

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **KENSINGTON JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Ilkeston

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112573

Headteacher: Mrs L Partridge

Lead inspector: Mr P Cole

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> March 2004

Inspection number: 256592

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	256
School address:	St John's Road Ilkeston Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE7 5PA
Telephone number:	0115 9322920
Fax number:	0115 9443115
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr F Phillips
Date of previous inspection:	8 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Kensington Junior School is of average size and serves an urban area close to the centre of Ilkeston. The school number on roll is similar to what it was at time of the last inspection. The movement of pupils in and out of the school is slightly greater than in other junior schools. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds but overall they are slightly disadvantaged compared to those found nationally, and the average attainment of pupils when they enter the school is just below the national. The school's population is almost entirely white British and all pupils speak English. The proportion of pupils with special education needs is similar to other schools across the country but the proportion of those with statements is higher than the national average. The special educational needs include learning difficulties and physical problems.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2616	P H Cole	Lead inspector	Science History Geography Art and design
1112	P Oldfield	Lay inspector	
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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>9</b>
Standards achieved in subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>11</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>23</b>



## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **sound school that is improving**. Pupils currently achieve satisfactorily but the progress that they make is improving due to improving teaching and to the leadership of the school. The headteacher gives a strong personal lead. The school is well managed and provides **satisfactory value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Strong leadership of the headteacher and the effectiveness of management is now leading to good improvement.
- Good levels of care help to successfully promote the pupils' positive attitudes and their good behaviour and personal development.
- The consistently effective teaching and learning is leading to pupils in Year 6 making good progress.
- The school's strong links with parents and its partnerships with other schools and the community.
- The quality of the provision made for pupils who have special educational needs ensures they make good progress.
- Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and often does not help pupils to improve.
- Standards in history and geography are below expectations and pupils make too little use of their skills in literacy and numeracy in these subjects.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Standards have been maintained. There are many opportunities now for pupils to take initiative and responsibility. Assessment is mainly used well but there are still some weaknesses in marking. Reports to parents are much better and give parents good information on their children's progress. The governing body now fully meets its legal responsibilities and the school makes sound use of principles of best value to evaluate and inform spending decisions.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

**Overall pupils are achieving satisfactorily and there is evidence of this improving.** The table shows that Year 6 results in the 2003 tests were noticeably below the average for all schools across the country, but they were average in mathematics and science when compared to what the pupils achieved when they were tested in Year 2 and they were above average in English. The inspection found standards in almost all subjects to be broadly in line with the national expectations by Year 6. These standards indicate reasonable achievement given pupils' modest starting points in Year 3. The school's detailed and careful tracking shows that almost all pupils make at least steady progress in English and mathematics. Those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the well-focused and targeted support they are given. Pupils do not achieve well enough in history and geography mainly because their skills have not been developed sufficiently. Their achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is improving

because the subject is now properly resourced and regularly taught. Pupils' skills in writing in English and in conducting investigations in science, which the school has identified as weaknesses, are getting better because of the emphasis that is being placed on them.

**Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding development is promoted well.**

They are **well behaved and positive about school**. Their **attendance is good**, which is a considerable improvement from last year when it was below average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **satisfactory** education for its pupils. **Teaching is satisfactory** overall and pupils in Year 6 classes make good progress because of the consistently strong teaching they receive. A key strength in teaching across the school, particularly in Year 6, is the careful matching of work in English, mathematics and sometimes in science to pupils' needs so that different groups make appropriate progress. Other significant strengths include: good subject knowledge; the effective use of individual targets in English and mathematics that help pupils to know what they need to do to achieve the next steps in their learning; and, teachers' high expectations and good management of behaviour which keep pupils working well. Teachers are good at asking thoughtful questions to check understanding and to make pupils think and they focus well on teaching of skills in art and ICT that add effectively to pupils' learning. A particular weakness that occasionally limits pupils' progress is when teaching does not take into account effectively what pupils already know. A general weakness is found in the marking of pupils' work which mostly does not help pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. An over-reliance on worksheets in some classes reduces the opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in history and geography and to use their literacy and numeracy skills. Assessment is satisfactory and is increasingly being used to improve pupils' learning.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs and accommodation is satisfactory, although the staff room is too small for staff meetings and the playing field is too small for effective games lessons. Pupils are very well cared for and the effective partnerships with local schools, parents and community benefit both pupils and school as a whole.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership is satisfactory and management is good.** The headteacher, who has been in post for less than two years, sets a very good example through her own teaching and is skilfully engaging key staff and governors so they are making an increasingly effective contribution to the development and improvement of the school. Good use has started to be made of self-evaluation to plan what needs to be done and the action taken is bringing about improvements.

