

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **FOUR ELMS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Four Elms, Edenbridge

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118275

Headteacher: Ms Wendy Fox

Lead inspector: Wendy Simmons

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup>- 11<sup>th</sup> February 2004

Inspection number: 256155

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

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	110
School address:	Bough Beech Road Four Elms, Edenbridge, Kent
Postcode:	TN8 6NE
Telephone number:	(01732) 700274
Fax number:	(01732) 700274
Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Four Elms Primary School.
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Clive Harrison
Date of previous inspection:	19 <sup>th</sup> - 21 <sup>st</sup> May 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Four Elms Primary School is situated in a small village close to Edenbridge. The current headteacher was appointed 18 months ago. The school is arranged around the original Victorian building and benefits from an attractive modern extension and grounds. However, there is no hall space for physical education. There are 110 pupils registered at this popular and over subscribed school. Pupils are taught in mixed aged classes and there are more girls than boys. Pupils attend from several surrounding villages, with 70 per cent coming from Edenbridge. Overall, pupils' social circumstances are average. The school has low percentage of pupils receiving free school meals. The number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is lower than average overall. Almost all pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds, with very few learning English as an additional language. When pupils start the school in the Reception class, their skills and knowledge are broadly average, but this varies between year groups, with some years showing above average standards. During the last year, the school found it difficult to replace a senior teacher, but after a period of having a number of supply teachers, this has been resolved. The school has been awarded two Achievement Awards for improving standards of work and the Active Mark for involvement in sport.

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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9977	Fran Luke	Lay inspector	
32539	Robert Cross	Team inspector	Science, religious education (RE), physical education (PE), geography and history.
10808	Alan Britton	Team inspector	Mathematics, special educational needs, design and technology (DT) and Foundation Stage.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Four Elms Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education.** Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good leadership and management are leading to improving standards. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher shows good leadership and has developed an ethos for improvement with governors and the new senior teacher. Subject managers are starting to take more responsibility.
- Attainment in English is well above average, pupils achieve well due to good teaching and learning.
- Teaching and learning for able pupils in Year 2 in mathematics and science lack challenge.
- There is very good provision for pupils with SEN.
- The quality of teaching, learning and provision in the Reception class is good.
- Parents, staff and governors work closely together, which has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Pupils do not achieve well enough in ICT, due to limitations in teaching and learning.
- Pupils are not doing enough experiments and investigation in science for themselves.
- Assessment information is not used to best effect to help all pupils to achieve well.

Satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection in 1998. Standards have improved by Year 6 overall, which was recognised when the school was awarded two Achievement Awards. There has been satisfactory improvement in developing opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively. Challenges for the more able have developed mostly in Years 5 and 6 and within English throughout the school. However, the school has been slower in meeting the needs of the most able in Year 2 in mathematics and science. There has been good progress in improving provision in the Reception class and in maintaining the very good provision for pupils with SEN. Teaching and learning remain good in Years 3 to 6. Communication with parents and the role of the governors' show good improvement. Aspects of assessment and ICT still under developed.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The table below shows the school's results in the last three years. Currently, standards in the Reception class are above average, especially in communication and personal and social skills. Standards are average overall in Year 2. There has been significant improvement in English, which is currently well above average in reading and writing. Standards in mathematics are average, which shows some improvement on the last three year's test results, although few pupils are working on higher Level 3 skills. Standards in science are average by Year 2. By Year 6, the standard of work seen is above average overall. It is well above average in English and above average in science and mathematics. In ICT, standards are broadly average. Pupils reach very high standards in swimming.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	A*	A
Mathematics	A	C	A	B
Science	B	D	B	C

*Key: A\* top 5% of schools A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E\* - in the lowest 5% of schools*

*Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

**Achievement is satisfactory.** Children make good progress in the Reception class and generally in Years 1, 5 and 6. Pupils with SEN achieve well, but the rate of achievement for higher-ability pupils in Year 2 is inconsistent between subjects. Pupils achieve best in English, as they make consistently good progress throughout the school. This reflects the school's emphasis on improving this subject in the last year. In science, better progress is hampered by the pupils not doing enough experiments for themselves. In ICT, pupils do not develop skills quickly enough from year to year and this slows down their rate of progress and achievement.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good overall, but occasionally, a few younger pupils do not pay sufficient attention in lessons. Attendance is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.** The care shown by staff contributes to pupils' good personal development. Pupils are keen to learn. **The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall.** There are notable strengths in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6, due to lessons meeting the needs of all ability groups more effectively. The mixed aged classes sometimes do not provide equal opportunities for all pupils, and adversely affect the progress of higher ability pupils. This is a major factor in why teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in Year 2 for mathematics and science. The headteacher and governors have taken firm action to give more teaching time to the mixed aged classes. This is working best in English. Pupils are keen and confident to work independently in ICT but there is not enough regular teaching of ICT. Links with the community and extra activities enrich pupils' learning. A significant strength is the very good support given by teaching assistants, who work closely with teachers to provide good teaching and learning for pupils with SEN. Assessment information is not used effectively enough to track pupils' progress, set targets and plan lessons. Learning in gymnastics is hampered by the accommodation.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good overall.** The headteacher has acted effectively to bring about important changes. Governance is good. All statutory responsibilities are met. Relationships and teamwork are very good. Subject leaders are still developing their management roles. Leadership is good for SEN, English, ICT and the Foundation Stage.

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

Parents like the school very much and feel that it is more stable now all classes have a permanent teacher. Pupils like this happy school and care for each other.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED.**

The most important things the school should do to improve.

- Raise the achievement of the most able pupils in Year 2, by developing challenging teaching and learning in mathematics and science.
- Make better use of assessment information to plan lessons, set targets and track pupils' progress, so that pupils know what to do to improve.
- Increase teaching time, resources and learning opportunities in ICT.
- Increase investigation and independent learning opportunities in science.
- Further develop the role of staff with other management responsibilities.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage and good for pupils with SEN. In Year 1 it is satisfactory, but in Year 2 it is too patchy, which is unsatisfactory for higher ability pupils. In older classes achievement is satisfactory overall, with significant strengths in Years 5 and 6. Standards overall by Year 6 are above average. In English, they are well above average and, in mathematics and science, they are above average. Standards by Year 2 are average overall.

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

- Achievement in English is consistently good and leads to standards in English, which are well above average throughout the school.
- Pupils are not achieving well enough in mathematics and science in Year 2.
- There is good achievement for children in the Reception class.
- Pupils with SEN achieve well for their abilities.
- Pupils could be achieving better in ICT and in aspects of science.
- Achievement in physical education is hampered by the accommodation.
- The tracking of progress as pupils move through the school is not rigorous enough.
- The provision for able and gifted and talented pupils is inconsistent.

1. When children start this school, in the Reception class overall their attainment is broadly average. Children show suitable confidence in their skills, including their personal and social skills. However, some year groups vary considerably, with some classes having a significant proportion of higher ability pupils. Children make good progress in the Reception class. There is a strong emphasis on language skills and work on basic number activities is satisfactory. Overall, high expectations and a rich variety of learning opportunities enable these young children to achieve well. By the end of the Reception year, records indicate that standards are above average because a high proportion of children have reached the expected goals in all areas of their learning and a significant proportion are working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. This above average attainment on entry to Year 1 is a characteristic of most classes although in Years 3 and 5, it is average.

