

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HOLMFIRTH JUNIOR, INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Holmfirth

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107655

Headteacher: Mr D Murgett

Lead inspector: Mr R Burgess

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> November 2003

Inspection number: 256472

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	219
School address:	Cartworth Road Holmfirth
Postcode:	HD9 2RG
Telephone number:	01484 222481
Fax number:	01484 222480
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	K Stacey
Date of previous inspection:	30 <sup>th</sup> March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Holmfirth to the south of Huddersfield. It is similar to average sized primary schools, with 219 pupils on roll, aged between three and eleven years. The school serves the immediate community but also admits pupils from a wider area. The pupils come from a range of social backgrounds. The proportion of boys and girls varies significantly in different year groups. There are two mixed age classes for Years 1 and 2. The school admits children to the Nursery part time, after their third birthday. Children's attainment on entry is above average, although a wide range of attainment is evident and there have been very wide fluctuations between different year groups over recent years with attainment being average in some years. The majority of pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds. There are three pupils with English as an additional language. Eighteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is similar to the average. This is an increase since the last inspection; most have moderate learning difficulties or are dyslexic. The number of pupils with special educational needs has varied considerably from year to year and impacted on results in Year 2 test results in 2002. Six children have a statement of special educational need, which is above the national average. The number of pupils in receipt of free school meals is below average. Since the last inspection in 1998 there have been a significant number of staff changes apart from the headteacher and deputy who were appointed shortly before the last inspection.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20950	R W Burgess	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design
13485	P Widdowson	Lay inspector	
25203	R Cooke	Team inspector	Science Geography History Religious education
23610	J Denton	Team inspector	Mathematics Music
32596	G Phillips	Team inspector	English Design and technology Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

peakschoolhaus ltd  
Suite 17  
BPS Business Centre  
Brake Lane  
Boughton  
Newark  
Nottinghamshire  
NG22 9HQ

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school.** The leadership of the headteacher is very good. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Standards are above national averages by the end of Year 6. Teaching and learning are good, with some very good features resulting in good learning in classrooms. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Most of the teaching is good, with very good teaching in the Foundation Stage and in English throughout the school. The high proportion of good teaching helps pupils to develop lively, enquiring minds.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development.
- Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good.
- Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is very good.
- Improvements could be made in assessing and monitoring work in other subjects as has already been done in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- There is insufficient provision for the development of pupil's spiritual awareness and their learning about the diverse cultures in modern society.

The school was last inspected in March 1998 and has made a good improvement since then, effectively addressing all the issues raised. There is now a clear and comprehensive school improvement plan. Provision for the children in both the Nursery and Reception classes is now very good and the curriculum provides a good balance of creative and more structured activities. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is now very good.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

**Achievement is good throughout the school.** Pupils with learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well. Standards in the Nursery and Reception classes are good in all areas of learning. The children currently in the Foundation Stage are achieving well because of very good teaching. In Year 2, standards in speaking and listening and reading are above those expected and in writing are average. Standards are above average in mathematics, science, ICT and art and design. They are average in all other subjects. In Year 6, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are above average. Standards are good in English, mathematics, science, ICT, art and design and history. They are satisfactory in all other subjects. No judgement was made on standards in physical education because no lessons were observed during the inspection.

**Pupils' personal development is very good. The provision for their moral and social development is very good. The provision for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.** Attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils behave very well in class and most have positive attitudes to school. The staff have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and teach the differences between right and wrong very well. The pupils like coming to school. They are punctual. Attendance is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided is **good**. Teaching and learning are good overall, although both are very good in the Foundation Stage. There is very good teaching in English. The good quality teaching is resulting in good learning and improved standards throughout the school

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Well-planned lessons in the Nursery and Reception classes, which lead to very good learning.
- Very good use of support staff within most lessons.
- Very good provision for equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- Pupils with learning difficulties, and those who use English as an additional language are all supported well and make equally good progress.
- Pupils find their work interesting and feel their teachers listen to their ideas and help them to understand how they can improve their work.

The quality and range of the curriculum are very good in the Nursery and Reception classes, and good elsewhere. Throughout the school, pupils with potential difficulties are identified early and given very good levels of support. Pupils make good progress towards their individual targets. All pupils learn effectively in a secure environment where health and safety provision is fully in place, along with child protection. Links with parents are good. Most parents are supportive of the school but a few are concerned about aspects of leadership and management. The inspection team judges that these concerns are unfounded.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The headteacher shows very good leadership** and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and other senior staff. **Management is good**; there is a shared vision and determination throughout the school to improve standards and the quality of educational provision. The governance of the school is good. Governors are a committed team who know and understand the school and give strong support to the work of the staff as they strive to improve the school. There is a continuing review of the way the school is heading and all aspects of the work of the school are kept under constant assessment. It has good resources, which are used effectively for the benefit of all its pupils.

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

Questionnaires and comments received from most parents were positive and supportive of the school. A small but significant number of parents expressed a range of concerns about the school, including its leadership and management. The judgements of the inspection team were that leadership is very good and management is good. Responses from pupils indicate a high level of pride in their school. They feel they are given good opportunities for taking responsibilities; they are given very good help in understanding how they can improve and are listened to when sharing their views with staff.



## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve assessment and monitoring of work in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education.
- Improve provision for pupil's spiritual development and for learning about the diverse cultures in modern society.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils throughout the school make good progress compared to their achievements when they first start. In the Nursery and Reception classes children achieve well and by the end of the Reception year most are likely to exceed the expected levels in all areas of learning. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 standards are above average in English, mathematics and science.

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

- At the age of eleven standards attained in mathematics and science are above those normally expected.
- Standards of speaking and listening are good throughout the school.
- Standards attained in writing, although satisfactory, are lower than standards in speaking and listening.
- A significant number of pupils attain the higher levels in the national tests in English, mathematics and science at the age of eleven.
- At the age of eleven overall test results have improved each year for the last four years.
- School improvement in test results does not always keep pace with the national trend because of a small number of pupils with significant learning difficulties.

