

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **HIGHFIELD INFANT SCHOOL**

Shortlands, Bromley

LEA area: Bromley

Unique reference number: 101663

Headteacher: Mr D. Payne

Lead inspector: Mr G.R. Logan

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> –19<sup>th</sup> November 2003

Inspection number: 256425

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	224
School address:	Highfield Drive Shortlands Bromley Kent
Postcode:	BR2 0RX
Telephone number:	0208 464 7804
Fax number:	0208 464 7804
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C. Collins
Date of previous inspection:	23 <sup>rd</sup> March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Highfield Infant School serves a well-established residential community in Bromley. Most housing is privately-owned and, in common with similar areas around London, expensive. A small number of pupils live in housing association properties. The school, opened in September 1972, shares a site with its partner junior school. The school is of similar size to many infant schools. Most of the 224 pupils live in the immediate locality. The majority of pupils are from White European backgrounds, with around 15 per cent of pupils from a diversity of minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is almost four times as great as at the last inspection. Five pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language. A well below average proportion of pupils (four per cent) have special educational needs, for mainly moderate learning difficulties. This is a much lower figure than at the last inspection. No pupils have statements. This is a very stable community - less than four per cent of pupils leave or join the school over the course of the year, other than at the end of Year 2. This is much lower than is often found in urban schools. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals (four per cent) is well below the national average (19 per cent). The profile of pupils' attainment when they enter the school is above average overall, though with some spread.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11810	Mr G.R. Logan	Lead inspector	Mathematics; Physical education; English as an additional language
9744	Mr P.H. Brown	Lay inspector	
14806	Mr J. Stevens	Team inspector	Science; Information and communication technology; Religious education
11901	Dr D.P. Lowe	Team inspector	Art and design; Design and technology; Music; Special educational needs; Foundation Stage
30705	Mr G.M. Stephens	Team inspector	English; Geography; History

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates

Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very effective and much improved school** with a very supportive, caring ethos. It is extremely successful in including all pupils in its activities. Pupils achieve well over time. Teaching is good overall, and very good in Reception. Standards overall are well above the national average and have been sustained successfully since the last inspection. The leadership provided by the headteacher is excellent. He has a very clear vision for the school and is well-supported by the staff. They work creatively with governors to ensure that the school has an appropriate agenda for continuing improvement. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are high. Pupils achieve well. The few pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive very good support. Gifted or talented pupils are supported very well.
- Foundation Stage provision is very good and has improved significantly.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behave very well. Their personal development is very good.
- The curriculum is very good. Extra-curricular provision is excellent. Pupils are very well-prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils are cared for very well.
- The partnership between the school and its parents is excellent.
- The governing body is highly effective.
- The quality of teaching could be further developed in Years 1 and 2.
- Assessment has some strengths, but the school recognises that there is further work to do in the foundation subjects in Years 1 and 2.

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. All issues raised have been successfully tackled. High standards have been effectively sustained. Able pupils are very well provided for. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have shown significant improvement. There has been a fundamental, and very successful, restructuring of the Foundation Stage provision. Staff changes have brought new energy to the school. The school now makes a major contribution to training new teachers. The partnership with parents is a significant strength.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	A	B	A	A
Writing	A	B	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	B

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

- Children currently in Reception have made a very good start and are on track to achieve the goals set for them.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science are well above average overall.
- Standards are above average in many of the foundation subjects.

**Pupils achieve well. Those with special educational needs, or who speak English as an additional language, achieve well because of the very good support they receive.**

**Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are very good.** Their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Relationships and behaviour are very good. Attendance is now good and punctuality is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided is good, with some very good features.**

**Teaching is good overall.** The proportion of good or better teaching was very similar in Years 1 and 2. The most consistent teaching was in Reception, where all teaching observed was very good. Teachers know their pupils well and have a good understanding of how to move learning forward. However, not all teaching builds sufficiently upon pupils' enthusiasm or motivates them enough. Good assessment procedures are used effectively in Years 1 and 2; assessment is very good in Reception. As a result of teachers' encouragement, pupils work well independently. Teachers plan effectively to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Learning support staff are well prepared and responsive to the needs of pupils. Teaching in ICT has benefited from significantly improved resources and good training opportunities. The curriculum is rich and interesting. It is broad and balanced. Extra-curricular opportunities are excellent. Pupils receive very good care and support. Very good induction procedures help the youngest children to settle quickly. Child protection procedures are good. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. The school has an excellent partnership with parents. Links with other schools are excellent. Links with the community are very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership of the school is excellent and the management is very good.**

Since his arrival, the headteacher has worked with drive and determination to implement a comprehensive plan for improvement. Many aspects of the school have been significantly improved, in particular the Foundation Stage, resources for learning, the school's partnership with parents and its links with the junior school. The school evaluates its work rigorously and makes very good use of available data and expertise. Governors manage the school very efficiently and are highly effective and committed. Statutory requirements are met fully. School administration is very efficient.

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

Parents are very happy with the school. They are very pleased with the improvements made and feel that the school is very well led. The level of parental involvement in the life of the school is outstanding. Pupils enjoy school very much. They feel that the lessons are interesting and fun, although they are not convinced that other children behave as well as they should. They feel that adults are always available to help them if things go wrong.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

There are no significant key issues, but the school should work on these developmental points:

- Develop further the already good teaching in Years 1 and 2, so that it matches the very good practice in Reception.
- Extend the good assessment practice already evident in Reception and the core subjects to the rest of the curriculum.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils' achievement overall is good. Children in Reception make good progress. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are well above average by the end of Year 2. Performance in national tests improved significantly in 2003. Standards are above average in most of the remaining subjects of the curriculum.

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

- High standards have been sustained since the last inspection.
- Higher attaining pupils achieve particularly well; gifted or talented pupils are well-supported in English, mathematics and ICT.
- The school is working effectively to raise pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in Foundation Stage now benefit from very good teaching and enhanced provision and this has the potential to boost achievement further across the school.
- Boys and girls of all capabilities and from different ethnic backgrounds make similar good progress over time. Those with special educational needs do well because of the good support they receive. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well.
- The school makes increasingly effective use of available data to target good achievement in all years.

