendance and behaviour procedures support pupils well.
- The headteacher and staff have a very good knowledge of their pupils, but the tracking of pupils' personal development is informal and lacks rigour.
- Pupils' targets do not sufficiently support the advice and guidance given to them for their future development and progress.
- The school receives very good support from outside professional agencies.
- Pupils are quickly made to feel welcome and part of the school family.

### **Commentary**

28. The school has improved this area since the last inspection, and the weaknesses reported then have been addressed. Policies and procedures are now well defined and thoroughly implemented by conscientious and caring staff. The headteacher has a very strong sense of purpose of caring for pupils in order that they are included in the school as part of the 'Dunnington Family'. He is skilled in negotiating external resources into the school for the benefit of pupils and especially those with specific needs. The school is welcoming to external professional agencies and receives very good and well-focused support.

29. Child protection procedures meet statutory requirements. Staff training is up to date and the school is vigilant to risks to children. The school undertakes regular audits of the school premises, and a disability access audit and risk assessments have been completed. The school is a safe place, although minor accidents are not always recorded rigorously enough. There is some congestion on the small hard-standing playground when the adjacent field is not used, and the school has been advised about three minor health and safety issues.

30. The school's good behaviour procedures are positive and emphasise the use of praise: self-discipline is an expectation. Staff act as very good role models and their sensitive impact on all pupils is evident during their stay in the school. Both staff and pupils have enthusiastically embraced a peer mediation initiative developed by the Warwickshire education welfare service, which allows pupils to help to manage relationship issues. The school successfully combats any threatening behaviour and pupils feel safe.

31. The headteacher and staff give the highest priority to the pastoral care of all pupils, in order that they realise their full potential. Older pupils, in particular, feel totally secure that they can trust the headteacher and staff to listen with a sympathetic ear to their problems and anxieties. Many pupils engaged the inspectors and talked easily about their enjoyment and happiness in coming to the school and the fun of learning in a safe environment where they have firm friends.

32. The arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good in Reception, but are only satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. The tracking of pupils' personal development is informal, lacks records and relies too much on the experienced teachers' accumulated knowledge of individual pupils in a small village school. However, teachers readily identify pupils with special educational needs and they develop good IEPs with pupils and parents. Pupils with problems are soon identified

and there is good feedback and discussion of issues between the teachers and the headteacher at internal staff meetings, where strategies are structured to the individual pupil.

33. The induction of pupils new to the school is good. Children and parents in the Reception class are quickly integrated into the school and children make a flying start to their school lives. Older pupils make a determined effort to see that the new 'babies' soon become part of the 'Dunnington Family'. Parents are very appreciative of the school's efforts to give them high quality advice on helping their children and in giving their child a successful start.

34. The school is starting to listen to pupils on wider school issues. Pupils have rejected a school council; instead, the 'Indaba', which meets once per half term, allows the whole school to air its likes and dislikes. They have tabled some topics, but progress on their ideas is limited to date, and they have not yet fully influenced the school's agenda. Pupils' targets are not well developed in the school. Teachers have lacked confidence in engaging pupils in setting meaningful individual academic targets, and when targets are set they are too general to either influence performance or to give pupils a real understanding of how to improve.

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

Parents have a good level of satisfaction with the school and the education it provides. The partnership between the school and home is satisfactory. The school's links with the community are good. The school's links with other schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most parents have a good level of respect and admiration for the integrity of the headteacher and staff and their vision for their children's education.
- The partnership with many parents makes an effective contribution to their children's learning and happiness at school.
- Despite the headteacher's and staff's hard work to understand parents' anxieties, a minority of parents are dissatisfied with some aspects of the school.
- The school is not proactive in systematically consulting with parents on issues.
- All pupils benefit greatly from the school's very good relationship with the local community.
- The school has good relationship with other pre-schools and primary and secondary schools.