2. Pupils work in mixed aged classes in Year 1 and 2, which means that there is a very wide range of abilities. The school recognised that improvement was needed to meet the needs of all of the pupils and so, governors appointed an additional teacher to help with English. There has also been very successful staff training in literacy. By Year 2, standards in English have improved significantly and are now well above average overall in both reading and writing. This shows good achievement and very significant improvement on the results reported in the 2003 national tests, when standards were below average in writing. Last year, few pupils gained a higher Level 3 result in writing in the national tests, but this is improving as about one third of the class were working at this level. This good achievement in English reflects the fact that more teaching and learning time can focus on able pupils. However, in mathematics and science, standards, although currently average, show that there is underachievement by this group of pupils because too much work is planned to meet the average ability pupils in Year 2. Although this has the advantage of often stretching the Year 1 pupils, it slows down the learning of some

higher ability Year 2 pupils. This is a factor in why the school gains few Level 3 results in national tests and why standards in the previous three years were below average in national tests.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.0 (16.5)	15.9 (15.8)
Writing	14.2 (16.1)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.9 (15.8)	16.4 (16.5)

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

3. From Year 2 to Year 6, achievement is satisfactory. The school has raised standards overall by Year 6 since the last inspection, and has been awarded two Achievement Awards in 2000 and 2001, when standards in national tests were very high. It is important to note that recent staffing difficulties have slowed down the progress made by some pupils. However, the staff is more stable and the headteacher takes groups of pupils, so that work for different abilities is carefully planned to ensure that they make good progress in English and steady progress in mathematics. Standards in mathematics are above average, but not as high as the very high standards found in English. Support is especially successful in Years 5 and 6, where pupils make the best progress. Nonetheless, they are not as successful in improving standards in science throughout the school. This is because pupils do not do enough practical investigations and experiments for themselves. This is a factor in explaining why standards are average overall, as the school gets to few above average results in national tests to improve standards overall.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.4 (29.2)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.7 (27.5)	27.0 (26.7)
Science	29.6 (28.1)	28.8 (28.3)

*There were 14 pupils in the year group, Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained the good progress and achievement made by pupils with SEN. Teaching assistants and teachers often provide very good support for pupils both in class and through focused group activities. In English, this can often result in pupils reaching average standards in reading and writing.

5. Throughout the school, in ICT, pupils do not do well enough in aspects of their work because the school is only just developing the range of resources and teacher expertise. Moreover, there is insufficient teaching time to improve achievement. Many pupils have not developed skills from year to year in the past and this influences their achievement by Year 6.

6. Teachers' use of assessment information is not rigorous enough to lift the quality of work. Further specific details are expanded upon in the teaching and learning section of this report. Lack of rigour in tracking pupils' progress makes it an ineffective tool in setting challenging targets for national tests. For example, the school predicted that 42 per cent would reach the higher Level 5 in English in Year 6 in 2003, but 71 per cent achieved this level.



7. The school is just beginning to identify and provide for gifted and talented pupils. This is working well especially for pupils in Years 5 and 6 and for those learning English as an additional language, but is weaker in Year 2. Of note is the very good achievement for able swimmers. The school is working hard to develop sports and has received an Active Mark even though the school hall is unsuitable for gymnastics. The school works closely with an arts specialist school to provide for gifted and talented artists.

**Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils like school. Their attitudes to their work and behaviour are good overall but, in Years 1 and 2, they are satisfactory. Attendance is good. Overall, pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance is above average and pupils arrive at school on time.
- Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour are good and support their learning.
- Provision for moral, social and cultural development is a good feature of the school.

**Commentary**

8. Pupils commented that the school is a friendly place. Attendance is above average and children are keen to come to school and to arrive on time.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.6	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:2002 /2003*

9. Pupils have a positive attitude to school and there is a strong link with parents, which enhances pupils’ learning. In lessons, pupils are enthusiastic about learning. They concentrate on, and persevere with, their work. Behaviour around the school and on the playground is good. In lessons, behaviour is generally good. However, in one class, where the teacher is not always consistently firm, the attitudes and behaviour of some children are not always so good and this affects learning adversely. No bullying or harassment was seen during the inspection and pupils spoken to were very happy that any incidents were always dealt with quickly. There were no exclusions in the school year before the inspection. Pupils’ are confident. They demonstrate good self-esteem and enjoy working independently.

10. Relationships throughout the school are good, and staff provide good role models for pupils. Pupils are courteous and helpful and work well together in pairs or in groups. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to take on additional responsibility, which they carry out very conscientiously. For instance, the School Council and Year 6 monitors, who have responsibility for carrying out duties around the school, including setting out the equipment for assemblies. There are also ‘Playground Friends’.

11. Moral, social and cultural development is good and spiritual development is satisfactory. Religious education and various acts of worship allow pupils to recognise the diversity of faiths represented and they show a good understanding and acceptance of varying religious customs. Pupils are also given opportunities for reflection. However, in RE, pupils show a lack of understanding of how RE affects them in everyday life. Pupils' moral development is good. The school helps them to understand the effect of their actions and they have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils' social development is also good. Pupils genuinely feel they have a voice and that they can make a difference in aspects of school life through their membership of the School Council. They are taught to think of others less fortunate than themselves, by organising and raising funds for different charities. Pupils' cultural development is good. For example, they take part in such activities as Indian dance, Steel Drums and Maypole Dancing.

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	77	0	0
Mixed – White Asian	1	0	0
Mixed –any other mixed background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Black or Black British-Caribbean	1	0	0
Parent/pupils preferred not to say	7	0	0
Information not obtained	21	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**

12. The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The strongest features of the provision include the good teaching and learning for children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6 and the very good teaching and learning opportunities for pupils with SEN. Areas needing most improvement are challenges for the higher ability pupils in Year 2, where teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in mathematics and science. Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 3 to 6. Assessment is good in the Foundation Stage but, elsewhere, it is an area for improvement. Pupils and parents have very positive views about the quality of education.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Assessment is unsatisfactory

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching in Year 2 is unsatisfactory in mathematics and science.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good in English throughout the school.

- Teachers and pupils have good relationships and pupils are keen to learn.
- Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils, especially for pupils with SEN.
- Assessment is insufficiently developed to enable pupils to achieve their full potential.
- Investigation and research activities are underdeveloped in science.
- There is not enough teaching of ICT to raise standards.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 are good.

## Commentary

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	11	9	1	0	0

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

13. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement in the Reception class. Teaching and learning are now good. Careful attention has been given to the Year 1 pupils who are also in this class to ensure that they make suitable progress. In this class, staff make better use of assessment information to plan the next stages of learning for the children than in other classes in the school. Work and activities are well planned to make learning interesting. Time is used effectively to ensure that children learn by listening to adults and then investigating things for themselves. Group activities are carefully thought out to enable the children to talk about what they are doing with other adults. High priority is given to developing reading, writing and wider communication and social skills. Good attention is also given to creative and physical activities, although the outside area is underdeveloped as an outside classroom. During the inspection, it was used mainly for physical development.