#### **Commentary**

1. At the last inspection, standards were, as now, well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, standards were average in the foundation subjects, with the exception of ICT where standards were below average. Given that standards were well above average in language and mathematics and in physical and creative development by the end of the Reception year, this would suggest that pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 was satisfactory overall. Changes in staffing, raised expectation, better subject documentation and planning, a sharper focus on the needs of gifted or talented pupils and improved assessment procedures, have had a positive effect on standards, particularly in the foundation subjects, where standards have risen, and in pupils' overall achievement, which is now good.
2. Attainment on entry to the school is above average overall, although there is greater diversity in the intake than was the case five years ago. In most subjects, pupils achieve well from their different starting points. Standards in ICT are now above those expected. Standards in national tests have been sustained. Minor variations from year to year are now more often a reflection of the make-up of a particular year group than of shortcomings in teaching or expectation. Higher attaining pupils do well, with a well above average proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. The proportion of pupils achieving at this level in 2003 was the highest in any of the last five years. Both boys and girls do well in national tests and overall performance by gender follows national trends closely. Both groups make similar rates of progress during their time at school. Pupils with two terms experience in Reception, who are invariably younger than the others, tend to achieve less well overall by the end of Year 2 than do those with a full year of Reception experience. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and achieve well. Their needs are identified early in their school life and they are set clear and achievable targets. The small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well over time. They receive good support from teachers and support assistants.



## Foundation Stage

3. Almost all children in the Foundation Stage have had some pre-school experience and are well-prepared for entry to school. They benefit from good induction procedures and settle well into school routines. Very good curricular provision, underpinned by very good teaching, ensures that children achieve well. On entry to Year 1, their attainment significantly exceeds the expected level, particularly in language and literacy, mathematical and personal and social development.

## Key Stage 1

4. Year 2 results in 2003 were well above average in reading and writing when compared with the national picture and to similar schools. Standards in mathematics were well above average in relation to schools nationally and above average when compared to similar schools. There was no significant variation in performance between boys and girls. Results in 2003 showed a good improvement in reading and writing, but a marginal decline in higher level attainment in mathematics, compared with results in 2002. The proportion reaching Level 3 in writing improved significantly.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.7 (17.0)	15.9 (15.8)
Writing	16.5 (15.0)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.7 (18.0)	16.4 (16.5)

*There were 90 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. Standards in the work seen in core subjects are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2, confirming recent test results. The school creates good opportunities for pupils to write purposefully across the curriculum. Last year, the school identified some underperformance in aspects of writing. This was successfully targeted and tackled in the last school year, achieving significant improvement by the end of the year. A new handwriting scheme has been introduced though pupils are not yet consistently transferring their new skills into their general writing activities. Reading is a strength and pupils have a very good knowledge of their letter sounds. Standards in mathematics remain high. Pupils have good skills in numeracy and record their work independently from an early stage. In science, there are good opportunities for pupils to undertake practical and investigative activities and this boosts standards significantly. The school has also been effective in achieving improvement in ICT, where standards were, at the last inspection, unsatisfactory. Good levels of resourcing, staff training and effective leadership have transformed the situation, so that ICT is now a strength. There is increasing cross-curricular use of ICT.
6. Not all subjects were inspected fully. However, standards in most of those seen, including religious education, are above those expected and pupils achieve well overall. Good use is made of visits and visitors to promote learning in subjects such as history and geography. Rigorous teaching and high expectations ensure that standards are above average in physical education. In both music and physical education, the allocated time slots for lessons are short. This is a deliberate strategy, ensuring that pupils are very focused and engaged, so that they make the maximum progress possible.
7. The school makes very good use of available data to ensure that pupils make consistent progress. Assessment procedures and the use of the information which these provide are increasingly effective, and very effective in the Foundation Stage. A commitment to raising standards underpins many of the initiatives aimed at improvement. Pupils identified as gifted or talented are now supported well through termly programmes which target areas such as writing and ICT.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupil attendance is good and punctuality is very good. Attitudes to work and behaviour are very good. Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, is also very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' behaviour, both in and out of class, is very good.
- Pupils display very positive attitudes to work and very good self-esteem.
- Relationships with adults and between pupils are very good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

### Commentary

8. Attendance levels, currently at 95.4%, are good and are above the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. These good levels of attendance reflect the pupils' enthusiasm for school, but are also achieved through effective procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance. Punctuality is very good, making it possible for lessons to commence on time and without disturbance.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.2
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.*

9. Attitudes to school, and in particular learning, are very good. Pupils are extremely enthusiastic about lessons and also about the very many extra-curricular activities on offer. This enthusiasm is evident in the large number of pupils still participating in various clubs a good hour after the formal end of the school day.
10. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good and make a significant contribution to learning. Pupils communicate confidently and are able to sustain an intelligent level of conversation both in class and in less formal settings, such as the dining hall.
11. The school very successfully provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to display initiative and accept responsibility. They are regularly asked to perform small tasks in class which are appropriate to their age and are effective in developing a sense of responsibility.
12. Pupils' behaviour is very good, both in the classroom and generally around the school. They are attentive to their teachers and also to the needs and sensitivities of each other. They show courtesy and respect to other people, including visitors. The school has introduced very effective behaviour management strategies which are consistently implemented and fully accepted by pupils as fair and reasonable. The cornerstone to these strategies is the set of "Six Golden Rules" which were drawn up in consultation with pupils and provide an agreed code of conduct for behaviour throughout the school.
13. Oppressive behaviour, including bullying, is virtually unknown at the school but, nevertheless, clear and coherent strategies are available should any cases arise. Pupils fully understand the nature of bullying, including its harmful effects, and these issues are frequently discussed. There have been no exclusions, either permanent or fixed term, during the past 12 months.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	165	0	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
White – any other White background	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	7	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	8	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	5	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	8	0	0

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

14. The school is very effective in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Assemblies provide an appropriate opportunity for spiritual reflection and this is reinforced by visits to the local parish church. Pupils very much respect the feelings and values of others, and this awareness is encouraged during class discussion times. The school very effectively promotes an understanding of the nature and role of the local community, as was observed at a whole-school assembly exclusively devoted to this theme. A very strong social responsibility exists, as exemplified by the large stack of “love in a box” shoe cartons awaiting departure to less well-off countries. Pupil awareness of cultural diversity is good and is achieved through visiting speakers, theatre groups, French and Spanish language clubs, and other imaginative initiatives.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is very good, with excellent extra-curricular provision. Pupils are cared for very well. The partnership with parents is excellent.

#### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching is good overall. It is best in Reception, where all teaching is very good. Expectations are generally high, pupils are challenged well and learning proceeds at a good pace. Overall, teachers use assessment information well to plan future work.