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

The children clearly enjoy school and their parents strongly support the school. They appreciate the good information they receive. Parents also find useful the guidance on homework, reports on their children's progress and individual targets for their children's learning. They are asked about their views and know that the school listens and responds to their concerns.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Make more consistent use of marking across all classes and subjects to help pupils understand more clearly what they need to do to make their work better.
- Provide pupils with more opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects such as history and geography.
- Improve standards in history and geography, particularly pupils' skills in these subjects.





## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall standards are broadly in line with national expectations and pupils achieve appropriately in all subjects, except for history and geography where standards and achievement fall short of expectations. Pupils in Year 6 make better progress than those in all other year groups. In tests, boys have done less well than girls but the steps the school has taken are helping to improve their achievement. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 are achieving well in almost all subjects.
- Standards and achievement in ICT are improving and standards are now in line with national expectations.
- Weaknesses in pupils' competence in planning and conducting scientific investigation are being tackled and by Year 6 investigation is a strong feature of their achievement.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Standards and achievement in history and geography are not high enough.
- Pupils do not make enough use of their skills in literacy and numeracy in other subjects, particularly in history and geography.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.7 ( 25.7)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.1 (25.7)	26.8 (27.7)
science	26.9 (29.1)	28.6 (28.3 )

*There were 61 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

1. Last year's results were not as strong as in the previous year. They compared unfavourably with schools nationally and with those where pupils came from similar backgrounds. One of the two classes experienced considerable disruption, due to illness, to their teaching when they were in Years 5 and 6. The performance of this class was significantly weaker than the other class, with fewer pupils achieving the higher level 5, and more not attaining the expected level 4 in national tests. The performance of the boys was particularly badly affected in science in the disrupted class. Despite this problem, the results compared satisfactorily with those in other schools where pupils had achieved similar results when tested in Year 2. Over time, results in the school have fluctuated but overall the school has maintained a similar profile to the national and the school's results are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection.
2. Standards found during the inspection were broadly in line with national expectations in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and also in most of the other subjects. Within this sound picture there are signs of improving achievement, particularly in Year 6 where teaching is now strong and is helping pupils to accelerate their learning. Weaknesses, identified by the school's own analysis, in writing, mathematics and science are being tackled and this is leading to improvements in both pupils' attainment and achievement. Their writing is now more expressive and pupils are drafting and editing their work more effectively. A strong emphasis has been placed on developing pupils' understanding of and skills in conducting investigations in science, particularly in Year 6, and this is now a relative strength in their achievement in this

subject. Problem solving is an aspect of mathematics that has improved. Pupils' ability to apply their literacy and numeracy skills are not sufficiently developed in other subjects, particularly history and geography. In too many cases the worksheets used in these subjects are limiting pupils' abilities to research and to record in different ways what they have found out.

3. The provision made for ICT has improved considerably with the opening of the school's new ICT suite. The subject is now taught regularly by teachers who have had their own skills enhanced, and standards and achievement in this key subject are rising well. The standard of singing in the school is good and this reflects the effective specialist teaching provided and value placed on the quality of performance across the school.
4. By Year 6, standards and achievement in history and geography are not high enough because pupils' skills, for example in using different sources of information, have not been sufficiently well developed and they are not given enough opportunities to use these skills to find out about the past and about different locations for themselves.
5. The steps taken by the school to target pupils and match work more closely to their needs are beginning to tackle the weaker performance of boys, and lower attaining groups still have a disproportionate number of boys in them.
6. Good support, effectively matched to group and individual needs, both in class and in withdrawal groups, is provided for pupils with special educational needs. As a result, they make good progress and are achieving well.

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

The positive findings from the last report have been maintained. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance levels have improved from below to above the national average.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance has improved to be above the national average. .
- The majority of pupils enjoy coming to the school and take an active part in what the school offers.
- Pupils display good attitudes to work and their confidence and self-esteem are well developed; relationships are good.
- There are effective systems in place to deal with any inappropriate behaviour.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

### **Commentary**

7. Attendance has improved from below average last year to above during this year due to the close liaison with the educational social worker and good policies to record attendance and follow up issues. There has been one temporary exclusion in the current school year and three in the previous school year. Pupils come to school and to lessons on time.
8. The attitude of almost all pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and almost always work hard. A few pupils, usually boys, lack application when they are working independently or when not directly supervised. However, pupils are generally well supervised by teachers and other adults and this keeps them on task. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy strong relationships with others, and this encourages them to take a full part in all the activities the school has to offer.
9. The school makes effective provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies are often of high quality and make a strong contribution to pupils'

development; for example during inspection week, a high quality class assembly, performed by Year 6 pupils, supported very well the weekly theme of 'teamwork'. Class and school rules are understood, as they are displayed around the school and consistently applied by adults. Pupils respond well to responsibility, for example being monitors, and 'yard buddies' to support younger pupils. They show good understanding of the responsibilities of living in a community. Older pupils take part in a ballot to select pupils who have been kind or helpful. The school welcomes pupils' views; for example, weekly class discussion time is set aside to allow older pupils a forum to discuss what is working and what is not working in their class. This is shortly to be extended by the creation of a school council.

