

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FOXHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Queensbury, Bradford

LEA area: Bradford

Unique reference number: 107432

Headteacher: Mrs A Bleasdale

Lead inspector: Miss J H Sargent

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> February 2004

Inspection number: 256165

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:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	256
School address:	Brighouse and Denholme Road Queensbury Bradford West Yorkshire
Postcode:	BD13 1LN
Telephone number:	(01274) 882 426
Fax number:	(01274) 882 106
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Keith Jenkinson
Date of previous inspection:	11 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average primary school, with 235 full-time pupils aged four to eleven and 21 children attending the recently opened part-time nursery. It is situated on the northern outskirts of Bradford. Since its last inspection, the school has undergone significant changes. It has changed its type from first school to primary school as a result of local re-organisation and changed its category from Grant Maintained to Foundation School.

The school serves the local community, but also takes pupils from a wider area. Almost all pupils are of white British ethnic origin. The number of pupils leaving or joining the school during the school year is low. There is a small number of pupils for whom English is not their first language, but none of these pupils is at an early stage of English language acquisition. Most pupils have experienced pre-school provision and attainment on entry is judged to be similar to most other children. Overall, there are more girls than boys on roll and Year 5 has more pupils than other year groups. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. No pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Pupils with special needs include those with specific or moderate learning difficulties, physical difficulties or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2002.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21113	Miss J H Sargent	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Personal, social and health education
9928	Mr A Dobson	Lay inspector	
32146	Mr S Hobbs	Team inspector	
27773	Mrs F Mackenzie	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language English Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education
18911	Mr D Nightingale	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Maths Design and technology Music Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI  
Barley House  
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a satisfactory school** with several strengths. The school is well led by the headteacher, who is effectively supported by the assistant head and chair of governors. Children under five and pupils up to the age of seven achieve well. Standards are good in English, mathematics and science because of the good teaching that pupils receive. For pupils aged seven to 11, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, resulting in satisfactory standards in English, mathematics and science. The inclusion of different groups of pupils is satisfactory overall. The school offers a very good range of activities outside school, particularly sporting activities. Management of the school is satisfactory, but there are some weaknesses in improvement planning and the work of the governing body. Pupils are well cared for and attendance is very good. It is well regarded by parents and carers, but needs to improve communications and consultation with them. The school provides **satisfactory value for money**.

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

- The good leadership of the headteacher.
- Achievement for children and pupils up to the age of seven is good because of good teaching.
- Teaching of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall, but with a significant amount of good teaching, which is beginning to raise standards.
- The governing body has insufficient knowledge and understanding of the school's work and is not as effective as it should be in holding the school to account.
- The school improvement plan lacks strategic detail and does not evaluate what has been done.
- Pupils are well cared for and there is a very good range of activities after school.
- The school is well regarded by parents but communications with them could be better.

Since its previous inspection in 1998, the school has made satisfactory improvement. The school has managed major changes to its work and these have taken up significant amounts of management time, affecting the pace of improvement. Staffing issues at Key Stage 2 have affected the implementation of developments, so more progress has been made at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching is now monitored and evaluated across the school. Teachers at Key Stage 2 do not always make sufficient provision for pupils of differing abilities and some lessons lack pace and challenge. Subject leaders monitor teachers' planning; more development work is scheduled. The governing body is not sufficiently well informed about the school's work and does not hold the school to account. The views of parents are less positive than at the previous inspection. The school's accommodation has been developed effectively and the provision for information and communication technology has been improved.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Standards of achievement are satisfactory overall.** Children under five achieve well in all the areas of learning. Most will attain the expected goals by the end of their Reception Year and a

minority will exceed them. Standards are good for pupils at the end of Year 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in Years 3 to 6, particularly higher-attaining pupils, do not progress as well as they should in English, mathematics and science, because lessons do not always offer sufficient pace or challenge for all pupils and staff absence has caused disruption. Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve satisfactorily. All pupils with special educational needs achieve well, but older higher-attaining pupils do not always achieve well enough.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good, overall.** Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and attendance is very good, contributing well to pupils' learning. Children under five make good progress in personal, social and emotional development. They are enthusiastic learners and are well prepared for the National Curriculum.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching is satisfactory overall.** Teaching for children and pupils up to the age of seven is good, facilitating good learning. For pupils in Years 3 to 6, teaching is satisfactory. The differences seen in teaching are reflected in the lower standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6. In Years 1 and 2, teachers have consistently high expectations and include work which makes pupils think hard; good use is made of time and pupils are kept busy. This is not always the case in Years 3 to 6. Homework is set in all classes, but parents are not always sufficiently well informed about how they can help their children. All school staff contribute to the caring environment and support assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory.** The leadership team have worked hard to guide the school through a difficult period of disruption and change. This has taken time away from tackling educational issues and issues from the previous inspection, although satisfactory improvement has been made. There is a shared aspiration for excellence and all staff want to help the school to improve. The school's improvement plan lacks detail of how things will be improved and evaluation strategies, reducing its impact. Some governors are less well informed about the school's work than others, reducing the overall effectiveness of the governing body, as not all members are sufficiently well informed to challenge the school. The school fulfils all statutory requirements other than the requirement to publish national comparative assessment data in its prospectus. Subject leaders are becoming better informed about their subjects, but are not yet fully involved in raising standards.

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

The school is well regarded by most parents and pupils and they express a good level of satisfaction. Pupils enjoy school and know that they can go to an adult if they are worried. Parents feel that staff are fair and encourage pupils to become mature. Some parents are rightly dissatisfied with the level of information that they receive about their children's learning and progress and would like to be consulted more about their views on the school and its work.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise standards at the end of Year 6 by improving teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6;
- improving governors' knowledge and understanding of the work of the school so that they become more effective in holding the school to account;
- develop clear and detailed plans for school improvement which show strategies for bringing about change and for evaluating the effectiveness of such work and its impact on standards;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- include comparative national assessment data in all required documents.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall. Achievement is good for children in the Nursery and Reception classes and for pupils in Years 1 and 2. For pupils in Years 3 to 6, achievement is satisfactory. Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2. Standards are average in these subjects at the end of Year 6 and are thus average overall.

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

- Standards at the end of Year 2 in English, mathematics and science are good because of good teaching.
- Standards achieved by pupils in Years 3 to 6 in English, mathematics and science are less good than those achieved by pupils in Years 1 and 2, reflecting satisfactory teaching.
- Higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not achieve as well as they could because lessons do not always offer enough challenge.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes achieve well because of their eagerness to learn.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they receive good support.

#### **Commentary**

##### *Starting school*

- When children are admitted to the Nursery class, they are attaining at levels which are broadly in line with what might be expected of children of a similar age. Children achieve well in Nursery. Not all the children who enter the Reception class have attended the school's Nursery and as a result attainment levels at the start of the Reception Year remain in line with what might be expected. By the end of the Reception Year, most children will attain the expected goals and a significant number will exceed them.

##### *The school's results in national tests*

- At the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above those seen nationally. Over time, the results for reading show that standards are very good. In writing, results have shown a strong trend of improvement since 2000, reflecting the effectiveness of measures that the school has put in place to improve writing. Standards in mathematics have dipped slightly since 2001, but have remained above national levels. More pupils need to attain at the higher Level 3 if the school is to restore previous levels of performance. Over time, boys have attained at higher levels than girls; however, no gender bias was evident in work seen during the inspection.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.1 (17.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.9 (15.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.7 (17.8)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- At the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are satisfactory. Average points scores show that over time, pupils attained at levels slightly above those seen nationally.



Previous results only date from 2001, this being the first year that the school had pupils in Year 6.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (27.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.5 (27.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.0 (28.3)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- Detailed analysis of the results for 2003 shows that in English, a significant number of pupils attained at the expected Level 4, but too few pupils attained at the higher Level 5. The school exceeded its target for the percentage of pupils expected to attain Level 4 by 26 per cent, and exceeded the national average result by 15 per cent. However, at Level 5, the school's results fell short of its target by five per cent and the target itself was nine per cent below national results.
- Results in mathematics were better, with the school's targets being exceeded at Levels 4 and 5. National average results were exceeded by four per cent at Level 4, but fell short of the national average results by one per cent at the higher Level 5. For both English and mathematics, the disappointing results at the higher Level 5 are reflected in inspection findings on standards achieved in Years 3 to 6, and are attributed to specific weaknesses in the teaching of these pupils.