#### **Commentary**

1. Standards in the Nursery and Reception classes are good in all areas of learning. The children currently in the Foundation Stage are achieving well because of very good teaching. By the end of the Foundation Stage these children are expected to have met the early learning goals well and be attaining above levels expected for their age. These standards reflect the improved provision in the Foundation Stage as a result of new staff appointments and an improved curriculum. These improvements were fully implemented in the last academic year and therefore have not yet impacted on standards at the end of Year 2
2. Standards in knowledge and understanding and in speaking and listening are significantly better than those seen in most pupils' recorded work, except that selected for display purposes. Standards in speaking and listening and in reading are above those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, which is the same as at the last inspection. Standards in writing at the end of Year 6 are above average. Standards in writing at the end of Year 2 are average and similar to the standards at the last inspection.
3. The school analyses carefully the wide range of information gained from school and national assessments to set appropriate targets for English, mathematics and science. Gifted and talented pupils achieve better in English, mathematics, science and ICT than in other areas such as geography because there is not yet any systematic identification or specific provision for them in these other subjects. Achievement is better in English, mathematics and science than in other subjects because less attention has so far been given to assessing pupils' progress in these areas.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.4 (15.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.9 (13.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.8 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. National test results at the end of Year 2 were adversely affected by the higher numbers of pupils with significant learning difficulties. Current standards in Year 2 are good and better than the test results indicate; this is because these results reflected the higher number of pupils with learning difficulties in that particular year group. Pupils perform better in mathematics than in English. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are better than their skills in writing because the school has focused on developing speaking and listening in response to the identified needs of these pupils when assessed in their Reception year. In recent tests there was a significant difference between the overall performance of boys and that of girls, with girls outperforming boys in all areas. In 2003 attainment in national tests was below that expected of pupils of this age in reading and writing and in mathematics. Girls outperformed boys in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.5 (27.6)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.8 (28.2)	26.7 (26.7)
Science	31.2 (28.9)	28.3 (28.3)

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

5. Standards of current work in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards of speaking and listening are better than those in writing, reflecting the emphasis the school places on developing pupils' thinking skills. Standards in pupils' oral recall of their knowledge and understanding are better than those in recorded work. In 2003 national tests attainment was above national expectations in English and well above in mathematics and science. In 2003 national tests attainment was above that of similar schools in English and well above in mathematics and science. Overall points scores have improved year on year. There was a rise in all areas in 2003 with 100 per cent of pupils attaining the expected level in science. A significant number of pupils attained the higher levels in mathematics.
6. Pupil achievement in ICT is good, supported by the cross-curricular approach to teaching. Achievement is good because teachers are confident to teach the subject, and the provision of very good resources. In art and design and history standards are good
7. Pupils achieve well throughout the school because of very good tracking and target setting that identify their needs. There is careful monitoring of the progress of individuals and different groups. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well because their progress is well monitored and there is good liaison with their families. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is well monitored and appropriate support is given to meet their needs, ensuring they achieve well. Boys and girls make good progress because the school pays attention to different learning styles that suit both gender groups and is aware that there are some differences in performance between the two groups. The school is addressing this issue. Pupils in different year groups achieve well because the school recognises areas where more support is needed and deploys its support staff accordingly. There have been recent

improvements in provision in the Foundation Stage that are beginning to have a positive impact on performance in Year 1.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Pupils' personal development is **very good**, particularly their moral and social development. Their spiritual development and cultural development is **satisfactory**. Attendance is **good**, with the majority of pupils turning up on time.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' personal development is very good because the school values and respects the pupils.
- Social and moral development is very good and a strength of the school but provision for their spiritual and cultural development is less well developed and is only satisfactory.
- Pupils behave very well.
- Pupils are fully involved in their own learning, and independence in lessons is encouraged.

### **Commentary**

8. Attendance at the school remains above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. Pupils enjoy coming to school because the teachers are caring and friendly and lessons are interesting. As a result, they are keen to learn. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, have very good attitudes to learning which impacts significantly on the standards they achieve. In lessons they are given good encouragement and support, which gives them confidence to answer questions and participate in discussions. The good teaching in the school ensures that pupils find the work interesting and challenging and because of this they are attentive and concentrate well.
9. There have been no exclusions. Pupils have a clear understanding of the school's expectations of good behaviour and understand the difference between right and wrong. In lessons pupils settle quickly and respond well to the instructions given by the teachers, which means lessons start promptly and have good pace. Pupils are able to work quietly and sensibly on their own and in small groups. They share resources well and help each other.
10. In the playground pupils are very lively and boisterous but they are well supervised and there is no evidence of rough or aggressive behaviour. All children play well together and if there is a problem Year 6 pupils who have been trained in mediation act as 'befrienders' to try to resolve any issues. Pupils are polite and friendly; visitors are made to feel very welcome. Moving around the school the younger pupils tend to rush and are not always aware of others. The older pupils, however, are more responsible, open doors for adults and look after the younger pupils. At the end of playtime classes line up and walk into school quietly and very orderly.
11. Pupils have a good range of individual responsibilities in the classrooms and a school council has recently been established with elected representatives from each class. The council operates independently, although help is available from a member of staff should it be needed. The council members have discussed a number of issues affecting daily life at the school and take their responsibilities very seriously. They value the opportunity of having a voice in running their school. In Year 6 responsibility is extended to helping in the school office, helping in the dining hall at lunchtime and running the tuck shop at break. All children in the Reception class are given a buddy in Year 6, which helps the younger children settle into school. This develops relationships and enhances personal development. The residential visits for Year 6 pupils are very effective in developing independence, self-confidence and co-operation.
12. There is good provision for personal, social and health education, including sex education and drug awareness. The newly appointed co-ordinator is very committed and has already redrafted the policy and drawn up an action plan for its implementation. The provision for pupils' social,

moral, spiritual and cultural development is good overall. Social and moral development is very good and a strength of the school. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong, and how to play and work together in harmony, and learn to reflect on how best to behave and live. They are taught to respect and value the feelings of others and during this half term there is a focus on relationships with an excellent display in the entrance hall which is both stimulating and thought provoking. It is interesting that pupils interviewed during the inspection fully supported the school's policy on non-competitive sport and thought it far better that everyone should have the opportunity to play in the school football team.

13. Whilst pupils' appreciation of their role in our society is good and they feel valued as members of the school community, some opportunities to develop spirituality and self-awareness are missed, both in assemblies and across the curriculum. The school offers its pupils a rich and varied curriculum but this does not take full advantage of the cultural diversity represented in modern society.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data	4.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

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

## Exclusions

### Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Chinese

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
190	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

**The quality of education provided is good.** Pupils reach good standards as a result of good and sometimes very good teaching. The promotion of equality of opportunity for all pupils is very good. Provision for pupils with specific learning needs and with English as an additional language is very good. The breadth and balance of the curriculum are good. There is very good provision overall for pupils' support, care and guidance. Links with parents are good. The school's links with the community are satisfactory.

## Teaching and learning

**Teaching is good in most lessons** and pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve their learning. It is very good in the Foundation Stage. Very good support is given to pupils with special educational needs. These factors contribute effectively to the **good learning in most lessons**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' knowledge of their pupils is good.
- Relationships are very good and expectations are nearly always high.
- The teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good.
- Learning is made more relevant and interesting by exploiting meaningful links between subjects.
- The school has made good progress in improving its procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.
- Portfolios of work in different subjects have not been assessed against the requirements of the National Curriculum.