10. The spiritual dimension of assemblies allows for a moment of reflection, and always indicates strong moral messages. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and are encouraged to reflect on the plight of others by considering issues such as poverty in personal, social and health education lessons. Cultural provision is good and enables pupils to develop a good understanding of both their own and others' cultures. This is reflected in a number of displays around the school that promote multi-ethnicity and different cultural heritages, including the one that shows Year 4 taking part in a Hindu wedding ceremony. Displays of Ancient Egyptian-inspired work and examples of pupils exploring various artistic traditions were present during the inspection. Pupils do not visit different places of worship or centres, and this is an aspect that is missing from their religious and cultural experiences.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.1	School data	0.1
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.*

## Exclusions

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

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

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
256	3	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 is satisfactory overall. Teaching overall is satisfactory and is good in Year 6. Teaching generally is improving as teachers make increasingly better use of assessment information to match their teaching to needs of different groups of pupils. The curriculum and resources available to support teaching are satisfactory, although there is limited space available for staff to meet and the school's field is too small for games lessons.

## Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. A significant proportion of lessons are well taught or better. These are mainly in Year 6 although good and very good teaching is found in other year groups. The

assessment of pupils' learning and teachers' use of assessment are satisfactory. Both teaching and assessment are improving.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is consistently good in Year 6.
- Effective use is made of teaching assistants to support groups and individuals.
- There is good use of assessment information to provide pupils with targets to work towards, to group pupils for teaching and learning purposes and to modify what is taught to them.
- Marking is inconsistent and too often provides little or no guidance to pupils on how they can make their work better.
- Planning of teaching is occasionally not effectively matched to what pupils need to learn next and in the foundation subjects does not always focus clearly on what pupils should learn.

**Commentary**

*Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	5 (16%)	12(37%)	12 (37%)	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. The teaching of three lessons was not graded.*

11. No unsatisfactory teaching of lessons was found during the inspection. The analysis of pupils' completed work did reveal weaknesses in teachers' marking and in the effectiveness of what is sometimes taught in history and geography. Good use is made of teaching assistants to work with groups and on occasion individuals. Teaching assistants are well briefed, understand the purpose of the lessons and are skilled in guiding, questioning and encouraging pupils. They work mainly with less able pupils and those with special educational needs, and these pupils make good progress and are able to take a full part in lessons. In English, mathematics and science (mainly Year 6) teachers are careful to match what they teach to groups of pupils with different needs. This supports the learning of all groups and extends the learning of the more able as well as ensuring that those who find learning more difficult are also provided with appropriate learning opportunities. On occasion, the overall work that is planned is not as well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils and this can slow the learning of some pupils. This was seen in a mathematics lesson, for example.
12. Many lessons, particularly in English, mathematics and sometimes in science, benefit from the clear focus provided by learning objectives that are shared with, and in the best lessons explained to, pupils. This helps pupils to understand the purpose of the lesson and to work with the teacher to achieve what is planned. In foundation subjects, and sometimes in science, teachers can rely too much on the scheme of work and do not think through the purpose of the lesson as clearly as in English and mathematics. This can lead to a weaker focus on learning specific to the subject, and opportunities to promote knowledge, skills and understanding are missed. Much of the work done by pupils in history and geography is reliant on pupils completing worksheets that restrict the opportunities for them to investigate, research and record effectively. This leads to underachievement in these subjects by the time pupils come to leave the school. Similarly, opportunities for pupils to apply what they have learnt in English and mathematics while working in other subjects are not planned sufficiently often to consolidate and extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
13. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and ensure that they almost always work hard, although on occasion some teachers are not vigilant enough in keeping an eye on groups they are not directly working with, and as a result a few pupils, usually boys, do not always apply themselves as well as they should. In a high proportion of lessons teachers have secure subject knowledge which they demonstrate by probing pupils' understanding through

questioning. Through demanding questions, teachers encourage pupils to think more clearly and challenge them to work things out for themselves. Skills in ICT and art are often taught well by teachers who explain and demonstrate new skills clearly. Homework is regularly set in English and mathematics and contributes effectively to what is covered in lessons.