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

- Teaching and learning are **good** overall, and **very good** in Reception. This enables pupils to make consistent progress and achieve well. Pupils use their writing skills well across the curriculum.
- Teachers’ use of assessment information to plan future work is good. Lessons are planned effectively to meet pupils’ needs. Good links are established between subjects.

- Deployment of teaching assistants is effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
- Overall, pupils are challenged well. However, teaching in Years 1 and 2, while rigorous, sometimes lacks vitality.

### Commentary

15. At the last inspection, teaching was also good overall. Occasionally, expectations were not high enough. The current headteacher has been working to build upon already effective teaching and his efforts, which have been assisted by staff changes, are now paying off. Recent input to the Foundation Stage, with new, but very experienced staff, has produced consistently very good teaching. The intention now is that a planned focus on Years 1 and 2 should see the overall quality of teaching there rise to be very good also.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 ( 0%)	13 ( 32%)	22 ( 53%)	6 ( 15%)	0 ( 0%)	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.*

16. Staff in the Foundation Stage have a very good understanding of the areas of learning and are working well in partnership with parents to enable children to learn well. Planning takes full account of individual needs and there is a fundamental emphasis on structured play. Teaching and learning in the lessons observed were consistently very good. Good teaching is supporting good achievement for most pupils across Years 1 and 2. Pupils are challenged well overall, although some of the teaching, while efficient and rigorous, lacks sparkle. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show a good capacity to work independently or collaboratively. Higher attaining groups in particular are expected to be able to 'get on' with tasks. This promotes independence well and encourages pupils to show initiative and to be more self-sufficient in their learning. Teachers question pupils well and, in the best lessons, encourage them to think strategically; to devise ways of approaching a problem which can be applied, or creatively adapted, on other occasions. This approach is used well in the better lessons in mathematics.
17. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Their individual needs are met through the work that is set and the quality of the support provided. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from working alongside their peers in the classroom and from the good support that they receive individually or in small groups from teaching assistants. It enables them to make good gains in learning in relation to the targets set in their individual education plans.
18. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language are taught effectively. The school makes specific provision for the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills, and this is having a beneficial effect on their confidence in the spoken language. Otherwise, they are supported well through adapted planning in lessons and the support of classroom assistants. The tracking information which is now becoming available indicates that, over time, these pupils achieve well.
19. Teachers' methods are chosen well to assist pupils in gaining knowledge and developing understanding at a steady rate. For example, there is a high level of first-hand learning in science, where pupils experience an investigative approach from an early stage, and in history and geography where the curriculum is well-supported by visits and visitors. Planning is good, particularly so in the Foundation Stage. The school has developed good planning structures with plenty of guidance for staff to draw on. Clear objectives are set for learning, though these are not always made explicit in lessons. Good use overall is made of assessment to inform the planning of suitably challenging work to match pupils' needs and capabilities. The use of

assessment in the Foundation Stage is very good. Pupils are given helpful comments when their work is marked, often orally, to help them improve their future work. Teachers make good use of data to track pupils' progress and identify areas of weakness. Pupils' progress is effectively tracked in writing and numeracy every half term, and this helps with target-setting. Individual targets are set in English and science, though not in mathematics. There is still work to do in developing assessment procedures in some of the foundation subjects, including ICT. Good use is currently made of homework to support pupils' achievement.

## **The curriculum**

The breadth of curricular opportunities is very good. Opportunities for enrichment are excellent. Accommodation and resources are good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is excellent.
- Provision for pupils with SEN is very good.
- Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good.
- Curricular development in the Foundation Stage is innovative.
- Support for learning outside the school day is excellent.
- Preparation for pupils' later stages of education is excellent.

## **Commentary**

20. The curriculum is child-centred and all pupils have access to a very broad and balanced curriculum, including religious education. The school is innovative in its approach to the curriculum in the Foundation Stage, in that play is an essential part of the learning process. The quality and range of opportunities provided are very good. There are consistent whole-school approaches to teaching and applying literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.
21. Provision for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship is very good and is an integral part of all areas of learning. Equality of access and opportunity is excellent for all pupils. Individual differences in terms of race, class, disability, background and gender are positively acknowledged and reflected in the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to participate fully, make choices, express opinions, recognise the needs of others, and respect those who have responsibilities.
22. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It is organised to meet their specific needs. Individual education plans contain appropriate targets relating to areas of learning or behaviour. Targets are discussed with pupils and parents and are reviewed at least once in each term.
23. Preparation for pupils' transfer to the junior school is excellent. There are good links between staff and there is an effective programme of visits involving staff, parents and pupils.
24. Opportunities for curriculum enrichment are excellent. Educational visits, visitors and focus weeks, linked to pupils' learning needs, enhance the breadth and quality of their experiences. Support for learning outside the school day is excellent, including opportunities for participation in sport. Participation in the arts, including the choir, recorder groups and instrumental music, is excellent. Participation in other after-school activities is very good.
25. The very good match of teachers to the curriculum enables all subjects to be taught well. The match of support staff to the curriculum is very good in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 and 2. Accommodation is very good in the Foundation Stage and good in the rest of the school. Accommodation is used imaginatively and staff have created a stimulating learning environment. Outdoor accommodation is very good in the Foundation Stage. There

is a very good computer suite which is used well. This has contributed to the improved standards in ICT. Despite the unattractive external appearance of the four mobile classrooms and their lack of toilet facilities, the school does not allow these factors to affect standards. Good resources are used imaginatively to support the curriculum.

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

The school very effectively ensures the health, safety and welfare of pupils. The support, advice and guidance given to pupils are very good. Pupils' involvement in the life of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Health and safety procedures, including those related to child protection, are detailed, appropriate, and very effectively implemented.
- The support, advice and guidance provided to pupils are of a very high quality.
- The school successfully seeks, and acts upon, the views of pupils.