### Commentary

14. Overall, teaching is good. This judgement is similar to the findings of the last inspection although there have been improvements. The teaching in English is very good. The proportion of very good and excellent lessons has more than doubled since the last inspection and planning, identified then as sound, is now good.
15. In the main, all pupils learn well as they progress through the school, not only in acquiring knowledge and skills, but in their personal development. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make very good progress against the targets set for them in their individual education plans because teaching and support are very effective.
16. There are many strengths in the teaching but the main ones are teachers' very good relationships with their pupils, high expectations and very good subject knowledge. In the very best examples, lessons are taught at a really brisk pace with infectious enthusiasm so that pupils are very keen to join in, answering questions and giving suggestions confidently. In these lessons, pupils work at a good rate and learn a great deal. For example, in a Year 3 literacy lesson, pupils developed their writing skills by making their own play scripts for the story of the Three Little Pigs.
17. Teachers state what it is they expect pupils to learn in the lesson and share this with them. There are opportunities for pupils to check on their own learning as teachers encourage pupils to consider what they have learned by the end of the lesson. Marking is good overall. In the very best examples, for example in a Year 6 lesson developing pupils' understanding of the main characters in William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, pupils are told how they have got on, what they need to do next and personal targets for improvement. Pupils feel they are given very good guidance on how to improve their work.
18. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well, with some very good teaching observed, particularly in Years 2, 3 and 6. Teachers are flexible and teach some literacy and numeracy skills, such as writing, data handling and measuring, in and through subjects such as history, geography and science.
19. Classroom assistants are a valued and valuable part of the teaching team. In the Nursery and Reception classes particularly, skilled assistants make a significant contribution to the rapid progress made. The support given to pupils with behavioural difficulties is also very good and ensures the individual pupil can learn effectively and does not impede the learning of others.

20. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' progress and learning are good. The school has developed good testing and record-keeping procedures in English, mathematics and science, which it plans to extend and develop in other subjects. Assessment information is kept for the other subjects of the curriculum but in less detail. Information gained from test results is used well to track the progress of each individual as they move through the school and also to identify areas of success or difficulty.
21. The school makes good use of detailed comparative data from the local authority to extensively monitor and analyse the data from testing. With this information it identifies trends and variances in achievement. The senior staff have used this information to track the progress of pupils of all abilities to ensure that they are progressing fast enough against their predicated levels of attainment. Answers in national tests are closely analysed so that staff can pinpoint exactly where pupils have gaps in their understanding.
22. Through their assessments in lessons and the monitoring of pupils' work, teachers are setting good, and increasingly precise, targets for pupils to work towards. The assessment co-ordinator has identified the need to identify best practice within the school to unify systems and assessment procedures. There are whole-school portfolios of pupils' work, but these have not yet been assessed against specific National Curriculum level criteria, which limits their usefulness in informing teachers' assessments of pupils' work.
23. The achievement of pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is monitored regularly, and individual education plans are reviewed and adapted. These plans give clear guidance about what pupils need to learn and practise. Individual teachers ensure pupils are supported with as much adult help as possible to promote good self-esteem and help them succeed in lessons.
24. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good although there are no formal methods of doing this. However, the school is a close community; teachers and classroom assistants know their pupils very well and are sensitive to their needs and accomplishments. Pupils' personal development regarding self-awareness and self-discipline is promoted well and is reflected in pupils' behaviour both in and out of lessons.

### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons***

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

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

### **The curriculum**

The school provides a **good**, broad and balanced curriculum that is enhanced by a range of activities beyond the expected lessons. It is very good in the Nursery and Reception classes. There is a good number of teachers and support staff to teach the curriculum, and resources are generally adequate but would benefit from extension when funds become available. Since the last inspection, schemes of work have been completed for all subjects throughout the school and there has been very good improvement in provision for pupils with special educational needs. The accommodation is limited for physical activity and outside play.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is presented in innovative and imaginative ways, including visits and visitors.
- Good opportunities at different times of the year are provided for pupils to take part in clubs, sport and residential visits outside of lessons.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school is highly committed to ensuring equal access and opportunity to learning for all pupils and promoting a healthy personal development.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory, particularly for sporting and outdoor activities.

## Commentary

25. Planning for the Nursery and Reception classes is very good, with a wide range of interesting and challenging indoor and outdoor activities.
26. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is well planned to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Very interesting scenarios that capture the imagination of both boys and girls are introduced as challenges through the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy that are well linked to other subjects. Particular attention has been given to texts that will engage boys in wanting to learn. A visiting music specialist uses a range of meaningful ways to enhance pupils' desire to learn instruments. The teaching of Spanish and residential visits for Years 5 and 6, extend pupils' learning. Their community involvement is enhanced through initiatives such as the 'Sharing Memories' group, which contributes to the pupils' work in history. Opportunities to participate in sport and in performances at Christmas and summer, aid pupils' development in the arts of music and drama, as well as the responsibility of presentation.
27. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Plans are very carefully drawn up with the additional help and guidance of the experienced teacher, ensuring all pupils, including those with statements of special educational needs, receive very good support, enabling them to make good progress. By focusing upon pupils taking small steps and reinforcing their prior learning effectively, good gains are made in improving levels of reading, writing and handwriting, as well as speaking and listening.
28. The ethos of the school is characterised by a very good commitment to the equality of opportunity for all pupils and to that end the school uses booster programmes and other physical or language support for those who need it. Very good attention is given to personal and social development and health and drugs education so that pupils talk and act with maturity. Pupils are well prepared for their moves to and between the different stages of education, and homework is linked to the 'Parent Assisted Learning Programme' so that parents have opportunity to work with their children. Pupils on the special educational needs register have individual educational plans very specific to their needs and the plans are regularly reviewed. Their ongoing use by both teachers and support staff and continuous assessment ensure that all pupils have access to the full curriculum.
29. The school makes best use of its available accommodation, with good use of display to enhance the building, but its location on a steep hillside restricts availability for sporting activities. Playgrounds are limited in size and position for activities and easy supervision. There is a good number of teachers and support staff to teach pupils, and resources are adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum, but teachers acknowledge they would benefit from more resources when funds become available. Good investment in ICT has recently enhanced the schools' provision with laptop computers that can be accessed by Nursery children, as well as in the computer suite and classrooms of Years 1 to 6.



## Care, guidance and support

**The care and guidance for pupils are very good.** The school offers its pupils a caring and supportive environment where all are valued and respected. Pupils and parents agree that all are treated fairly and equally. Those with special educational needs and disabilities are very well supported. The personal guidance offered pupils is good but their knowledge of their own learning needs further development. Children new to the school and those transferring to secondary school benefit from good induction arrangements.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very caring environment and creates an atmosphere in which all pupils can learn well, regardless of their gender background and ability.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults in the school are very good.
- Systematic and well-managed assessment procedures ensure that pupils' progress and personal development is effectively monitored.