14. Teaching and learning are especially successful in Year 5 and 6. Despite the mixed age class, the senior staff and governors have given careful thought to the organisation of teaching time to ensure that the different ages and abilities are suitably challenged. The headteacher takes a lead in teaching both English and mathematics to Year 6 pupils, which is helping pupils to develop knowledge and understanding quickly by working in small groups. As a consequence, pupils have a good amount of individual attention.

15. The headteacher and governors have also taken firm action to improve the overall quality of English throughout the school. There are several reasons why teaching and learning are good and these are detailed in the English section of this report. There are two significant features of leadership, which explain why the quality of English teaching is good. Firstly, training has resulted in work being well planned for higher ability pupils throughout the school. Secondly, the school is paying for an extra teacher in Year 1, which frees the able Year 2 pupils to work for longer with the teacher on challenging activities. It is important to note that this does not happen in mathematics or science and, in both of these subjects, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Although the Year 1 pupils are suitably challenged, the most able pupils work at a slow pace and do not do work which makes them think about more demanding skills. Thus, overall, more able pupils are not doing well enough and this results in unsatisfactory learning for this group of pupils overall.

16. Opportunities for pupils with SEN are consistently very good throughout the school. There is a strong emphasis on developing literacy skills due to work being well planned and every pupil is clear about how to make progress. Teaching assistants work very closely with teachers and they are skilled at helping pupils to master new skills and knowledge. They also enable pupils to repeat activities in different ways so that they really understand them. They are especially successful in developing pupils' reading and spelling skills.

17. In all classes, pupils are mostly very keen to learn. Only a few pupils in Year 2 act inappropriately, which can sometimes slow down the learning of others in the class. Teachers usually insist on high standards of behaviour, but occasionally they are not firm enough about setting the boundaries about what is expected. Since 1998, there has been satisfactory improvement in encouraging pupils to learn how to work independently. This is most successful in ICT activities, where pupils show very good concentration and make many decisions for themselves. However, overall, there is insufficient direct teaching of ICT skills, which slows down pupils' learning. Further details can be found in the ICT section of this report. Within science, pupils are keen to try things for themselves, but until recently, experiments and investigations have been demonstrated too much by teachers and this does not allow pupils to think for themselves.

18. The school has identified the need to improve how assessment information can be used to help teachers to plan challenging lessons for pupils. Overall, there is too much inconsistency in how this works, which is unsatisfactory. Samples of pupils' work show that teachers are getting better at marking work, so that comments offer some suggestions about how to develop and improve pieces of work. However, this tends to be more successful in English in Year 5 and 6, than in other year groups and subjects. Pupils are not regularly involved in helping to assess their own work in mathematics and science although some good examples of target setting are clearly evident in English. Here the headteacher tracks pupils' progress from year to year, but class teachers do not have enough awareness of this information to plan challenging lessons for all pupils. More significantly, tracking is not done frequently enough to ensure that targets for individuals can be modified to ensure accurate challenges throughout the year.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is adequately planned and provides good opportunities for pupils' learning to be enriched by a variety of extra-curricular activities. It is best in the Foundation Stage. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, with significant strengths for children in the Reception class. Staffing is good. Resources are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is not fully successful in meeting the needs of higher ability pupils.
- Opportunities for enriching the curriculum are good.
- Pupils have good opportunities to participate in many sports.
- Provision for SEN is very good.
- The quality of the accommodation is very variable.

### **Commentary**

19. Most pupils have equal access to the curriculum. However, some aspects of gymnastics and ICT are limited due to shortcomings in the school's accommodation and resources for the

subject. Issues from the previous inspection concerning curricular opportunities and lack of schemes of work in some subjects have been fully rectified.

20. Children in the Reception class follow a broad and balanced curriculum that meets all children's learning needs and ensures a good start to their education. In Years 1 and 2, the curriculum for this mixed age class is not always challenging enough for the higher ability pupils. Elsewhere in the school, the daily curriculum is satisfactory.

21. The school is most successful in adapting the curriculum to take account of pupils with SEN, especially relating to work planned to help them to improve their English and mathematical skills. Moreover, these pupils receive very good curriculum support from skilled teaching assistants and are included in all aspects of the school.

22. Teachers make good links between different subjects, especially through literacy and numeracy, as these skills are taught in other subjects such as DT, geography and science. Some elements of control technology are limited due to a lack of resources. The school has an interesting range of extra activities, which help pupils to widen their learning. Teachers are mostly experienced and well qualified to teach in the primary area of education and there are a good number of support staff. Extra staff provide specialist music and French lessons. There are a large number of sporting activities, particularly in Year 3 to 6, at local, county and national levels. Pupils visit one of the local grammar schools for gymnastics sessions to compensate in part for the lack of resources in the school. Support for learning outside the school day include a residential visit by the older pupils in the summer term and links with other several schools. The curriculum is also enhanced by participation in the arts involving the visit of a steel band and puppetry and drama clubs. Good use is also made of visitors to the school, for example, the grandparents' afternoon tea during the inspection which was organised to coincide with Class 1's work on *Little Red Riding Hood*.

23. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall. It is of very high quality in the Reception area, where children have direct access to their own enclosed, partly covered, outside area. Large climbing and balancing apparatus are also available and are used well by Reception and infant children. Considerable money has been spent to provide a covered area. This is a good initiative, as it allows the Reception class to have their full curriculum throughout the year. The main building is clean, bright and well maintained and all staff work hard to create and sustain a warm, welcoming environment. There is a large, central activity area, which is well used for group activities and a computer suite. However, the school only has the use of a church hall for PE lessons and this is unsatisfactory for gymnastics.

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

The provision for all pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring of pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils have good opportunities to air their views on the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff are caring and there is good attention to the health and safety of pupils.
- There are very good arrangements to help children to settle into school.
- The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is good.

- Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good, but monitoring of academic development is not rigorous enough.

### **Commentary**

24. The school has a rigorous approach to health and safety overall. Regular checks are made of all equipment in the school. There are good arrangements for the provision of first aid and appropriate provision made for pupils who are unwell. Staff are kept informed of individual children's specific medical needs. Procedures for child protection are good. For example, time is allocated at the beginning of each staff meeting for staff to share any concerns, which are then closely monitored.

25. Induction arrangements for pupils entering the school are very good. As a result; children quickly settle and grow in confidence. Staff visit the local pre-school facilities and meet all the parents and children before admission. In addition, parents and children have the opportunity to visit the school and to meet staff and pupils. Parents are confident with the arrangements and speak highly of the support given to their children.

26. Relationships are good. Staff know their pupils very well and are well aware of their individual needs. They provide good role models for pupils, which has a positive impact on behaviour. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal progress are clear, and this helps the development of pupils' self esteem. However, although simple systems are in place to track pupils' academic progress, these are not used rigorously enough to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress. Monitoring of pupils' personal development is especially successful in the Foundation Stage, where informal notes help to form a big picture of the progress that individuals make during the term. Staff meet together at the end of each year to talk about children's progress and information is passed among staff as pupils move through the school. Pupils note that staff are always available should they need support or advice and they feel well supported. There are good opportunities for pupils to offer their opinions through the active school's council. Pupils are confident that their views are taken into account and that they have an impact on school life. For example, they are keen for the library to improve and this is being acted upon by the parents' association.