### **Commentary**

35. Parents are now more pleased with the school than at the last inspection. The headteacher gives a high priority to the school's relationships with parents, and relationships are good with most parents. He is determined to be accessible to parents to allay any concerns. Most parents feel that the school respects and values their role and wants them as partners as part of the 'Dunnington Family'. A significant number of parents at the school gate were fulsome in their praise of the school and were concerned that the official Ofsted parents' meeting had a negative tone that did not represent the feelings of the majority of parents. Links with parents of children with special educational needs are good. They are kept fully informed about their child's progress through termly meetings. Their views are sought and listened to and, generally, they are pleased with their child's progress.

36. A minority of parents do not believe that the school is easy to approach or that they are in a real partnership. They have one area of significant dissatisfaction, in that they feel they are not well informed about their children's progress. This aspect has improved since the last inspection, but it is still only acceptable to seven out of ten parents. The inspection team judged that the information provided is satisfactory. Despite the headteacher's and staff's efforts, they have not always been able to satisfy some parents. The inspection team judged that parents' concerns were unfounded, but that many aspects of the school's partnership with parents are only average in comparison with other primary schools, so that parents do not all have a real understanding of school procedures and the education system.



37. The statutory information provided for parents is good. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are informative and interesting and represent the character of the school well. Annual reports to parents are satisfactory, as the school has struggled to develop a detailed yet readable style in the last few years. The reports contain comprehensive computerised statements of what children can do in all subjects, but lack information on past or future academic and non-academic targets. Pupils produce an independent separate report. There are no indications that feedback from parents is welcomed, but most parents feel comfortable with the opportunities they have to discuss progress. Parents used to enjoy an informative newsletter but this has proved difficult to produce regularly. Parents are given an adequate view of homework and topics, though some have been confused on occasions by science homework.

38. Although there is no parents' policy, parents have signed the home/school agreement and fulfil their pledge through their children's attendance and punctuality, and many parents assist their children with homework. A large number of parents are energetic in helping the school and most parents attend the many school functions. The Dunnington Friends' Association is energetic in involving parents and in fund-raising. The school gives some help to parents in discussing how they might help their children and explaining new education strategies and initiatives at regular curricular evenings.

39. The school does not systematically harvest the views of parents or consult them formally on school initiatives. It relies too much on informal conversations with easily accessible parents, so that it does not always have a realistic view of parental opinion. Hence, the present level and intensity of the dissatisfaction of some parents have surprised the school. The governors do not have a sufficient view of parents' concerns and do not undertake their own independent review.

40. The school is a focus for local village life. It enjoys good relationships with the local community and pupils benefit greatly from the close ties. Relationships with the local churches thrive and the vicars are regular visitors for assemblies and to take part in school life. The churches and adjacent countryside are important resources for the practical teaching of some subjects of the curriculum. People from the local community are welcomed into the school to support the spiritual and cultural provision. The pupils learn about protecting the local environment through their annual litter pick in the village. Local businesses have been generous in their support of the school and the friends' association.

41. The school has good relationships with schools and playgroups. The very good relationship with a cluster of playgroups enables Reception children to make a flying start into the school and quickly be part of the 'Dunnington Family'. The headteacher has developed a mutually beneficial relationship with other like-minded headteachers. The relationship with the adjacent village primary school is especially beneficial, leading to joint training for staff and residential visits for pupils. The school maintains good contacts with two secondary schools and the grammar school, so that parents receive informative advice as the time for transfer to secondary school approaches. Pupils make a good transition to their new secondary schools, but are always keen to maintain contact with their former school.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is soundly led and managed. The headteacher offers satisfactory leadership, supported soundly by other staff. The school is managed satisfactorily. The governing body operates satisfactorily.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is successful in its aim of creating the 'Dunnington Family' in the school.
- Improvement in ICT has been managed very successfully.
- Curriculum co-ordinators do not have enough time to carry out their roles as subject leaders effectively enough, or to monitor the work in their subjects closely enough.
- The governing body knows the school well and supports senior managers effectively.
- The headteacher and governing body have a very good understanding of the school's financial position and educational priorities.
- The school has declining financial reserves.