### Commentary

30. Whilst many of the staff are new to the school, a sense of mutual respect and trust has been quickly established. As a result, pupils feel confident to approach staff with any problems or concerns they may have. The very good relationships extend to the support staff, particularly at play time and in the way that the lunchtime supervisors organise and play games with the younger children and explain to older pupils why certain playground rules were necessary. The quality of these relationships enhances the very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.
31. The pupils play an important role in supporting the school's policy of offering care and support to all pupils. The Year 6 'befrienders' are trained in mediation and take their responsibilities very seriously. The 'buddy' system between Year 6 pupils and Reception children not only supports the younger children when they start school but also strengthens friendships across the year groups.
32. The school has an effective behaviour policy with a clear system of rewards and sanctions, which are applied consistently throughout the school. This ensures that the school functions as an orderly society where pupils can learn well. The school has a policy in place to eliminate oppressive behaviour and there are effective procedures in place to deal with any incidents. As a result, pupils, teachers and parents do not perceive bullying as an issue. There is clear guidance to parents to ensure pupils' correct and safe use of the Internet.
33. Personal development is monitored through ongoing assessment and is specifically commented on in the pupils' annual reports. The school places a high priority on personal development and is currently focusing on relationships. This is the theme for assemblies and there is an excellent corridor display to make pupils think about and reflect on the whole spectrum of relationships that exists in their lives.
34. The school provides effective support and guidance for all its pupils including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The policy of including every pupil in what the school has to offer is very effective and the school clearly has a high priority for ensuring that it does not discriminate.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

**Links with parents are good.** The school works hard and with very good levels of success to involve parents in its life and work. Most parents are very supportive of the school.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has an effective partnership with parents and the majority of parents are supportive of the school and the work it does.
- There are good links with other schools.

### Commentary

35. The school maintains effective links with parents and informs them of how well their children are getting on. After consultation with parents, formal parent and teacher meetings are now held twice a year and parents have ample opportunity to discuss their children's attainment and progress and personal and social development with teachers. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have any problems or concerns at any time and staff are available to discuss issues with parents at the beginning and end of the school day. The school also has initiated a parent assisted learning project to encourage parents to help and support their children with work at home. It is also intended as a two-way communication between home and school.
36. A few parents raised concerns in particular about the leadership and management of the school. The inspection team finds that these concerns are not applicable to the school; leadership and management of the school are good.
37. The school provides some very good information to parents through the school brochure and the governors' annual report to parents, which is now one document, a school calendar, regular newsletters and information on the curriculum. There are induction meetings for new parents, a parents' evening to discuss sex education, and, every three years, a parents' evening to exchange views on the progress the school is making, in line with the school improvement plan.
38. There is a small number of parents who regularly help in the classroom, specifically with supporting reading and helping with art and ICT. Many other parents make themselves available to help with educational visits and school trips and there is always a willingness to support the school whenever they are asked to do so. Many parents support their children with homework and this has a significant impact on pupils' learning and achievement. There is very good support from the Friends' Association, who organise a wide range of social fund-raising activities. They recently donated £5,000 towards the new computer suite.
39. The school has been pro-active in seeking parents' views on homework and parent teacher consultations, and has reacted to parents' comments to change the frequency and content of the school calendar.
40. Transfer to secondary education includes secondary school staff visiting the school and the pupils visiting their classes at their new school for an induction day in the summer term. This ensures smooth transfer to the next stage of their education. The school is about to embark on a project involving three other European primary schools where staff will visit to study Holmfirth Market and how it impacts on the local community. The headteacher hopes that this will lead to further links with the schools in the future. Also planned is a visit to the school for a three-month attachment by a Japanese teaching assistant, which has the potential to have a significant impact on raising pupils' awareness of the life, culture and traditions of Japan.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good leadership of the headteacher and key staff has created a school with a strong sense of purpose and a clear vision for the way in which standards can be improved.
- The headteacher and key staff make effective use of resources and processes to improve standards.
- Staff work very closely and effectively together in order to bring about improvements.
- There is a very strong commitment to training for all staff.
- The governors play an effective role in shaping the direction of the school.

### Commentary

41. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is very well supported by key staff. Under their very effective direction the school has made good progress in addressing the issues from the last inspection, particularly in regard to provision in the Nursery class and for pupils with special educational needs. There have been several staff changes and building works during this period, and the headteacher has managed these changes well. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and has developed a shared commitment among all staff to raising standards. Staff have a strong pride in the work of the school and work very well together.
42. The school is well managed by the headteacher and key staff. Staff and governors are very well involved in setting the priorities for the school and have recently gained some of the parents' views on the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The senior staff, together with the subject co-ordinators, decide on the whole-school priorities for development and actions that will raise standards. The school improvement plan sets clear objectives and timescales, though success targets are not often linked to raising pupils' attainment levels. When setting the budget, governors wisely give a high priority to staffing and there are many support staff in school who help to make teachers' work more effective. The headteacher has been very successful in obtaining additional funding from a variety of sources, which has enabled the school to carry out some of the recent building improvements and refurbishment. The school has good procedures for assessing information about pupils' attainment, analysing their performance data, and target setting for English and mathematics, and uses this information well in its drive to raise standards.
43. The school's performance management system is very good and involves teaching staff, support staff and office staff. Many staff are involved in research that is linked to raising pupils' achievement. Objectives for teachers are very clearly linked to priorities for the school, as well as their own professional development. The monitoring of classroom teaching is rigorous and this has led to significant improvements in teaching. The training for non-teaching staff has helped them to support pupils more effectively, and some have completed additional training to support pupils with specific educational needs.
44. Governors are closely involved in the life of the school and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They regularly meet together to discuss the work of the school and are very involved with school improvement planning. They ensure that the school's finances are well managed and linked to the priorities in the school improvement plan.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	555537
Total expenditure	559503
Expenditure per pupil	2260

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	2782
Balance carried forward to the next	-3966

The deficit carry-forward was directly attributable to capital projects developing the computer suite and refurbishment of the administration areas.

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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection when provision for children in the Nursery class, and for all children with special educational needs, was a key issue. The factors which have led to this improvement are the

- Very effective leadership and management of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator.
- Good facilities and very good resources, which are used very effectively to support the wide and interesting activities offered to the children in the Foundation Stage.
- Very good teaching across all areas of learning in the Nursery and the Reception classes that ensure that children make very good progress.
- Very good teamwork by teachers and well-briefed classroom assistants who provide a very caring and stimulating environment in which young children feel safe and learn very well.
- Very good observations and checks which help all adults to know what the children can do and what they need to work on next.
- Very good planning which makes sure that all children, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress.