### **Commentary**

26. Procedures for safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of pupils are very good. A clear and coherent child protection policy has been prepared which is rigorously implemented. The headteacher has designated responsibility and he ensures that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are fully aware of their responsibilities with respect to child protection matters.
27. A detailed health and safety policy has been adopted which clearly defines responsibilities, organisation and specific procedures. Procedures for first-aid, fire prevention and control, and accident reporting, are appropriate to the needs of the school and are fully understood by adults and pupils alike. Teachers very effectively incorporate health and safety aspects into lessons, as observed in a design and technology lesson in Year 1 during which pupils were instructed in the safe use of scissors. Likewise, at the Cookery Club, pupils were shown the safe way to place hot pans on a cooker.
28. The school provides very good support, advice and guidance to pupils. This is based on close personal knowledge of individual pupils and on the very strong personal relationships which have been established. Pupils unanimously expressed total confidence in discussing any problems that might arise with their classroom teacher. Teachers are ably supported in providing this pastoral role by classroom assistants, lunchtime supervisors and the many parents who help in the school.
29. Induction arrangements for pupils entering Reception are extremely effective and ensure a smooth transition into school life. Most pupils settle very quickly and this allows them to commence learning at a very early stage.
30. The school effectively seeks the views of pupils and, where appropriate, acts upon them. Within the classroom, pupils are informally consulted as to their opinions, and teachers visibly acknowledge the value of these. The 'Six Golden Rules', which reflect the agreed code of conduct for behaviour throughout the school, are regularly re-negotiated with pupils. At a meeting with pupils a strong view was expressed that their opinions are listened to and respected.

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

Excellent partnerships have been established with parents and other schools. Very strong links have also been established with the local community.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Communication with parents is excellent.
- Parental involvement in the life of the school is outstanding.
- Links with other schools are excellent.

### **Commentary**

31. The school is held in very high regard by parents, who believe it to be very well led and managed, and highly successful in promoting pupils' academic and personal development. The school maintains a highly effective dialogue with parents, operating informally on a day-to-day basis, and also more formally through questionnaires and meetings.
32. The excellent partnership with parents makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning and to the personal development of pupils. Parents receive full information regarding the school's provision for special educational needs and are regularly informed about their child's progress. They meet formally with the class teacher and, if necessary, the co-ordinator for special educational needs, each term. Parents are always welcome to share any concerns with the school. Similar high-quality links are maintained with parents of pupils who have English as an additional language.
33. Communication, both written and verbal, with parents is excellent. Regular newsletters are sent to parents and these are informative, well presented and reader friendly. The school brochure is comprehensive and professionally presented. The annual governors' report to parents provides an excellent summary of the school's progress during the previous year. Parents are provided with very good feedback as to their children's progress through the annual written reports which are comprehensive, personalised, and contain relevant and measurable targets for future development.
34. Verbal communication is of a very high standard. Curriculum workshops are held regularly. These assist parents to provide additional support for their children's learning and to supplement conventional parent evenings.
35. Parental involvement in the life of the school is outstanding and makes a major contribution both to the academic and personal development of pupils. An army of parent helpers assist in the classroom, and this assistance is very effectively organised. Very many parents assist with the running of school clubs. The Friends group raises in the order of £14,000 annually for the benefit of the school.
36. Links with the local community are very good and significantly enhance learning. There are regular visits to the local Parish Church. Links with the local library are used to develop pupils' interest in books and literature further. Other local visits are used effectively to enhance the curriculum. Further enrichment is provided through visitors to school, including theatre groups, musicians, and guest speakers.
37. Links with local schools, and particularly Highfield Junior School, are excellent and ensure an almost seamless transition from infant to junior education. Pupils in Year 2 visit the Junior School prior to starting in order to develop familiarity with the new surroundings and, consequently, to build their confidence. Excellent links have been formed with other infant schools which have resulted in two-way staff visits between the schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Governance of the school is very good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. The leadership of key staff is very good and the school is managed very well.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors work very well with the headteacher. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and challenge the headteacher and staff to raise standards further.
- The headteacher has a very clear vision, sets common goals and inspires and motivates staff to achieve them.
- Key staff support the headteacher very well, sharing his enthusiasm and vision, and working hard to reflect on current practice and to improve it still further.
- High expectations and efficient management systems ensure that all staff concentrate on creating an environment where teaching and learning remain the main focus.

### Commentary

38. The governing body shares the headteacher's vision and ambitions for the school. It supports him very well in his drive to create a reflective school community in which learning opportunities for pupils improve still further. Governors are ambitious for the school, but are careful to review and consult widely and thoroughly before sanctioning changes that will affect teaching and learning. They are kept well informed through regular visits to the school and discussions with parents. They also carry out detailed analysis of data regarding pupil progress that they compare year on year and against similar schools, and they also receive very detailed reports from the headteacher. They are very involved in drawing up the school improvement plan, and ensure that progress against targets is closely monitored. They hold the headteacher closely to account for all that happens in the school.
39. Over a comparatively short period, the headteacher has, with determination, energy and clarity, shared his vision for the future of the school with governors, staff and parents. He is relentless in his pursuit of excellence and the promotion of even higher standards, and has begun to put in place appropriate systems and structures. He is a team builder with very high expectations of staff, valuing everyone as a 'key worker'. He leads by example, modelling the teaching of literacy in classes throughout the school to demonstrate good practice. Consequently the national strategy is now well embedded. Recent changes to the Foundation Stage have improved provision and practice, and the headteacher has ensured that not only staff, but also governors and parents, have been fully involved in the process. He is always available to parents, and it is this personal approach and accessibility that typify his very successful style of leadership.
40. The headteacher is very well supported by the recently appointed deputy headteacher. She has been very involved in the changes in the Foundation Stage and in shaping the medium and long-term plans. Subject leaders have a very good overview of their subjects and are responding well to the headteacher's initiatives. They are now more empowered to take responsibility for their subjects, being given an annual budget and drawing up priorities for action. To support them in this process, they audit resources and identify what needs to be done to raise standards further.
41. The headteacher's principle that all decisions must be taken in the interests of children's learning, is borne out by systems that focus on gaining value for money and the effect of expenditure on teaching and learning. An example of this is the £8000 raised by parents and spent on outdoor play equipment in the Foundation Stage that has had such a positive effect on the quality of education provided.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	668,382	Balance from previous year	37,193
Total expenditure	676,663	Balance carried forward to the next	28,912
Expenditure per pupil	2,506		



42. The governing body manages school funds very well. They are rigorous in evaluating the effectiveness of spending decisions. Principles of best value are well understood and applied, and efficient systems are in place to ensure that the school always gains value for money. Financial and general administration in the school is currently very efficient. Recent audit recommendations have been implemented fully. The school meets the needs of its pupils well and currently provides good value for money.

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

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

Provision in the Reception Year (Foundation Stage) is **very good**.

