

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DUSTON ELDEAN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121945

Headteacher: Mrs J Brown

Lead inspector: Mr D Shepherd

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> June 2004

Inspection number: 256010

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: 4-10  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 395

School address: Main Road  
New Duston  
NORTHAMPTON  
Postcode: NN5 6PP

Telephone number: 01604 752283

Fax number: 01604 588411

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Carter

Date of previous inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> January 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Duston Eldean Primary School is bigger than most other primary schools and has 395 pupils on roll. Nearly all pupils are from a white British background. A small number of pupils are from other backgrounds, such as Indian, Chinese and Caribbean. Just over two per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well below average. Other indicators also show that the school serves families whose social and economic circumstances are better than the national picture. Fifty-three pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, three of whom have a statement. This proportion is broadly similar to most schools. The main needs are social, emotional and behavioural, specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties and physical difficulties. Nearly all pupils come from the area close to the school. Fourteen pupils speak English as an additional language, three of whom are at the early stages of learning English. Pupils' attainment on entry is average. The rate at which pupils join and leave the school is below average.

The school is undergoing a local education authority review of provision and changing its status from a lower school to a primary school for pupils aged 4-11 years. This is the first year the school has taught pupils in Year 5. Next year, it will teach pupils in Year 6. The school is involved in the national initiative 'Excellence in Cities'.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2905	David Shepherd	Lead inspector	Science, information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, special educational needs, English as an additional language
9391	Norma Ball	Lay inspector	
31192	John Stewart	Team inspector	English, geography, history
25432	Liz Budden	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, art and design, music
32556	Stephen Greenall	Team inspector	Mathematics, design and technology, physical education
3525	Peter McGregor	Team inspector	

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Duston Eldean is an improving school that provides a satisfactory education with some good features.** When pupils start school, their overall attainment is close to that expected for their age. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they reach average standards by the end of Years 2 and 5. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with good features. Leadership is good and management is satisfactory. During the last two years, the good leadership of the headteacher has resulted in a number of important improvements in the work of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- The headteacher and deputy lead the school well, effectively supported by senior staff, but the quality of teaching and learning is not checked rigorously enough in some subjects
- Pupils achieve well in speaking, listening, reading and investigative science, but boys do not do well enough in writing
- Teaching is good in Year 5 but, in a few other classes, teachers do not provide pupils with enough guidance on how to improve and the management of behaviour has weaknesses
- Procedures for assessing standards in English, mathematics and science are good and are used well to help pupils improve, but those for most other subjects are unsatisfactory
- Pupils have good attitudes to school and are developing into sensible and mature young citizens because provision for their personal development is good
- Parents and pupils hold positive views about the school

Significant improvements have been made since the appointment of the present headteacher two years ago. Pupils are now achieving better than they did and standards are beginning to improve. Compared with the last inspection, a greater proportion of the teaching and learning is now good and very good. The leadership provided by the senior staff is now good. During the past two years, each of the key issues for improvement has been a priority for the school and most have now been completed successfully in English, mathematics and science. However, the school has not carried out improvements in other subjects to date. The school has sound plans to improve its provision for ICT in its new building, and for improving the monitoring role of subject co-ordinators. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

**Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.** Children start school with average standards. Their achievement in the reception classes is satisfactory and they join Year 1 at the standards expected nationally in most areas of learning. They achieve higher standards than this in their personal, social and emotional development. In Years 1 and 2, most pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach the expected levels overall in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards in speaking and listening are above average. During 2002-03, however, standards were lower in all subjects because the learning of pupils in Years 1 and 2 was

severely disrupted by the misbehaviour of a few boys. Teachers in these classes had to spend a significant amount of teaching time correcting misbehaviour, and so many pupils did not make enough progress and failed to reach the standards they should. The trend of improvement in national test results over the past five years is below the national trend, but this is likely to improve because of improved standards this year. Standards in science are at expected levels overall, but better than expected in the investigative aspects of the subject.

National test information is not available for the oldest pupils because they have not yet reached Year 6. Standards at the end of Year 5 are at expected levels in English, mathematics and science, and above average in speaking, listening and investigative science. Achievement is good in Year 5 because the teaching is good. In Years 3 and 4, whilst pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, it was unsatisfactory in some of the lessons observed, owing to weaknesses in teaching. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language and gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory.

**Pupils' personal development is good. Their spiritual, moral and social development are good and their cultural development is very good.** Their attitudes and behaviour are good overall, although a small minority of boys do not always behave well. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory with good features. Teaching and learning are satisfactory** with some being good and very good. Lesson planning is good and includes suitable provision for pupils at their different levels of ability. Where teaching is good, as in many lessons seen in Year 5, pupils are encouraged to think hard about their work and they learn at a fast pace. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged well in their work but are not always given enough guidance about how to improve. A few teachers do not always manage to control the behaviour of a few boys well enough and this interrupts the learning of others in the class. The school assesses the attainment of pupils well in English, mathematics and science and uses this information effectively to raise standards and improve teaching. The school has not yet developed assessment in most other subjects and procedures in these are unsatisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by a good range of activities outside lessons. Pupils receive good levels of care. The school has good links with parents, other schools and the community. .

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Overall, leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.** The headteacher and deputy lead the school well. As a result, since their appointment, there have been a number of significant improvements in the work of the school. They are supported effectively by other members of the senior management team. Subject leadership is satisfactory, but the quality of teaching and learning is not always monitored rigorously enough. The school is managed soundly. However, there are weaknesses in some classes in the quality of teaching and learning. Governors are supportive of the school and governance is satisfactory.

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

Parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and views expressed at their meeting indicate that they are satisfied with the school. Responses to the pupils' questionnaire and talking to pupils indicate that they hold positive views of the school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are

- raise standards in boys' writing, especially in Years 3 to 5
- improve the quality of teaching where there are weaknesses

- implement systems for checking on pupils' progress in subjects where this is not the case
- ensure that all subject co-ordinators have a role in checking on the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, and good in aspects of English and science. Following a period of decline during the past few years, standards in English and mathematics are now improving. At the end of both Years 2 and 5, standards in English, mathematics and science are average.

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

- Many pupils achieve well in speaking, listening, reading and investigative science, and standards in these areas are above average
- When they were in Year 2, the current Year 3 pupils made unsatisfactory progress in writing and mathematics
- Boys achieve well in science but their achievement in writing is unsatisfactory
- Pupils in Year 5 achieve well

#### **Commentary**

##### **Foundation Stage**

1. Children start school with standards in literacy, numeracy and in their personal development that are typical for their age. Through sensitive and thoughtful teaching, they achieve satisfactorily and, by the time they join Year 1, reach the expected standards in most areas of their learning. They achieve better than expected standards in their personal development.