Staff develop a good partnership with parents by visiting the children in their homes and providing opportunities for children and parents to visit the school before children start in the Nursery class. Teachers give parents good written information about the routines of school and how they can help their children. Parents come into the classrooms at the end of the session to collect their children and are encouraged to talk to the staff about their children's learning. Teachers welcome parents as helpers in the classroom and many help on a regular basis. Children start in the Nursery class at the beginning of the autumn or spring term, depending on their age, and are in that class for three terms part-time before joining the Reception class. Although there is a wide range of ability when children start in the Nursery class, most are working at levels above those expected for their age, especially in language, literacy and mathematical skills. The Nursery and Reception classes have regular times each day when they work as a class, for example for story time and for some activities. However, during most of the day the children use all the activities in the Foundation Stage unit, including the outside area, and they play and work together very well.

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

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **very good**. Very good teaching and learning means that many children will exceed the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception class.

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

- Very good relationships and the very good example set by adults mean that children settle quickly into the school and behave well.
- Children are very enthusiastic and concentrate well because the activities are exciting and the adults share the children's enthusiasm.
- Adults give the children plenty of help but encourage them to be independent and also to share, take turns and work together.

#### **Commentary**

45. All the adults work extremely well together in planning, working with children and checking what they can and cannot do. The very good relationships between the adults provide very good examples for the children in how to work together. All adults constantly encourage children to

feel confident about what they can achieve. They encourage children to think about others and have a 'special' target for the week. During the inspection the target for the Nursery class was to be friendly to each other and the teacher regularly reminded the children of it. Adults give them lots of interesting and exciting things to do, such as playing in the puppet theatre, and in the Three Bears' house in the outdoor area. As a result there is a buzz of activity in the inside and outside areas and children work very hard and concentrate well. Adults join in with questions, suggestions and discussion so that children are eager learners. They make sure that children know the routines so they become confident at choosing activities independently. They give children plenty of opportunities to co-operate, take turns, share equipment and help one another, for example by making sure that each child gets a turn to be a special helper.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **very good**. Many children will exceed the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception class because of the very good teaching.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reading standards are very good because there is very good teaching.
- Teachers and other adults provide very good opportunities for children to talk and listen to adults and other children so children talk clearly and listen attentively.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for writing so children become confident writers.

### Commentary

46. The teaching of reading is particularly successful in the Nursery and the Reception classes. Teachers choose interesting books to share with the children that generate a lively enthusiasm for reading and books. There is a very good emphasis on basic skills and children learn sounds and how to put the sounds together to make words. Children who learn more slowly benefit from regular help from adults. Teachers have been very successful in enlisting the support of parents and carers in regularly reading with children at home and this helps the children make such good progress.
47. All the adults provide very good models for children in their speaking and listening. They encourage children to explain and describe what they are doing by the effective use of questions and prompts. They provide a range of very good activities that encourage children to talk and listen. For example, when children perform a puppet show they speak very clearly and change their voices for the different characters whilst other children listen attentively. Children listen to adults very intently because they find their presentations and discussions interesting.
48. A few children can write their names and many letters when they start the Nursery class. Children make good progress because adults give them plenty of opportunities to write independently, so they become confident at using the sounds they know to write words by themselves. There is just the right balance between teaching some of the skills needed for writing, and encouraging children to experiment with letters so that they become confident writers.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **very good**. Most children will exceed the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception class because of the very good teaching and the opportunities adults provide for them.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress because adults take every opportunity to count and talk about mathematical aspects of their activities.
- Clearly explained and interesting tasks mean that children concentrate well and work hard.

## Commentary

49. In whole-class sessions in the Nursery and Reception classes the children practise accurate counting skills. Nursery children learn to count backwards and forwards by singing number rhymes, and during a registration session children in the Reception class learn to recognise number symbols and the value of numbers to ten. The teacher's skilful questioning and clear explanations mean that most children in the Reception class know how to halve and double numbers up to ten. When children are cooking they learn how heavy things are. When they made fireworks from different shaped boxes they learned the names of shapes and found out, for example, that a cylinder rolls but a cube does not. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are beginning to use mathematical language correctly because adults use this language when they talk to the children about their work.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**. Many children will exceed the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception class because of the very good teaching.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of first hand experiences successfully extends children's knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Staff use clear explanations and questions to promote this area of learning.

## Commentary

50. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve well. Children are excited by their work because teachers plan a good range of activities and visits to stimulate children's curiosity and to help them to understand more about the world around them. Activities such as making biscuits help children to learn about how ingredients change as a result of cooking. Children find out how to join with glue when they make firework pictures, and whether it is better to stick on sequins before or after the paint has dried. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to use the computer, for example to effectively develop early reading skills. Adults explain the tasks very clearly and use questions well to help children think about what they are doing. As a result, children are keen to find things out. For example, the teacher in the Nursery class gives the children a good range of objects in the water tray so they find out which objects float and which objects sink.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**. Many children will exceed the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception class because of the very good teaching.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's physical development is good because of the well-planned activities in the outside and indoor areas.

## Commentary

51. The outside area is very popular with the children in the Nursery and Reception classes and they have almost continual access to it. The area, which includes a soft play area, is quite small when the grassy area cannot be used due to the weather, but there is a good range of well-planned and purposeful activities, which develop all areas of learning. Children run, jump and climb confidently. They take turns and share when they use the bikes and scooters, and they manoeuvre their bikes confidently between markers. In the classrooms teachers provide good opportunities for children to practise skills such as cutting and moulding material, and to use tools such as pencils, paintbrushes and glue sticks. Teachers plan a good session in the hall each week, where children can use the small and large apparatus to develop skills such as balancing, climbing, hopping and jumping.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **very good**. Most children will exceed the expected levels at the end of the Reception class because teaching is very good and staff provide exciting activities for the children.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide very good opportunities for children to develop their imagination in role-play and art activities
- Children in the Nursery class sing well because the teacher gives them plenty of opportunities to sing.

## Commentary

52. Children enjoy playing with others in the role-play activities because adults use the space and resources imaginatively. For example, the Three Bears' house outside enables children to take on different roles and encourages their speaking and listening skills. Children develop their imagination very well when adults talk to them about what they are doing, ask them very good questions and join in their play. The teacher in the Nursery takes every opportunity to encourage children to sing and children join in eagerly because the teacher makes singing fun. When they sing the 'Floppy Dog' song children join in the words and the actions and move in time to their singing. There is very provision for painting, drawing, colouring, modelling using different materials and collage.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**. Standards in speaking and listening and reading are above those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, which is the same as at the last inspection. Standards in writing at the end of Year 6 are above average. Standards in writing at the end of Year 2 are average and similar to the standards at the last inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because teachers give pupils very good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Due to very good teaching, pupils make good progress with their reading and enjoy talking about their books.
- Teaching is very good throughout the school.
- There are very good arrangements to check how well pupils are learning and whether they are making enough progress.