*Inspection findings*

*Foundation Stage*

- Achievements are at least satisfactory and often good in the prescribed areas of learning for children under five. They are particularly good in the area of personal and social development and this helps children to progress well in other areas of learning because they co-operate well and engage in independent learning. Children's physical skills develop well and they use these to good effect, for example when engaged in learning to write, paint or draw.

*Years 1 and 2*

- Standards in English and science are good and have improved since the previous inspection. Standards in mathematics have been sustained at above average levels. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 because teachers make provision for the differing abilities within the classes and provide work which offers appropriate challenge. Lessons are often introduced by recalling work that has been done previously and pupils of all abilities are encouraged to contribute, thinking hard and achieving well from the outset. The pace of work is good and pupils know what they must do to improve the standard of their work because they are familiar with the targets which are set for them. Support staff know pupils well and their careful intervention results in good achievement by pupils with special needs. Higher attaining pupils are sometimes the focus of the teacher's attention during class work, ensuring that they are challenged and extended in their work.
- Good use is made of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, in science, Year 1 pupils record ideas on whiteboards and pupils in Year 2 demonstrate a very good understanding of the different ways in which they can record their findings, such as using bullet points or numbers. The effect of the school's focus on writing is seen in the capabilities of pupils in Years 1 and 2. They readily work in groups or record their ideas independently. Their writing skills are effectively developed through good use and application across the curriculum.

*Years 3 to 6*

9. Standards in English, mathematics and science are satisfactory for pupils at the end of Year 6. At the time of the previous inspection, the school was a first school and did not have Year 6 pupils. The satisfactory standards seen highlight a slowing of progress in the key stage when compared with standards which are well above average at the end of Year 2. The lower standards for older pupils are largely because teachers do not expect enough from their pupils and lessons do not always offer sufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils.
10. The improvements in writing seen in Key Stage 1 are less evident in Years 3 to 6. Temporary staffing arrangements, resulting from teacher absences, have made it more difficult to implement changes to the school's teaching of writing at this key stage. In some classes, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills across the curriculum, as there is overuse of work sheets which do not demand enough of pupils. The pace of work is sometimes pedestrian and tasks are not well matched to pupils' abilities, so that higher-attaining pupils receive too little challenge and pupils are generally less productive. Weaknesses in higher-level writing skills are reflected in work across the curriculum. For example, when writing about work in science, older pupils do not use sophisticated vocabulary and they use only simple sentences to convey their ideas. Across the school, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are sound, and in religious education, they are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
11. The school anticipates an overall trend of improvement in its future results, but, from its knowledge of different year groups' achievements, also anticipates that this will not be a steady rise. Targets for 2004 are higher than 2003 and in line with national averages at Level 4. At Level 5, targets are still below national averages but the margins are being reduced.
12. Results for 2003 show that girls attained at levels below boys, particularly in English. This was not evident in work seen during the inspection, in which girls and boys attained at similar levels. For the very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, achievements are sound. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because support assistants are well informed about what is expected and give pupils confidence and encouragement. The school has recently appointed a co-ordinator to promote the achievements of gifted and talented pupils. A register of gifted and talented pupils is to be drawn up and achievements will be closely monitored.

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

The pupils have **positive attitudes** to school and their **behaviour is good**. Attendance levels are very good and the pupils' punctuality is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have a very good attendance record; they enjoy school and know that they are there to learn.
- Most pupils behave well all the time, producing an atmosphere that is friendly and conducive to learning.
- Relationships are good between pupils and between pupils and staff.
- Pupils develop into articulate and interesting individuals with a very good sense of right and wrong.
- Not enough emphasis is given to some aspects of pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

### **Commentary**

13. Pupils have a high opinion of their school. Their parents value education and this is reflected in attendance levels that are well above the national average for primary schools.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.8	School data	0.4
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.*

14. Once in school, pupils settle down quickly and most are eager to learn. They are alert, attentive and generally work hard, although the level of motivation is often dependent on the quality of the teaching and particularly the pace of the lesson. Pupils participate well in lessons and are proud of what they achieve. Homework is taken seriously and school clubs are popular and well attended.
15. Standards of behaviour are good throughout the school. Rules are well understood and considered fair by the pupils. The atmosphere in classrooms is conducive to learning, however, not all teachers are equally confident in applying the school's behaviour management techniques and this affects learning in some lessons. Movement around the school is orderly; this is particularly important given the circuitous routes and many steps in the premises. In assembly, pupils listen well and sing enthusiastically. Dining is a civilised social occasion where noise levels are reasonable and table manners are good.
16. The playground has a happy, friendly feel. During the inspection, constant high winds and rain meant that 'The Cage', a covered semi-outdoor area, was used for many breaks, effectively allowing pupils to be out of their classroom during inclement weather. No signs of over-boisterous behaviour were observed. Some parents have concerns about bullying. Many pupils were spoken to and none reported any problems, they did, however, mention regular low-level name-calling as an issue, but all expressed confidence in the teachers' abilities to sort out any problems. Staff are vigilant in curbing any games that might become too physical, as was the recent decision to ban a game called 'bulldog tag'. There are no racial issues in the school. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
17. Pupils work and play well together. In lessons, they listen to each other's opinions and ideas with respect. They know how to take turns and share. They have good relationships with the staff and are polite and courteous. During their time at school, pupils grow in confidence and their social skills develop well. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to take on extra responsibilities ranging from classroom monitors to reading partners and these are accepted enthusiastically. Assemblies and class discussions are used effectively to build up a very good sense of right and wrong and an appreciation of festivals in both Christian and other faiths. However, there is little evidence that the school makes a conscious effort to develop the pupils' spiritual awareness, for instance by regularly having a period of reflection during assemblies. Pupils have a firm grounding in Western culture through music, literature and art but only a limited appreciation of what other cultures have to offer.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory** overall. It is better in Nursery, Reception and Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6, because of the variation in the quality of teaching, which causes pupils' progress to slow down in Years 3 to 6. The breadth of the curriculum is satisfactory and pupils are offered very good opportunities for learning after school, particularly in sporting activities. The school's links with parents, although satisfactory overall, require some improvement in communications and consultation.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory overall**, with good teaching in Nursery, Reception and Years 1 and 2. Assessment is satisfactory overall, however older pupils do not have sufficient understanding of how they can improve their work.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching in Nursery, Reception and Years 1 and 2 gives pupils a good start to their education.
- Teaching for pupils in Years 3 to 6 does not offer consistent challenge because work is not always sufficiently well matched to pupils’ differing levels of capability.
- Teachers of older pupils do not always expect high enough standards of work or behaviour.
- Some teachers talk for too long and do not give pupils enough time to complete their work.
- Teachers, learning mentors and support assistants work well as a team and help pupils to overcome learning difficulties.
- Older pupils’ understanding of how they can improve their work is often unsatisfactory.

**Commentary**

18. The table below gives details of the quality of teaching across the school. The quality of teaching for children aged under 5 and for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is better than that for pupils in Years 3 to 6, and this results in the slower progress seen for older pupils. Although lessons were seen in a range of subjects, inspectors’ judgements give emphasis to the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Additionally, account was taken of pupils’ work and of discussions with pupils about their work.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	6 (16%)	17(46%)	13 (35%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

19. In the Nursery and Reception classes, teachers and support staff spend time developing children’s personal and social skills. This helps children to develop good attitudes to learning and they approach all learning experiences with interest and enthusiasm. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Pupils have a good grasp of how to use letter sounds when reading and writing and possess the confidence to use these skills in lessons across the curriculum. In numeracy, pupils readily apply their knowledge of mathematics and can, for example, record various ways of arriving at a given number.
20. Lessons are well paced and keep pupils interested throughout. Support assistants are clear about their role in the classroom and work effectively alongside teachers. In addition to helping particular pupils with special educational needs, assistants provide general support to other pupils so that challenge and pace are sustained. Lessons are planned to provide differing levels of challenge, so that all pupils are extended by the work that is done. Questions are carefully worded and teachers target individual pupils to assess their understanding. There is an expectation that pupils will work hard, and although classrooms are sometimes noisy, pupils become engrossed in the tasks they are given.
21. In Years 3 to 6, teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn, but the impact of their teaching on pupils’ achievement varies. This is because the lessons planned do not always take account of the range of abilities within the class. Pupils are sometimes given the same work or there is insufficient difference between the work given to pupils who attain at average levels and that for higher-attaining pupils. Pupils’ productivity could be better and work is sometimes left incomplete; where pupils make errors, they do not always correct them. Teachers do not always make the best use of lesson time. The pace of teaching is

sometimes slow as teachers spend too much time talking when they introduce a lesson, leaving less time for pupils to complete the work that is set. Expectations are not always high enough and pupils often work slowly. The final part of the lesson becomes rushed and teachers do not have enough time to assess pupils' learning or correct misunderstandings. The effect of this is cumulative and higher-attaining pupils are underachieving.