##### **Years 1 and 2**

2. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2, standards in reading were average when compared with all schools, but below average when compared with similar schools. Standards in writing and mathematics were below average when compared with all schools and well below average when compared with similar schools. Standards in reading were the same as those of the previous year, but those in writing and mathematics were lower. Overall, the achievement of pupils in Year 2 during 2002-03 in reading was satisfactory, but in writing and mathematics it was unsatisfactory. This was because these classes included a minority of boys who found it very difficult to behave well. These boys, one of whom was excluded from school on numerous occasions during last year, disrupted lessons and this slowed down considerably the learning of the rest of the pupils. The result of this disruption was that standards were lower than they might have been had the learning not been disrupted so much. Standards in science were above average when compared with all schools and average when compared with similar schools. Pupils' achievement in science was satisfactory.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.1 (15.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.7 (14.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.7 (16.6)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 69 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- Standards seen during the inspection in Year 2 are much higher this year. Overall, they are at expected levels and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is good in speaking, listening, reading and in investigative science and standards in these areas are above average. Standards in writing, mathematics and other aspects of science are at expected levels and pupils' achievement in these aspects is satisfactory. The environment for learning is much more settled. The quality of teaching has improved. The leadership of the school has pursued good initiatives to raise standards, which are paying off.

### **Years 3 to 5**

- Pupils do not take National Curriculum tests until they reach the end of Year 6, so no table of results showing comparisons with other schools is available. As with pupils in Year 2, inspection findings show that standards in speaking, listening, reading and investigative science are above average and pupils are achieving well in these areas. Achievement in other aspects of these subjects and in mathematics is satisfactory and pupils are attaining average standards. The reason for the good achievement in certain aspects of these subjects is because the school has focused on raising standards in these areas, and has been successful. Pupils achieve particularly well in Year 5 because the teaching is consistently good. However, the achievement of pupils in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory. This is because the learning in some of these classes is sometimes interrupted by the immature behaviour of a small group of pupils. Overall, the standards achieved by pupils in Year 3 have improved this year and are typical for their age.
- The achievement of higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers consistently plan work that is well matched to these pupils' level of ability and this helps them to make sound progress in their learning. They receive regular help to carry out their tasks from teachers and teaching assistants, but this does not always provide clear enough guidance about how they can improve. The achievement of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory overall. They receive good support from teaching assistants who help teachers plan work for these pupils at their levels of proficiency with the English language. Boys achieve well in science because the tasks are interesting and practical. Their achievement in writing is unsatisfactory overall because they do not find many writing tasks of interest to them. Overall, although improving, standards are not as high as they were at the last inspection.

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

Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The spiritual, social and moral development of pupils is good and their cultural development is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most pupils have positive attitudes in lessons, work hard and behave well, but a small minority of pupils do not always behave well, especially in the playground
- Relationships are very good
- Provision for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school

### **Commentary**

- Pupils like school. They generally enjoy their lessons and work with enthusiasm. In almost all lessons pupils listen attentively, work sensibly and try to do their best. This helps them learn and achieve well in a number of areas. Very good relationships between pupils and with adults help to promote a positive learning environment and a happy atmosphere in

school. Pupils enjoy class discussions and they contribute to them with confidence and share their views clearly with their classmates. A good example of this was in a Year 4 numeracy lesson when pupils worked well on a range of individual and group tasks about odd and even numbers. They explained clearly the work they were doing and what they had found out from their investigations. Most pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their work and behave well. They are helped in this by teaching assistants who make sure that pupils fully understand the work they have been set. This extra help ensures that most of these pupils carry out their work with confidence. Children in the Foundation Stage have positive attitudes to their work and behave well. Pupils' attitudes are similar to those found at the last inspection.

7. The majority of pupils behave well but, in a few classes, a small minority of pupils act immaturely and distract others from their work. The school is teaching pupils to manage their own behaviour through the introduction of a behaviour curriculum and this approach is being very successful with most pupils. However, a few pupils are finding this difficult and their behaviour is not as good as it should be. Most teachers manage pupils' behaviour well but, when this is not the case, a few pupils disrupt the learning of their classmates and learning time is lost. On these occasions, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. In addition, a few pupils sometimes become overexcited and boisterous in the playground and they do not behave well enough. The school has investigated carefully ways to improve playground behaviour and sensible plans are being put in place to improve the quality of playtimes. For example, older pupils are being trained to lead games and activities with younger pupils and playground equipment is being purchased to help provide a variety of different games that pupils can enjoy. Lunchtime clubs have also proved effective in improving the quality of behaviour by involving pupils in organised activities. Prior to the inspection, some parents expressed concern about the inappropriate behaviour of some pupils, particularly bullying. Inspectors noted that, although there are a few pupils whose behaviour is not acceptable at times, on the whole behaviour is managed well by staff. There is a good community atmosphere throughout the school. Overall, behaviour is broadly similar to the last inspection.
8. Older pupils are given good opportunities to take on responsibilities. This contributes well to their personal development. Duties, such as delivering registers to classes and preparing the hall for assembly, are carried out efficiently and with pride. Pupils realise they are part of a community and need to share and recognise the feelings and needs of other people. Respect for others and themselves is developing well through lessons in personal, social and health education. This is having a good impact on the behaviour of all pupils and also contributes well to their social and moral development. Pupils understand the school's code of conduct, which is clear and well displayed in the school. Pupils value the rewards earned for 'golden time'. They are introduced to the beliefs and practices of a wide range of other cultures. Work in history on the Aztecs, in geography on Japan and Ghana, and in religious education on Hinduism illustrate the range of cultures studied by pupils. Assemblies, and the many well-presented displays around the school, illustrate the significant depth of work covered to help promote pupils' cultural development. A multicultural week is held each year and this is a very good initiative providing factual and practical activities about many cultures for pupils. This helps pupils to develop a respect for other cultures and traditions and understand that all people and traditions make sense and are to be valued. Provision for pupils' personal development is similar to that at the last inspection.

### **Attendance**

9. Attendance is broadly similar to the national picture. The majority of pupils attend school regularly and on time. Despite the school's efforts to improve levels of attendance, a number of families continue to take holidays in term time and this has an adverse affect on

the progression in learning of these pupils. The poor attendance of a very few pupils also has a negative effect on attendance statistics. The Education Welfare Officer from the local education authority provides good support to the school in following up persistent poor attendance. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Attendance is not as good as it was at the last inspection.

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

Authorised absence	
School data:	4.9
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	0.6
National data:	0.4

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

**Exclusions**

10. One pupil was excluded on numerous occasions during the school year 2002-03. This pupil caused significant disruption to the learning of other pupils, but is no longer at the school.

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

No of pupils on roll
300
2
4
3
4
5
4
5
2

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
40	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory with good features. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with good features. The curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory. The school provides pupils with good levels of care and looks after them well. Links with parents, other schools and the community are good.

**Teaching and learning**

Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. In over half of the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good, sometimes very good. Assessment is satisfactory overall. The proportion of good and very good teaching has improved since the last inspection.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan work carefully to meet the needs of pupils at different levels of ability
- Most teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, but this is not the case in all classes
- Teaching and learning are not as good in Years 3 and 4 overall as elsewhere in the school
- Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science, but they are unsatisfactory in most other subjects
- Teachers encourage pupils well in their work, but they do not always indicate to them how they could improve

## Commentary

11. During the inspection, teaching and learning were judged at least good in six out of every ten lessons observed, and very good in nearly a quarter. Most of the very good teaching and learning was in Year 5. One lesson was judged unsatisfactory, and another one was judged poor. The main weakness in teaching is the lack of consistency in approach between certain classes, especially in Years 3 and 4, where teaching and learning overall are not as good as elsewhere in the school. Where the school has sought to improve areas of the curriculum during the past two years, teaching is often good. These include speaking, listening and reading in English and investigative work in science. In these subjects teachers plan work well at pupils' levels of ability and often set tasks that are practical and involve pupils in taking an active part in their learning. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Because of the significant amount of good teaching, many pupils, especially those in Year 5, are achieving well in some subjects, particularly in English and in investigative science. The following table shows the numbers of lessons observed at each level.