### Commentary

42. The headteacher has an extremely clear pastoral vision for the school, based on Christian values. This envisages that every member of the school community – pupils, support staff, other adults, parents, governors and teachers – are known and respected. This vision is shared by staff and governors and recognised by many parents. For example, parents commented that their children are 'nurtured and protected in a caring environment', and that the 'staff engender a wonderful sense of family'. All staff know all of the pupils and are trusted by them. This results in a happy environment in which pupils really want to learn and behave well. Parents also commented that staff treat their children as individuals. This is certainly true in their pastoral, caring roles; however, it is not always so evident in terms of the work set for different pupils.

### Example of outstanding practice

#### **Standards were too low in ICT and needed to be improved.**

At the time of the last inspection, standards in ICT were too low, pupils made unsatisfactory progress and staff generally lacked confidence in the subject. Improving matters was the subject of a key issue. The new headteacher's first thoughts, in discussion with staff, were to improve the skills of members of staff; therefore any who did not have a computer of their own were provided with one. All staff took a certificated course in ICT to ensure that all had the necessary basic skills to use their computers. The computer suite was organised and software provided. Training was available to all schools at this time through the New Opportunities Fund. The school wisely bided its time before taking advantage of this, using the time to analyse exactly what training needs were apparent, based on the software and hardware then available in the school. A tailored programme was designed and was very successful. Further hardware, for example, digital cameras and digital video cameras, was purchased. As staff confidence grew, so did the quality of their teaching and of pupils' work. Now, the use of ICT is fully integrated into many aspects of the curriculum, for example, when pupils used the digital video camera to film their own 'information films' from World War II, and edit them on the computers, making them appropriately monochrome and 'scratched'!

43. However, although the school clearly aims to treat all pupils as individuals, this does not always occur in practice. Assessment data is not always used rigorously to set targets for improvement and the marking of pupils' work is not always helpful. Work in lessons is not always closely matched to the needs of individuals. These features are factors in the satisfactory achievement of the pupils on the whole. Curriculum co-ordinators do not routinely have the time available to check that planning does take account of individuals' needs, nor to look at their completed work to check that levels of challenge are appropriate. Similarly, they are unable to visit lessons in action to see how that planning is converted into learning. When time has been made available, for example, when the mathematics co-ordinator recently worked alongside an officer from the local education authority, these shortcomings are readily noted and action planned.

However, the English and science co-ordinators have not recently completed such a survey, so the weaknesses in writing across the curriculum, for example, have not been identified as effectively as they should. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is well organised and manages the extensive paperwork well. She monitors the work of learning support assistants well.

44. The governing body is an enthusiastic group that supports the school and its ethos wholeheartedly. They recognise the value of the 'Dunnington Family'. They also have a clear understanding of the nuts and bolts of school life: the support of the governing body was instrumental in ensuring that the temporary classrooms, criticised at the time of the last inspection, were replaced by the permanent ones now in use. They are similarly working tirelessly towards the opening of a nursery on site, so as to be able to provide for even younger children. However, governors also recognise that they have some way to go in order to hold the school to account effectively and act as a true critical friend.

45. The financial management of the school is very competent, as the governing body and the headteacher have been very prudent in managing the consequences of a small decline in the number on roll since the last inspection. They have prioritised a strategy of maintaining four classes and teacher staffing levels, but they have had to concede a reduction in classroom support over the last three years. In order to protect their overall strategy, they have implemented and monitored annual deficit budgets in the last two years. Despite significant cost reductions, the school's financial reserves have declined and the school will be in deficit at the end of the year 2003/2004. The school has applied some of the principles of best value well, but does not implement those of comparison and consultation enough. The cost of educating each pupil is approximately in line with national averages for small schools, although teacher salaries are high and some specialised services have been bought in to support the school. Considering the average cost of educating each pupil, the satisfactory standards achieved, the satisfactory quality of education, the satisfactory leadership and management of the school, the satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and the very good ethos of the school, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

<b>Income and expenditure (£)</b>	
Total income	310,472
Total expenditure	322,055
Expenditure per pupil	2,985

<b>Balances (£)</b>	
Balance from previous year	7,263
Balance carried forward to the next	-4,270

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

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

46. The Reception class offers full-time provision. Children have attended a very wide range of pre-school settings, and simple checks show that their attainment at the start of the Reception class is above average. By the end of Reception, they are likely to exceed the early goals in all areas of experience, and to achieve well above expectations in their communication, language and literacy skills.