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

There is a good partnership between the school and parents. There are good links with the local community. The links with other schools and early year's providers are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Links with parents are good and show good improvement since the last inspection.
- Parents work closely with pupils and staff in improving the school.
- There are effective links with local schools and the wider community.

### **Commentary**

27. Since 1998, the school has made good progress in improving links with parents. Parents feel that the school is more open and staff more approachable. They especially like the way in which newsletters keep them informed about school life and pupils' achievements. General

communication is good. Parents are involved in giving their ideas and views about the schools improvement plan. This has been especially successful in planning a new homework policy, where a group of parents worked with teachers and governors to identify what they felt would be useful and practical in a busy week. As a result, the provision for the most able is being improved, with plenty of opportunities for them to do special project activities.

28. Parents are very supportive of the school and happy with the care and education it provides. The parents' association is very active and not only raises funds but helps pupils in the school council to work on special projects. For example, pupils designed the decoration to improve the pupils' toilets and parent volunteers worked with the pupils to paint the rooms. Parents of pupils with SEN have good links with the school. Nearly all parents are involved in the planning and reviewing of their child's targets and education plans. There is good contact with staff responsible for SEN both in the local secondary schools and cluster of primary schools. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress.

29. The local community plays an important part in widening learning opportunities through links with the carnival float event, the village pantomime and with the Evergreens (Age Concern Organisation). The school is working well to develop contact with a multicultural school in Croydon and by linking with an African school. Spiritual development is aided by working with the parish church. There are also strong links with other local schools to extend training and learning opportunities, particularly in sports and art activities.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is good. Management is satisfactory. Governance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership and management of the headteacher give the school a clear direction.
- Governors make a strong contribution to the leadership and management of the school
- The leadership and management of the school's provision for pupils with SEN are good.
- The Foundation Stage is well led and managed.
- Staff development is strong.
- Financial management has strengths and weaknesses.
- The role of subject managers is underdeveloped.
- The school improvement plan is not sufficiently focused.
- The monitoring and use of performance data are not fully developed.

### **Commentary**

30. The headteacher has a clear vision for the improvement of the school. She has plainly identified weaknesses in achievement in Year 2 and taken firm steps to start to address them. This is the result of making good use of effective self evaluation. The headteacher provides a strong role model for other staff in her leadership and management and in the quality of her teaching. There is a strong team spirit in the school and staff work well together. This is in spite of the facts that there has been a high turnover of teaching staff and the school does not have formal procedures for the induction of new staff. Other members of staff with management responsibilities support the headteacher appropriately. The members of the senior

management team are relatively new appointments to the school and the role of this team has not, therefore, been fully established. The senior management team has met to consider issues such as raising standards. However, it has no terms of reference as yet and training in the role is planned for its new members. The school is fully and successfully committed to including all pupils in its work. However, equality of opportunity is unsatisfactory as some pupils, particularly the more able, do not reach their full potential.

31. The governors are enthusiastic and very committed to the school. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They gain this through a variety of appropriate procedures including focused visits to classrooms and reports from staff. The governors use this knowledge well. They contribute to the school improvement plan at its earliest stage and thus help to develop the school. The knowledge that they have of the school also enables the governors to act as effective critical friends. They have, for example, questioned, and been reassured about, the validity of appointing a specialist teacher of French.

32. The school has a comprehensive staff development programme. Within the last year, training has, for example, taken place in writing, art, gymnastics and assessment. Performance management is well established and successfully supports the school's priorities. This is evident in the way that the general development of the role of subject co-ordinator has been linked to this process. Furthermore, identification of strengths and weaknesses in the expertise of staff has led to the appointment of a specialist music teacher.

33. The leadership and management of subject co-ordinators are satisfactory. Most have suitable action plans for the improvement of their subjects and have had training in undertaking the role of co-ordinator. However, although they have carried out direct observation of teaching and learning, this is still an area of weakness. Most co-ordinators lack confidence in this aspect of their role. Few of the observations undertaken identify points for improvement although strengths are recognised. This means that the work is not improving teaching and learning and is not, therefore, driving standards up. It also means that co-ordinators do not have a clear view of standards in their subjects in most cases. Particular strengths include the good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage, which reflects the school's success in making good improvement in all of the issues identified in 1998. In English, strong leadership is leading to good achievement and, most significantly, in improving standards in Year 2.

34. The leadership and management for the provision of SEN are good. The co-ordinator, who is experienced and well qualified, has recently been appointed, and is responsible for all SEN, including administration. The work of learning support assistants is carefully planned. Management of assessment systems are good and use of funding and monitoring of staff are resulting in good achievement by this group of pupils.

35. The school improvement plan covers an appropriate period. It is well related to the aims of the school, includes a contribution from parents and is carefully reviewed. It is very comprehensive and covers virtually all aspects of the school. However, it is very bulky and has no clear overview. This makes it difficult to access easily and it is by no means clear what the school's most important priorities for development are amongst so many.

36. The school is developing its analysis and use of performance data. The end of Year 6 national test results in mathematics have been examined in detail and strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' performance noted for action. However, these procedures have not been applied to English and science. The school is also developing systems to track the



performance of individuals and groups of pupils, although these are not rigorous enough to enable all pupils to achieve very high standards in all subjects.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	344,830	Balance from previous year	37,252
Total expenditure	292,891	Balance carried forward to the next year	51,939
Expenditure per pupil	2763		

37. Finances are managed efficiently and governors understand the importance of using funding to raise standards. Budget planning and monitoring procedures are prudent and rigorous. Planning is linked to the educational priorities in the school improvement plan and governors receive regular information, which allows them to monitor spending. The members of the finance committee use their expertise to forecast likely budget scenarios for some years ahead. Financial reserves, at about seven per cent, are slightly above recommended levels. It is planned to take account of additional staffing costs and further development of ICT resources in the next year. Spending is not compared with that of similar schools and the governors do not have a clear statement of how they ensure that the school gets best value for money.

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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

38. There are very good induction arrangements for introducing children to school and this means that they all quickly get used to their daily routines. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is average, overall. All children achieve well, including those of higher ability and those with SEN. Most achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception in the six areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1 and some work within Level 1 of the National Curriculum.

39. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement, which reflects the good overall leadership for this part of the school. The quality of teaching and learning observed was overall, good and was supported by the very good accommodation, both of which have developed since the last inspection. Lessons are well-planned and detailed records of children's individual development and progress are kept and used well to plan future lessons. These records are also used to identify children who need extra help or those of higher ability. There is a wide range of activities and children are beginning to select tasks for themselves for part of the day.

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

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

#### **Main Strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well due to careful attention to this aspect of learning.
- Personal, social and emotional development are evident in all areas of learning.
- All staff act as very good role models for children's personal and social development.

40. The quality of teaching and learning in this area of learning is good and all children achieve well. Good emphasis is given to children's personal, social and emotional development through all aspects of the school, for example, when they eat their packed lunches in their own classroom to develop social skills. The routines established in the classroom and reception areas help children to feel secure and begin to develop independence like in their 'peg choice' activities. They quickly learn to share equipment and to listen when others are speaking. Relationships between children and adult staff are very good and all adults provide very positive examples of how to behave. Children are generally attentive and very well behaved; they are growing in confidence and in their ability to cooperate with others. Almost all children are on course to meet the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception.

