

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **KNOWL HILL CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Knowl Hill, Reading

LEA area: Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Unique reference number: 109966

Headteacher: Mrs Julia Paradine

Lead inspector: Hazel Callaghan

Dates of inspection: 24 - 27 November 2003

Inspection number: 256655

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: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 65

School address: Bath Road  
Knowl Hill  
Reading  
Berkshire  
Postcode: RG10 9UX

Telephone number: 01628 822584  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr Paul Hartland

Date of previous inspection: 29 June - 1 July 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Knowl Hill Primary is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled school. It is a very small school with only 65 pupils on roll. Pupils are admitted from a very wide area around the school. Most are of white British heritage. Eight pupils and their families came originally from other countries. Four of these pupils have English as an additional language, but are no longer in the early stages of learning the language. The school has a good reputation locally and the number on roll has grown considerably over the last three years. There is a much greater proportion of pupils moving into all year groups through the school than is found normally. Many of these new pupils have special educational needs and, consequently, the school has a higher proportion of pupils (26 per cent) on the special educational needs register than is usual. There are three pupils with statements of special educational needs and four other pupils who are supported within the School Action Plus programme. Three of these pupils have significant emotional and behavioural difficulties, two have special learning difficulties and two have moderate learning difficulties. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each year group has a significant impact on the standards attained by the school. Children are admitted into the school in the term before their fifth birthday. At present there are only four children in the reception group. They are usually taught with a group of Year 1 pupils, and sometimes join pupils in Year 2. Years 3 to 6 pupils are taught in two classes every morning. On Thursday and Friday afternoons the school comes together to make two large groups for art and design and religious education. The school achieved a Healthy Schools award and the Investor in People award in 2002. The school works in co-operation with The Piggot School, which provides two teachers to teach French each week to pupils in Years 5 and 6.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22254	Hazel Callaghan	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education English as an additional language
1311	Barry Wood	Lay inspector	
30677	Peggy Waterston	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English History Geography Religious education Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Knowl Hill Primary has many strengths. It is a happy school where pupils feel confident, valued and secure. Parents are extremely pleased with the individual care pupils receive. The education provided is satisfactory overall with strengths in Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and pupils make sound progress in their learning through the school. The leadership provided by the headteacher is good and management procedures are satisfactory overall. **The school provides satisfactory value for money.**

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

- The leadership provided by the headteacher is good.
- The teaching of mathematics is good and pupils achieve well.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils make insufficient progress in developing their writing skills in Years 3 to 6.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- The school is a very inclusive community, where pupils of all capabilities and backgrounds are welcomed and the personal and learning needs of all pupils are a priority.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- The partnership with parents is very good and their views of the school are exceedingly high.

The school has made **good** improvements since the previous inspection in many areas. Significant strengths are the standards and achievement in mathematics, the staff who work successfully as a united team, the strong partnership with parents, improved provision for pupils with special educational needs and for the higher attaining pupils, and the much improved financial planning. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage, however, has not improved sufficiently and, although the provision for information and communication technology has improved, pupils still make insufficient progress in their learning.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Standards attained fluctuate from year to year because of the small number of pupils in each group. The good number of adults in the classroom ensures that pupils receive individual attention so pupils with special educational needs and the potentially higher attaining pupils make good progress. Children enter the school with a wide range of attainment but the increasing number of pupils with special educational needs means that overall standards on entry to the reception class are below average. Standards are below those expected by the time they enter Year 1, especially in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. In the 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 2, standards were in line with those found nationally in reading. This is similar to that found during the inspection. Standards in writing and mathematics were below average in the 2003 tests. During the inspection, standards in mathematics were higher and more in line with the national average, whereas standards in writing were well below average. Pupils' achievement in reading by Year 2 is **good**. Their achievement in writing and mathematics is **satisfactory**, overall.

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

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

In Year 6, the standards attained continue to fluctuate because of the large proportion of pupils who move into the school throughout the key stage, many of whom have special educational needs. Pupils' achievement in mathematics and science is **good**, in reading it is **satisfactory**, but in writing it is **unsatisfactory** because there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects.

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

**Caution should be taken when reading these results as there were less than 10 pupils in the grouping for both Year 2 and Year 6.**

**The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural education is good overall** with strengths in the provision for pupils' moral and social development. **Pupils' attitudes to their work and behaviour are good.** They develop very good relationships with each other and adults.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education overall is **satisfactory**. The curriculum is enhanced by visits into the local community and by visitors to the school. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **unsatisfactory** because there are insufficient clear objectives set for children's learning. The quality of teaching is **satisfactory** with often good teaching in Year 2 and some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Teaching assistants play a significant part in the progress pupils make. Throughout the school, however, teacher' expectations for the amount of work pupils complete is often not high enough and pupils' work is careless and untidy.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is **good** and has led to effective improvement in many aspects of the school. She is responsible for creating the strong inclusive ethos and has created a team of staff who share her desire to provide the best education possible for the pupils in their care. The aspects in need of further development identified by the inspection team had already been recognised by the headteacher and staff. Management of the school is **satisfactory**. Co-ordinators lead their subjects effectively and are developing a sound understanding of standards in their subjects and areas in need of improvement. The governance of the school is **good**. Governors are very supportive of the school and carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents show total confidence in all aspects of the school and particularly in the headteacher's personal commitment to dealing with any problems and complaints. They feel that their role as parents is valued and respected. Pupils confidently say "I love my school," wear the school uniform with pride and believe that one of the special aspects of the school is its small size.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In order to further improve, the school should:

- Raise standards in writing by giving more opportunities for pupils to write in other subjects.
- Raise standards in information and communication technology by ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills across the curriculum.