14. There are some good examples of pupils' work being marked effectively when teachers provide comments that explain to pupils what they need to do to make their work better. This is not consistent across all classes and subjects, and too often marking consists of encouraging comments or just acknowledging that pupils have done the work. This form of marking contributes little to improving pupils' learning.
15. Assessment is used satisfactorily to focus teaching on what pupils need to learn and in helping pupils to take the next steps. Test papers in English, mathematics and science are analysed and actions are taken to tackle weaknesses that have been identified. This has helped to improve standards and achievement in writing, problem solving in mathematics, and enquiry skills in science, particularly in Year 6. Regular assessments are made of pupils' progress and the information is used to group pupils and increasingly to plan the next steps in their learning. The latter is seen in the fine tuning of lessons and in the targets that pupils need to work towards in the future. At present there is little link between targets set and the marking of pupils' work, and this limits the effectiveness of both.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a sound curriculum based on a broad and balanced range of subjects. A range of interesting extra-curricular activities is available for the pupils. The resources are adequate. The accommodation has some limitations.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for children with special educational needs, lower achievers and those children who are achieving well is good.
- ICT resources are good.
- The curriculum has been modified to improve English, mathematics and to a lesser extent science.
- The school has a high number of teaching assistants who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- The accommodation has some limitations.

## **Commentary**

16. The overall quality and range of opportunities offered to the pupils are satisfactory. The curriculum is based on national guidelines and the curriculum for English and mathematics provides pupils with sound opportunities to develop their skills by the age of eleven. Since the last inspection the school analyses results of tests more effectively so that it can ensure that the curriculum is adjusted to meet the children's needs. The curriculum is now more focused on raising standards in English, mathematics and to a lesser extent science. The quality of provision for ICT has improved significantly since the last inspection and ICT is increasingly being taught through other subjects. However, teachers do not always ensure that pupils are provided with opportunities to consolidate and extend skills learnt in English and mathematics in other subjects, like history and geography.
17. The school provides children with an interesting range of extra-curricular activities to enhance the pupils' learning. The school is particularly proud of its choir and the enthusiasm of the children is evident in their rehearsals. The choir regularly participates in local events and its performances are well received. The school stages regular productions. Children have good

opportunities to participate in numerous religious and cultural activities. Sporting and physical activities feature strongly in the curriculum.

18. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is effective because it is tailored to meet their needs. It links into their individual education plans, which are detailed with clear manageable targets. The number of additional staff to support pupils with special educational needs is good and they make very effective contributions to pupils' learning. They work closely with teachers to build pupils' confidence and self-esteem, as well as their knowledge and skills.
19. The school has sufficient, appropriately qualified teachers to provide for pupils' individual needs and a suitable education. The resources in all subjects are adequate to provide an appropriate education. The new computer suite is an asset to the school, ensuring that ICT can be taught effectively. However, the accommodation has some limitations. The staff room is too small for the number of staff and the playing field is small. The school is in the process of doing a feasibility study to improve accommodation.

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

Pupils continue to be well looked after. The provision for their well-being, health and safety is very good. The provision of support, advice and guidance is also good. The arrangements for seeking, valuing and acting upon pupils' views are currently satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Procedures to ensure pupils care and welfare are very good.
- The support, advice and guidance given to pupils are good.

### **Commentary**

20. Pupils feel secure at the school because of the high levels of care and the good relationships. Arrangements for child protection are good; systems for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. The deputy headteacher is responsible for child protection, and deals with issues very well. Each year staff's awareness of the new developments in child protection is kept up to date. The school has designated first aiders, who are appropriately well trained. Minor accidents are well recorded and dealt with in a kindly way. All appropriate testing of equipment has been done to ensure that the school is safe; regular fire drills have been held.
21. Most pupils feel that there is a person to whom they can go if they are worried about anything; the school has a good policy of allowing classroom assistants to move on with the class, thus ensuring one adult is always known to them. The headteacher records any concerns parents may have about their children and acts promptly on them. The school intends that all pupils feel well supported. A good example of this concern is the alterations made in arrangements for the school nurse to meet older pupils early into their final academic year to discuss concerns and offer personal guidance. The programme for personal, social and health education provides much valuable guidance to pupils. The school listens to pupils' request and responds positively to these when it is appropriate. Year 5 pupils, for example, wanted to raise money for a *Blue Peter* appeal and they were encouraged to take full responsibility for this, but teachers and other staff were asked to keep a helpful eye on what they were doing. Pupils' views and concerns are often discussed in class and there are plans to establish a school council. The survey of pupils' views showed that they feel positive about their school.
22. Effective systems to monitor attendance are in place and the school has established good links with support agencies. The care given to all pupils is very good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported throughout their time at the school.