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0 %)	10 (22 %)	16 (37 %)	16 (37 %)	1 (2 %)	1 (2 %)	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. Throughout the school, teachers plan lessons well. The purposes of lessons are clearly worked out and they are shared with pupils. Where teaching is very good as in Year 5 for example, they are reviewed at the end of lessons to see if pupils have learnt what was intended. In most subjects, activities are prepared for higher- and lower-attaining pupils that are pitched well at their levels of ability. Pupils find these activities cause them to think carefully and this helps them to learn effectively. For example, in science, lower-attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, record the results of their investigations by responding to specific prompts and by compiling a table or chart. Higher-attaining pupils are expected to produce a descriptive account that includes predicting what might happen, what they did and what they found out. This holds the interests of higher- and lower-attaining pupils and they learn well in investigative science because expectations of their work are geared well to their abilities and needs. In English and mathematics, however, work set is sometimes too easy for higher-attaining pupils. Practical work in science interests all pupils, but is of particular interest to boys. Many boys speak positively about carrying out investigations and finding out how things work.
13. Most teachers manage pupils' behaviour well in lessons. Pupils respond positively to this and behave well. They settle down quickly to their work and are keen to learn. This is not the case in all classes. In some classes in Years 3 and 4, teachers do not control pupils' behaviour well enough. This results in a small minority of pupils, mainly boys, acting immaturely, distracting

others and disrupting the learning of the class. Pupils do not learn and achieve as well as they should on these occasions.

14. Assessment procedures are good in English and mathematics. For the past two years, pupils have been set end of year tests in reading, writing and mathematics. From the results of these, individual learning targets for the following year have been set. These long-term targets have been then sub-divided well into shorter term learning goals for pupils that are recorded in their books. This indicates to pupils in a very clear and focused way what they need to do to reach higher standards in their work. In science, pupils' learning is assessed well at the end of each unit of work and records of their progress kept by teachers. As with English and mathematics, this motivates pupils to work well and achieve higher standards. However, these procedures have only started this year, and they have not yet had time to contribute to marked improvements in all elements of these subjects, such as in writing and mathematics. With the exception of ICT, assessment procedures have not been developed in the same way in other subjects because, quite understandably, this has not been a major focus for the school until procedures for English, mathematics and science are operating effectively. Lack of assessment and setting targets for improvement is one reason why pupils do not achieve as well in some subjects as in English, mathematics and science.
15. Evidence from pupils' books indicates that teachers encourage pupils well in their work. Comments such as 'Well done' or 'I like what you have written' appear frequently at the end of pupils' work. These encourage pupils to work hard because they feel that their teachers think highly of what they have produced. Some books also include comments that indicate to pupils how they might improve. For example, in science in Year 5, one teacher wrote, 'I like what you have done and this shows you understand the topic. What do you think would happen if you had carried out the investigation differently?' On the whole, however, teachers do not extend pupils' thinking enough by including thoughtful comments in their marking. In addition to this, in a few classes, teachers do not guide pupils enough during lessons to help them improve. For example, teachers and teaching assistants concentrate on helping one or two groups and leave others to carry on by themselves with little direct help. This means that some pupils do not receive the help they need when they are stuck and, in these lessons, do not make the progress they should.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum enriched by a good range of visits and extra-curricular activities. Accommodation is good and resources are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ? Lessons in personal, social and health education are supplemented well by a behaviour curriculum that has been developed successfully throughout the school and pupils are responding positively to it
- ? The school provides pupils with a wide range of extra-curricular activities in sports and music
- ? Provision in speaking, listening, investigative science and swimming are good
- ? The school does not have enough up-to-date computers and there are too few resources to help pupils in their investigative work in mathematics and science

## **Commentary**

16. The curriculum meets all legal requirements. Provision for speaking, listening, reading, investigative work in science and swimming are particular strengths of the school's provision. This is because the school has been successful in emphasising these aspects of its provision during the past two years. The school has correctly identified that it needs to improve its provision in geography, history and problem-solving work in mathematics. Whilst provision in these subjects is satisfactory overall, there are particular aspects that need improvement. For example, the school does not know the standards being achieved in geography and history and pupils do not have enough opportunities to carry out problem-solving activities in mathematics.

Sufficient time is allocated to each subject in order to teach the National Curriculum in full. The school provides lessons in sex and relationships education and in drugs education. Curriculum provision is similar to that found at the last inspection.

17. The school has successfully developed a behaviour curriculum. This is taught through a systematic programme in personal, social and health education lessons and in assemblies. On these occasions, pupils discuss issues such as working together and the importance of rules. This is having a positive effect on pupils as they reflect on the implications and importance of behaving well to help communities, such as a school, to function well. The behaviour of most pupils is good and they are developing into mature and sensible young citizens as a result of teaching such as this.
18. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The needs of these pupils are identified well as soon as they become evident. Teachers work together to devise suitable learning targets to help these pupils improve. Some of these targets are good and indicate the small steps in improvement that these pupils can achieve. Other targets, however, are too general and make it difficult for teachers to teach towards them and pupils to achieve them. Pupils with special educational needs receive good help in their work from teaching assistants and they make good progress on these occasions. When this extra help is not available, however, these pupils do not make as much progress. Provision for higher-attaining pupils, including the gifted and talented, is satisfactory. Teachers' plans in most subjects show that they expect these pupils to carry out harder work. Some work set for higher-attaining pupils in mathematics, however, is too easy for them. The school has sound plans to improve provision for gifted and talented pupils as part of its involvement in the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative. Provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is satisfactory overall. They receive good help from teaching assistants. As a result, even though teachers do not have enough expertise to teach these pupils effectively themselves, achievement is satisfactory. Boys do not achieve as well as girls in writing and provision for them in this area, while satisfactory in the main, is quite rightly a priority for improvement.
19. A wide variety of extra-curricular activities takes place at lunchtimes and after school. These help develop further pupils' skills in sports, ICT and in their personal, social and health education. They include netball, football, choir, computer club, lunchtimers' club, French, dance crazy and book swap club. These clubs are popular with pupils and over one hundred attend them. In addition, pupils play in competitive matches against other local schools in football and netball. Pupils have opportunities to sing and play in local music activities with other schools. For example, during the inspection, a local singing festival was held with other schools. Pupils also have opportunities to go to a number of places of interest as part of their lessons. These include museums, theatres, a local fast-food outlet and a supermarket. A residential visit is also planned for older pupils. The school has maintained the good provision in extra-curricular activities noted at the last inspection.
20. The school has an appropriate number of teachers and teaching assistants who are well trained and effectively deployed. The accommodation is good overall. The two halls and classrooms provide pupils with plenty of space for their learning. The school has extensive playing fields that are used well for sports' activities and science investigations. The school has a training swimming pool that provides good opportunities for pupils to learn to swim. Accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage is good, although the outdoor area, while spacious, is not covered. The school has recently established a small computer suite in anticipation of extending this provision further with the new building alterations. This is a sensible compromise made by the school at the present time. However, the school does not have enough up-to-date computers, which is unsatisfactory. A number of up-to-date

programs cannot be loaded on to these computers because of a lack of disk space on them. As a result, this slows down the progress pupils can make. There are not enough resources to teach effectively in religious education. In particular, there are too few religious artefacts and not enough use is made of ICT. Resources for other subjects are satisfactory overall. However, more resources are needed to help pupils with their investigational work in mathematics and science.