47. Provision in the Reception class is good. Good links with pre-school settings and planned steps for induction ensure the children are happy and well settled. An exciting curriculum provides a good balance of teacher-guided activities alongside activities that children choose for themselves. Children are willing to try out new activities, and so become confident learners. However, the teacher does not monitor which activities children choose to visit, so as to ensure even coverage of all areas of learning.

48. Teaching and learning in the Reception class are good overall. The teacher leads very effective lessons in literacy and mathematics, thus promoting high achievement. From clear judgements of what individual children already know and can do, the teacher maintains the challenge in work to expand learning successfully. This was evident when children wrote letters to a 'Garden Centre' and were encouraged to use their knowledge of letters and their sounds to try to spell simple words by themselves. The outcomes of assessments are carefully recorded and used effectively in planning, enhancing children's achievement.

49. Presently, easy access to outdoor activities is restricted and this affects the free flow of learning. Resources meet the children's learning needs, but there are not enough large, outdoor toys. The teacher in charge manages provision very well and, without support from a learning assistant, draws from the regular help of parent helpers when extra hands are needed.

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

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

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

- The children are happy and well settled.
- Relationships between adults and children are very good.
- The activities provided encourage interest and a positive start to school.

#### **Commentary**

50. The children are happy and well settled. Their contributions are valued and so they develop a strong self-image, are proud of their achievement and pleased when others do well. The quality of relationships between adults and children enables the children to 'have a go' with their learning, try out new ideas and gain in independence, for example, when choosing resources to help with their own experiments in sand-play. The children's behaviour is very good. They take turns and work confidently with other adults and in larger groups, such as assembly time. Good levels of interest and persistence enable the children to concentrate on their own play and sustain involvement.

51. Teaching is good. The teacher knows the children well and quickly spots and monitors any difficulties. She makes sure less confident children join in, providing good models of fair play, so that the children soon develop a sense of right and wrong.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons led by the teacher are very good.
- Achievement in speaking, reading and writing is very good.
- Incidental learning and spontaneous play are not monitored closely enough.

### Commentary

52. The teacher makes the most of the children's good language and literacy skills at the start of Reception class and responds successfully to individuals' needs. In turn, the children listen to and use spoken and written language readily in their play and learning. This was evident when children discussed their visit to the 'Garden Centre' and explained that 'bees suck nectar from flowers' and questioned whether spiders do the same.

53. The teacher makes effective links between the spoken and written word – encouraging children to write letters of thanks to Geoff the gardener is an example. The children are beginning to organise their own sentences and write independently. They control their pencils well and link letters with their sounds. Attainment in writing is above expectation for the children's age.

54. Progress with reading is very good. The children turn readily to books: a good number are beginning to read everyday words by sight, recognise initial letters and read simple stories with understanding. Parents are very supportive and share books with the children at home.

55. Teaching is good. The teacher provides the opportunity for children to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations. Exploring stories, writing about shared experiences and using information from digital photographs to stimulate talk all work to good effect to engage children and promote learning. As yet, the children's learning in spontaneous play and in the experiences they choose to visit is not monitored and assessed tightly enough. Consequently, the teacher has few opportunities to build on and extend the children's knowledge and interests.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident and competent in learning to use skills.
- Teacher-directed experiences are clearly planned.