23. Pupils are provided with good levels of support, advice and guidance based on teachers' careful monitoring of their behaviour, attitudes and personal development, in lessons and around school. There are thorough procedures to monitor the progress of pupils and information is used to give pupils appropriate support with their learning. Where the school has clear evidence that additional support, either academic and personal, is necessary, parents are consulted and appropriate guidance is given. The induction programme is well developed so that all pupils settle quickly into school.

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

This is a continuing strength. Parents show strong support for the school. They are given good quality information, consulted on what the school is doing, and are encouraged to help in their children's education. The parent teacher association works hard to raise funds for the school and is at the heart of many of the local community's events. There are beneficial links with other schools.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Reports to parents are informative and are effective in making clear strengths, weaknesses and targets for improvement.
- Parents are provided with good quality information about the life of the school and how they can help their children learn.
- The parent teacher association provides considerable additional funding and organises many events that involve the community.
- Effective links with local schools promote cost-effective training of staff, close liaison and smooth transfer of pupils.

### **Commentary**

24. The school takes its relationship with parents very seriously. The headteacher makes herself available in the playground before and after school every day. This is seen as a valuable point of contact by parents and helps to ensure that any concerns that parents may have are quickly dealt with. Reports to parents are much improved since the last inspection. They make clear to parents what their children can and cannot do and identify what needs to be worked on to help them improve. The targets that are given to pupils in school are also made available to parents. Homework is regularly set on the same day each week and guidance given, when needed, to parents so they can help their children. On occasions workshops are organised to explain to parents how their children are taught. All these efforts are appreciated by parents as they help them to become involved in their children's education.
25. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with what is happening in school and they are encouraged to become involved in helping with school visits, although few help in school. The parent teacher association organises many events for both fund-raising and community purposes. It made a significant contribution to the school's new ICT suite and provided a lighting system for the hall. Parents' views have been sought through a questionnaire. Outcomes are shared with parents and actions are taken to tackle concerns.
26. The school enjoys good relationships with local schools. These links provide opportunities for joint training of staff, curriculum liaison and enrichment, such as the wind band, and support the smooth transfer of pupils. A local professional football team continues to provide coaching. The school has participated in national events such as the National Meningitis Walk when it provided lunch for the walkers.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership is satisfactory and management is good. The headteacher is a good leader who has successfully created a caring ethos that promotes inclusion, continuous improvement, teamwork



and high expectations. Overall, senior staff and governors make a satisfactory contribution to leadership. They are becoming increasingly involved in decision making and the management of the school. Management is good; it is based on thoughtful self-evaluation, careful and effective planning and good use of resources and the funding available to the school.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good leadership of the headteacher.
- The developing effectiveness of key staff and governors.
- Effective self-evaluation of the school’s strengths and weaknesses.
- Good planning to make the school better.
- Effective financial control and management.

**Commentary**

27. The headteacher, who has been in the school for 18 months, leads from the front. She is a very good teacher who works very well alongside colleagues to support and encourage them. She has a good understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses from her monitoring of teaching and analysis of data, and a clear view of what she wants to achieve. She uses these well to initiate debate with, and involvement of, staff and governors. This is successfully raising expectations. Another consequence relates to key staff, including the deputy headteacher. They are taking on more responsibility than they have historically by becoming more involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, although this is still an aspect of their work that requires further development. Governors are now provided with more information on which they can base their decisions and they are increasingly becoming effective ‘critical friends’ to the school.
28. The school improvement plan is a good management tool that is firmly based on objective self-evaluation and identifies what needs to be done to raise standards, although the priorities for this could be more precisely defined. There is a good link with the school’s budget, which is being used well to support improvement in provision and standards. Financial control and management are thorough and informative reports are provided for governors so they have a clear understanding of the school’s current and projected finances when planning spending. Increasingly the principles of best value are being applied to ensure that appropriate decisions are taken.
29. Good use is made of assessment information to modify the curriculum and teaching to improve pupils’ learning and ultimately standards and achievement. Most of the monitoring of teaching is currently done by the headteacher and co-ordinators are not yet as fully involved in identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning as they should be. Subject co-ordinators who lead subjects that have been priorities have often made a good contribution to improving provision. This is particularly the case with literacy and ICT. The roles of other teachers as subject leaders have not yet been developed sufficiently.
30. The induction of new staff is very good and the newly qualified teachers have been given very good support and guidance. Arrangements for performance management are effective and on track. Teachers’ targets are appropriately linked to school priorities as well as to their personal priorities.