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

The care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are good. Pupils are provided with satisfactory guidance and support. The ways in which the school seeks and acts on pupils' views are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is a caring environment where all pupils are valued and feel confident in the adults who look after them
- Induction procedures are good and this helps pupils to settle quickly into school
- Monitoring of pupils' achievements is improving, with good systems in English, mathematics and science, but the school has unsatisfactory procedures in most other subjects
- Pupils feel their views are listened to and respected

### **Commentary**

21. The school provides pupils with a safe and secure environment and this is maintained well by regular inspections of equipment and the premises. Several staff in each of the two school buildings have first-aid qualifications and there are sensible and thorough procedures for the care and welfare of pupils who unwell or suffer minor injuries in school. Child protection arrangements are well organised with two senior members of staff sharing responsibility for this important area. The school works effectively with local agencies that support and extend the good care it provides for pupils. Pupils respond positively to the high levels of care provided by staff. They feel confident in confiding problems and concerns to staff and feel that they will be listened to and supported by them. Induction arrangements for pupils new to the school are good and include a carefully planned series of visits. Parents spoke positively about this aspect of the school's work at the pre-inspection parents' meeting. Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety has improved since the last inspection.

22. The school has recently developed good assessment procedures that provide guidance for pupils in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Pupils' achievements in English and mathematics are assessed well at the end of each year using data from optional national assessments. Their achievements in science and ICT are assessed well at the end of each unit of work using commercial assessments. The outcomes of these assessments are used effectively to set learning targets for pupils in these subjects. This provides pupils with good guidance for the following year about what they need to do next to improve. This is not the case, however, in other subjects because there are no assessment procedures of this type and assessment and guidance for pupils in these subjects are unsatisfactory.

23. Staff know the pupils in their care well. This knowledge provides the basis of good guidance for pupils' personal development, though the effects of this guidance are not monitored in a formal way. Behaviour targets are set for some pupils who find behaving well difficult. These pupils, who have special educational needs with regard to their behaviour, work towards achieving their targets and are improving their behaviour.



24. Pupils' views are not gathered by the school on a regular basis, but adults respond positively to any suggestions pupils make. For example, recently, pupils have contributed to school plans for a new school uniform and the development of a 'school promise'. In lessons in personal, social and health education, pupils discuss a range of their concerns and issues that are important to them, such as bad behaviour, bullying and how working co-operatively with each other is valuable. Opportunities to discuss issues such as these make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development and help to raise their self-esteem. Pupils are very clear that they are treated fairly in school and that their views are valued. The planned introduction of a school council is likely to provide a useful forum for pupils to make a more regular contribution of ideas to help develop and improve aspects of their school.

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

Links with parents, other schools and the community are good.

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

- Parents are kept well informed about the progress their children are making and are positive about what the school provides
- The parents' association is very supportive of the school
- The school works well with local schools and has good links with the community

#### **Commentary**

25. Parents have positive views about the school. They recognise that the school is well led and that their children are encouraged to work hard. Parents are comfortable in approaching the school if they have concerns, and they say complaints are dealt with effectively. They appreciate the way they are kept informed about their children's progress and feel increasingly confident about all that the school is doing. Reports on progress at the end of each year are well set out and clear so parents understand how well their children have achieved. These reports also highlight some areas in which children can improve their work, especially in English and mathematics. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are helpful documents that give a full picture of the school. They are well illustrated and informative, although information about standard assessment tests does not have an explanation to help parents understand it fully. The school has maintained and consolidated the good partnership with parents noted in the previous report.

26. Parents feel welcome in the school. They are consulted satisfactorily about issues that are of direct concern to them. New initiatives, such as the introduction of mixed-age teaching, are closely monitored by the school so that parents' views are taken into account. Parents are kept well informed about the curriculum and given good guidance so that they can help their children with their work in school. For example, regular workshops are held for parents of children in the reception classes. These provide parents with useful ideas about how they can help their children with their learning at home. Parents provide the school with good support. For example, a good number of parents help in classes, especially with swimming classes, and with fund-raising through the parents' association. Overall, the contribution made by parents to the school and to their children's learning at home is good.

27. The school works well with local schools, providing good opportunities for staff to meet and share training sessions with other teachers. This enables teachers to exchange ideas so that they can try them out in Duston Eldean. Local schools share resources and staffing and this school benefits from, for example, the shared use of a specialist French teacher and the use of a bus to take pupils to sports' matches. The school has a well-established link with University

College, Northampton, and is used as a base for teachers in training. Pupils benefit from this because they are taught for short periods of time during the year in different ways by a different person. Because the school has not yet taught pupils in Year 6, links with secondary schools are not well established, but plans are well in hand to link as effectively with the next stage of education as with local primary schools. Overall, there has been an improvement in links with other schools and education institutions since the last inspection.

28. The school has good links with the community. These are valued by the school and they make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils of all ages have good opportunities to find out about their local area. For example, younger pupils go on short walks around the locality and older pupils visit the local theatre and take part in local sports' meetings with other schools. Visits are also made to local churches and links have been forged with a local fast-food outlet and a local supermarket. A number of local people visit the school and share their skills or experiences with pupils. The curriculum is enriched by such contributions and they bring an added dimension to lessons. Members of the local community make good use of the school facilities for clubs and a range of meetings. Community links have improved since the last inspection.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall, leadership is good and management is satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is good. Leadership and management by subject co-ordinators are satisfactory overall. Governors are supportive of the school and governance is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is improving because of the good leadership of the headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher
- The school's leadership team is effective in improving teaching and learning and helping to raise standards
- Monitoring of pupils' progress and of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators varies – it is very good in English and mathematics but not good enough in other subjects ...
- Governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school

### **Commentary**

29. The headteacher was appointed two years ago and, since that time, she has made a number of improvements to the school. A greater proportion of the teaching is good or very good and pupils are achieving better than they did. Standards are beginning to rise. The headteacher is being supported very ably in this work by the recently appointed deputy headteacher. All decisions about improving aspects of the school's work are based, quite properly, on a very clear vision and ambition to improve teaching and learning so that pupils' achievements and standards are raised. The pace of change is fast and is already contributing significantly to raising standards and improving teaching and learning. This is especially the case in Year 5 where the teaching is often good. As yet, however, the quality of teaching and learning is not consistently good throughout the school. The wider school leadership team of senior staff is also very focused on raising standards and improving teaching. This team is providing effective support to the headteacher and shares the vision for improvement. These staff act as good role models for others and are fully involved in strategic decisions.

30. As a result of rigorous, systematic and honest evaluations of its performance, the school is aware of its strengths and weaknesses. These are reflected in the school improvement plan, which is a very detailed and comprehensive document. Central to the plan is the recognition that standards need to be raised. Understandably, this plan represents an ambitious approach to seeking improvements at the school. Staff and governors take an active part in the production and review of the plans. Pupils' performance in national tests is

analysed systematically and plans for improvement devised. The school has recently carried out much useful work assessing and recording pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science but the leadership team has not yet had time to continue this work in other subjects. The performance of teachers so that they all contribute effectively in raising standards is also a major priority for the school, and is done well. Induction procedures for staff new to the school are satisfactory.