#### **Communication, Language and Literacy**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well.
- There is a strong emphasis on basic communication skills.

41. Almost all children are on course to meet the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception in this area of learning by Year 1. Children make good progress in developing new skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing due to good teaching. Not all children are confident speakers when they arrive in school and staff, therefore, make every effort to engage them in conversation both in formal and informal situations. Good teaching makes effective use of literacy activities. For example, in one lesson, the teacher used a 'big book' to find out if children all recognised and understood the 'e' sound and most of them could. Nearly all children read the title on the front cover and understand the difference between the author and illustrator. A few predict the story content of the 'big book'. Children act out stories, which improves their speaking skills. They write regularly and are already learning simple joined handwriting skills.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a strong emphasis on basic number skills.
- Teaching and learning are sometimes too formal.
- Children's ability to use their counting knowledge is relatively under developed to solve practical problems.

42. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and all children achieve satisfactorily in number, shape, space and measurement activities. They learn and enjoy a number of rhymes and develop a growing range of mathematical vocabulary. All mathematical activities are planned well to enable children to develop their numeracy skills. Most children count to ten and beyond but their ability to solve practical problems is still under-developed. This was seen when some higher ability children spontaneously counted to 29, but were then stuck in counting and estimating beyond this number. Here, there were missed opportunities to use this as a teaching and learning point to challenge the most able learners. There is a tendency for teachers to over direct pupils, which does not allow them to find out things for themselves, as evident when children were sorting cubes, spheres and cuboids. Nearly all children are on course to meet the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception. A few will be working on the National Curriculum.

## **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

43. A scrutiny and analysis of planning and displays and observation of 'Grandparents' Afternoon' indicate that nearly all pupils will reach at least average standards and achieve well. No judgement was made about the quality of teaching and learning. The outdoor and indoor areas provide a stimulating environment, throughout the year, to ensure that children's natural curiosity is satisfied. In a short observation, grandparents were invited into the Reception classroom for tea and to talk to children about their own early lives and school days. The session was very well attended and organised to link with the class literacy topic of 'Little Red

Riding Hood'. Children use a wide variety of bricks and kits in their construction work to explore and create models. Computers are used frequently and children's ability is at least average, when supported by adults. Children's awareness of religious and cultural traditions is developed through special seasonal festivals and attendance in some whole school assemblies.

### **Physical development**

44. Observations of outdoor and classroom activities and a scrutiny of the wide range of apparatus and equipment indicate at least average attainment by the majority of children. The children have the use of a well-planned enclosed area for large wheeled toys, which is also partly covered so that it can be used throughout the year. Children also use the infant playground and have the use of fixed, large climbing and balancing apparatus. These resources were observed to be well used during playtimes and free activity periods. Some children were also observed catching and throwing small balls in a competent manner. Children are provided with a good range of experiences to help develop their finer manipulative skills for example, jigsaw and construction activities and the opportunity to paint and cut a variety of materials. No judgement was made on the quality of teaching and learning.

### **Creative Development**

Provision for creative development is **good**.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- A wide range of activities and resources provided to stimulate children's imaginations.
- Children are beginning to develop the ability to select their activities and they achieve well.

45. All children are reaching at least average standards in their creative development due to good teaching and the provision of a wide range of activities to stimulate their imaginations. This results in good achievement by Year 1. Children choose activities for themselves and staff participate in active role-play to encourage children to use their imaginations. However, a significant proportion of children have not yet developed the confidence to participate in independent role-play. Evidence from wall and table displays shows examples of exploration of colour and the encouragement for children to use a variety of colours and media in their creative work. Although the Reception children had only been introduced to the self initiated 'peg' creative activities for just over a week, all chose their activities sensibly and remained on task for the entire session.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching and learning lead to good achievement and very high standards,
- The subject is improving which reflects its good leadership.

- Teaching assistants provide very good support.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is improving, but is not of a consistently high standard.
- Tracking of pupils' progress during the term is not rigorous enough.
- Some books are rather outdated and worn.
- The development of literacy skills is planned for and used well in other subjects.

## Commentary

46. Standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are currently well above average in speaking, listening, reading and writing. This represents good overall achievement for pupils as they move through the school. The very high standards by Year 6 have been maintained since 2000 and show very good progress since the school was last inspected in 1998, when standards were reported as average. The school has made rapid recent improvement in Year 2, especially in increasing the amount of higher level 3 work in the class. Achievement is good by Years 2 and 6.

47. Good achievement is a direct result of good teaching and learning throughout the school. Teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory. It is best in Years 2, 5 and 6, where expectations and challenges for the most able are very high. Overall, teachers have good subject knowledge and help pupils to learn many new skills successfully.

48. Pupils have regular opportunities to read and pupils with SEN receive very good support and are included successfully in all lessons. One of the strengths of teaching is the way in which pupils learn about punctuation in texts by reading them aloud with adults. For example, in Year 2, pupils read a simple play about Sleeping Beauty as one of their guided reading activities. During this time, pupils learned about speech marks and how to read bringing each character alive. Following this, they read and acted the book to the rest of the class, which also helped pupils to gain confidence and develop speaking and listening skills. In Year 2, the behaviour of one or two pupils can disrupt otherwise good learning opportunities. Reading and speaking skills continue to progress through to Year 6, with pupils reading with accuracy. They know about a good range of different authors, such as Tolkien and Lisa Daniels. Within lessons, pupils are helped to understand about how to infer and deduct ideas from texts. In a very good lesson, pupils confidently compared five texts and talked about the five elements of stories, including opening, build up, the dilemma and how the author develops an exciting ending.

49. Pupils' learning is greatly enhanced by opportunities for them to think and learn independently and by working in pairs and groups. Throughout the school, teachers place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' vocabulary, as evident in the poetry work seen in Years 3 and 4, when pupils had to make word pictures on the theme of 'Through the Door'. This work demonstrated how the staff are seeking to widen pupils' use of adjectives and also to give very strong support to pupils with SEN, who had an opening door paper book to inspire them to develop their ideas. Pupils confidently grasp the idea of similes and make notes to support their writing.

50. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on developing spelling, which shows rigorous adherence to the National Literacy Strategy and good links to homework. Very good practice is just starting to raise pupils' achievement, which includes opportunities for pupils to identify errors from their own writing and add these and topic words to their own spelling lists. Equally, pupils with SEN make very effective use of ICT programs to help them with their spellings. Handwriting is very good in Years 1 and 2, where the emphasis on learning joined

writing is having results. Some pupils in other year groups did not have this firm start and their handwriting is not as neat.

51. There has been a major focus on helping pupils to write extended pieces of work. This is developing well, with some teachers marking pupils' work, so that they receive encouraging comments as well as clear pointers for development and improvement. However, this is best at the top end of the school and only just developing in other year groups. Pupils are encouraged to work hard and some have very clear targets for improvement, but these are not consistently evident in all books and some pupils do not know what their target is. Although the school is tracking pupils' progress every year, it is not evaluating this on a termly basis, despite often doing tests and sampling work. Consequently, targets for improvement are not adjusted enough to ensure that all teachers are clear about what they should expect from their pupils. Tracking of pupils' progress is not rigorous enough and this limits the school's ability to raise achievement from good to very good.