**Financial information**

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	607,914	Balance from previous year	16,403

Total expenditure	614,511
Expenditure per pupil	2,409

Balance carried forward to the next	9,806
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## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS**

### **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2**

#### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Overall, teaching is good and it is especially strong in Year 6.
- Assessment is good, enabling the school to plan for pupils' individual needs.
- Leadership is good and data is analysed and informs planning.
- Support for specific groups of children is good.
- Individual and group targets are set and are contributing to improving standards.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning by the subject leader is not yet fully developed.
- Speaking and listening skills are not monitored sufficiently well.

#### **Commentary**

31. Standards in English by the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with national expectations and overall the pupils' achievement is sound.
32. The teaching has improved recently but its full impact on pupils' learning is yet to be felt. Good systems are now in place to improve standards, but these have not yet been fully monitored to assess how well they are working. Since the last inspection, assessments have improved. Test results are now analysed in detail so the teachers can see where improvements need to be made. As a result, the teaching has been more focused on pupils' individual needs. This is particularly strong for the children with special educational needs and those pupils who achieve well. Teaching in Year 6 is especially strong and focused on using the national guidelines and expectations. Although marking is sometimes very effective and focuses on identifying the next step in the children's learning, this is not always the case.
33. Good emphasis is placed on developing the pupils' writing skills. They are learning to use varied and interesting language to make their writing more expressive and creative. They now draft and edit their work, which is an improvement since the last inspection. In Year 3, pupils good use of word-lists to successfully extend their vocabulary. In Year 6, the pupils are particularly aware of the quality of their writing and what is needed to improve it. Speaking and listening skills are being developed well across the school through persistent questioning by teachers. In addition, during the course of lessons pupils talk to partners to discuss ideas and develop opinions. Pupils are extending their vocabulary through reading a variety of texts. During guided reading lessons pupils are helped to develop their skills well. In order improve the provision for reading skills the school has rightly identified the need to improve the quality and range of its book resources.
34. The subject is led well and lessons are now planned well. Planning is based on assessments of pupils' progress as this helps to identify children's needs. Children have both individual and group targets so teachers and pupils know what needs to be done to improve the work. The strategies in place, including the teaching of speaking and listening, have not yet been sufficiently monitored to ensure that they are being used to best effect.

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

35. Across the curriculum literacy skills are not always developed as well as they could be. Pupils' writing skills are not used to good effect in lessons such as history and geography, because often the written work is restricted to worksheets. However, in the best teaching pupils' literacy

skills are exploited. For example, in one religious education lesson, children successfully created balanced written reports on miracles performed by Jesus.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils enjoy their lessons and have positive attitudes to their learning.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables these pupils to achieve well.
- Planning is inconsistent and does not always build securely on what pupils already know.
- Some marking does not always help pupils to know what they have to do to improve.

### **Commentary**

36. Standards were broadly in line with national expectations at the time of the last inspection and progress was satisfactory. Standards have been maintained and are currently average. Achievement is sound and pupils have made satisfactory progress although there is evidence that this is beginning to improve. This is because the school has used its assessment well and now organises the teaching of mathematics into ability groups that are working effectively. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and this is an improvement since the last inspection.
37. Teaching and learning in mathematics are satisfactory overall. Some very good teaching was seen during the inspection. In the best lessons, teachers are comfortable with the subject and explain new ideas clearly. They know what to teach and when to teach it by using the national guidelines. As a result, pupils achieve what is expected for their age, enjoy their lessons and have positive attitudes to their learning. There is strong emphasis on practical application of problem-solving skills in these lessons, which offers very good levels of challenge and helps pupils to achieve very well. In the very good lessons, teachers also help pupils understand how well they are doing and what they need to do next. Teachers set sensible, achievable targets that motivate pupils to do well.
38. Occasionally, where other aspects of teaching are effective, teachers have not planned carefully enough to meet pupils' different needs, have not made enough use of practical work to support pupils' understanding or have missed opportunities to promote problem solving. Such weaknesses limited the progress made in these lessons.
39. Teachers expect pupils to behave well. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good and teaching assistants ensure that pupils take a full part in their mathematics lessons. Because of this, these pupils' attitudes are good and they enjoy learning. The quality and effectiveness of marking are inconsistent and marking does not always help pupils to understand what they have to do to improve their work.
40. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Teachers and support staff are comfortable in what they do because they have received training in the subject. The co-ordinator maintains a sound overview of the subject and has begun to monitor teaching and learning. As a result, he is able to contribute to relevant management decisions aimed at remedying weaknesses and sharing good practice throughout the school.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

41. The use of mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum is beginning to be developed but not enough is being done at present. The co-ordinator has plans to tackle this weakness.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations by Year 6 and pupils' achievement is sound, reflecting satisfactory teaching overall. The effectiveness of provision is similar to the findings of the last inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in Year 6.
- There is too much inconsistency in teaching and curriculum provision between year groups.
- Pupils with special educational needs and often also groups of lower attaining pupils are effectively supported and make good progress in lessons.