Standards on entry are above those expected for children of this age. They make good progress through the Foundation Stage and achieve well in the six areas of learning. The breadth of the curriculum is very good. Standards at the end of the Reception year are well above those expected for children of this age and most children work within Level 1 of the National Curriculum.

Leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good. The Foundation Stage leader demonstrates an excellent sense of purpose and clarity of vision. Her management is very good. Through her knowledgeable and innovative leadership of the curriculum and teaching, she provides an excellent role model for staff and children and is beginning to create a very effective staff team. The level of care and the quality of support are very good. Teaching is very good and leads to very good learning for all children. Children respond well to the high expectations of teachers and the challenges offered. Teachers use ongoing assessment very well to meet the needs of all children. Children work well, both independently and in groups. The outdoor area is very well equipped as an outdoor classroom and is used very well to complement the indoor classroom.

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

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

#### **Main strengths**

- There are carefully planned opportunities for children to engage with each other in play.
- The promotion of equality of access and opportunity is excellent.

#### **Commentary**

43. Personal, social and emotional development is very effectively promoted in all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Very good induction procedures, and continuing support, give children a very good start to their early learning. Carefully planned, well-focused activities engage their interest and attention. They respond very well to what is provided and quickly become independent users of the classroom and the outdoor area. The very strong emphasis on inclusion ensures equality of access to the curriculum for all children. Space is used imaginatively to create a stimulating learning environment, in which very good resources are accessible to children and encourage autonomy and independence. Children's attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good. Their developing sense of their own needs, views and feelings, begins to incorporate sensitivity towards others. They learn to share well, for example, when working together on a story map or recreating roles in the puppet theatre. All children begin to understand the difference between right and wrong, and the consequences of their words and actions for themselves and others. They accept the need for a common code of behaviour and have an awareness of the boundaries set and of behavioural expectations.

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

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

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

- There are very well-planned opportunities to develop children's language.
- Basic skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing are taught well.

## Commentary

44. There are very well-planned, formal and informal opportunities to develop language skills in every area of the curriculum. Standards by the end of the year significantly exceed the Early Learning Goals. The early emphasis on sounds and word-building skills helps children's early language development to very good effect. Direct teaching is followed by focused activities that support well what has been learnt; for example, children successfully write their own story sequence, using their phonic knowledge to attempt to write words. Sessions are structured to provide the maximum amount of time for individual choice, sustained concentration and decision-making. Children's language is effectively developed through role-play, for example, as they 'fill their vehicles with petrol in the outdoor area and pay for it at the till', using key vocabulary. They develop expressive language in the 'Three Little Pigs' role-play area, with adults encouraging appropriate vocabulary. Most children listen carefully, extend their vocabulary and use a widening range of words to express their ideas. Their reading skills are developed well through listening to stories, sharing books with adults, exploring favourite books on the computer, and joining in familiar refrains. They are taught to develop good letter formation through practical experience and have many opportunities to apply their writing skills. All aspects of the National Literacy Strategy are covered in a carefully planned and relevant way.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of practical activities help to develop mathematical skills.
- Good use of sand, water and role-play develops mathematical concepts.

## Commentary

45. Standards by the end of the year exceed the Early Learning Goals for the great majority of children. Oral work, in each lesson, is effectively reinforced through practical activities and simple programs on the computer. Most children recognise numerals to twenty, and count to twenty and beyond accurately, as well as being able to count backwards. They are able to compare two groups of objects, saying whether they have the same number, 'more than' or 'less than'. They have a good understanding of capacity and weight, developed, for example, through their experience with sand and water, using words such as 'heavier' and 'lighter'. They use the vocabulary of time and money correctly. Children have a good understanding of positional language, which they use correctly as they play 'lucky dip' in the outside area, for example, selecting two cards, such as 'slide' and 'next to'. Their knowledge of shapes is good, and they use it well, for instance, when printing with shapes or 'junk'- modelling with three-dimensional shapes. All aspects of the National Numeracy Strategy are taught in a relevant and interesting context.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT skills are developed well.
- A range of activities develops understanding and uses of the senses very well.

## Commentary

46. Children are familiar with the school, the local environment and places further afield, such as the Horniman Museum and a hop farm. Their interest in why things happen and how things work, develops well as they examine objects, for example, practise their building skills or undertake a treasure hunt in the sand. They know that some materials can be separated from other materials by sieving. Through making cakes, biscuits and gingerbread men, they appreciate that materials are changed by heating. Their understanding that they should care for all living creatures is developed well through learning about hedgehogs, for example, watching eggs hatch out in an incubator and growing plants, such as cress. They increase their understanding and use of their senses, as they explore the outdoor environment, sort leaves by shape and colour, and make a collage. Computer skills are developed progressively, and children use a range of software to support the development of reading, phonics, writing, number, sorting, matching, and word processing skills. They express awe and wonder as they program a Roamer to make up to three movements, forwards and backwards, estimate how far it will travel and check the accuracy of their predictions. Children have a suitable awareness of religious beliefs and celebrations, and they appreciate the social character of some times, places and people. They achieve well and standards exceed those expected by the end of the Reception year.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of physical skills, and the use of tools in the classroom, is very good.
  - Children's responses to rhythm and music are promoted very well.
47. Children achieve well in their physical development. Standards are well above those expected by the end of the Reception year. Children respond well to rhythm, music and stories through movement, and know the need to start and stop on request. Good use is made of the well-equipped outdoor area to extend the work in the classroom. Children negotiate space successfully, adjusting speed and changing direction to avoid obstacles. They move with confidence, imagination, control and co-ordination, and with an awareness of others, both in the hall and outside, and use climbing equipment safely. They are able to control a ball with their hands and feet, and they throw and catch balls successfully. They have a suitable awareness of the importance of exercise and a healthy diet, and they recognise changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. Physical skills in the classroom are taught well. Children demonstrate increasing skill and control in handling tools, objects and malleable materials safely.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many good opportunities to make and listen to music, and to explore a variety of media in art.
- Children are given good opportunities to use their imaginations.