52. Good leadership is resulting in improvement in standards, especially by planning training to improve teachers' skills in developing writing. The headteacher takes Year 6 lessons on a regular basis and this acts as a very good role model to staff. There are sufficient resources. The Parents' Association is raising funds to improve the library, which is needed, as many books are worn and some reading scheme books are outdated.

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

Pupils' literacy skills are well promoted in other subjects. For example, in history pupils read about characters in Ancient Egyptian and Greek history. In ICT, pupils research new topics and use word processing and Internet skills to make their own presentations. Very good use is made of the cassette recorder for listening to stories. In science, pupils enjoy drama activities to widen their learning. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is greatly enhanced through English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is overall **satisfactory**

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement in Year 2 is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils with SEN are supported very well.
- Support by the headteacher and good teaching raises standards in Years 5 and 6.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good
- Assessment is not developed enough to improve standards.

### **Commentary**

53. Standards of achievement are above average in the current Year 6. This shows an improvement from the findings of the last inspection but is slightly lower than the 2003 national test results when the school's targets were exceeded. Pupils' achievement, which takes into account their capabilities and previous levels of attainment, is satisfactory overall.

54. In the current Year 2, standards are average. This judgement is in line with the previous inspection's findings and above last year's national test results. Standards were also below

average in comparison with similar schools. Pupils' achievement in lessons and over time is satisfactory in Year 1, but unsatisfactory for more able pupils in Year 2. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls.

55. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The strongest teaching and learning observed was in Years 5 and 6. However, work is insufficiently challenging for higher ability pupils in Year 2, which leads to unsatisfactory learning and achievement. In the mixed Year 1 and 2 class, teaching and learning are challenging for Year 1 pupils. Most teachers use resources well to give pupils 'hands on' experiences of mathematics. In the Year 6 higher ability group observed, pupils were encouraged to use calculators to solve more difficult problems and to check their answers. This also indicated a good link with ICT. Year 3 pupils handled an assortment of three dimensional shapes to develop their recognition and understanding of edges, sides and vertices. There are missed opportunities to encourage pupils to write down their workings and talk about how to solve mathematical problems in different ways. Teachers do not often mark pupils' work in ways which show them how to improve.

56. In all the lessons seen, pupils who have SEN were given very good levels of support by teachers and support staff. Booster classes also provide helpful activities to support pupils' understanding. These activities are taken by well qualified and experienced teaching assistants.

57. Most teachers have established good classroom routines. As a result, pupils behave well, remain on task and are generally keen and interested in mathematics. This leads to at least satisfactory progress in the subject. However, high expectations for pupils' performance are not always evident and some lessons lack pace and challenge. Homework is regularly set and is appropriately matched to pupils' work in their lessons.

58. Leadership and management are good. The well qualified and enthusiastic subject co-ordinator has been in post for just over a term and has already been instrumental in formulating an action plan that includes the priority of raising standards and achievement in the infant section of the school. The problem solving and investigative aspects of mathematics have also been identified as a priority for development. Lesson observations and scrutiny of work indicates that this emphasis is already happening and pupils are encouraged to explain their methods of working. Tracking documents have been introduced for all year groups. This identifies pupils of higher abilities and the progress of those with SEN but these assessments are not fully used to improve standards. Standards at the time of the last inspection were reported as average in both key stages. Standards have been maintained in Year 2 and have improved in Year 6, where work has taken place to improve the teaching of numeracy, which was key issue in 1998. Accordingly, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

59. Several examples of the use of mathematics in other curriculum subjects were evident during the inspection. These included pupils' work in science and DT. Pupils collected data and produced graphs in their science lessons and Year 1 and 2 pupils used measuring techniques in their work on the design of Joseph's coat of many colours.

### **SCIENCE**

The provision in science is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The standards reached by more able pupils in Year 2 are not high enough.
- There is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' investigative skills.
- Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of most aspects of the subject.
- Pupils' writing skills are not used well enough in Year 2.
- There is good use of pupils' numeracy skills.
- Assessment procedures are not good enough.
- The use of ICT to support pupils' learning is not fully developed.

## **Commentary**

60. Standards are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. This is similar to the judgement made by the school's 1998 inspection in Year 2 but is an improvement in Year 6. The improvement is due to better teaching in Year 6. In both Year 2 and Year 6, the judgement is similar to the standards reached in the school's national end of year tests in 2003. In 2003 in Year 2, all pupils reached average levels but only 13 per cent reached above average levels. The situation is similar now. Most pupils are at average levels but too few are above average because more able pupils are not sufficiently extended. Pupils with SEN are doing well.

61. In Year 2, for example, most pupils know what conditions a plant needs to grow successfully, can describe how some materials are changed by processes such as heating and are able to make a bulb light in an electrical circuit. They are weaker on above average elements of science such as understanding ways in which animals are adapted to their environments and classifying changes in materials as reversible. In Year 6, pupils, for example, show above average knowledge of the main functions of human organs although their knowledge of the organs of plants is weaker. They understand the processes of evaporation and condensation and can explain what is meant by a balance of forces.

62. Throughout the school, the pupils' scientific enquiry skills are under developed. In Years 1 and 2, the amount of investigative work in the pupils' books was very limited and most was very similar. It appeared to have been undertaken as a class rather than individually in many cases. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils' books indicated similar findings. Conversations with the pupils in Year 6 led to the same conclusions. The pupils felt that most experimental work consisted of demonstrations by the teachers and carrying out tasks that had been fully explained to them. It was clear that they had little experience of planning their own experiments or identifying variables when conducting a fair test.

63. A strength of the subject is the application of the pupils' numeracy skills. In Year 2, for example, pupils had measured the size of hand spans and heads and presented some of the results in the form of block graphs. In Year 6, pupils have timed the rate at which substances cooled down and presented their results as line graphs.

64. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are unsatisfactory when all the evidence is considered as pupils' achievement, particularly that of the more able, is unsatisfactory. This is because most of the work is set at average levels. The pupils produce little written work. Most of that produced is carried out on worksheets and does not challenge their literacy skills or extend their scientific thinking sufficiently. As a result, many pupils, particularly the more able, are not adequately challenged. A generally satisfactory lesson in Year 2 in which the pupils were asked to devise a fair test to apply their knowledge of what happened to ice when it was



melted indicated some of these weaknesses. The strengths of the lesson were its preparation, the clear explanations given by the teacher and a good discussion of what made a fair test. However, the pupils were well aware of the basic ideas of the lesson and knew full well what happened to ice when it was heated. Scientific vocabulary was not developed sufficiently. Three containers of ice were placed in different locations to see how long they took to melt. The task for the more able pupils was to draw these pots in their locations and then write what their drawings showed. There was insufficient development of the experimental skills expressed in the lesson's objectives and, essentially, 'no hands' on investigative work for the pupils.

65. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are good and promote good achievement. In Year 6, the pupils' books show evidence of ample, well-presented work of a good standard. Most of their work represents their own ideas and thoughts. In a satisfactory Years 5 and 6 lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher had recognised that pupils were not very successful in drawing conclusions from experiments. The teacher planned to address this point through the pupils working in pairs to carry out an experiment involving how an elastic band stretches when weights are added to it. The lesson was well introduced with good use of scientific vocabulary and very demanding questions. However, when the pupils started work they lacked the skills and confidence to decide what to do. This was because they had very little experience of independent investigative work. As a result, progress was slow and the teacher realised that they needed much more help in undertaking their own experimental work.