### Commentary

42. Teaching is good in Year 6 classes and pupils here are making good progress, particularly in their understanding of, and competence in, conducting scientific investigations. This is enabling a significant proportion of pupils to work above the expected level for their age. Higher attaining and average attaining and some of the lower attaining pupils are able to explain the need to keep all but one variable constant in order to ensure a test is fair, and the higher and average attaining pupils are able to plan their own investigations. This is because teachers challenge them to work things out for themselves, including how they can record what they have found out. Pupils' knowledge of the factual content of science is sound overall.
43. Year 6 teachers consistently plan lessons that meet the needs of the different groups in their classes. They identify and share objectives for lessons with pupils and work purposefully to achieve them. Teachers' questioning is challenging, when appropriate, and is also used to assess pupils' understanding so that misunderstanding can be tackled. Their marking of pupils' work is reasonably supportive and helps pupils understand what they need to do to improve. These strengths are not consistently found in the work of other classes. In Year 3 there is a strong emphasis placed on investigational work but this is less evident in Year 4. The coverage of the curriculum is also more extensive in some years than in others. In the lessons seen outside of Year 6, teachers did share general learning objectives with pupils which helped to focus learning but they did not sufficiently identify what different groups (other than lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs) would be expected to learn or do and sometimes this limited what some pupils, usually the higher attaining pupils, were able to achieve. Pupils' completed work, other than in Year 6, shows a similar limited match to pupils' differing needs. Generally lessons are appropriately resourced and teachers are confident in what they are doing. Good use is made of teaching assistants to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils are able to take a full part in lessons.
44. Leadership and management of the subject are barely satisfactory. A recent strength has been the work done to analyse test results in order to identify weaknesses in pupils' learning. This has led to a major emphasis being placed on investigational work in Year 6, resulting in an improvement in standards. A weakness in leadership and management has been not ensuring that this focus for learning has been understood and acted upon by other teachers. Too little is being done to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning across the school and to ensure consistent quality in what is provided for pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has a new, well-equipped, purpose-built ICT suite which is used well.
- The leadership of ICT has a clear vision for the future.
- ICT skills are not being sufficiently developed in other subjects of the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

45. Standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with those expected by pupils of this age. This is similar to what was found at the last inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and have made sound progress in their acquisition of basic ICT skills. Recently as a result of the regular access to a wide range of ICT resources, pupils' progress is accelerating. All groups of pupils undertake tasks which cover all strands of the curriculum. The school's provision is very well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who leads by example and understands exactly what it is that she has to do to continue to improve the provision in ICT.
46. The new suite for ICT is very well equipped and used very well by the school. There is a good ratio of computers to pupils and good use is made of the interactive whiteboard. Teachers are continuing to develop their own skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject, and overall teach the subject well. There is a good balance of direct teaching of skills and letting pupils find out for themselves. Pupils, particularly boys, use computers confidently and their keyboard skills are often good. Younger pupils are learning how to combine graphics and text successfully, for example in producing a folder cover for their science topic on plants and animals. These pupils demonstrated their skills as they created a border for their cover and skilfully dragged pictures, which they had selected from a folder, into their cover and saved their work. Other pupils designed a cover and the inside for their Easter card. They worked well together as they further developed their skills. Year 6 pupils built on existing skills and began to create buttons to link pages in the text they were producing. The lesson developed pupils' literacy skills well as they discussed the purpose of and produced a balanced argument about animals in a zoo. Very good paired work developed reasoning and writing skills well.
47. Teaching is effective and teachers teach key skills well. They use the interactive whiteboard effectively to demonstrate and explain and are effectively developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject. Teachers assess pupils' learning against the learning intentions in lessons and use this to inform their planning for their next session. This helps to ensure that pupils make secure progress over time.
48. The subject co-ordinator has a clear understanding of how to improve standards further. There is a suitable scheme of work which supports planning, teaching and learning. The policy covering use of the Internet takes appropriate account of the need to ensure pupils' welfare and safety. The co-ordinator monitors pupils' work on a regular basis, and this helps her to plan for further improvement in the subject.

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

49. Teachers are becoming more aware of the need to use ICT in other subjects but this is not yet sufficiently well established. The co-ordinator is aware of this weakness and is currently working to tackle it.