22. Assessment tasks are undertaken as required, with the school making use of optional national tests for older pupils. All pupils' progress is monitored at regular intervals. The school is starting to track pupils' progress via computerised methods. This should facilitate the process of monitoring the progress of different groups of pupils. An analysis of test results is undertaken and this informs current development objectives. The implementation of school improvement initiatives, for example raising standards in writing, has been less effective in Years 3 to 6 than elsewhere in the school, due to problems with staff absence. The development of assessment has been similarly affected. The appointment of a temporary assessment co-ordinator is injecting new energy into the school's work as the new computerised system is developed. Day-to-day assessment is more effective for younger pupils, who receive appropriately challenging work and are aware of what they must do to improve their work. Older pupils do not always know how to improve their work because teachers are sometimes unclear about what must be done to move pupils to the next level.
23. For pupils with special educational needs, assessment is used effectively and individual education plans contain clear targets for improvement. These are effectively communicated to the adults who work with them. The school has two learning mentors who work with a small number of older pupils to help them overcome barriers to learning. This initiative is proving successful in helping pupils who have low self-esteem. The recent appointment of a co-ordinator for gifted and talented pupils is an important step towards recognising the learning needs of these pupils and ensuring that they all receive appropriate work.

## The curriculum

The curricular provision is **satisfactory** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in literacy and numeracy is good at Key Stage 1, but satisfactory at Key Stage 2.
- There is very good support for learning outside the school day, and the school organises a wide range of clubs, with very good participation in sporting activities.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress.
- The provision for personal, social and health education has good links with external agencies and takes into account national initiatives.
- The school has recently undertaken some effective initiatives to make improvements to the curricular provision; accommodation and resources have been improved and are now good.

### Commentary

24. The school has developed a broad and balanced curriculum with a satisfactory time allocation for the subjects taught. This meets the National Curriculum requirements and includes appropriate provision for religious education and collective worship. The personal, social and health education policies include appropriate guidance for sex education, plus advice on drugs and alcohol education.
25. The school promotes satisfactory equality of opportunity for most pupils, but there is some underachievement for higher-attaining pupils at Key Stage 2 because their work does not take sufficient account of their abilities. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to make good progress. Teachers plan well for these pupils in class by making suitable adaptations to the work that is being covered. These pupils are effectively

supported by teaching assistants, who have a good knowledge of their needs and their individual learning targets. The school also employs learning mentors who provide targeted assistance for some pupils who find some aspects of school difficult. The mentors are successful in helping these pupils to improve their achievements.

26. The school is starting to address the needs of higher-attaining pupils in a variety of ways. For instance, setting arrangements in Years 5 and 6 in numeracy and literacy ensure that teachers set work which is matched more effectively to pupils' differing ability levels. However, there is still more work to do to ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged. In some year groups and some subjects, for example in science and history in Year 3, there is evidence of extensive use of worksheets, which do not allow scope for independent learning for higher-attaining pupils and which inhibit the application and use of literacy skills. The school has elected to include provision for gifted and talented pupils within its policy for special educational needs and some special provision is being organised for these pupils in Year 4, with plans to extend this provision across other year groups.
27. The curriculum includes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, with some strengths. The recent policy guidance reflects the caring ethos of the school. In Key Stage 2, aspects of this curriculum area are taught as discrete topics that are timetabled every week, or as part of assemblies or registration time. In Key Stage 1, the school teaches many of the themes through class discussions known as 'Circle Time'. This approach is very effective for younger pupils. The school has developed good links with external agencies, for instance the local police service, to the benefit of the pupils' education.
28. The school provides very good opportunities for enrichment, including a wide range of extra-curricular provision; it offers very good opportunities for pupils to participate in sport and the arts. For example, the school participates successfully in a range of sporting activities, competing against other schools including, football, rugby and cross-country events. They have been part of a joint schools' initiative, and as such have benefited from the specialist tuition of the local school's PE. co-ordinator. The pupils are introduced to a range of activities that promote the arts, including theatre visits and visits to local places of interest, such as a Victorian schoolroom, in the context of Humanities studies. Older pupils also have the opportunity for a residential visit. The school has established cultural and educational links for Year 6 pupils with a school in the Czech Republic, but there are few examples of introducing pupils to culture beyond Europe. As a consequence, pupils have only limited knowledge of the multi-cultural society in which they live.
29. The school has good resources and accommodation. The school has undergone a major refurbishment recently. Nursery provision has been introduced and the Foundation Stage teaching area has been improved. An ICT suite has been created on a mezzanine floor. This is a useful facility, but at times the noise of pupils in the hall below is very distracting. The well-stocked school library is effectively used, being timetabled for regular use by classes. Resources to support curricular provision are generally good.
30. Staffing levels are satisfactory overall, with a good number of classroom support assistants, together with two learning mentors. There are good examples of co-operation and teamwork within the teaching staff, such as in teachers' willingness to assume temporary curricular responsibilities and undertake relevant in-service training, in order to improve standards within the school. For example, staff who have taken on the temporary leadership of Key Stage 2, mathematics and assessment have audited their new areas and prioritised their work with an awareness of the need to raise standards at Key Stage 2.

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

Pupils are **well cared for** at school. They are given **sound** support and guidance. The way the school seeks the views of pupils is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are well looked after by a caring staff and this is recognised and appreciated by parents.
- Child protection and health and safety issues are taken seriously.
- Learning mentors are effective in giving additional support to pupils.
- Pupils are not sufficiently aware of what they need to do to improve their work.
- There is a lack of formal procedures for seeking pupils' views.

## Commentary

31. The school is a friendly community where pupils are well cared for and treated with respect. Concerns are listened to sympathetically. The headteacher has a high profile and knows each pupil by name. Supervision is good at all times and pupils feel safe and secure. Child protection procedures are good, with two senior members of staff fully trained in the subject. Health and safety are considered important, with regular inspections of the premises. This is particularly necessary given the location and the overall complicated layout of the premises. Parents are right to feel confident that when their children are at school, they are treated fairly and are in a safe environment.
32. Most staff know the pupils well and the recent changes to teaching staff do not appear to have had a detrimental effect on the strong pupil/teacher relationship. The sound assessment procedures ensure that all the older pupils have targets for improvement in English and mathematics. Unfortunately, these targets do not have a high enough profile within the school, with the result that many pupils cannot remember them. This reduces the effectiveness of the procedure. Personal development is monitored informally but effectively – the quality of the comments on personal development in the pupils' annual reports is good. Learning mentors (funded by the Excellence in Cities initiative) are very effective in giving additional support when needed to individual pupils, particularly in boosting self-esteem.
33. Pupils have been involved in designing the school playground but the school has no formal procedures for regularly seeking, or acting on, pupils' views.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community and other schools are **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have a high opinion of the school.
- Parents are not consulted enough on the way the school develops.
- Information to allow parents to be involved in their children's learning lacks a consistent focus.
- Communication between school and home is not always informative enough.
- Pupils benefit from a good level of parental involvement.