### Commentary

56. In a well-resourced number lesson, with 'beaky bird' helping to focus on counting, the children recognised numbers to 20 and could use the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting successfully. In group work, they are beginning to relate addition with combining two groups of numbers: two five-year-old girls were amazed that different number combinations make the same total. The children learn how to form their numbers correctly, to count, to order and to find the missing number to 20. They recognise and use basic shapes and alternating patterns in work in art and with construction toys. Teaching is good when directed by the teacher, enabling children to develop new knowledge successfully.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are clearly based on first-hand experiences.
- Good teaching encourages observation, exploration and problem solving.

### Commentary

57. Teaching is good and learning is enhanced by the well-planned, first-hand experiences that successfully link different areas of experience such as science, design and technology, geography, history and ICT. Children build and construct, exploring a range of techniques and materials, for example, when helping to construct a wall with a local builder. They can use a digital camera to record observations and subsequently make comparisons about their environment. Their study of plants and animals brings about very good achievement because of the opportunity to sustain investigations, ask questions and draw conclusions. Children's running commentaries about their observations, suggesting: '*Butterflies fly, but spiders hang in webs and it looks like they are flying*', give evidence of this. The children's own skills with the computer and digital camera move on well.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The hall is used well to develop children's large-scale skills.
- The lack of easy access to outdoor activities sometimes stops the flow of learning.
- The school plans well to ensure that fine skills are developed.
- The range of outdoor toys is limited.
- Children have good opportunities to learn to swim.

### Commentary

58. Teaching and learning are good overall. The children benefit from regular swimming lessons and make very good progress with their confidence and skills in water. They also learn how to move confidently in larger spaces, such as the school hall, and are aware of working with others. They begin to recognise the changes happening to their bodies when active and make good progress with their co-ordination when using small apparatus to throw and bat balls. In everyday lessons, a wide range of experiences with cutting, gluing and sticking ensure the development of greater dexterity. Whilst activities are planned, the lack of easy access to the outdoors and a limited range of large equipment can restrict the practice of certain skills like pedalling, climbing and balancing.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Creative and artistic skills are developed in all areas of learning.

### Commentary

59. Teaching and learning are good. The children explore a range of different media and successfully develop their skills with painting, drawing and constructing. They can carry through their own ideas, for example, when making jack-in-the-boxes and use original patterns to decorate their work. The opportunity to collaborate in a large group, for example, to paint a mural linked to work on plants and animals, showed good use and application of paint and growing accuracy for detail. Achievement in music is good. The children recall words to songs and hymns and sing tunefully along with others in assembly. They experiment with untuned instruments and learn how to keep a steady beat. Opportunities for the children to create imaginatively in role-play are planned clearly.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reading is fostered in all classes and well supported by parents at home.
- Pupils speak confidently and use their broad vocabularies well.
- Opportunities are missed in other subjects to develop pupils' literacy skills.

### Commentary

60. Provision in English has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection. Standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 have improved, but the curriculum, target setting, marking and use of assessment data have not moved forward quickly enough.

61. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, though progress is slow and success is measured in small steps. They receive good support from both teachers and learning support assistants. These pupils are encouraged to join in with regular lessons. They are usually given work that is best suited to their abilities rather than attempt and be frustrated by the tasks the class are doing.

62. Pupils are wonderfully articulate, and standards in speaking and listening are well above national expectations in Years 2 and 6. They have, and use well, broad vocabularies. Answers to teachers' questions are almost always in well-constructed sentences. In conversation, pupils listened to the viewpoint of others before giving their opinion when discussing their reading habits. Pupils in Year 2 displayed great maturity in narrating a story about a sloth, recalling the sequence of it in great detail.

63. Most pupils are avid readers and standards are well above the national expectation in Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Year 2 recalled their books in detail. They read accurately and with fluency; a lower attaining pupil, in particular, read expressively to bring the story alive for the listener. Pupils in Year 6

have very positive attitudes to reading and read widely. They skilfully read complex texts. They were well aware of how to find books in the school library. They regularly bring their own books to school to read because, they say, the school has too few books that interest them.