## HUMANITIES

50. Only one lesson was seen in **geography** and none in **history**. However, pupils' completed work was evaluated and discussions were held with Year 6 pupils about their current and past work. The evidence strongly indicates that standards are below national expectations and pupils could achieve better than they do. Year 6 pupils demonstrate weak knowledge, understanding and skills in both subjects and this is reflected in much of the completed work across the school. In most classes a considerable amount of what pupils have done consists of worksheets. Pupils have made some interesting visits and they undertake a little field work but the overuse of worksheets has limited the opportunities for pupils to be historians and geographers, applying appropriate skills to find out about the past and about different locations. Too few opportunities have been provided for pupils to research and to record their findings in a variety of ways, for example using tables and different forms of writing.

## Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator provides good guidance and support.
- Teachers use a variety of methods to help pupils learn.
- Pupils are interested in learning about different religions.
- Monitoring of teaching has not yet been developed.
- Assessments are not yet in place.
- Learning is not sufficiently consolidated to ensure pupils' knowledge is secure.

### Commentary

51. The standard of religious education by the end of Year 6 is likely to be in line with the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
52. Pupils are successfully introduced to the major world religions and are developing an idea of belief systems. However, at times the learning is not sufficiently well consolidated to ensure that pupils' knowledge is secure. They are introduced to Christianity and suitable methods are used to help pupils' learn its key features. Pupils understand that the Bible is a special book, for example. Links have been developed with the local church; the curate comes into school to hold assemblies.
53. Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory. Teachers follow the locally agreed syllabus of religious education and nationally agreed guidelines. Resources for this subject are adequate and supplemented with additional materials and visits. Children have the opportunity to attend and engage in interesting and worthwhile role-play events such as a baptism at the local church and a Hindu wedding.
54. Leadership and management are sound. The co-ordinator has provided teachers with a very detailed scheme of work that supports their teaching and assessment of pupils. However, the teaching has not yet been monitored to assess the impact of this on children' learning.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

55. Only one lesson in **art** was visited during the inspection. Evaluation of pupils' completed work indicates that standards are comfortably in line with national expectations. Pupils experience a satisfactorily broad and balanced curriculum. Completed work shows that pupils are developing skills in using a good range of materials and an appreciation of the work of famous artists and of artistic traditions from periods they study in history. Much of the work is done with care and is

of good quality. In the lesson visited the teacher was careful to explain and demonstrate techniques and the effectiveness of this approach is evident in the work of this class and others across the school.

56. **Design and technology** was not a focus for the inspection and no overall judgement can be made about the quality of provision in design and technology because of insufficient evidence. Work on display was scrutinised, teachers' planning was examined and discussions were held with pupils. These indicate that the provision is well planned in terms of National Curriculum requirements and that standards are broadly in line with expectations. There is good coverage of the subject, sometimes through other areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 3 designed and made a felt hand puppet which was joined together by stitching. Pupils enjoyed making their puppets and had given them individual names. Pupils in Year 6 talked enthusiastically about designing and making a shelter to put a 6cm man inside. They could say how they were constructing the shelter and how they intended to strengthen the corners. Good mathematical links were developed through measuring and cutting the materials used. Although the co-ordinator has been in post for only a short time he has produced an action plan and is beginning to develop the subject further throughout the school.
57. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on **music** because only one lesson was seen.
58. The school employs a music specialist to support the non-specialist staff and a useful scheme is also available to provide guidance in teaching. The assemblies seen revealed that good quality singing has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils participate enthusiastically. They enjoy singing and sing tunefully.
59. In a good lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils were taught to think about their own singing and how it could be improved. Through good teacher guidance and extensive rehearsal, pupils improved their performance during the course of the lesson. Pupils were able to practise diction through singing tongue twisters. They have some opportunities to use tuned instruments in lessons, such as chime bars. Pupils also have the opportunity to use a range of untuned percussion instruments and they are aware of the different ways that instruments can be played. Children are introduced to musical vocabulary, such as 'dynamics', although not sufficiently frequently so the words become part of their vocabulary. They are taught to maintain a rhythm.
60. Pupils are learning to appreciate a variety of music from different cultures and children instantly recognised 'African Music' because of their knowledge of *The Lion King*. There are opportunities for pupils to participate in musical events such their own musical productions, and the choir is well thought of in the community. Links with the wind band at the local secondary school are used to enhance the music curriculum.

## Physical education

61. Physical education was not a focus for the inspection and only two lessons were observed. The evidence would indicate that the quality of provision in physical education is satisfactory with pupils achieving standards that are in line with national expectations. In the lessons seen the teachers were confident and taught key physical education skills effectively. Pupils demonstrated good attitudes to their work and tried hard to improve. The school hall is small but this did not adversely affect the delivery of the lessons seen. The school field is very small and is not adequate for games lessons. The school's curriculum includes swimming and pupils achieve the appropriate standards and awareness of water safety. In addition, coaching in a range of sports enhances the after-school provision and these sessions are popular with pupils.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
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	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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