- Teachers and support staff give pupils with special educational needs good support so they achieve well.

## Commentary

53. Teachers place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills so that they become confident at speaking to other pupils and adults, whether in small groups or in front of a large audience. Pupils express themselves very clearly, and listen to what adults and pupils say. This is because teachers use a wide vocabulary, repeat and explain unfamiliar words and listen attentively to what pupils say.
54. Pupils make good progress with their reading because teachers throughout the school know how to teach the skills that pupils need to enable them to read. Teachers give pupils very good opportunities to talk about what they read. There are good opportunities during the day for pupils to read in groups, with a partner and by themselves. Pupils in the early stages of reading learn sounds and know to put them together correctly to make words. Teachers provide a wide variety of books that are graded so that they successfully develop pupils' reading skills. In the whole-class sessions, teachers choose exciting texts with very good vocabulary to foster pupils' enjoyment of reading. Pupils become confident in discussing the texts they read because teachers use very good questions to check they understand what they are learning and to make pupils think more about their work. For example, pupils in Year 6 confidently and eloquently talked about the characters from *Macbeth* and showed a good understanding of the characters when they read the play.
55. Teaching is very good throughout the school so pupils make good progress and work hard. Teachers have set up very good procedures for assessing pupils' progress in reading and writing. This helps them plan work that is just the right level for pupils but challenging enough to make sure all pupils learn and make the best possible progress. They explain very carefully to pupils how they can improve their work and set targets for them to achieve. Teachers know what they have to teach, and explain the work very clearly so pupils know what they have to do. They use probing questions to make pupils think about their work. Teachers present the work in exciting ways so that pupils join in the lessons very enthusiastically and behave very well. Teachers and support staff praise and encourage pupils and give them additional help when they need it. They make sure that the work they give pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language is at just the right level so that they can make good progress and can work independently for some of the time. Support staff are well trained to help pupils with the many skills they need for reading and writing.
56. By the end of Year 2 pupils have very good ideas for writing and can articulate them well, but many lack the skills required to write these ideas down. Though standards are improving during Years 3 to 6 there is evidence of pupils' writing skills lagging behind their speaking skills. Writing continues to be an area that the school has rightly targeted for improvement; this is reflected in the improved standards seen during the inspection compared to previous years' national test results. The hard-working and enthusiastic subject co-ordinators have implemented many actions to improve standards, including a very comprehensive training programme for staff.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum

Overall, there is very good use of language and literacy skills across the curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to use their speaking and listening skills in many subjects such as when they talk about how they can improve their designs for photograph frames in design and technology. Pupils frequently use their writing and reading skills, for example, in history when pupils in Year 5 wrote about the life of a Victorian child and Year 4 pupils wrote poems about the Egyptians. There is good use of ICT skills; for example, pupils used their word processing skills to write about the Egyptians.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards by Year 6 are very good and well above average.
- Teaching is good and there is very good use of support staff to help pupils who have special educational needs.
- Strategies for teaching problem solving are good, helping pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' attitudes to mathematics and ability to work independently are very good.
- Pupils say they are given a very good understanding of how they can improve their work.
- Leadership and development of the tracking system are very good.

### **Commentary**

57. Standards in mathematics are good in Year 2 and very good in Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There are no major differences between boys and girls, and pupils with English as an additional language achieve in line with other pupils. Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 have fluctuated over the recent few years, due to a higher number of pupils with special needs entering the school. Throughout the school, well-trained classroom assistants provide very good support to these pupils and this is reflected in their current attainment. Pupils' attainment on entry from the Reception class is above average. The current Year 2 pupils build on their good start and achieve well against prior attainment, particularly in problem solving and calculation, where they are grouped mostly by age for lessons, rather than in their mixed age class. The majority of pupils in Year 2 are secure at adding numbers to 50 and some up to 100 and higher attainers work well above this number. They demonstrate an above average ability to use strategies to solve real-life problems in number and share their skills well when working together through the good skills taught to them.
58. By Year 6, the problem-solving skills taught enable most pupils to address specific challenges in working out savings through ratios and competency in a range of methods to calculate with numbers above 100,000 and even lower attainers to over 10,000. They verbally describe well strategies they would use to calculate and solve problems and have quick response to mental challenges.
59. Teaching is good overall. Where teaching is very good strengths include very clear explanations, checking of learning and moving at a good pace. In a lesson where teaching was satisfactory, the lesson included these aspects but giving too much information at one time slowed pupils achievement in the activity. From evidence of other work seen during the inspection, it is evident that most teaching is good and that in Year 6, it is often very good, resulting in better understanding, as voiced by a Year 6 pupil: "This year's maths is exciting because of the challenge. It feels as if the teacher is preparing you for something hard."

### **Strengths in teaching include:**

- well-prepared planning with clear objectives shared with pupils and checked at the end of the lesson;
  - innovative scenarios for setting problem-solving into real-life or story challenges;
  - Ensuring pupils build on previous knowledge and have full participation in the acquisition of skills and assessing their own learning, including pupils with special needs, pupils with English as an additional language and higher attainers.
60. The strong and effective leadership has brought good focus and improvement since the last inspection, through the introduction of new monitoring and tracking procedures in Years 1 to 6. This is already identifying pupils who need help in specific areas and priorities, such as ensuring work is focused towards girls so that in 2005 girls will not trail behind boys in the highest scores in tests. In Years 1 and 2, assessment documents show the good progress made by pupils in a range of units of work from measures taken before and after the unit. The

National Numeracy Strategy is well adapted to the needs of pupils, and to present interesting teaching that captures the imagination of the pupils. Very good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that pupils readily ask questions and that they know how to assess and improve their work. There are adequate resources and a good ratio of classroom assistants to support pupils in numeracy.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

61. The school ensures good cross-curricular links between subjects; tables, graphs and sequencing were much in evidence during the inspection. Good examples of graphs and tables linked to science, a healthy eating programme and physical education were well displayed from Year 5, some using ICT to display findings. Features in history made good use of time lines and pupils in Years 1 and 2 used sequencing in pictures and words for literacy and in their Victorian washing studies.

### **SCIENCE**

The provision for science throughout the school is **good**.

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

- Work in science is well supported by very good wall displays throughout the school.
- There are good cross-curricular links that support teaching in science.
- Residential visits in Years 5 and 6 increase pupils' environmental awareness.
- A useful portfolio of work is being developed.
- There is very good tracking of the development of pupils' individual skills.
- Teachers plan their lessons well and have high expectations of pupils' understanding and behaviour.
- Some good use is made of the school grounds and buildings for observation and investigation with younger pupils, but little use is made of the local environment with older pupils.