64. Pupils' writing skills are above national expectations. Pupils learn to write in a wide variety of styles and links are made with history, for example, when writing a letter home from an evacuee, giving the writing greater purpose. Pupils' persuasive writing on 'zoos' in Year 5/6 was well thought out. The poetry in Year 4 on 'Christmas Senses' was very effective and allowed pupils to explore their emotions. Handwriting is mostly joined but is generally untidy through the school, though pupils do refine their work and its presentation, especially in Year 6. Word-processing is used quite well for pupils with special educational needs.

65. Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils join Year 1 with above average skills and teachers build on these, assisted by good parental support for learning, through to Year 6. Pupils develop a love of reading through regular practice, and speaking and listening skills are improved through drama and question and answer sessions. The school is improving the provision of writing opportunities for pupils but these are too often confined to English lessons, rather than exploring chances in other subjects like geography and science.

66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils work hard, applying themselves fully to the tasks they are given because teachers encourage and praise them. They respond quickly to instructions from their teacher. In a Year 2 lesson, for instance, the teacher clapped her hands twice and her pupils, who were rehearsing their plays quite noisily, immediately fell silent. For the most part, rather than setting different tasks to match the different abilities of pupils, teachers set the same task for all and expect better responses from the more talented pupils. This happens too often and is not supported by the high quality marking needed to ensure that every pupil knows what is required and how to improve further. The teaching of spelling has improved and is now linked closely to groups of sounds. There is regular spelling homework and tests, in most cases, weekly. However, regardless of their ability, virtually every pupil in an age group is given the same spellings to learn. This does not challenge the most able.

67. Assessment is satisfactory. Statutory and non-statutory tests are used to measure standards. Analysis and evaluation are at an early stage and, as a result, few alterations to teaching style or curriculum are evident. The school achieved its Year 6 targets last year and pupils are capable of achieving them again this year. Targets for individual pupils in end-of-year tests are not set high enough. Pupils who achieved Level 4 in the Year 5 test are not consistently aimed towards a Level 5 in Year 6.

68. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator currently has no non-contact time in which to carry out her duties. This severely limits her ability to support colleagues, analyse data and monitor resources. She has intervened positively and effectively when pupils' test scores have indicated individual weaknesses. However, she has yet to thoroughly evaluate pupils' performance in all tests and make any alterations to the curriculum or teaching style of herself and her colleagues.

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

69. Pupils' use of their literacy skills in other subjects is unsatisfactory. In Years 1 and 2 the teacher is starting to create more chances for pupils to write; for example, writing home as nurses from the Crimea, and teachers of older children also use history effectively as a stimulus. Other subjects are not used so well. In science, pupils too often record on worksheets and miss the chance to develop report-writing skills. In spite of their ability, pupils undertake little research, either independently or guided by the teacher. Virtually all of the Year 5/6 class's work in geography is on worksheets, some of them involving pupils in mundane exercises such as completing a sentence by filling in one missing word.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above national expectations throughout the school.
- Achievement is satisfactory because tasks are not varied enough to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- The co-ordinator is offering good leadership; management of the subject is satisfactory and improving.

### **Commentary**

70. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards above national expectations for pupils of that age. This is maintained, but not further improved upon, throughout the school, so that standards observed in Year 2 and in Year 6 are still above the expectations of the National Curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 6 were seen working confidently with angle facts in triangles, whilst pupils in Year 2 systematically made all possible numbers from a given three digits and could put them in order from smallest to largest.

71. These standards represent satisfactory achievement. Whilst standards are maintained above national expectations, not all pupils are consistently challenged beyond their comfort zone. Teachers carefully plan different work for the two age groups in each class. However, every pupil in one year group is typically given the same work, with the effect that some find it too hard and others find it too easy. Pupils with special educational needs receive support and different work more closely matched to their needs. Also, the comments on pupils' marked work do not challenge them to improve and try harder. Although there is discussion in class about the triumphs and difficulties encountered, this is not always translated into written comments or short-term targets for improvement. Marking is too often restricted to ticks and crosses. However, in most lessons pupils are engaged through interesting discussion and methods. For example, when learning about the angles of a triangle, Year 5 pupils tore the corners from a triangle they had drawn and lay them along a line to demonstrate that they add up to  $180^\circ$ . Pupils do not routinely write about what they are doing or record their methods in their books enough, affecting their progress in both mathematics and writing.

72. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject. She leads well. Management of the subject is satisfactory and improving: the co-ordinator has looked at work alongside an officer of the local education authority and is aware of the weaknesses cited above, although she has not yet been able to observe lessons in action. She liaises with other staff to set formal targets for groups and check progress using assessment data, but overall, the systems for rigorous management are not securely in place to enable her to really drive standards up.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

73. Mathematics is used effectively in science and ICT to produce graphs and tables. Its use in the humanities is restricted by the use of worksheets that make the range of responses narrow.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good range of scientific knowledge, but this is not always apparent in their written work.
- Provision and standards are not monitored and evaluated closely enough.
- In some classes, pupils are beginning to think like scientists.

### Commentary

74. Standards in science are in line with national expectations in both Year 2 and Year 6. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection. Achievement is sound overall. However, targeted work in 'booster groups', which traditionally contributes to raising standards in science in Year 6, has yet to start.

75. The good range of scientific knowledge, apparent in discussions with pupils, is not always evident in their written work. Work is generally planned at one level for the whole class, and lacks specific planning to meet the needs of the age and ability levels found in each mixed-age class. In the junior classes, worksheets restrict the writing pupils can produce, and this in turn sets a ceiling to learning and achievement.

76. However, improvement in pupils' understanding of the principles of scientific enquiry is evident. In lessons in Years 3 and 4, pupils were clear about what they were trying to find out in their study of forces and achieved well. They have a good grasp of how scientists carry out investigations, consider what needs to be controlled and measured, and predict and evaluate their findings. In a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, pupils achieved satisfactorily when they evaluated their own daily diet and developed a better understanding of proteins, fats and carbohydrates.

77. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 discuss their work in science enthusiastically. They enjoy experimenting and are even motivated to set up their own experiments at home, for instance, testing different materials to see if they are waterproof. They are starting to ask scientific questions and research information about animals and their habitats. Year 1 pupils can talk knowledgeably about the difference between reptiles and mammals, suggesting that '*Tigers crouch and stalk their prey*'.

78. Teaching in lessons in the junior classes is sound overall. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2. Effective teaching is linked to good subject knowledge and practical work. This ensures the pupils' interest is maintained and enables them to carry out investigations. Teachers encourage all groups to contribute in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from extra adult support in lessons. Boys and girls co-operate well and achieve similar levels with their work. There are no pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language who need extra help. Assessment outcomes are not, however, used effectively in planning.

79. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management. Procedures for checking the effectiveness of teaching and learning in mixed-age classes are informal. This means the co-ordinator lacks the specific information to help her support her colleagues more precisely. The coverage of work in mixed-age classes is systematic and follows national guidelines.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision is much improved and pupils now achieve well.
- The subject is very well led by the headteacher.
- Assessment procedures are not securely in place as yet.

### **Commentary**

80. Only one lesson directly aimed at ICT could be observed, but evidence from other subjects and from completed work indicates that pupils now attain standards above those expected by the National Curriculum and achieve well as a result. This is a very good improvement over the situation at the last inspection when provision was unsatisfactory. Staff are now much more confident with the subject and make good use of the computer suite, the class-based computers and the school's collection of basic laptop computers. Pupils are confident users of technology, for example, using the basic laptops to communicate across the classroom and take notes. The progress made, and the confidence of pupils, indicate that teaching is now good.

81. The improvements have come about because of the very good leadership and management of the headteacher in this area. He set in train a carefully considered set of actions to raise the confidence of staff and to improve the provision of hardware and software. Information and communication technology (ICT) is now used to support other subjects very effectively, as another tool in teachers' kits, rather than something to be used on special occasions.