## Commentary

34. Parents are very supportive of the school. They consider it a good school led by an accessible and approachable headteacher. Overall they approve very much of the way the school is run, but a significant minority of parents have concerns about communication between school and home and the extent to which parents are involved in the way the school develops. The inspectors found merit in the parents' concerns.
35. The information parents receive is a mixed bag. Newsletters are of good quality and keep parents well informed on the life of the school. The prospectus gives a useful introduction to

the school but omits vital information that allows parents to compare how the school is doing against national standards. This is unsatisfactory. Letters containing information about pupils' future work lack sufficient detail to allow parents to be more involved in their children's learning. Pupils' reports meet legal requirements but do not indicate how parents can help their children. At present, many contain educational jargon, have no clear guidance on what the child should do to improve, and in the case of junior children, most reports do not give parents an indication of how their child is doing against national expectations, although the school has this information. Letters to parents about changes to the school's procedures often give no background information about why the changes are being introduced. Notice of events is sometimes very short for those working parents who have to make arrangements.

36. There is little evidence that school seeks and considers the views of parents when drawing up plans for school development. Parents have a good level of involvement with the school, which directly benefits pupils. Many parents regularly help in the classroom, for instance, listening to children read or helping with cooking. This help is valuable and appreciated by the staff. The Parent Teachers' Association is active and successful in arranging social events and fund-raising. Most parents listen regularly to their children reading at home and this has a significant impact on reading standards. Homework is generally well organised in the school. However, the procedure of keeping parents fully informed by means of a diary and using this diary for two-way communication is not being monitored rigorously enough by the school for it to be effective. The homework policy does not reflect school's current procedures.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership, management and governance of the school are **satisfactory** and are reflected in the satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides good leadership, with a clear vision for the school and high aspirations.
- The chair of governors is well informed and offers active support to the school, but the governing body as a whole is insufficiently involved in supporting and evaluating the work of the school.
- Significant amounts of time have been spent managing a range of recent changes and difficulties, diverting time and attention from educational matters.
- The headteacher and assistant head make effective use of performance data and monitoring information to determine what needs to be improved.
- Subject leaders have too little knowledge of teaching and learning in their subjects.
- The school development plan lacks strategic detail for the longer term and has too little information about how change is to be brought about and its impact evaluated.
- Good financial management is helping the school to work towards its objectives in improving the quality of education provided.

### **Commentary**

37. The headteacher provides good leadership and has successfully managed a number of significant changes to the school over the past few years, for example, changes in funding arrangements from Grant Maintained to Foundation School and a change of age range from first to primary school. The assistant headteacher provides the head with good support. Together, they have a clear view of what the school should provide for its pupils. This vision is articulated well in the introduction to the school development plan. In seeking to bring about improvement, the headteacher leads by example in working alongside teachers and regularly visiting classes to assess how well pupils are learning. As a result, she is very clear about what needs to be done to effect change.



38. An able and active chair of governors has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governing body has committees to help with its work, but has recently restructured them, as some committees proved ineffective through lack of governor involvement. Minutes of committee meetings are not always sufficiently detailed and omit important information, such as who attended meetings. The decision to delegate some responsibility for premises to an individual governor is not good practice. Recently, governors have worked hard to improve the school's accommodation. The results are impressive, but attention has been diverted from educational issues. The governing body as a whole is not sufficiently involved in the strategic development of the school or in acting as a critical friend in evaluating the effectiveness of the school's work. They discuss the school development plan provided by the headteacher, but are not closely involved in its formulation. There is little evidence of their active involvement in evaluating the success of this plan in achieving its targets. As a result, their understanding of what the school does well and what needs to be improved is limited.
39. Procedures used by the headteacher for monitoring how well the school is doing are good. Analysis of information from annual tests is used effectively to show teachers where improvement is needed. This has highlighted the need to improve the progress pupils make between Years 3 and 6. As a result of this, the headteacher closely monitors what happens in classes, particularly focusing on the work pupils are doing. The information obtained helps the headteacher give support, guidance and challenging targets to teachers to help them improve their teaching and improve the progress pupils make. Considerable work has been put into this and the school acknowledges that this needs to be a continuing process. There are good links between the school's priorities for improvement and the arrangements for the professional development of teachers.
40. The leadership provided by other staff is inconsistent in its quality. Leadership of a few subjects and areas of work is good. For example, the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics and music co-ordinators are developing their areas and subjects well. In most other areas, the role of the co-ordinator is not as well developed. Art and design has no subject leader and this is reflected in the barely satisfactory level of work seen and the just satisfactory curriculum coverage. Only recently has the school started to make significant progress in subject leadership. All co-ordinators have received training to help identify what it is they need to do to become more effective. They ensure that appropriate planning is in place which offers a proper balance of activities. Some subject leaders have looked at standards of children's work. As yet, co-ordinators have not been closely involved in the analysis of test results and the regular and systematic observation of what happens in classrooms. Clear action plans for the development of their subject have been produced by most co-ordinators but these have not been included in the school development plan to provide a structured and comprehensive picture of what the school is aiming to improve and when. Co-ordinators do not yet have the management of a budget to help achieve these plans.
41. The school development plan summarises the main priorities for the school. It does not, however, provide sufficient detail about how targets will be implemented or what criteria will be used to evaluate the impact of each target in bringing about improvement or raising standards. The plan is derived from a long-term improvement plan covering at least three years. Neither of these plans covers all the areas of school management which are linked to budget priorities. Important areas of change, such as managing staffing during a time when the number on roll is falling, are not identified, although the headteacher and chair of governors clearly know that this is an issue and how it will be dealt with. The issues arising from the development plans of subject leaders are not incorporated into the school plan, limiting the effectiveness of the work being done by curriculum leaders. Although success criteria are identified in the plan, they are not rigorous enough in focusing attention on how the achievement of each target will help to improve the quality of education or raise the standards achieved by pupils. This lack of detail in the plan does not help the governing body to fulfil its role.
42. Despite the weaknesses in the school development plan, financial management is good. The headteacher and the chair of governors have an understanding of the school's longer-term

needs. Consequently, the budget is produced to meet ongoing commitments and future developments. For the past two years, the school has carried forward a significant balance of funds. There is a clear understanding by the headteacher and chair of governors about how this money will be used, in particular, for sustaining staffing levels as the school roll falls in future years. These long-term strategies are not explicitly stated in the school improvement plan nor recorded in detail in minutes of the governing body. Day-to-day administration of the budget is good and a bursar who visits weekly supports the school administrator effectively. The school successfully ensures that it achieves value for money when orders are placed for goods and services but it does not evaluate the effectiveness of its major spending decisions in terms of the improvements made to the quality of education provided or the standards achieved by pupils. Together, the standards achieved by pupils, the overall satisfactory leadership and management and the unit costs per pupil mean that the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	635,322
Total expenditure	648,909
Expenditure per pupil	2,515

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	168,979
Balance carried forward to the next	155,392

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**. Children are prepared well for transfer to Year 1.

When children start in the Nursery, their attainment is in line with that expected of children of their age. They make good progress. A number of children who have not attended the Nursery are admitted to the Reception class so that overall, attainment at the start of the Reception Year is in line with that expected for children of their age. All children continue to achieve well and by the end of the Reception Year, their attainment is better than that expected for their age, particularly in personal and social development and physical development.

A series of visits to school, useful meetings and relevant written information mean that children and their parents and carers are given a good introduction to the school. Good transition arrangements help children make the move from part-time to full-time education with ease. Teaching throughout the Nursery and Reception classes is consistently good, and in some lessons it is very good. Well-planned activities provide children with a good balance between adult-led activities and those at which children work independently. Children feel comfortable and secure within the unit because a good level of staffing ensures that all children are very well known by at least one adult. The team work well together under the effective leadership of the class teacher. Capable nursery nurses teach in the Nursery and Reception classes to allow the teacher to work throughout the unit. This arrangement works very well. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection.

Accommodation has been significantly improved since the last inspection, with the building of the Foundation Stage Unit. Although the rooms are on different levels, the space is organised well. The new outdoor play area ensures children have access to large play equipment, although the space available is small and there is no direct access from the teaching areas. In wet weather, the children have access to the covered play area when not required by the older children. The Foundation Stage is well led by a co-ordinator who has a good understanding of the work of the unit and how it can be further developed.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and helps children develop good skills for learning.
- There is a good balance between adult-led activities and opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves.
- Children work together well on appropriate activities.
- Children show a good level of independence in activities they choose for themselves.