31. Leadership and management by subject co-ordinators are satisfactory overall. Their roles and responsibilities have been made clear recently. Subject co-ordinators are aware of the overall strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. They give good support and guidance to other teachers, especially when they return from receiving further training themselves. They monitor teachers' plans and check that the school's programme of work is being taught. They monitor pupils' work where it is possible to do so. Since the headteacher was appointed, the priorities in the school have been very clearly focused on raising standards, particularly in English and mathematics. As a result, the leadership and management of English and mathematics are especially effective and, consequently, ways of improving teaching, learning and achievement in these subjects are being successful. Co-ordinators in subjects other than English and mathematics have not had the opportunity to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. This means that they do not know first-hand what are the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching in their subjects. However, the school has plans to correct this weakness. This is one of the key issues to be drawn to the school's attention from this inspection.
32. Leadership and management of provision for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. Pupils' needs are identified as soon as they are perceived by teachers and plans are drawn up to help pupils improve their work and/or their behaviour. These plans are satisfactory overall and are monitored well to check whether pupils have met the targets for improvement that have been set for them.
33. The management of some pupils' behaviour at lunchtimes is an issue for the school to resolve. During the inspection, some boisterous and over-exuberant behaviour was observed by inspectors, and parents and pupils are both concerned that this is a time when bullying sometimes takes place. The school has devised suitable plans that are linked to the school's approach to behaviour management and self-discipline. The aim of these is to improve behaviour at lunchtimes, but they have yet to come fully into effect.
34. Governors are very supportive of the school. They ensure that the school meets its statutory duties. They are well organised into committees that help to give them a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the standards achieved by pupils. They do not, however, ask enough searching questions about the work of the school in order to provide more help to the headteacher and senior staff, although they are very aware of the positive impact of the present leadership on the school. The governing body helps set the overall priorities for the school in its improvement plan.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	770,270
Total expenditure	784,405
Expenditure per pupil	1,986

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	68,920
Balance carried forward to the next	54,785

35. The budget is being spent satisfactorily with a clear focus on raising standards and improving teaching. Staffing and other resources are being used efficiently for the benefit of pupils. The school is aware that it needs to take account of likely expenditure because of the new building that is scheduled shortly. Funds are prudently being kept back for this purpose. The systems to manage school finances are satisfactory.

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

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

36. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. It is good in children's personal, social and emotional development. This is similar to that reported at the last inspection. The reception classes are suitably organised and resourced to help children learn the different areas of learning. The outdoor accommodation, established since the last inspection, is spacious and attractive, although it does not have a covered area that could be used in bad weather due to future building plans.
37. Almost all children attend some pre-school provision before they begin at school and the reception staff liaise well with the main pre-school providers each summer term. Links with parents are very good and there is a timetabled slot each day in the first half-term for parents to discuss their children's progress with a teacher. This ensures that children settle into school very quickly. Parent workshops are held throughout the year and these help to involve parents in their children's learning.
38. Overall, children start reception with average attainment in all areas of learning. They achieve satisfactorily in relation to their individual starting points as a result of satisfactory teaching. In their personal, social and emotional development, children achieve well because of the good teaching in this area. Children are offered a good range of activities, and there is a good balance between those activities led by teachers and those children choose for themselves. The school follows national guidance well in teaching and the recording of children's progress. However, not enough use is made of assessments to help children learn more effectively. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory.

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

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good.

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

- Children achieve well and reach standards above those expected for their age by the end of the year
- Arrangements for helping children to settle quickly in the reception classes are good
- Children enjoy taking responsibilities, are very confident, and behave well

#### **Commentary**

39. Good induction procedures help children to settle into school quickly. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that they provide a stimulating environment to help children feel secure and confident to try out new and interesting things. Several examples were seen during inspection of children working together cooperatively and independently. In a group that were building large models in a relatively small space, children were talking in pairs about the models they were making. They moved very carefully round their models so as not to knock them over.
40. Children are taught the right way to behave in a firm but gentle way. They respond positively to this and behave well. All children dress and undress themselves sensibly and walk in an orderly way to the hall for physical education lessons. Children are keen to take the register to the school office and they do so confidently and quickly. They are responsible for eating an apple, if they wish to have one, and putting their card in the tray to show that they have eaten it. They know that aprons must be worn for painting activities and help each other to put these on. They are

confident in choosing and selecting the materials they need for an art activity because the resources are clearly set out at their level.

41. Children achieve well in this area because of the good teaching that helps them learn effectively. Teachers plan carefully and systematically and provide a good range of activities that help children to become responsible young members of the school community. Children start school at average levels of attainment in this area, but, by the time they enter Year 1, they reach above average standards.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children speak and listen well because adults encourage them to do so on many occasions
- Children are taught the sounds letters make well and this helps them learn to read and spell
- Children do not progress quickly enough in learning to write because they do not receive enough guidance from their teachers

### **Commentary**

42. Children's achievement is good in speaking and listening and satisfactory in reading and writing. The majority of children are on course to reach the goals expected by the end of the reception year. In speaking and listening, however, some will exceed these goals. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in speaking and listening, but there are weaknesses in the teaching of writing.

43. In speaking and listening, children listen to each other well without interrupting when working in groups. During the inspection, they discussed confidently the colours they were using for their teddy bear pictures and the characters they were painting. Teachers and teaching assistants pronounce sounds and words very clearly so that children are able to attempt to write words correctly. Children learn to use direction words like 'under', 'over' and 'through' very quickly. This good teaching helps children to achieve well in this aspect of language and reach above-average standards.

44. Standards in the early stages of reading are average and children's achievement is satisfactory. Teachers place a good emphasis on teaching the sounds letters make. For example, each morning children practise the initial and end sounds of simple words. Some also learn the sounds made by the middle vowels in simple words. Teachers help children to see how the sounds change in words when letters are moved around, for example, 'men' changes to 'met' by altering the last letter. These skills help children in their writing. Children enjoy reading and listen well to class stories. Children make satisfactory progress in their reading and most will achieve, and some will exceed, the standards expected for children of this age by the time they start Year 1.

45. Children's attainment in writing is not as good as in the other aspects of literacy and many children do not achieve as much as they could. Most write short captions. For example, they have written about plant growth and about what a pet needs. Although children use small whiteboards effectively to try out their words, they are not given sufficient help to encourage them to think about choosing and seeing words to use in their writing. Children do not receive enough help on correct spelling and how to form letters correctly for this stage of the

reception year. As a result, many children do not achieve as much as they could in their writing.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are beginning to think mathematically because of teachers' good questioning
- Children are not always given enough help to develop their ideas in independent learning

### **Commentary**

46. The majority of children are on course to attain the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year and they achieve satisfactorily as a result of satisfactory teaching. Children respond well to their teachers' questions. For example, they were keen to work out how many bears were left in a bag of ten after some had been taken out. They offered ideas enthusiastically about counting on from a number to solve a problem their teacher had asked. They are starting to use good mathematical language, such as 'more than' or 'less than' to describe numbers.

47. A group of children responded very well to the challenge given by the teacher to compare the heights of two teddy bears. However, this learning was not reinforced by setting the children further tasks to do in their independent work. There was not sufficient accuracy in discussions about 'longer' and 'taller' and, as a result, children's learning was not sufficiently developed.