82. Whilst improvement has been rapid, not everything is fully in place. Formal assessment procedures are not in use to inform teaching better, and monitoring and evaluation of provision is still largely informal.

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

83. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively to support other subjects. The use of the digital video camera to support learning in history is described elsewhere in this report. Digital images are used well in general for recording and to promote interest. Spreadsheets and other software support learning in mathematics, and the more mundane use of word-processors and desk-top publishing packages improves the presentation of written work in English and the humanities. The Internet is used well for research, for example, in art and design, when pupils searched for images of containers to find some they liked in order to sketch them.

## **HUMANITIES**

84. It is not possible to make secure judgements about provision because work was only sampled in both geography and history. In Years 3 to 6 the history curriculum is better than that usually found because the school takes topics further and is starting to explore links with other subjects, for instance, through making short films about aspects of the Second World War.

85. In history, standards are above national expectations in both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They are keen to work at the tasks given to them and have a growing understanding of the events and individuals studied. Innovative use of other subjects and skills in Years 3 to 6 fires the imagination of pupils. Art skills were used well to produce dramatic charcoal pictures of 'evacuees'. Digital cameras were used effectively to record pupils' short plays about the blackout and gas masks. Teachers are beginning to make full use of pupils' literacy skills, as in the good extended writing connected with the retelling of the 'Story of Roanoke'.

86. Standards in Year 6 are above national expectations. In their writing, pupils empathise well with the plight of child workers in the Victorian period. This type of activity also enhances pupils' knowledge of their own culture. Achievement is satisfactory. Worksheets do not always give pupils the opportunity to show what they can do.

87. The subject is managed well and standards have improved since the last inspection. Inspection evidence indicates that parents are justified in saying that history is strong in this school.

88. Standards in geography in Year 2 are above national expectations. Good teaching allows pupils to relate their understanding of how to write questions and letters with the chance to write to 'Katie Morag'. A well-managed plenary session allowed pupils to share with the class the high quality of their part-finished letters. Selected pupils located Scotland and England on a map easily and the local knowledge of a pupil who had been to Arran on holiday was used effectively. In Year 6, some particularly good work on rivers and their rate of flow combined pupils' knowledge of geography, science and mathematics very well. Overall, however, the work of pupils of all ages is dominated by worksheets and these restrict the opportunities of pupils to answer in their own way. There are very few examples of pupils' own writing or research work.

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

89. Inspectors sampled pupils' work in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Very few lessons were observed. Inspectors spoke to pupils and staff about their work.

90. Pockets of imaginative work in art reflect the pupils' ability to work in a wide range of media and to create something new by themselves. Links with other subjects like history provide an opportunity and stimulus for work. The benefits of working together with other schools in 'Arts Week' are evident in the good quality of wall hangings depicting scenes from other cultures. Work from all age groups enlivens school displays. Parents think that art is a strong feature of the school.

91. The school has made good headway with its provision for design and technology since the last inspection. Skills of planning and making are built upon in a more progressive way, year-on-year. Singing in music is a strength and adds to the quality of assemblies and pupils' cultural development. When performing together, pupils sing tunefully and with feeling and expression. Junior pupils add descants to well-known hymns and songs and enter on cue. A lively repertoire of songs and good teaching ensure that the school choir is very well attended by boys and girls. All year groups perform with instruments and benefit from expert music tuition if they so wish.

92. The school is proud of its very good record of regular provision for swimming. All year groups, from the Reception class onwards, are included. Pupils in the juniors develop their skills and techniques with long jump and high jump satisfactorily. Younger and older pupils develop a growing awareness of the effects of exercise on the body.

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

93. The school makes sound provision in the curriculum for pupils' personal development. Circle time lessons are timetabled, and the school's 'Indaba', including all pupils, offers them a taste of democracy. The school's very positive ethos, based on Christian values, makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Health education is organised through the school's science curriculum in the main.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
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>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
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 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).*