66. The management of the subject and its improvement since the school was last inspected are satisfactory. Standards have improved in Year 6 and been maintained in Year 2 since the school was last inspected. However, progress in Year 2 is not as good as it was. The subject manager has a sound plan for the subject's improvement, which includes the further development of the use of ICT in science. However, there are weaknesses in assessment procedures, including teachers' marking, and the use of assessment information to plan the pupils' work. The pupils have no targets for improvement. As a result of these weaknesses, much of the work set, particularly for more able pupils is not hard enough and they do not know how to make their work better. The monitoring of teaching and learning lacks rigour. The development of assessment and the role of co-ordinators are both areas for action.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Overall provision is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is not enough direct teaching of ICT and this influences pupils' achievement.
- Good leadership is leading to the development of the subject and resources.
- Pupils are keen to learn new skills and work very well independently.
- There are insufficient resources to support learning in science, DT and music.
- Assessment procedures lack rigour to extend pupils' learning

### **Commentary**

67. Standards in ICT are average by Year 2 and Year 6 overall but, in pupils' understanding of how to control things using computers and in data handling, standards are below average. Desktop publishing, word processing and research skills are above average in Years 5 and 6.

68. Overall achievement is unsatisfactory as learning and progress are too patchy from year to year. This is mostly because there is insufficient teaching of new skills as set lessons within the weekly timetable for all classes, which is resulting in unsatisfactory teaching and learning overall. Some staff are not confident in teaching challenging ICT skills. Achievement is best in Years 5 and 6, where pupils are making good progress from their lower than average starting point. This reflects the high expectations and good teaching and learning opportunities by the subject manager, who is acting as a very good role model for both pupils and staff. During the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 confidently used the Internet to research many things for themselves, such as the life of Houdini and Greek life using pictures from the British Museum. Here, pupils confidently copied and animated pictures and text and have started to add sound to make a special history presentation. Most significantly, pupils are now working on individual homework projects, which is having a positive impact on their achievement, especially for very able pupils.

69. The school has employed a specialist independent advisor to guide it in the planning of the curriculum and to help with technical difficulties, which is good practice. Assessment procedures are useful and clear but they do not note the level at which individual pupils are working and so, there is a tendency for teachers not to go beyond average level activities. In this respect, there is insufficient challenge for pupils as they move through the school.

70. Despite the weaknesses noted in teaching, pupils demonstrate a very keen interest in the subject and have a very good capacity to work independently. This enables pupils to work at average levels overall, as teachers and assistants drip feed tips and teaching points to individuals and small groups and pupils work showing very good concentration and an ability to persevere and overcome difficulties by helping each other.

71. The new subject manager shows good leadership and management skills. Overall, leadership shows how the school is now taking firm and swift action to make improvements. For example, the subject manager presented a firm case to governors to improve resources. Following this, finances were allocated to purchasing a good range of new computers. These are now highly accessible in the hall and the school now has a higher than recommended ratio of computers to pupils. Since January 2004, the school has also purchased two large screen interactive white boards to allow the whole class to take part in learning new skills. This works best in Years 5 and 6, where pupils are making rapid progress in catching up with learning that they should have done in previous years. Currently, pupils are still not having sufficient direct teaching in other classes. Where ICT is used in classes, it tends to be tacked on to the lesson plan, rather than identified in the plan with specific learning skills, which develop from lesson to lesson. Since 1998, the school has made satisfactory progress in developing standards of work, but aspects of developing teaching and learning remain weak. This is why progress has been too slow overall since 1998. In the last few months, progress has been very good.

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

72. Overall, there are satisfactory links with other areas of learning but they are stronger in some subjects than others. For example, they are used well to enhance pupils' learning in art and design, history and English. However, in science and DT, the school does not have sufficient resources to support learning. For example, there are insufficient sensors to measure temperature, rainfall and heart beats and the school has very little equipment for the control technology aspects of the curriculum, although this was on order during the inspection. Although the school has two digital cameras, the memory cards are generally too small for the demands

of school learning. The school does not have any software to support learning in music on the computer, but makes effective use of compact disks. Year 2 children use the word processor to write stories and much use is made of the cassette recorder to help pupils with reading skills. In geography, pupils send e-mails to another school to compare different locations. In art, pupils make good use of drawing programs.

## HUMANITIES

73. No geography lessons were seen during the inspection and inspectors did not obtain enough evidence to make comments on this subject. One history lesson was observed, discussions with pupils took place and a meeting with the co-ordinator was held.

74. In the **history** lesson observed in Years 5 and 6, teaching, learning, standards and achievement were good. The focus of the lesson was theatres in Ancient Greece. The pupils suggested a good range of sources from which evidence about the topic could be gathered including the Internet, books and museums. The teacher used questions such as "Why was the theatre this shape?" to lead a productive discussion. The pupils made a strong contribution to the discussion and showed above average skills in speaking and listening. Good links with literacy were a strong feature of the lesson, for example, when pupils were encouraged to make notes for use in a class discussion. Pupils of all ages and abilities did essentially the same work. Overall, the pupils showed good attitudes and were keen to learn. At times, they became noisy and lost concentration although the teacher effectively regained their interest. ICT was used well to help the pupils to develop their understanding of the theatre and of Greek Gods.

75. Discussion with Year 6 pupils showed that they had enjoyed their visit to the museum. This had clearly made a significant contribution to their cultural development. The pupils were keen to comment on things such as the clothes, money, pottery and farming of Ancient Greece. They showed a good understanding of Greek theatre. For example, the pupils knew why the theatre was open to everyone, why the plays sometimes represented real life issues and that going to the theatre was a religious event. They particularly liked the fact that if the audience did not like the play they threw stones at the actors. Discussion with pupils in Years 5 and 6 confirmed that they regularly used ICT to support their learning in history. Management of the subject and its improvement since the school's last inspection are satisfactory. However, there are weaknesses in the co-ordinator's overview of standards as monitoring procedures are under developed and assessment procedures are inadequate.

76. **Religious education** was not taught during the inspection and so no judgements about provision, teaching or learning can be made. However, the range of other evidence available, including the pupils' work, discussions with them and the subject's co-ordinator and the planning and work on display were analysed. This evidence indicates that standards in Years 2 and 6 meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus and that achievement is satisfactory.

77. Pupils in Year 2 show a sound understanding of aspects of Judaism. For example, they know about aspects of Jewish dietary laws. They know what the bread at the Shabbat meal symbolises and why it is covered in cloth. The pupils also have a secure understanding of the significance of personal and Christian festivals such as Christmas, Easter, birthdays and weddings. The pupils had little knowledge of Hinduism. There was limited written work in the subject in Year 2. Most of what there was consisted of worksheets that were identical for pupils of all abilities.

78. Pupils in Year 6 are suitably aware of a range of important features of a number of religions including Christianity, Sikhism and Buddhism. For example, understanding the significance of Guru Nanak and the Five K's in Sikhism. The pupils have developed respect for the views of religions other than their own from their knowledge of other religions. Their progress in understanding Christianity is enhanced by a range of educational visits and visitors, for example, by the local church and by the local vicar. However, this aspect of RE is not well developed for other religions. Another area of relative weakness is in the pupils' knowledge of the relevance of religion to their everyday lives. The pupils' work in Year 6 is well presented.