## Commentary

48. Learning areas are well organised and resourced, and this has a positive impact on the development of children's creativity. Children achieve well and standards are above those typically found by the end of the Reception year. With effective guidance and support, they use primary colours imaginatively in their paintings, and are able to differentiate and mix

colours successfully. Their 'art gallery' demonstrates clear progress over time in the use of colour and in painting portraits, houses, gardens and flowers. They cut and join a variety of materials accurately. As adults work alongside children, they encourage them to talk about their work, thereby effectively developing appropriate vocabulary. Children work well together in groups. They show good skill for their age when drawing, painting, sewing, making models in clay and designing vehicles. There is a clear focus for each activity and this has a good impact on children's learning. Children enjoy exploring loud and quiet sounds with their hands, voices and instruments, and listening to music from other cultures, and their skills are developing well. They are imaginative when communicating their ideas through music, dance and role-play. Children demonstrate increasing control, as they sing songs and tap out rhythms. They show a good level of skill when using computers and this makes a good contribution to their work in mathematics and art, for example.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

### ENGLISH

Provision for English is **very good**. Pupils enter school with above average standards and leave with well above average standards.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of English is good.
- The subject is well resourced.
- The English subject leader leads the subject well.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Handwriting skills, though taught, are not systematically applied in pupils' workbooks.
- The library is underused as a resource.

#### Commentary

49. Standards are well above average and pupils achieve well. National test results indicate that the school's focus on improving the standard of writing has been successful, as standards are well above average. Pupils are given good opportunities to write, often at length, for a range of audiences and purposes. They know how to gain the reader's attention, as when one pupil tersely began a story: 'Joanne was small for her age'. They often use a very good range of vocabulary. Teachers seize opportunities to model writing in lessons and use visits such as that to Ightam Mote to motivate pupils to write accounts and descriptions. One pupil wrote, 'At 9.15 a.m. we rushed off to the coach'. Although handwriting is taught regularly and 'practice books' indicate that many pupils join their letters well, this skill is rarely transferred to general workbooks and therefore opportunities to practise and consolidate this skill are lost.
50. Pupils read very well. They enjoy books and have very positive attitudes to reading, encouraged by the new stock of reading books recently purchased. In a class in Year 1, all the pupils recognised the five vowels and one generalised, 'nearly every word has a vowel in it.' In Year 2, a pupil with English as an additional language was supported very well by a classroom assistant as they reviewed 'recipe vocabulary' and was therefore able to play a full part in the lesson. Teachers model reading well, capturing pupils' interest and demonstrating how picture clues can aid understanding. Correct grammatical language is used in all the classes and pupils in Year 1 understand terms such as 'phoneme', 'predict' and 'vowel', and use them correctly in context. The headteacher, leading by example, has modelled literacy lessons throughout the school and consequently the National Literacy Strategy is now applied consistently in all classes, including weekly guided reading sessions. Discussions with pupils and staff indicate that the majority of pupils are supported well in their reading at home and that most visit a public library regularly.
51. Teaching is good overall. The most successful lessons are well focused, proceed at a good pace and engage pupils well, from start to finish. Classroom assistants very effectively support pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those who find aspects of the subject challenging, and consequently these groups make good progress and achieve well. Planning is good and teachers are careful to match work to the needs of the pupils. On occasion, teachers do not make learning objectives sufficiently clear at the outset of the lesson and therefore it is more difficult to discuss with the pupils whether or not they have achieved their objectives at the end of the lesson. Discussions with pupils indicate that they are beginning to understand and focus on the learning targets pasted into their books. All books are carefully marked, with guidance for further improvement normally given directly in lessons. Pupils listen well in the majority of lessons and most teachers are skilled at asking questions that encourage pupils to reflect and explain. Pupils do

not listen as well in lessons where the pace is slow. Their attention wanders and they fail to concentrate, with a minority talking to each other instead of concentrating on what the teacher has to say.

52. The subject leader, well supported by the headteacher, provides effective leadership. She has a clear view of how to raise standards further and has recently overseen an improvement in resource provision. She is aware that the school library is not yet used effectively to support learning and plans are in hand to review and improve this aspect.

### **Language and Literacy across the curriculum.**

53. Pupils use computers effectively to word process their writing. Teachers develop many opportunities to encourage and allow pupils to write whenever possible in subjects across the curriculum. For example, they write letters of thanks after visits, letters from 'the Crimea' in history and detailed reports and explanations in science.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average, and have been sustained at a very high level since the last inspection.
- Pupils achieve well. Higher attaining pupils make good progress.
- Pupils develop good, independent recording skills from an early stage.
- Teaching is rigorous and learning is consistently good through the school. Expectations are high and pupils are challenged effectively.
- Support staff are well-prepared and have a positive effect on pupils' learning.
- The numeracy co-ordinator manages the subject very well.

### **Commentary**

54. Good teaching helps pupils to reach standards which are well above average by the end of Year 2. High standards have been sustained because of the consistently high quality of teaching. The school successfully targets potentially weaker aspects of the mathematics curriculum, such as problem-solving. The school has also focused well on pupils of differing abilities, including those identified as gifted or talented, who have had additional support. It makes effective use of committed support staff. Pupils with special educational needs are well-supported in smaller groups so that almost all achieve the expected level by the time they leave the school. There is a good level of awareness of the specific needs of pupils with English as an additional language. They are, for example, often targeted during questioning, to ensure that they understand key teaching points. This has ensured in 2003, for example, that a well above average proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in the national tests. The school is, therefore, enabling pupils to achieve well.
55. Teaching and learning are good. There is a commendable consistency of quality in the teaching across the school. Teachers and learning support staff have good relationships with pupils. They encourage pupils to feel secure and confident in their ability to succeed. Many pupils are developing a mature approach to their work and the higher attainers in particular work well independently. For example, pupils are encouraged to record calculations independently from the beginning of Year 1, with minimal use made of worksheets. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils were encouraged to think strategically as they tried to identify missing numbers from a 100-square. Later they structured word-problems to reflect simple multiplication and division facts. The teacher focused repeatedly on 'how?' and 'why?', causing pupils to reflect on general principles which would be transferable to other aspects of their work. This promoted pupils' learning particularly well. A key feature of the best lessons is

the brisk pace. No time is wasted. Also, where teaching is particularly good, teachers are skilled at assessing how well pupils are learning and in adapting their lesson plans as a result of what they notice. This was seen, for example, in a lesson in Year 2, where the teacher had modified work significantly as a result of the previous day's work. When marking work, teachers often include helpful comments which point the way forward. The school has decided not to implement individual target-setting in mathematics. ICT is used well to support teaching and learning in mathematics, and pupils have a regular session in the ICT suite which focuses on the development of numeracy skills.