#### **Commentary**

62. Standards are good and pupils achieve well throughout the school because of good teaching, clear instructions and high expectations of pupils' understanding. These standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Pupils display a good knowledge of scientific vocabulary and a good understanding of the scientific processes with which they have been involved. The amount of recorded work is, however, limited, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Some good use is made of the local environment and the school buildings in Years 1 and 2, for example in their study of plants and the habitats of small animals. Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to take part in residential visits that give opportunities for the development of environmental awareness. Year 3 pupils have recently visited the National Stone Centre and some good follow-up work has taken place in the classroom. Only limited use is made of the local area and environment as a resource for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
63. Teachers work hard to provide a colourful, interesting and stimulating environment for learning. There are good displays of science throughout the school; for example, a display about liquids and solids included good use of key scientific vocabulary, interactive displays with appropriate questions and well-labelled diagrams.
64. By the age of eleven pupils are able to make predictions, carry out experiments, record their results and draw conclusions, for example in using different materials as filters to successfully separate solids and liquids. Opportunities to carry out experiments vary as pupils progress through the school, with more opportunities in Year 6 than in other years.

65. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported in science and achieve well. All pupils are included in all activities and pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are given appropriate opportunities to respond in oral parts of lessons. Pupils behave well in lessons and show enthusiasm.
66. The recently appointed co-ordinator has appropriately ensured that the school policy and guidelines are up to date and has established an action plan with suitable priorities. Arrangements for the monitoring of teaching and learning are at an early stage of development. There is a clear system for the tracking of the development of pupils' skills. ICT is used well in developing pupils' research skills. National standard test results are systematically analysed with regard to gender and ethnicity. Following the Year 6 success in national tests in 2003, when 100 per cent of pupils attained the expected level for their age, the school appropriately aims to continue to monitor the pupils' progress in order to sustain high levels of attainment.

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

Provision in ICT is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good.
- The range and quality of the curriculum are good.
- The quality and quantity of the resources are very good.
- There are elements of control and sensing that are not as effectively developed as they could be.
- Co-ordinators give a very good direction throughout the school.

### **Commentary**

67. Standards are above average at end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils make good progress. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. Since then there have been very good improvements throughout the school. With the use of national grants and additional funding from the school's budget, the school has established a computer suite. The development of these very good resources has had a substantial impact upon raising standards.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is good. As a result of this, the pupils' quality of work by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is above average for their age. The teachers base their lessons securely upon the national guidelines. This provides them with a good structure for the development of the pupils' skills.
69. Discussions with some Year 6 pupils reveal that they make very good use of the Internet to search for information to be used in other subjects. They are competent in their skills of downloading, cutting and pasting from the Internet. They use this technique well to collect information from the large databases. They use all facilities of the word processor well and include design techniques to design eye-catching presentations, especially posters linked to their work in literacy on story illustrations and book covers. They have a firm understanding of the use of spreadsheets which they use to record their performance in physical education lessons. They can create graphs to help them interpret their results. These are all strengths of the pupils' skills and knowledge. However, there are elements of control and sensing that are not as effectively developed.

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

The use of ICT across the curriculum is good. Teachers plan for opportunities to develop skills in subjects such as mathematics and science. Word processing is used regularly and pupils take full

advantage of the computer when researching for their work in subjects such as geography and history. Pupils use their skills in ICT to record and display data collected in surveys in a range of formats, for example pie charts and bar graphs.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

The provision for the geography and history curriculum is **satisfactory**.

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

- The history and geography curriculum is well supported by displays throughout the school.
- Co-ordinators are producing useful portfolios that reflect the work being done.
- Teachers plan their lessons well and make very good cross-curricular links that support the history and geography curriculum.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils' understanding.
- Some use is made of the local area and educational visits, but visits are not systematically linked in whole-school planning to particular areas of learning.

#### **Commentary**

70. Standards of work seen in the school portfolios and in pupils' recorded work do not reflect the high standards of pupils' work seen on display or observed in lessons. The school focuses on different learning styles and individual improvement rather than setting standards to which pupils could aspire. As a result standards in geography throughout the school and in history in Years 1 and 2 are in line with those normally expected. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' knowledge and understanding of history are above those normally expected of pupils of this age.
71. There are examples of very good display work throughout the school that are well labelled, attractive and thoughtfully planned, with appropriate questions to support learning. There are good exemplars of pupils' work to encourage individual effort.
72. In all lessons teachers prepare their lessons well and have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Teachers set good examples in their use of good, challenging vocabulary and probing questioning to take pupils' learning forwards. Teachers provide some very good opportunities for pupils to use their imagination and to empathise with the people in situations being studied, for example in a dramatisation of life in a Victorian classroom. There are good opportunities for individual research both at school and at home, and computers are used effectively as an information resource and for word processing.
73. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are well supported by appropriate questioning and suitable work expectations. However, in some lessons support staff are not actively engaged for considerable periods of time.
74. The school appropriately plans to provide further learning opportunities for pupils through its involvement with the Comenius Project which is linking the school with schools in Finland and Ireland and benefits staff and pupils through exchange of ideas, and with the visit of a Japanese teaching assistant.
75. There has been an improvement in pupils' mapping skills since the last inspection. Planning for geography and history has improved and there are up-to-date policies and schemes. There are good overall plans for teaching the curriculum, but as yet there is insufficient monitoring to ensure that all aspects are being adequately addressed. The recently appointed co-ordinator has an appropriate action plan and priorities for improvement. Portfolios of work are being developed in line with the school's philosophy of encouraging individual effort. They are not used, however, as examples of a high standard to which others could aspire.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Particular attention is paid to learning about other faiths in Years 1 and 2.
- The involvement of a local vicar ensures that aspects of the Christian faith are covered.
- Pupils are able to talk about aspects of religious education that they have studied, but there is little recorded work in pupils' books or the school portfolio.
- The syllabus is supported by some good displays.

### Commentary

76. In Year 2 and Year 6, standards in religious education are broadly in line with those identified in the agreed syllabus taught in the local authority's schools, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' knowledge of other faiths, including Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism, has improved. All pupils make satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. These pupils were well supported in the lesson observed.
77. Teaching was satisfactory in the one lesson seen when Year 1 and 2 pupils worked together to learn about being thankful. The lesson was well planned. There was good input from a local vicar, but the range of activities was limited and some pupils became distracted and inattentive.
78. The school visits the local church for Christmas celebrations, but makes insufficient use of the local church and other places of worship as a learning resource. There are good displays about other faiths, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Pupils learn about and celebrate some of the main religious festivals, including the Christian festivals of Easter, Christmas and harvest, as well as the Moslem festival of Eid and the Hindu festival of Diwali. There are occasional opportunities to learn about different religions from members of staff, visitors and parents, but there is no systematic arrangement to link these visits to the syllabus on a regular basis.
79. The co-ordinator has been appointed this year and has identified suitable priorities to take the subject forwards. There is a clear overall plan linking national guidance materials to the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. A policy is now in place and there is some assessment and recording of pupils' progress, although this is at an early stage. There is as yet insufficient focused monitoring to verify that all aspects of the agreed programme are being taught effectively.
80. Pupils have limited recall about what they have learnt in religious education and there is little recorded work in pupils' books. Work on display and discussions with pupils indicate that there is adequate coverage of the agreed programme overall.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### ART AND DESIGN

Provision for art and design is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils experience a wide range of activities, using a variety of starting points and materials.
- Teaching is good overall.