79. Management of the subject and its improvement since the school was last inspected are satisfactory. ICT is used appropriately to support the pupils' work in RE, for example, through research using the Internet and links with other subjects. In DT, pupils were seen to design multi coloured coats for Joseph. There are weaknesses in assessment, including the marking of pupils' work. Marking of work consists largely of ticks or praise and is not developmental enough. Pupils in mixed aged classes are often given the same task whatever their age or abilities. This means that some of them, particularly the more able, do not always reach their full potential and they have no real understanding of how to improve their work. However, pupils with SEN do well when they receive additional support.

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

80. The main focus areas for the inspection were English, mathematics, science and ICT. Thus creative aspects did not receive as much inspection time and this is why teaching and learning and provision overall are not judged in each subject. It was not possible to see music beyond hymn practice. Two PE lessons were observed. In addition, inspectors talked to pupils about their work and held discussions with teachers and sampled pupils' work.

81. In **art and design**, standards are average by Year 2 and Year 6 from the work seen on display and from the photographic records. Strengths include the good links with ICT to help pupils to develop their use of colour and expression of their imaginations. Links with spiritual development are good, as pupils enjoy artwork and were absorbed in the two lessons seen during the inspection. Lessons were not seen in Years 1 and 2, but in Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy the subject and show very positive attitudes. They talked about different artists such as Paul Klee and confidently use his work as a starting point to invent journey pictures using different collage and paint materials. Sketching skills are average by Year 6. This work shows that links with other subjects are good, as pupils had used the digital camera to record local scenes for their work in geography and were then drawing their own sketches. Following this, pupils started to use watercolours. While they were confident in mixing colours, there were missed opportunities to raise standards by helping pupils to learn how to do background washes before adding detail. Although pupils are beginning to use their sketchbooks, these are not used to their full potential to aid pupils' learning. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily, but there are no systems in place to assess pupils' work.

82. Limited information was gathered on **design and technology**. Only one lesson was observed in DT but evidence from classroom displays and this lesson indicates that standards are broadly average in Year 2. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about teaching and learning and pupils' achievement over time in Years 1 to 6. In the Year 1 and 2 lesson observed, the topic of designing and making a coat for Joseph was well linked to pupils' work in RE. Apparent links to other subjects were also observed including science, ICT and art and design. This lesson indicated a very good example of the school's new developing creative curriculum in line with national guidelines in 'Excellence and Enjoyment'. Most pupils were able

to draw confidently designs for Joseph's coat on the computer and then copy these on to a textile before cutting and stitching the shape. All pupils concentrated and persevered with their tasks and were given very good support by teaching assistants, especially in the sewing activities. The teaching, learning and pupils' achievement were very good overall.

83. During the inspection it was not possible to see any **music** activities or lessons. However, the school now employs a specialist teacher and pupils enjoy learning the recorder as an extra curricular activity. Parents spoke enthusiastically about the musical elements of plays and concerts. The school has a suitable range of instruments, although links with ICT are underdeveloped. During assemblies, pupils sang enthusiastically and tunefully. Cultural development is good, for example, pupils enjoyed a visit by African drummers.

### **Physical education (PE)**

Provision in physical education is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in swimming in Year 6 are very good.
- Limited resources and accommodation cause some weaknesses in provision.
- The subject is well supported by a good range of extra curricular activities.
- Assessment and evaluation procedures are not sufficiently well developed.

### **Commentary**

84. Observations in lessons indicated below average standards in gymnastics in Year 2 and average standards in games in Year 6. This represents unsatisfactory achievement in gymnastics and satisfactory achievement in games. These judgements are broadly the same as those made by the school's last inspection. Swimming was not observed during the inspection. However, the school's records indicate that standards are very good. Almost all the pupils leave the school in Year 6 able to swim at least 25 metres safely and unaided using a recognisable stroke. In addition, significant numbers do considerably better than this. Pupils have taken part in swimming events at county and national level. This judgement represents very good achievement in swimming. The judgements about standards also represent satisfactory improvement since the school was last inspected. Standards in swimming have improved since 1998 and the judgement about games is the same. No comparison about gymnastics can be made as no judgement was made in 1998.

85. Teaching and learning in the Years 1 and 2 lesson seen were unsatisfactory. Most pupils were able to perform forward rolls with some degree of control. However, few had mastered the backward roll and their sequences of jumping and rolling lacked poise and imagination. Progress was unsatisfactory. This was, largely, because the pupils' behaviour was unsatisfactory and the teacher did not control them well enough. This meant that they did not do enough work. Furthermore, the lesson lacked a strong enough structure. There was no clear warm up or down, there was no discussion of the effects of exercise on the body and the pupils' evaluative skills were not developed. In addition, the limited size of the hall created difficulties for learning. It was clear that the pupils were not well trained in putting out apparatus.

86. In the Year 4, 5 and 6 lesson observed, teaching and learning were satisfactory. The lesson began with a suitable warm up session. The teacher introduced the main part of the

lesson by a sound demonstration of the chest pass and how to anticipate where a receiver who was moving would be when the ball reached them. When practising these skills, the pupils showed below average abilities at passing and anticipating but average skills in receiving when the ball was passed accurately. A group of pupils working with a teaching assistant showed good skills when moving and controlling a bouncing ball. The pace of learning for the pupils working with the teacher slowed down significantly when they worked in pairs passing the ball to each other until they got close enough to have a shot at a netball ring. The rest of the group essentially waited for a turn at this activity without sufficiently directed work. There was insufficient assessment of pupils' individual performance by teachers and, consequently, not enough personal advice to pupils on how to develop their skills.

87. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is well aware that the requirements of the National Curriculum in the subject are not met because of shortcomings in accommodation and resources for gymnastics. The school uses the nearby church for gymnastics. This is too small and lacks wall bars and large apparatus. However, every effort to improve the situation is being made. Pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class use the small hall as year groups rather than as a class, use is made of a local secondary school's facilities and a sponsored event is planned to provide equipment. In addition, good use is made of the school's grounds and the subject is well supported by a good range of extracurricular activities and competitive sports fixtures with other schools. However, there is no formal action plan for the development of the subject and assessment and monitoring procedures are underdeveloped.

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

### **Personal, social and health education**

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**

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

- There is good leadership, which is working effectively to improve the provision.

#### **Commentary**

88. There has been effective development of the subject since the last inspection, which reflects good leadership and management. The school has a good policy and planning for the subject, which is taught in its own right and is also linked to other subjects like physical education and science. The school has invited several visitors to talk about aspects of the subject including, the nurse for a 'Growing Up' talk to Year 6 pupils and medicals including dental screening. In the Years 5/6 lesson, observed pupils were encouraged to think and discuss which drugs were: helpful, safe, harmful or potentially fatal. They also discussed which drugs were legal and which illegal. Pupils were encouraged to work in small groups in order to promote good discussion and to widen their general awareness about drug use and misuse. The success of the school's personal, social and health education programme is reflected in the good attitudes and relationships evident in the school.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	5
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	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
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).*