56. The subject leader provides effective leadership. She has watched colleagues teach and has given them effective support and advice, based on her own training. This has ensured that the Numeracy Strategy is effectively adapted to meet the differing needs of pupils, including those who are early learners of English. Good curricular links have been established with the Junior School.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

57. The school has focused well on giving pupils the opportunity to use their mathematical skills in subjects across the curriculum. For example, pupils count their catches in PE and the beats in music. There is evidence of the use of non-standard units of measurement when judging a person's height in science, and in measuring and cutting tasks in design and technology. Bar graphs and tally charts are used well in science and geography as a means of representing information.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are at least good and occasionally very good.
- Pupils are keen and enthusiastic. They are well challenged.
- Assessment procedures are good, but information needs to be more accessible.

### **Commentary**

58. Standards are well above average, both on the basis of past performance and evidence seen in the classroom. In the 2003 teacher assessments, all pupils obtained the expected Level 2 with a significant proportion, 40 per cent, obtaining the higher Level 3. The majority of pupils in the current Year 2 are in line to achieve similar standards, which have been consistently high since the last inspection. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls and all achieve well, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. There are challenging extension activities for the higher attaining gifted and talented pupils.
59. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables learning to be made interesting and pupils apply themselves well as a result. This was particularly noted in a lesson with pupils in Year 1, where pupils made good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding in the different ways of making sounds in music. Teachers provide good opportunities for investigative activities, as seen in two lessons in Year 2 involving electrical circuits. In addition, in these lessons, teachers deployed teaching assistants, students and parents well to provide good help to be given to groups and individuals so that all made good progress.



60. Leadership and management of science are good. The subject leader undertakes regular monitoring and samples pupils' work. Assessed practical investigative activities, at least once a term, are effective in helping staff to track pupils' progress in science across the school. Currently, the results are not logged electronically and this makes collation more difficult.
61. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen, with the development of effective links between science and literacy. ICT is used well in recording data and producing graphs. The very good curriculum enables all pupils to be included.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Considerable improvement in the provision for ICT since the last inspection, when it was a weakness.
- Pupils' standards and achievement are now good.
- Teaching and learning are at least good and occasionally very good.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic.
- Resources, following the development of the ICT suite, are a strength.

### **Commentary**

62. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above those normally found. Standards have significantly improved since the previous inspection because more time is now given to the subject, and teaching and resources have been improved.
63. Pupils' basic skills have improved. Pupils are confident in using the mouse and are beginning to use the keyboard well. Good teaching has enabled pupils to make rapid progress and they achieve well. A large number of pupils have access to computers at home and this also contributes to the development of their skills.
64. In Year 1, pupils, working in pairs, are able to log on and log off independently, and access familiar programs. In Year 2, pupils' word processing skills are developing well. Through teachers' good use of interactive whiteboards, pupils sharpen up their writing skills to good effect, for example, confidently filling in the text in 'Speech Bubbles'. As a result of a very well planned and challenging lesson in Year 2, almost all pupils were able to copy and paste text and images into their work independently. As well as word processing, pupils use ICT successfully for data handling with graphs, modelling when making shapes fit together and in the use of paint programs to support art and design.
65. Teaching and learning are at least good and on occasions very good. Teachers have become more confident in their own ICT skills and this has had a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. Pupils are challenged well and the pace of lessons is good. They work well together in pairs. The school makes very good use of teaching assistants, students and parents during lessons to ensure that pupils understand what they are doing. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, achieve well. Pupils are enthusiastic and obviously enjoy the subject.
66. The recently-appointed subject leader recognises the need to establish more effective assessment procedures and to provide additional staff training.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. During the inspection, limited use was made of ICT during lessons in other subjects. However, there was some evidence of the effective use of ICT to supporting literacy and mathematical skills. There was also an example of the effective use of ICT in art and design, where pupils in Year 2 had drawn pictures in the style of Jackson Pollock, Mondrian and Kandinsky.

## HUMANITIES

### History and geography

68. In humanities, work was sampled in geography and history, with only one lesson observed in each subject. It is not therefore possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. However, there is evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work that standards are likely to be above average in both subjects.
69. Teachers are keen to make history 'come alive'. Visits outside school contribute well to this as exemplified by the visit, last year, of Year 2 pupils to the Florence Nightingale museum. Photographs show that they had the opportunity to dress up in period clothes, handle artefacts and reflect on a typical soldier's diet. As a result pupils gain a real insight into the life and times of a Crimean soldier. This is reinforced with good cross-curricular links when, for example, pupils pretend to be soldiers and write letters of thanks to Florence Nightingale. Pupils' literacy skills support their learning in both subjects very well, as they are able to access and use written information and to express themselves well in their written work.
70. In the history lesson observed pupils had to place photographs of the seaside in chronological order. This prompted much discussion about similarities and differences and further tasks reinforced the concept of how people change over time. In a Year 1 geography lesson, pupils walked down the road to 'discover' signs and their meanings. Both lessons engaged pupils well in appropriate activities well matched to their abilities.
71. The subject leader leads both subjects well. She has assumed responsibility relatively recently and has made a good start. She recognises that resources in history need to improve. She has started to purchase additional primary source artefacts and has a very clear view regarding the future development of the subjects.

### Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Work in religious education is challenging; pupils work hard and behave well.
- Assessment and the range and quality of resources need further development.

### Commentary

72. Standards are above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement on the last report. Analysis of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and the lessons observed indicate that achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, also achieve well.
73. Pupils know that some books are special to different religions and can recall the special books of the Bible, Torah and Qur'an. They have a good knowledge of Bible stories. Teaching and learning were at least good, and occasionally very good. In the very good lesson observed, pupils were able to answer the question 'How do your parents know you love them?', with

examples such as 'you respect them', 'you do something for them'. Teaching is rigorous and challenges pupils to think about issues raised in religious texts. Pupils are highly-motivated and respond positively in lessons.

74. The school has adopted a new scheme-of-work from the local education authority. Assessment is in a formative stage and needs further development. Resources are barely adequate, although the school has access to loan resources. Pupils have visited the local church, so extending their understanding of the church building as a special place. The subject leader has had no opportunities to monitor lessons but samples work regularly to ensure that standards are maintained. She writes the plans for collective worship, based around weekly themes, such as 'living in a community'.