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

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children select appropriate resources and use them well in many activities
- Children are learning how to use computers well

### **Commentary**

48. The majority of children are likely to achieve the expected goals by the end of the year and their achievement is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Children are provided with a wide range of opportunities to find out about the world around them. In science, they learn about the importance of water to make plants grow. For example, they were keen to water the lettuces they had planted outside and know how long these plants have taken to grow so far. They learn about features of insects, such as the ladybird. They counted the spots on the back of a ladybird using a magnifying glass. Unfortunately, they were not encouraged to find out more about ladybirds in books or on the computer or by asking questions so that their learning in this case was only satisfactory. In a geography lesson, a group of children achieved satisfactorily. They were asked to give instructions to a teaching assistant to enable her to get to the certain places in the classroom. This activity interested the children and involved them very well in their learning. They had a good understanding of how to give the correct instructions, but further opportunities to help the higher-attaining pupils give more detailed instructions were not taken.

49. Children enjoyed making different props for the class teddy bears. They used a wide range of tools and materials to do so, selecting scissors, glue, and sellotape and using them well. They had conversations about the best way to cut and fix pipe cleaners and were very proud of their finished products, such as sunglasses and binoculars. At the end of a session on building towers using construction blocks, one pupil took a digital photograph of the towers. He was shown how to do this very well by the teacher. Children are learning how to use computers well to find out information. For example, children used a computer program to give a short visual sequence of the life cycle of a butterfly.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children with special educational needs are taught physical skills well
- Children control small and large equipment well

### **Commentary**

50. Children's achievement in this area is satisfactory and most are likely to reach the standards expected of pupils of this age by the time they start Year 1. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In a physical education lesson, children were beginning to use space well. They were provided with good opportunities to move around the hall and were reminded not to bump into each other. They were getting accustomed to using all the space available to them. They are provided with good opportunities for throwing and catching. They throw and catch appropriately for their age using two hands. Children with special educational needs are taught well. They are helped to adapt their skills so that they can throw and catch with one hand, drawing the ball carefully into their bodies. Children jump using suitable control for their age. Lower-attaining children, including those with special educational needs, follow the movements of their teachers and of other children so that they achieve well. However, children are not encouraged to consider enough how they could improve their physical movements.

51. Children control different sized brushes well in their painting and cut with scissors well to make models for their teddies. Overall, they handle pencils, crayons and small cutting tools appropriately for their age although a few children do not hold their pencils correctly.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Painting skills are taught well
- Children are provided with good opportunities to act out roles

### **Commentary**

52. Children's achievement is satisfactory and most are likely to reach the standards expected in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children describe how to mix paints and some know that red and green combine to make brown. They know that they have to clean their brushes before they take the second colour for mixing. They think carefully about the colours they are using in painting teddies and some think carefully about the shapes they are painting. Higher-attaining children comment, showing good maturity for their age, on what they like about each others' pictures.

53. Children are provided with good opportunities for role-play. For example, they acted out in role a teddy bears' picnic. They practised their social skills well as they offered and ate the sandwiches they had made and in taking turns talking to each other. They concentrated on and enjoyed this activity for a significant period of time. Few musical activities were observed. However, children enjoyed exploring sounds made by the recently purchased musical instruments.

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



## ENGLISH

Provision in English is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in speaking, listening and reading, and so standards in these aspects are above expected levels
- Standards in writing are improving, but those of the boys are below expected levels
- English is very well led and managed and this is the reason standards are improving
- Teachers plan lessons well for all pupils who, as a result, learn and achieve well
- Standards of presentation and handwriting throughout the school are unsatisfactory

### Commentary

54. Standards in reading and writing are improving after a period of decline. Overall, standards throughout the school are average. Standards in writing have not yet caught up with the achievement of pupils. This is because good achievement has only occurred recently. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, achieve well, overall. Their good progress can be directly attributed to the school's clear focus on improving teaching and learning in literacy and the effective use of the National Literacy Strategy

55. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 speak confidently using a good range of vocabulary. They listen well and show good understanding of questions and the main points of discussions. In Years 3 to 5, pupils continue to improve and gain confidence when speaking. They give clear verbal explanations, use a variety of adjectives and adverbs to make their ideas more interesting, listen carefully, and respond well to instructions. Throughout the school, pupils answer questions willingly and courteously, and discuss ideas very well in small groups. This is because the teaching of speaking and listening is good. Teachers speak to pupils clearly and with courtesy. They listen carefully to the responses pupils make and value the contributions they make to lessons. This helps pupils achieve well in this area

56. By the end of Year 2, most pupils understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. They read non-fiction books using headings, text and pictures to find out the information they need and read a wide range of storybooks. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 continue to achieve well in reading. They enjoy reading and express clearly their opinions on books. By the end of Year 5, most pupils read with expression because they have a good knowledge of punctuation. Lower-attaining pupils have learnt good skills in tackling unfamiliar words. Pupils read and use effectively Internet sites for research and print out the appropriate text they need. Standards are high in reading because teachers teach the subject well. They help pupils to learn the sounds letters make and to sub-divide the parts of difficult and unfamiliar words. Pupils understand what they read because, as they read together in groups, teachers ask them what is taking place in stories.

57. Standards of writing are improving and pupils, especially the girls, are now achieving well. However, the standard of boys' writing is still below expected levels. Overall, standards of writing in Years 1 and 2 are at expected levels. Most spelling is accurate, punctuation is generally correct and sentences are well constructed. Higher-attaining pupils think carefully about the words they use and write good imaginative stories. Pupils in Years 3 to 5, especially the girls, continue to achieve well and make good progress and standards, overall, are at expected levels for the pupils' ages. Punctuation and spelling are generally accurate and pupils have good understanding of sentence structure. In one piece of work, pupils in Year 3 made good use of a Roald Dahl story and wrote interesting accounts of an

incident from different points of view. They used a wide range of vocabulary to engage the reader's interest. By the time they reach Year 5, pupils use a wide range of adjectives and adverbs to make their writing more interesting. For example, pupils in Year 5 wrote letters trying to persuade the reader about the points for and against the closure of a local road. They wrote well, reflecting the points of view of different groups of people with their own vested interests in the outcome. Overall, teachers have worked successfully in improving standards of writing. They provide pupils with good guidance about how to write well. However, in spite of this, boys need more guidance to help them write better than they do. They have not paid enough attention to standards of presentation and handwriting and, throughout the school, these are unsatisfactory.

58. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is consistently very good in Year 5. In these classes, pupils are set work that encourages them to think very carefully. They rise to the challenges set for them and work enthusiastically. Lessons are taught at a very good pace and, as a result, pupils learn very effectively. Where teaching is very good, teachers make the purposes of lessons clear and check that pupils have learnt what they were supposed to do by the end of the lesson. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, are given clear guidelines to help them in their work, especially their writing. This helps them learn well. The atmosphere in lessons is very positive because teachers, teaching assistants and pupils get on very well together. Pupils, including those who find it difficult to behave well, are managed effectively and this helps to promote good attitudes and behaviour. Teaching assistants provide good support for lower-attaining pupils and this helps them to learn well because the tasks are explained to them at their level of understanding. However, the teaching is not always as good as this. In a few lessons, tasks set for pupils are interesting but the pace of learning is too slow. In addition, some tasks are too easy for higher-attaining pupils.
59. Leadership and management of English are very good. The strengths and weaknesses of the subject have been checked on and plans for improvement have been devised. These are being very successful in raising standards. This has led to provision in the subject being better than it was two years ago. However, overall, provision in English is similar to that reported at the last inspection. This is in spite of pupils' enthusiasm for reading, standards of writing and the quality of teaching and learning improving during the past two years. Assessment procedures are good and these are accompanied by a good system for keeping records of the progress pupils are making. Computers are used well for word-processing some of the pupils' work.