#### Commentary

81. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above those expected for eleven year olds. It is clear from the attractive displays of art and design around the school that pupils experience a good range of activities, often linked to other subjects such as in their drawings of the story of Rama and Sita linked to their study of Hinduism in religious education. Pupils are introduced to different media and techniques. For example, Year 5 pupils use pencil crayon, charcoal or pastels to produce good quality scenes from the surrounding countryside. They discuss what they like, and give reasons why. They have also produced some good models using scrap materials demonstrating good observational skills and good skills handling clay to make tiles using a variety of objects to form impressions in the clay
82. Judgements about teaching also take into account examination of pupils' work, the school's art and design portfolio and the numerous displays around the school. What characterises good teaching is planning that identifies the aims for learning and takes account pupils' different abilities, clear demonstrations of techniques, pupils being made aware of what they will learn and time to reflect on this at the end of the lesson. Additionally, the care with which pupils' works is displayed shows pupils that their work is valued. Good use is made of a variety of stimulating starting points, often arising from pupils' work in other subjects, particularly in personal, social and health education with work to reflect emotions and links to work in science on healthy eating and balanced diets.

### DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision for design and technology is **satisfactory**.

#### Commentary

83. It is evident from teachers' planning, talking to pupils and from the work displayed around the school that pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations and some exceed these expectations. It is not possible to give an overall judgement on teaching but the teaching was good in the one lesson that inspectors saw. The teacher planned the work carefully, building on skills pupils had already learnt. Pupils knew what they had to do and worked very hard because the teacher explained very clearly what they should do and gave them interesting things to do. In the lessons seen, the teacher praised and encouraged the pupils and explained how they could improve their work. Pupils were given a range of exciting resources so they investigated how to make a stable picture frame. Pupils showed a range of good skills such as joining using glues and sticky tape. At the end of the lesson the teacher gave the pupils very good opportunities to talk about what was good about their work and how they could make it better. From talking to older pupils it is evident that this is a regular part of lessons and pupils have a very self-critical approach to their work in design and technology.
84. The new co-ordinator for design and technology is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and is developing a clear plan to raise standards. There have been some good improvements since the last inspections. Teachers now plan the pupils' work using national

guidance so that pupils build on the skills they have previously learnt. Resources, which are very well organised, are adequate and the co-ordinator has plans to purchase more. Assessment is at an early stage and is an area for further improvement.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

No physical education lessons were observed during the inspection so it is not possible to make a firm judgement on provision. Inspectors spoke to teachers and pupils about the work they do in physical education during school time, and the extra-curricular activities that the school provides for the pupils. Pupils said they enjoy their lessons and like the school's approach that all should participate in inter-school matches.

The school has a small hall and playing field on a fairly steep slope and teachers work hard to overcome the limitations of the site. Teachers plan work using national guidance to ensure that pupils cover all aspects of the curriculum for physical education and build on what they have learnt before. This is a good improvement from the last inspection when older pupils did not build on the skills they had previously learnt. Pupils in Year 5 benefit from weekly sessions at the local swimming baths. Those who are not able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 5 are able to have further swimming sessions when they are in Year 6 and most pupils swim the expected distance by the end of Year 6.

Last year the school made good use of outside providers to give specialist training in dance and basketball. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities including football and netball though many of them do not take place regularly. The football club is very popular and open to all pupils from Year 1 to Year 6. Teachers give all pupils in Year 5 and 6 the opportunity to play in the school football team. Pupils from these classes choose the pupils to play in the school football team when they play against other schools in the local school league.

## MUSIC

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Music is taught creatively and enhanced through a range of activities within and extra to lessons.
- There is no whole-school assessment procedure for music.

### Commentary

85. Only two lessons were seen in music, but discussions with pupils were held and previous work on display and in the school portfolio was scrutinised. From this information, judgements can be made that pupils' standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are average, as is their achievement. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
86. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but too few lessons were observed to make a secure judgement for Years 3 to 6. The good planning and enthusiastic teaching contributed to pupils' good achievement in understanding rhythm and singing tunefully in a Year 4 lesson, that built well on skills developed in the previous half term. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the classroom support staff. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are building a sound base for responding to signals and symbols, as introduction to playing from an improvised music 'score'. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have regular opportunities to develop singing outside of formal lessons for example in literacy and numeracy lessons. Year 6 pupils talk enthusiastically about 'fun' singing and spontaneously sing songs they have enjoyed.
87. Good use is made of pupils' knowledge of musical instruments when they give performances to younger pupils, when appropriate. The use of visitors to demonstrate instruments, such as a



range of recorders and piano, extends pupils' knowledge with first hand experience, as well as the opportunity to play the recorder in Years 2, 3 and 4. Good opportunity is given for performance and participation in dance and drama, with music at Christmas and through the local authority festival in the summer.

88. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Whilst the co-ordinator sees lesson planning and observes teaching, there is no formal method of checking pupils' knowledge and skills. Work in the school portfolio is accurately assessed against standards expected for pupils' ages and the co-ordinator identifies the need to develop a unified whole-school assessment system, when it can be included in the school improvement plan.

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

The provision for personal, health and social development and citizenship is **good**.

These areas of the school's work are at an early stage of development but the provision for them within different subjects of the curriculum is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching within the curriculum.
- Effective and enthusiastic co-ordination of the subject.
- Mature and responsible pupils as a result.
- The preparation of pupils for life in a multi-ethnic community is less well developed.

### **Commentary**

89. Provision is effective and reflected in mature and responsible pupils well prepared for life in general and for the next stage in their education. The preparation of pupils for life in a multi-ethnic community is less strong.
90. The school has allocated specific time for developing personal, social and health education and the curriculum is well organised. Teaching usually takes place through 'circle time' when pupils gather in a whole class group and support staff are deployed well to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to discuss personal and social issues in small groups. During the inspection an excellent session on mediation was observed, preparing Year 6 pupils for their roles as buddies and 'befrienders'.
91. The new co-ordinator for this subject is enthusiastic and has good plans in place for the development of these areas as a separate subject of the curriculum.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</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	3
<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	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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