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

75. No lessons were observed in **art and design** and it is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching or provision. However, on the plentiful evidence available, it is clear that standards are likely to be above those expected by the end of Year 2. Pupils make good progress and achieve well. The use of visual images helps to overcome learning difficulties for pupils with special educational needs, or with English as an additional language.
76. Pupils' skills develop well. They confidently mix colours to achieve different shades and tones and explore line, pattern, colour, tone and shape. Drawing, painting and modelling skills are good. Pupils in Year 2 create abstracts, based on the work of Kandinsky. They have opportunities to work with textiles and to make sculptures. Pupils study art from a variety of cultures. There is evidence of good progression as pupils move through the school. Displays are of a high quality and demonstrate pupils' interest, concentration and enthusiasm. ICT is used well to explore and create patterns in the style of Kandinsky, and portraits based on Picasso's work. Art contributes well to pupils' literacy development through discussion and research.
77. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader has been instrumental in enriching the basic curriculum. Visits now contribute well to extending pupils' understanding, as when Year 2 pupils visited 'The Keeping Gallery', the local church and Ightham Mote, whilst working on the theme, 'Can buildings speak?'. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

### **Design and technology**

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Skills are developed progressively.
- There is a consistent approach to planning, designing, making and evaluating products.
- The subject leader does not monitor teaching and learning.

### **Commentary**

78. Standards in design and technology are above those expected of pupils in Year 2. Food technology is taught well. The use of visual images provides a good stimulus for pupils' creativity. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well.
79. Pupils in Year 1 have worked on moving pictures, using sliding mechanisms. They understand the terms 'levers' and 'pivots' and successfully make pictures with a horizontal, sliding mechanism. They know how this might be extended, using a vertical, sliding mechanism in subsequent lessons. Pupils in Year 2 have developed their own ideas for a

string, glove, sock, or rod puppet, after exploring a range of other puppets. The use of 'process diaries' successfully ensures that pupils do their work thoroughly from the design process to the finished product.

80. Teaching is good, overall, and leads to good learning. Strengths of teaching are the progressive development of practical skills, building successfully on those developed in the Foundation Stage, the good use of questioning to ensure the active involvement of all pupils, and worthwhile opportunities for pupils to design and evaluate their own products. Strengths of learning are pupils' interest, enthusiasm, application, and productivity.
81. The subject provides suitable opportunities for pupils to develop and use their literacy and numeracy skills. Where possible, projects are linked to other subject areas to consolidate pupils' learning further. For example, in Year 1, the making of moving mechanisms is linked to work on pupils' journeys to school in geography. ICT is used well for research.
82. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has broadened the curriculum, in part through undertaking a programme of visits to extend her professional development. The portfolio of pupils' work demonstrates progression, an enriched curriculum, emphasis on high standards and the development of techniques. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths**

- There is a progressive development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The curriculum is enriched by good opportunities to perform.

### **Commentary**

83. Standards in music are above those expected of pupils in Year 2. All pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils in Year 1 confidently explore rhythm and develop their understanding of pulse. Almost all pupils can replicate sample rhythms accurately. Pupils in Year 2 extend their already good understanding of pitch, and long and short sounds, using a range of instruments.
84. Teaching is good and leads to good learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, expectations are high and the pace of teaching is brisk. Lessons are kept short – seldom more than twenty minutes – and this makes for a focused experience where pupils' concentration can be sustained well. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are developed well. Pupils have very good attitudes and the capacity to work independently and collaboratively.
85. Pupils develop their literacy skills well, as they listen, discuss, compose, evaluate music and sing songs. The breadth of curricular opportunities is very good. Over 60 pupils attend the school choir. Performance opportunities include the annual production by Year 2 pupils. There are recorder groups, and opportunities for pupils to learn the violin and cello.
86. The leadership and management of the subject leader are very good. He has detailed knowledge of pupils' attainment, as a result of monitoring teaching throughout the school. He has successfully raised the profile of music and enabled teachers, through training, to teach music with increased confidence. There has been a good improvement in standards and in pupils' response, since the last inspection. Resources are good, and are used well.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well as a result of the rigorous teaching;
- Pupils have very good attitudes to physical education. They work well together.
- More work is needed on the development of assessment procedures.

### Commentary

87. Standards are above those expected in the games' skills and gymnastics elements of physical education. No lessons were observed in dance. When throwing and catching, pupils in Year 1 demonstrated a level of control and co-ordination which exceeds that normally found. Standards are boosted because of pupils' very positive attitudes and their focus and commitment in lessons. This means that no time is wasted and achievement is consistently good. Warm-up sessions are used well and are much enjoyed by pupils. In Year 2, pupils showed a good awareness of space as they devised ways of moving around the hall. They were very responsive to the teacher's guidance and could modify their work to reflect the advice given. Again, the standard of control and co-ordination exceeded that normally found for almost all pupils, including those few with special educational needs. Pupils tidy away quickly and efficiently at the end of lessons.
88. Teaching and learning are good overall, with some very good teaching observed. There is a rigour and high expectation to the teaching which brings out the best in these pupils. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils. Pupils are very keen to please. Lessons are very well planned and the opportunities offered are consistent between classes. Almost all lessons sustain a very brisk pace, with no time wasted on issues of behaviour. Pupils know what is expected of them and respond accordingly, by working very hard. Teachers work hard to promote self-evaluation among pupils, encouraging them to comment upon the work they see. An example was seen in Year 1 where pupils made good use of an opportunity to talk to each other out what had gone well in the lesson today and what they could improve next time. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, although the subject leader is keen to see more input to the teaching of dance.
89. The subject leader has recently taken over this responsibility and is already providing good leadership. A new scheme-of-work has been introduced and this is contributing significantly to the consistent practice observed in games. Resources are good. Assessment structures are limited at present and this is an area for development. The extra-curricular provision for football on Saturdays is extremely popular with pupils and makes a creative link between infant and junior schools.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

- The school is a harmonious community in which all pupils have equal status and show respect for each other.
- Pupils are very supportive of each other when difficulties arise. Whole-class discussion time is used well in the school.

### Commentary

90. Personal, social and health education is well provided for. Pupils' personal development underpins much of the work which staff do and is linked effectively to religious education. The school is a socially and racially harmonious community in which all pupils are given equal

status. All staff include personal development in their regular class discussion session. In a good session observed, pupils were challenged to think about the demands of being a friend. The school pays good attention to health awareness. Younger pupils successfully learn about the need for a good diet and discuss health and physical well-being in PE lessons. Pupils benefit from the very good role models provided by staff. Pupils relate very well to one another and show tolerance and respect for views different from their own.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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