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

60. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are promoted well in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers, especially at the beginnings of lessons and pupils, in their turn, follow guidance and instructions well. Teachers allow pupils to answer oral questions at length and do not interrupt them when they are doing so. This helps them to develop their speaking skills well. Standards of writing are improving in most subjects. For example, in history and geography, many pupils, especially girls, write well in a variety of contexts. They write accounts of events from the past and describe the features of different landscapes. In science, pupils have good opportunities to write up their investigations as if they were scientists. They outline the predictions, write about what they did and include their results and conclusions of their investigations. Pupils are not provided with enough opportunities, however, to write in religious education.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ? Standards in mathematics are rising and many pupils are achieving well because the teaching has improved
- ? A significant proportion of the teaching is good and this helps pupils to achieve well
- ? Pupils' attitude to mathematics are good
- ? Management has a clear knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject

## **Commentary**

61. Over the past year, standards in mathematics have risen. The downward trend of the last four years has been reversed and many pupils are now making good progress. This is particularly evident in Year 5. In these classes, consistently good teaching has resulted in many pupils achieving well. However, achievement overall is satisfactory. Standards have improved most in pupils' knowledge and use of number because teachers have been successful in concentrating in particular on this aspect of mathematics. Standards throughout the school are now at expected levels for the pupils' ages in all aspects of mathematics.
62. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with a significant proportion being good. The consistently good teaching in Year 5 is resulting in higher standards. In these classes, pupils work productively and co-operatively and are very keen to share their answers with each other. More generally, most teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons very well to include work pitched at the correct level for pupils' abilities. Lessons are planned to allow for sufficient practice of pupils' oral and mental skills. A good amount of time is spent on allowing pupils to reflect and recall what they have been learning in previous lessons. Teachers ask pupils probing questions that identify what they already know and extend their thinking further. What pupils are to learn is explained well and this results in pupils learning well. For example, pupils in Year 2 added pairs of two-digit numbers together confidently and successfully, and explained clearly how they worked out these problems. Relationships are good and this promotes the positive attitudes pupils have towards mathematics. Teaching assistants are used effectively to help and explain tasks to lower-attaining pupils and those whose first language is not English. In a few of the lessons seen, however, higher-attaining pupils were set work that was too easy for them. In these lessons, the pace of learning was too slow and teachers did not expect high enough standards from these pupils. Work is marked regularly and comments from teachers encourage pupils in their work. However, these comments do not indicate regularly enough what pupils need to do next to improve.
63. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Management has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in mathematics. The school is concentrating on the right priorities for raising standards by improving the teaching of using and applying mathematics and reviewing resources. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment, setting learning targets and recording their achievements are good. This information is used effectively to identify those pupils who need further help to ensure they reach higher standards. It is also used to allocate pupils into teaching groups according to their abilities in Years 3 to 5. Standards and teaching are checked on systematically, but there has not been much opportunity for the subject co-ordinator to observe the teaching of the subject.
64. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. However, over the past year improvement has been good, and the downward trend in results has been reversed

owing to improved teaching and strengths in the leadership and management of the subject.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

65. Little evidence was available about the use of numeracy in the teaching across the curriculum. However, in science, good opportunities are provided for pupils to consolidate their mathematical skills. For example, pupils often record results of their investigations using line and block graphs and tables and charts. In history, timelines are used to enable pupils to understand how long ago historical events took place.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in investigative science are above the levels expected
- Boys achieve well because they enjoy finding out about the world around them in practical ways
- Pupils record science investigations well
- In a few lessons, work is not matched well enough to pupils' abilities and their behaviour is not managed well enough, so they do not make enough progress

### **Commentary**

66. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 5 are at the levels expected for pupils of these ages. Standards in investigative science are above these levels. This is because the school has been successful in concentrating on improving this important element of science. Teaching and learning in investigative science are good. Standards in pupils' understanding of materials and their properties, whilst at expected levels, are not as high as those in life and living processes and physical properties. This element of the curriculum is not taught in as much depth as other aspects of the subject. Overall pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 5 achieve well in science. This is because the teaching in Year 5 is consistently good, and, sometimes, very good. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. They receive good help from their teachers and teaching assistants to help them carry out investigations successfully and they record their work well using a clear structure and by completing charts and tables. Boys like the practical aspects of science and are keen to carry out investigations to find out about how things work. They achieve well as a result.

67. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with good features. Where teaching is good, teachers plan and prepare lessons well for pupils of different abilities. This helps all pupils to learn effectively, especially when they are carrying out and recording investigations. In science lessons, pupils are given good opportunities to consolidate the skills they have learnt in literacy. They practise their speaking and listening skills well when carrying out investigations. They consolidate their writing skills well as they record their predictions of investigations, describe what they did and write out their results and conclusions. They practise their mathematical skills well as they record the results of their investigations using tables, charts and graphs. They measure distances travelled by cars when learning about the friction of different surfaces. Teachers encourage pupils well in their work and pupils, in their turn, enjoy lessons and apply themselves well to the tasks in hand. Many lessons include practical activities that pupils enjoy, especially the boys. This encourages pupils to find out things for themselves and, in this way, they remember what they have learnt well. In a minority of classes, however, teaching and learning are not as positive as this. In some

lessons, teachers do not guide pupils well enough when they are carrying out tasks and, as a result, pupils do not know what they need to do to improve. More generally, teachers provide much encouragement for pupils when marking their work, but do not always indicate how they might improve. Sometimes, a small minority of boys act immaturely, misbehave and distract others. On these occasions, teachers do not manage to correct this misbehaviour successfully and the learning of all pupils in the class is slowed down through the disruption caused.

68. Leadership and management of science are satisfactory. Management has identified the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and drawn up plans to correct the weaknesses. This has been particularly successful during the past eighteen months. During this time, the school has been working on improving the teaching of investigative science and, as a result, this is now a strength of the teaching and learning. Pupils' achievement at the end of each unit of work is checked and records kept of the progress pupils make. This is successfully encouraging pupils to work hard to improve in their knowledge and understanding of science. However, management has not had opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in science. Standards, teaching and overall provision in science are similar to those noted at the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

69. Lack of evidence means that no overall judgement about provision can be made. Two lessons were observed, teachers' plans were inspected and a discussion was held with the subject co-ordinator. From this, it is clear that pupils in Year 5 are achieving the standards expected in compiling spreadsheets and some of them are exceeding these levels. However, not enough evidence was available to form an overall judgement about standards in Year 5 or in any other year group. Teachers' plans indicate that the National Curriculum in ICT is being taught in full. Pupils' progress in ICT is assessed well. Teachers' plans are monitored and examples of pupils' work at different standards have been compiled to help teachers judge the levels their pupils are achieving. Management has a good grasp of the subject and is involved in a local project in ICT for the Foundation Stage. The school has established a small computer suite that contains seven computers all networked. In spite of this, the ratio of up-to-date computers to pupils is well below the national average. Governors are aware of this and have plans to improve resources when the new building is completed.