### **Commentary**

43. By the end of the Reception Year, children's skills are well developed and a significant number are likely to exceed the nationally prescribed Early Learning Goals. Children come into school confidently and readily settle to work. They listen attentively to teachers or to recorded stories and eagerly join in activities, such as adding numbers or action songs. Children move sensibly around the unit, taking particular care when walking up and down stairs. They are interested in all the activities provided and willingly share their experiences with adults. Most confidently try new activities and readily choose what they wish to do from the appropriate range provided.

Children work well together taking account of others in their activities. For example, three nursery children in the role play corner played together well looking after their "sick" friend. Children concentrate well even when not directly supervised. They are eager to learn.

44. All adults provide children with good examples of working together and engender enthusiasm for learning. The team work is enhanced by nursery nurse students who work well under the guidance of the staff. Adults use every opportunity to develop children's confidence and to reinforce the expected standards of behaviour. Good relationships between the adults and children underpin the effective work done. Adults encourage children's participation in group activities or class lessons through clear explanations and good use of questions.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching helps children to develop their communication and early literacy skills well.
- Children make good progress in learning to read and write, using their good knowledge of letters and sounds.

### **Commentary**

45. By the end of the Reception Year, a significant number of children are likely to exceed the expected levels of development. Children are developing good skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing, preparing them well for their future education. Good, direct teaching is supported by a well-chosen range of activities, so that children engage in a range of learning experiences. Children listen attentively to class stories, particularly those enhanced by the use of puppets. They respond well to good questioning by adults to show sound understanding of the stories, identifying differences between different versions of the same story. Reception children practise reading at home and Nursery children enjoy hearing stories at home as part of the successful 'Share a Story' scheme. Children are able to take turns in conversations, expressing ideas clearly and listening to one another. This is an improvement since the last inspection, which reported that children were not given enough opportunity to develop their answers.
46. Progress in written work is good. Higher-attaining children write neatly, organise words logically and use their knowledge of letter sounds to help with spelling. They write for different purposes such as reports, imaginative stories, lists or annotated diagrams. Most children form letters correctly and copy words accurately. Those children who need extra help put pictures from a story in order, build up their knowledge of sounds and basic vocabulary and are beginning to copy writing independently. Careful records are kept of the good progress made by all children, enabling staff to adapt work to effectively meet children's differing needs.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers plan a wide range of activities which help children to develop their early numeracy skills.
- Children achieve standards that are, overall, better than those expected for children of their age.

### **Commentary**

47. Careful planning ensures that children cover a good range of work, so that by the end of the Reception Year, a significant number of children are likely to exceed the level of work expected for their age. A good balance of direct class teaching and well-planned group activities provides children with suitable challenges in order to learn mathematical skills and ideas effectively. Effective use of the interactive board helps children to develop their understanding of number. For example, children organised random numbers in order. They used this board both in class activities and in independent group work. Good explanations and clear demonstrations ensure that children understand the ideas and know what they have to do. Well-organised group activities ensure children consolidate newly-acquired understanding or skills, contributing to the good progress seen.
48. Children develop a good understanding of number. Higher-attaining Reception children confidently manage numbers larger than ten. They understand the idea of one more or one less and recognise whether a number is odd or even. They competently add single digit numbers. Most children are competent in using numbers up to ten and others work confidently with numbers up to five. Children recognise and create simple patterns, sort objects into groups and explore ideas of *longer*, *shorter*, *more than* and *less than*. Using the water tray, they develop an understanding of capacity by finding out how much water containers hold. Adults co-operate well in keeping records of what children can do and these are used to monitor children's progress and plan further work.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers' planning ensures children experience a wide range of suitable activities.
- Children achieve standards that are consistent with those expected for children of their age.

### **Commentary**

49. Children acquire a sound understanding of the world about them as the result of the good range of activities that they experience. They develop a suitable understanding of how computers operate and how they can help with their work. Clear teaching ensures children understand why it is useful to use computers when, for example, they discuss why labels are helpful and subsequently use the computer to make a label of their own name. They competently use the mouse and keyboard as well as printing their own work. Their knowledge of the world is enhanced by activities such as investigations about different materials, using the sand tray. Other activities develop children's awareness of healthy and unhealthy foods. Effective use of visitors, such as the local policeman, raises children's knowledge about people in the community who help them. They gain an understanding of religious and cultural traditions through looking at well-known stories and festivals. For example, children sequence a series of pictures to recount the Christmas story and they willingly talk to visitors about what they have learned about Chinese New Year.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Reception children receive very good teaching in lessons and develop their control of movements.

- A well-planned range of activities, both indoors and outside, helps children practise and improve their skills.
- By the end of the Reception year, children's attainments are better than those expected for their age.

### **Commentary**

50. The addition of an outdoor play area and the acquisition of a good range of large play equipment have been significant improvements since the last inspection. Children benefit from the wide range of well-planned activities these new resources allow. Although the designated outdoor area is small, children enjoy using large toys and improve control of their actions. In wet weather, access to a covered area means that children are still able to experience appropriate activities. As a result of good planning, adults ensure the area is well set out so that, for example, children are encouraged to park their large wheeled toys in the correct place, have access to a variety of activities and enjoy the space to run in. Nursery children particularly enjoyed the two-seater tricycle, which was labelled as "Taxi". They enjoyed being taken for a ride by a child who worked hard to pedal them around the area.
51. Movements are well co-ordinated for children of this age. Reception children benefit from access to the school hall and enjoy developing control over their bodies in very well structured lessons. They improve their balance and awareness of the space needed to work in. Children run, jump and skip, although a few children found this difficult. Children participate in all these activities enthusiastically.
52. Activities in the classroom enable children to develop control of finer movements such as those needed to control a pencil. By the end of the Reception Year, most children control a pencil and other colouring tools well, use scissors competently and manipulate small construction toys effectively. They manage the controls of a computer well.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

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

- Children benefit from a wide range of creative activities.
- Opportunities in other areas are used effectively to support children's creative development.

### **Commentary**

53. By the end of the Reception Year, most children have skills and understanding that are at least as good as those expected for their age. In both Nursery and Reception classes, children benefit from a wide range of activities which help them learn new skills and develop their imagination. Children in the Nursery developed their understanding of shades of colour when making patterns, using the colour of the week, red, with white paint to produce different shades. They were fascinated by this and worked with a high level of concentration at the task. Reception children enhance their mathematical understanding by painting regular patterns. Exploring three-dimensional shapes enhances both children's mathematical understanding and their creative awareness.
54. Imaginative play in the role-play corner helps children to develop their vocabulary, explore their understanding of the world as well as utilise their imagination. Reception children enjoyed acting out the story of Red Riding Hood.
55. Opportunities for children to sing songs and rhymes are taken in many activities. During the storytelling children sang a song about Red Riding Hood and one child confidently sang a solo.

Children enjoy singing and they do so competently, putting in all the appropriate actions to go with their songs.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Overall, the quality of provision is **satisfactory**, with strengths at Key Stage 1.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of achievement and teaching are good at Key Stage 1.
- In Key Stage 2 overall standards in reading and writing are satisfactory, but there is evidence of slight underachievement, relative to national averages, of higher attaining pupils.
- The initiatives in early writing have impacted favourably upon standards, particularly at Key Stage 1.
- Opportunities are provided for pupils to speak in public, to encourage them to be confident and articulate.
- The effective teaching and good resources for guided reading have a good impact on pupils' standards.
- In the literacy context of science, history and geography teaching, the usage of worksheets limits the scope and challenge for independent learning by higher-attaining pupils particularly.

#### Commentary

56. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment was average by the end of Years 2 and 4. Since 2000, standards in reading have improved in Key Stage 1 and are higher than national averages, and there have been even greater improvements at this stage in writing. In relation to similar schools, standards were higher in writing, and in line for reading. Standards at this stage are now good. In Key Stage 2, since 2001, test results have been broadly in line with national trends, but in 2003, there was evidence of underachievement by higher-attaining pupils. In relation to similar schools, standards were below average in English. This was because a lower percentage of pupils attained Level 5. Differences between the attainment of girls and boys are not significant, although, in 2003, there was slight evidence of girls' underachievement. Writing has been a focus for school development and recent improvements, particularly at Key Stage 1, have had a good impact, as seen in 2003 National Curriculum test results in Year 2. The school's targets predict an improvement in the anticipated numbers of pupils attaining Level 5 in English at the end of Year 6, compared with 2003.
57. Overall, most pupils achieve at least satisfactorily throughout the school, with pupils with special educational needs making good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. In the case of the very small number of pupils who receive special tuition in English as an additional language, progress is at least satisfactory. Overall, equality of opportunity is satisfactory, with teachers ensuring that nobody is excluded from any activity. However, last year's outcomes in standards in English at Key Stage 2 indicate that the provision for higher-attaining pupils was not well matched. The school has, in recent times, taken steps to address this issue by the introduction of setting in Years 5 and 6, by introducing special classes for higher attaining pupils in Year 4, and by the introduction of special literacy classes for lower-attaining pupils. These pupils are withdrawn at times and taught separately, which allows the teacher to focus upon average and higher-attaining pupils. The school is also starting to pursue other measures as part of a Gifted and Talented policy, but it is rather early to say how these measures are impacting upon standards.
58. Writing is improving in Key Stage 1 and pupils in Year 2 can write well-punctuated simple passages, including correctly spelled and structured sentences. They also produce high

standards of poetry, for example in Bonfire poems, with good use of adjectives. Towards the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils can write descriptive and imaginative passages in line with expectations for their age. There were good examples of poetry writing about winter and about 'The animal inside me'. They use drafting books and teachers give good encouragement to pupils to structure their work in paragraphs and to plan their work. These teaching strategies are generally effective. However, in science, history and geography lessons, in Key Stage 2 particularly, the preponderance of worksheets limits opportunities for pupils to engage in extended writing opportunities. Pupils throughout the school are learning ICT skills to enable them to research, redraft and express information in a variety of ways using ICT. The presence of whiteboards in the classrooms facilitates this learning.

59. Throughout the school, pupils' achievements in speaking and listening are good. This was evident in pupils' responses in most lessons and in a discussion with Year 4 and 5 pupils. In Year 6, in which pupils were engaging in a debate about the advantages and disadvantages of passive smoking, pupils acted out different role models and were gaining confidence in public speaking, expressing themselves generally well. In classes, most pupils listen and respond well to instructions and learning objectives.
60. The school has undertaken a comprehensive audit of all reading materials and worked towards improving provision of guided reading materials and usage of the school library. These measures have impacted favourably on standards at Key Stage 1, which are higher than national averages. In Key Stage 2, standards are in line for most pupils but below in respect of pupils attaining Level 5. It is important that the school provides sufficient opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 2 to develop higher order reading skills across all curricular areas.
61. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1. It is more variable at Key Stage 2, but most lessons seen were satisfactory or better. Teachers plan well, according to the National Literacy framework, making provision for different group activities. Pupils are well supported and assisted in class. In lessons which were good or better, the pace and timing of lessons was generally good, and high expectations were set. Teachers generally gave good encouragement for syntactical analysis of texts, as in a Year 2 lesson about synonyms. In the one lesson which was unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2, the converse applied. All teachers use the information they collect to establish targets for individual pupils. These are recorded in pupils' books. However, not all pupils knew their literacy targets. This suggests that targets should be reviewed more regularly with the pupils. In Key Stage 1, teachers set regular homework activities to support the work in class. In Key Stage 2, teachers allow pupils to conduct their own home-based research activities amongst other homework set.
62. There is good leadership in the subject and the co-ordinator has monitored test information to inform work on areas for development. These have been identified and programmes to bring about improvement are in place. She has introduced a range of measures throughout the school, which have already impacted favourably upon standards in Key Stage 1. When the computerised tracking systems are in fully in place, the school should be better placed to identify and provide focused support for pupils in different ability groups, particularly higher-attaining pupils in Key Stage 2.

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

63. There are good opportunities for pupils to extend and use their speaking, listening and reading skills in other subjects. The opportunities for pupils to access higher order reading and writing skills to support learning is underdeveloped in science, history and geography in Years 3 to 6.

## **MATHEMATICS**



Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve good standards by the end of Year 2 because of good teaching.
- Standards are in line with expectations by the end of Year 6, reflecting teaching which is satisfactory overall.
- Higher-attaining pupils at Key Stage 2 receive insufficient challenge and they do not achieve at the levels they are capable of.
- The pace of learning in Years 3 to 6 is often pedestrian and limits the progress that pupils make.
- The temporary co-ordinator has made a positive start and is bringing about effective change.

### **Commentary**

64. Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 are good; this is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. In the results of national tests in 2003, standards of attainment for pupils aged seven were very good when compared with all schools nationally and good compared with similar schools. Work seen during the inspection was good, overall. Pupils' learning is well planned and paced throughout Years 1 and 2, enabling these test results to be maintained. By the end of Year 2, pupils' competence with numbers is good, as is their understanding of shapes and measures. They solve problems related to real situations. This is an improvement since the last inspection when problem-solving was considered to be underdeveloped. By the end of Year 6, standards are at least in line with results nationally. Although the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in national test results is above average, there are not sufficient pupils attaining the higher level 5. The higher attaining pupils do not make enough progress from Year 3 to Year 6 to maintain the generally high standards achieved by pupils in Key Stage 1. There is no significant difference between the attainments of boys and girls.
65. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and in Years 3 to 6, it is satisfactory, with instances of good teaching. Where teaching is good, the pace of the lesson is sustained throughout, with good, sharp questions focusing pupils' attention and encouraging them to articulate their thinking. Pupils use their knowledge well to answer questions and this helps develop their understanding. A good understanding of the subject helps teachers plan suitable activities based on guidance from the National Numeracy Strategy. They explain processes clearly; for example, in Year 2 the teacher used pupils' knowledge of tens and units to demonstrate a strategy for adding two-digit numbers. As a result, most pupils completed this successfully and higher-attaining pupils competently managed three-digit numbers. Good classroom management ensures that pupils of different abilities receive appropriate tasks and that classroom assistants are used effectively to help pupils who need additional support. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. In good lessons, a short session at the end of each lesson helps children review what they have learned and helps the teacher assess the progress that has been made.
66. Where teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, the pace of lessons is not quick enough. Teachers' explanations last too long or are too repetitive so that pupils do not have enough time to practise the skills they have been taught. When set tasks, pupils are not encouraged to work quickly. They are allowed too long to complete tasks or are not given enough work to do to present them with real challenge. Although planning is based on examples provided by the National Numeracy Strategy, it is not followed closely enough. For example, in a lesson looking at problem-solving, pupils consolidated problem-solving techniques but were not encouraged to find quicker ways to find solutions or use calculators to speed up their responses, as indicated in the planning. This low expectation of what pupils are capable of particularly inhibits the progress of the higher-attaining pupils. The final part of a lesson is not always used effectively to assess what pupils have learned or give them the opportunity to

explain what they have achieved. Teachers set individual targets for pupils each term, but the targets are not ambitious enough for pupils to make good progress. The marking of pupils' work does not always give a clear indication of how their work could be improved.

67. A newly-appointed co-ordinator has made a good start to leading mathematics. She has quickly identified what needs to be done, arranged suitable professional development for teachers and introduced an appropriate strategy to help raise standards, the beneficial effect of which is becoming apparent in pupils' work. A good, detailed action plan identifies not only what needs to be done, but how it will be achieved. This plan is not, however, included within the school development plan, limiting the impact that it could have. As yet, the new co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor pupils' work or to observe teachers at work, but a start has been made on monitoring teachers' planning to ensure that the National Numeracy Framework is being followed.
68. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Standards are similar to those reported previously as is the quality of teaching, particularly with the younger pupils. Objectives for planning have been improved and are based on the National Numeracy Strategy, but this is not always followed closely enough. There is limited use of day-to-day assessment to inform planning, particularly in the Year 3 to 6 classes. The development of the subject has been affected by frequent and long-term staff absences.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

69. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory, overall. In some classes, pupils use data-handling to record results in science graphically. This is sometimes done using a suitable computer program. Pupils use careful, accurate measurements in science and design and technology lessons. Using mathematical skills is planned into orienteering lessons in PE. The cross-curricular use of mathematics is an area the new co-ordinator has rightly identified as being in need of further development.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

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

- Most pupils achieve well because of the generally good teaching.
- There is some underachievement by pupils in Years 3 and 6 because the pace of work is slower.
- Emphasis is placed on the investigative strand of science.
- Many links are made with literacy and numeracy, but only limited use is made of ICT.