## **HUMANITIES**

70. **Geography** was not a main focus during the inspection. As a result, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision. No lessons were observed and, therefore, no judgements can be made about the quality of teaching and learning or pupils' achievement. Teachers follow a useful programme of work that indicates that the National Curriculum is being taught in full. Management is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has developed a plan for improving standards and teaching. Teachers' plans are checked and pupils' work is monitored, but no observations of teaching and learning have taken place. The school has identified this as a priority so that the school understands fully the strengths and weaknesses in the subject.

71. Not enough evidence was available to make a judgement about provision in **history**. This is because no judgements can be made about standards and the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2. No lessons were observed in these year groups and only a small amount of pupils' work was available for inspection. Standards in Years 3 to 5 are at expected levels and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils know some historical facts

and they use evidence from a range of sources to recognise changes that have taken place over time. For example, they know about some Anglo–Saxon rituals and explain how archaeologists use excavated artefacts to help them explain aspects of the lives of people in the past. Year 4 pupils have a good understanding of materials and equipment that survive or decay when buried. Some good teaching was observed during the inspection. This was when teachers showed good historical knowledge and good lesson planning where a range of interesting activities was prepared for pupils. For example, in a Year 4 lesson on the Anglo–Saxons, pupils simulated the burial of a king with some of his possessions. This enabled all pupils to learn effectively from this practical activity. As a result, pupils responded well to the lesson and offered a wide range of ideas to make the activity even more interesting. In a few of the lessons seen, however, teachers did not manage pupils' behaviour well enough and this slowed down the progress pupils made because their concentration was interrupted. Management knows the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and suitable plans have been devised improving provision. Procedures for assessing pupils' achievement in history are unsatisfactory. Developing them has not yet been identified as a priority for the school. No monitoring of teaching and learning in lessons has yet taken place, although this is identified in the school improvement plan as a priority for the next year.

72. There was too little evidence to form judgements about standards, teaching and provision in **religious education**. Three lessons were observed, pupils' work was inspected, discussions were held with a sample of pupils and a discussion was held with the subject co-ordinator. Standards observed in the lessons inspected were at the levels expected in the locally agreed syllabus. However, there was not enough evidence available from pupils' books to provide a broader picture of the standards being achieved. What is clear from pupils' books is that teachers encourage pupils to record their learning in a wide variety of ways that include writing, drawing illustrations and sketches and using charts and tables. Teachers, quite rightly, expect higher-attaining pupils to record more than lower-attaining pupils. However, teachers do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to consolidate their thinking in religious education and extend their literacy skills by writing it down. The school teaches the locally agreed syllabus and has devised its own useful scheme of work. Management checks teachers' plans carefully to ensure that the agreed syllabus is being taught. Overall, the school does not arrange enough visits to different places of worship. Resources for teaching religious education are unsatisfactory, and teachers do not make enough use of those that are available, such as videos, CD-ROMs and the Internet.

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

73. No overall judgement about provision in **art and design** can be made because there was not enough evidence gathered during the inspection to do so. One lesson was observed, a discussion was held with the subject co-ordinator and pupils' work on display around the school was inspected. In the lesson observed, in Year 5, pupils were given a very clear focus for the decisions they made about choosing colour, texture and effects for planning the tapestries they were making. Pupils showed they had learnt about the shades of colours in previous lessons and used this knowledge well to reflect on the effects on colour and texture of turning materials to the wrong side. Higher-attaining pupils evaluated their choices well. Lower-attaining pupils were given good opportunities to discuss their ideas with a friend and, in this way, they made good progress. A range of work produced in Years 3 to 5 during the multicultural fortnight was seen near their classrooms and this indicated that standards in this work were as expected for the pupils' ages. A good range of materials is used in art and design. For example, in the work on Aztecs in history, collage masks were carefully made and pupils produced some impressive pictures and designs using string and materials for weaving. In geography, pupils produced some drawing and

painting on fabric in a Ghanaian style, Japanese-style blossom paintings on lanterns, and Japanese paper kites. Pupils' work in art and design is displayed well around the school.

74. Lack of evidence means that it was not possible to judge provision in **design and technology**. No lessons were observed during the inspection and little work was on display around the school. A discussion was held with the subject co-ordinator and photographs of a range of previous work were seen. Year 3 pupils have made attractive pencil cases, Year 4 pupils have recently produced some interesting working torches and Year 5 pupils have been planning, constructing and evaluating musical instruments and toys. Pupils in these year groups are keen to describe their work and discuss how it might be improved. There was little evidence of work from Years 1 and 2. Teachers' plans indicate that they follow national guidance in planning lessons and this suggests that the National Curriculum is being taught in full. Teachers receive regular training to help them improve teaching and learning in the subject. The subject co-ordinator and a teacher from each year group have attended recent training in design and technology.

75. **Music** was not a main focus during the inspection and not enough evidence was collected to make a judgement about provision. One lesson was observed, pupils' singing was heard during assemblies and a discussion was held with the subject co-ordinator. In the lesson seen for Year 5, pupils produced some interesting rhythms. Some pupils added embellishments to these rhythms to make them even more interesting. Pupils are very motivated by African drums to which they were introduced by an African drummer who visited the school recently. Pupils sing tunefully and enthusiastically in assemblies. The school choir practises regularly and sings in local events. The school offers a good range of opportunities for instrumental tuition from visiting teachers in 'cello, brass, woodwind and violin.

76. There was too little evidence to judge overall provision in **physical education**. Three lessons were observed, two in games and one in swimming. A discussion was also held with the subject co-ordinator. Pupils in Year 1 throw and catch small and large balls well and work sensibly with a partner. They select and use equipment with maturity for their age. In the tennis and swimming lessons observed, pupils achieved well because the teaching was clearly focused on developing pupils' skills in these areas. Good links were made in these lessons to other subjects. For example, the friction of the water in swimming was linked to work on forces in science. Provision in swimming is a strength of the school because all pupils from the reception classes to Year 4 have opportunities to swim in the school's learner pool. Pupils are enthusiastic and confident about swimming. The school provides a good range of sports activities. These include netball, football, country dancing, basketball, hockey and athletics. Some of these activities involve competitive fixtures against other local schools. Management provides good advice to other teachers, particularly those who are new to the school. The school uses a commercial scheme to help plan lessons in dance, games and gymnastics. Teachers adapt this scheme well as they match it to the needs of pupils in the school. No monitoring and evaluation of standards and teaching have taken place. This means that the school does not know how well it is doing in physical education or the strengths and weaknesses in its provision. The range and quality of resources used in physical education are good.

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

77. One lesson was observed in this subject and there was no past work completed by the pupils that could be used to evaluate standards achieved. It is, therefore, not possible to make a

judgement about overall provision. Lessons in personal, social and health education are provided in each class. These include provision for sex and relationships education. The school has plans to develop provision for drugs education. The behaviour curriculum is being soundly integrated into lessons in personal, social and health education. Assemblies are used well to provide pupils with valuable opportunities to discuss important issues, such as working together and the importance of rules to help communities work well. Opportunities, such as these help to broaden pupils' understanding of how to live with others and promote their personal development well.



## 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	4
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>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
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	3
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	3
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).*