#### **Commentary**

70. At the end of Year 2, standards in science are good and pupils achieve well. In 2003, teacher assessments showed that all Year 2 pupils attained at the expected Level 2 and a significant minority attained at the higher Level 3. Standards are particularly high in investigative science. Standards in Year 6 are satisfactory and pupils achieve well overall. In 2003, the percentages of pupils attaining at both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 were in line with those seen nationally, but were below those seen in similar schools. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because their work is carefully planned to build on previous learning and good support is given by supporting adults. Higher-attaining pupils achieve well throughout most of Key Stage 2, but there is underachievement in Year 6. Pupils' command of written English lacks sophistication and there is only limited use of technical vocabulary. When pupils draw conclusions from their investigations, they do not always interpret data effectively or make reference to their findings in their writing. No differences were observed in the achievements of boys and girls.

71. The teaching of science is good overall. The curriculum is soundly covered and an appropriate emphasis is placed on practical investigations in all year groups. As pupils progress through the school, they learn how to record their work in a scientific way. They set their work out to include hypotheses, methods, data and conclusions. They record data as graphs, tables and charts, showing a growing understanding of the principles of fair testing. Data is occasionally presented by computer-generated graphs or in spreadsheets, but overall, too little use is made of ICT to record data. ICT is sometimes used as a teaching aid, for example, in a Year 4 lesson on circuits, pupils used a relevant website to extend their work.
72. The pace of pupils' learning is good in Years 1 and 2, but shows variation in Years 3 to 6. In Year 3, too much use is made of work sheets. Although these are a convenient way of checking pupils' learning, they offer only limited opportunities for pupils to express ideas in their own words. Pupils are sometimes all given the same sheet and no acknowledgement is made of pupils' differing abilities. In Years 4 and 5, teachers' expectations are high and the pace of work is good. Good use is made of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers make good use of homework to support work in science. In Year 6, the pace of work slows once more. Pieces of work are left unfinished and it is unclear whether pupils have completed units of work. Marking is thorough, but indicates that there are common misunderstandings of the scientific concepts being taught.
73. The co-ordinator for science is better informed about work in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. He has undertaken analysis of Year 6 assessments and identified areas where improvements are needed, but as yet has no firm ideas on how to raise standards. The role of the science co-ordinator is being developed and opportunities for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning across the school are planned for within the school improvement plan.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at both key stages are satisfactory, with a good range of curricular developments in progress.
- Teachers plan an interesting range of activities that help to make learning purposeful.
- Pupils in both key stages are growing more confident and competent about using their ICT skills across the curriculum.
- The school's good ICT resources make an effective contribution to standards achieved.

### **Commentary**

74. Only a small number of lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence has been supplemented by sampling pupils' work and talking to pupils and members of staff.
75. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, with pupils achieving well. Pupils are developing a sound range of basic skills and are able to apply these skills in lessons. Pupils have a good understanding of the many applications of ICT, with teachers acting as good role models by making good use of ICT as a teaching aid. This was evident in lessons where the whiteboards were in use, and in the ICT suite, where pupils refer to the main whiteboard to follow exemplification.
76. The school makes good efforts to ensure that pupils who do not have computers at home are not disadvantaged. A club is provided specifically for these pupils so that they can practise skills at school. This club provides scope for pupils to choose what areas of ICT they wish to explore.

77. In the two lessons observed, one in each Key Stage, the teaching observed was satisfactory. These lessons were well prepared, and the teachers had relevant subject knowledge, and used the correct technical knowledge. In one Year 3 lesson, although the lesson objectives were broadly achieved, pupils became over-excited and this detracted from their concentration. In the Year 2 lesson, pupils made satisfactory learning in the development of word-processing skills as well as technical skills of saving their work to a folder and printing and closing the Encarta program.
78. The school is fortunate to have a well-resourced ICT suite. This is used to teach specific skills, and classes are timetabled in its use. This was seen to good effect in the Year 2 lesson, where the teacher and teaching assistant worked together, supporting all pupils well, including one with special educational needs. In Year 6, pupils have had experience of a range of ICT activities, including use of email, PowerPoint, plus the use of graphical and drawing programs, as well as Encarta and Internet research. Pupils are alerted to Internet safety advice. The evidence of pupils' work on display indicates that the range of pupils' experiences in ICT conforms to the policy advice and national guidance.
79. The co-ordination of this subject is good. The co-ordinator has only been in place for a very short time, but she has produced an action plan, identifying development needs, including networking the computers, and training requirements in certain areas, for instance, the use of microscopes. There have been significant improvements in resource provision since the last inspection, and the co-ordinator is in the process of developing staff confidence via ongoing training.

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

80. Pupils are given a range of opportunities to use ICT across the curriculum. During the inspection, there were some examples of ICT being interwoven into different lessons, including Year 6 pupils accessing the Internet in the context of research about mountains. However, the cross-curricular use of ICT was not always sufficiently apparent in the samples of work seen. Teachers' planning in core subjects generally identifies ICT links, helping to make sure that when ICT is used in lessons, it is purposeful and is linked to the work being done by the rest of the class. Despite this, there was not extensive evidence of ICT being used in all classrooms.

### **HUMANITIES**

81. In humanities, work was sampled in history and geography as only one lesson was seen. It is not possible therefore to form an overall judgement about provision.
82. Standards in history and geography are in line with those expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. Teaching is undertaken within a planned framework of activities, in line with national guidance. Generally, the topics selected are appropriate for pupils' year groups and the curricular framework, which operates on a two-year cycle, aims to be sufficiently flexible to avoid repetition. Good use is made of the environment locally and further afield and visitors enrich the curriculum. For instance, in the context of a Victorian topic, pupils visited a Victorian schoolroom and participated in role-play. Older pupils have the opportunity of a residential visit. Pupils in Year 2, who have been studying Florence Nightingale, have had a visit from the local nurse as part of their work. Pupils in Year 6 have a grasp of the chronology of significant periods in history. In the context of a recent topic, 'Britain since 1948', they have good knowledge of those aspects in which they have undertaken research, for instance fashion or sport. They have used the Internet as part of their research activities. Pupils show interest and enthusiasm for the topics they have studied.
83. On the basis of work scrutiny and one lesson seen, teaching and learning appear to be satisfactory in both Key Stages. Teachers generally have relevant subject knowledge, and make efforts to enliven the teaching with the use of videos and reference books. The one lesson seen in history in Key Stage 2 was satisfactory, but the resources used, the same

worksheet for the whole class, limited the potential scope for independent learning or extended writing opportunities, for higher-attaining pupils particularly. Work scrutiny indicated that there was also a heavy emphasis on the use of worksheets in a number of classes in Key Stage 2. There was limited evidence of extension activities provided for higher-attaining pupils, except in those classes where pupils were encouraged to undertake their own research, and when pupils participated in open-ended writing tasks. The teachers take trouble to ensure that pupils have appropriate aids available to assist their writing development, for example, Thesauri, and suitable reference texts are available as a class resource. The Internet is used as a resource in some topics, for instance 'Mountains' in Year 6, for investigative purposes.

84. The co-ordinator for both subjects has been involved in ongoing monitoring of the provision of the subjects, including monitoring of resource provision and ensuring that topics are related to local environmental visits. She has also been pro-active in establishing links for Year 6 pupils with schools in the Czech Republic and Germany. This has promoted a range of literacy skills in addition to geographical knowledge. Due to the emphasis of school priorities upon other subjects, very little monitoring of the teaching and learning has been undertaken to date.

### **Religious education**

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory** and meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

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

- Planning ensures pupils learn about a range of customs and practices of different religions.
- Religious education makes an important contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.
- There are no procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress.

#### **Commentary**

85. Standards of attainment remain in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as they were at the time of the last inspection. A lot of work in lessons centres around discussions, so there was limited written work to examine. However, evaluation of teachers' planning and analysis of the available work indicate that pupils' achievements are sound and that they make steady progress in developing knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and traditions of the world's major religions. It was not possible to see any lessons during the inspection to judge the quality of teaching.
86. Year 2 pupils improve their knowledge of important stories in the principal world religions by, for example, recounting the main events of the Christmas story and by sequencing pictures of the story of Rama and Sita in the correct order. Pupils who need additional support are given a sensible structure to help them record their ideas. By Year 6, pupils have extended their understanding of different religions. They study festivals such as the Hindu festival of Diwali, explain the significance of the Pillars of Islam and understand the importance of rituals, artefacts and worship to Sikhs. The higher-attaining pupils are developing a good understanding of religious belief, sometimes identifying common themes. The lower-attaining pupils have a more limited understanding of some of the abstract concepts that are discussed.
87. The headteacher provides sound leadership to the subject. She is clear about what pupils should learn and has ensured that the planning for each year promotes pupils' understanding. The scheme of work is linked well with the locally agreed syllabus to ensure pupils are taught a balanced programme of religious education. As a result the subject makes an important contribution to their spiritual, moral and cultural development. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Planning is now more consistent, standards have been maintained and the subject leader is more involved in the development of the subject. Pupils'

work is looked at regularly and the co-ordinator sees planning but there is no systematic programme of lesson observation or of assessment yet.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

88. One lesson was seen in the following subjects: art and design, design and technology and music and it is not possible therefore to make firm judgements about provision. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors spoke to co-ordinators about their work, looked at teachers' planning, looked at samples of pupils' work and had discussions with pupils. One lesson was observed in physical education at Key Stage 1 and two lessons were seen at Key Stage 2.

### Art and design

89. Standards of work are **satisfactory** overall. Work in art and design follows national guidance and meets curriculum requirements. Teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work show that skills are developed progressively, by building on previous learning. Pupils learn about shape, texture and tone and use a range of different media, for example, pencil, pastel, paint and crayon. Pupils are taught particular techniques which they then try out. For example, they use a colour wash to create effective seaside pictures. They develop their ideas about design by investigating pattern using printing and collage. Younger pupils use collage to represent faces and older pupils create woven designs using paper. Three-dimensional art was not well represented in displays or in samples of work seen, but there is a strong link between art and design and design and technology, so that many skills and techniques are used in projects which incorporate learning from both the art and design and design and technology curriculum. Links with ICT are underdeveloped. Pupils study the work of different artists from Western culture, but no evidence was found that pupils study art from other cultures.
90. There is no co-ordinator for art and design. Planning is not monitored and there is no check kept on standards or curriculum coverage. As a consequence, coverage of the art and design curriculum is only just satisfactory. More time needs to be given to the study of art from cultures beyond Europe and the use of ICT to generate and manipulate images. Pupils enjoy attending an Art Club after school, at which they work on an interesting range of projects.

### Design and technology

91. Standards of work in design and technology are **satisfactory**. Samples of pupils' work, together with teachers' planning, show that pupils gain experience of a range of materials and techniques and that they are developing the skills expected for their age through making a variety of products. Younger pupils annotate design templates and explain how they will develop their ideas, for example when making puppets. They neatly cut out felt and successfully sew their puppets. Older pupils design slippers, although these designs are not always annotated sufficiently clearly. Pupils in Year 5 follow a recipe to make biscuits. They evaluate their product by taste, texture and appearance as well as reviewing the process to see how they could have improved their work. The designs of the oldest pupils are not always clearly annotated to show how they will attempt to turn their design into a finished product.
92. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. Standards have been maintained and planning has been developed, using national guidance, to ensure progress is sustained throughout the school. The co-ordinator is involved in the further development of the subject but a systematic assessment and recording system has yet to be produced. The subject is not included in the school development plan to show how future provision will be sustained or improved.

### Music

93. Standards in music at Key Stage 2 are **satisfactory**. There is insufficient evidence to judge standards at Key Stage 1. Music was only observed in Year 5 and for a short session in Year

1, although singing was also heard in assemblies. In assembly, pupils sang with confidence and feeling. Some imaginative teaching in Year 1 enabled pupils to use whistling, together with their hands, feet and the classroom furniture, to create the music of a storm. In Year 5, pupils competently sang a well-known round in parts. From the evidence available and from discussions with the co-ordinator, standards in music are at least in line with expectations for pupils by the end of Year 6.

94. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject. She has drawn up a detailed action plan to guide the development of the subject but this plan is not included in the school development plan, either in full or in summary. In order to provide support for teachers and to ensure that all aspects of the subject are taught, the co-ordinator has successfully adapted a published scheme of work. This is supported by appropriate professional development to help teachers implement the scheme, develop their expertise and improve their confidence. The co-ordinator also works with teachers to offer advice and support on how lessons could be improved. As a result, the co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. A good range of resources contributes to the standards achieved. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Improvements have been made to the balance of the curriculum and the range of resources. The subject leader is more involved in the development of the subject but the role has not been extended yet to include management of a budget for the subject.

## Physical education

Overall the quality of provision is **at least satisfactory**, with strengths

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The extra-curricular sporting provision for older pupils is very good and achievements in these areas are good.
- Achievements in swimming are good.
- There are positive links with local schools, which have impacted well upon standards.

### Commentary

95. Three lessons were observed, with a focus upon dance and gymnastics. In lessons seen, pupils showed a good level of enthusiasm for the subject. They worked hard and responded well to the teachers' prompting. Levels of skills varied, according to pupils' physical abilities. In a Year 6 lesson, which was taken jointly by the teacher and local sports co-ordinator, pupils demonstrated a refined level of gymnastic skills in balance and shape formation. They co-operated well in groups and were keen to consider how to improve their movements. In a Year 1 dance lesson, pupils were very responsive to the teacher's instructions and keen to contribute their own ideas.
96. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory or good. Teachers had good subject knowledge, explained tasks clearly and there was a good pace to learning. Behaviour was managed effectively and good use was made of examples of pupils' work to show key skills. Learning was made enjoyable and pupils were given good opportunities to work individually or in groups.
97. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular sporting activities, including such activities as football, rugby and cross-country, with participation levels, achievement and enthusiasm being high. These activities contribute well to a dynamic overall curriculum. Pupils in Year 5 take part in weekly swimming lessons. The school's records of swimming awards show that by the end of Year 5, most pupils can swim at least 25 metres, with many swimming far greater distances. This is a strength in pupils' attainment.

98. The co-ordination of this subject is good, and the co-ordinator has taken a number of steps to develop PE, forming positive links with the local schools group and sports co-ordinator, to boost standards, teacher expertise and pupil achievement. She has also been instrumental in forging links and participation with local and national initiatives. An action plan is in place, which indicates relevant development objectives, and the updated policy places suitable emphasis upon curriculum balance and health and safety considerations.

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

Provision in personal, social and health education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Class discussions are used effectively to explore important issues, such as bullying, drugs misuse and health education.
- The co-ordinator has good knowledge of what needs to be taught and monitors work across the school.

### **Commentary**

99. Two lessons were seen in this area of the school's work, but discussions with pupils show that there is good coverage of the personal, social and health education programme. Pupils from Reception to Year 6 spend time talking about working and living together, covering important subjects such as bullying and the dangers of the misuse of drugs. Visitors such as the school nurse and the community policeman come to school to talk to pupils. The Life Caravan visits the school each year and this is the stimulus for much work on aspects of health education such as drug misuse and the dangers of smoking. There are strong links with the science curriculum, in which pupils learn about eating a balanced diet and the importance of exercise.
100. The co-ordinator for personal, social and health education is well informed and enthusiastic about her area. She works hard to ensure that important matters such as bullying are addressed and monitors planning against non-statutory guidelines to check that all aspects are covered. The variety of visits, visitors and trips is also monitored to ensure a balance is maintained.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<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	2
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

<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).*