- Improve the provision for children in the Foundation Stage so they have structured opportunities to develop the expected knowledge and skills.
- Raise teachers' expectations for the quantity and quality of pupils' work.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils make satisfactory achievement overall. Standards fluctuate from year to year but in mathematics and science achievement is good. The development of pupils' writing skills is unsatisfactory and in reception class pupils make unsatisfactory achievement.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' progress in mathematics and science is good, especially in Years 3- 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress towards achieving their individual targets.
- Pupils make insufficient progress in developing their writing skills in Years 3 to 6.
- The higher attaining pupils are effectively challenged and so often achieve well especially in mathematics and science.
- Children in the Foundation Stage make unsatisfactory achievement.

#### Commentary

1. Children enter the school with a wide range of abilities. Overall attainment is generally below that found nationally and in the last two years it has been well below. The number of children in each cohort is usually below ten and standards consequently fluctuate from year to year according to the balance of abilities within the group. In the last two years there has been a much greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs entering the school in the Foundation Stage and through the school.
2. There were four children in the Foundation Stage during the inspection and at the present rate of learning most are unlikely to attain the expected standards (the early learning goals) by the time they enter Year 1. Their personal and social skills are below those expected, as are their standards in communication, language and literacy, in mathematics, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards in their physical and creative development are better, and children are on course to attain the expected standards by the end of the year. Children in the Foundation Stage make less progress than they should because there is an unclear structure for what is taught and what children should learn. There is a high proportion of pupils in Year 1 with special educational needs. None of the children in this group had attained the early learning goals when they entered Year 1. They are making satisfactory achievement now because they are well supported. The class is small and there is a good ratio of adults to the number of pupils.
3. Standards in the 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 2 were average in reading. This is similar to that found during the inspection. Standards in writing and mathematics were below average in the 2003 tests. These standards are because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.9 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	12.1 (13.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.3 (15.5)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 7 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. During the inspection, most pupils in Year 2 were reaching standards expected in reading, mathematics and science. This represents good achievement in reading because of the regular opportunities made to hear pupils read at home and at school. Pupils make satisfactory achievement in speaking and listening, writing, mathematics and science.
5. Pupils' achievement in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 is good because their capabilities are effectively identified and teachers provide suitable activities that extend their knowledge and skills. Pupils' achievement in science is good because there is a strong focus on developing pupils' investigative skills and this develops their good understanding. Higher attaining pupils make good achievement in mathematics and science because they are provided with activities that extend their learning well. Pupils' achievement in English is unsatisfactory because the progress they make in developing their writing skills is insufficient. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their writing in other subjects, such as history and religious education.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24 (27.9)	26.8 (27)
Mathematics	27 (30)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.5 (30.4)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 8 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

6. Standards in Year 6 fluctuate from year to year because of the small numbers in each year group. A large proportion of pupils enter Years 3 to 6 during the school year. In the 2003 national tests, less than half of the pupils in Year 6 had been at the school in Year 2. Many of the newly admitted pupils have special educational needs and this has an impact on the overall standards attained. Parents are attracted to the school because of its good reputation in supporting pupils with special educational needs, especially those with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. Throughout the school teaching assistants are effective in promoting pupils' interest and attention to the planned work. Individual action plans for all pupils on the special educational needs register, including those with statements, generally have sharply focused targets so that progress can be assessed and targets modified to take pupils' learning further forward. The few pupils with English as an additional language are provided with similar levels of support as the other pupils. Their knowledge of English has developed well since they have been in the school and they have made good achievement, especially in learning English as they have been immersed in the language. They have a satisfactory range of vocabulary, but their inferential skills are often below those of other pupils because they are unsure of the meanings of some words and sayings.
8. Standards in information and communication technology have risen because of the improved range of equipment now available and teachers' greater levels of expertise. Insufficient time is given, however, to consolidating pupils' skills through other subjects and so attainment remains below that expected in Year 6. Standards in religious education are generally in line with those set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' work in the other subjects was sampled but there is insufficient evidence on which to judge standards and achievement.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are generally good. Provision for their moral and social development is good and for their spiritual and cultural development it is satisfactory, making these aspects of the pupils' personal development good overall. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have pride in their school.
- The school promotes pupils' high self-esteem and confidence.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils show good levels of care for each other.
- Most pupils behave well in their lessons and around the school.
- The provision for pupils' social and moral development is good.
- Many pupils' attendance to school is above that found nationally.

## Commentary

9. Although pupils' attendance has fallen since the previous inspection it remains above that found nationally. There is now a higher rate of holidays taken in term time. Attendance procedures are sufficiently rigorous for a small school to maintain, but in the present term unauthorised absence has increased owing to the headteacher being diverted by other priorities and less time has been given to monitoring this aspect. The school works closely with the education welfare worker to improve attendance. Punctuality is satisfactory, but a number of families living a long distance from the school find it difficult to arrive consistently on time.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.4	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.*

10. Pupils confidently say "I love my school," wear the school uniform with pride and believe that one of the special aspects of the school is its small size. "It is like a big family." In the classroom, some younger children tend to shout out and find difficulty in taking turns and sharing resources, but attitudes and behaviour improve to a good level as pupils become older and more mature. They learn to improve their concentration and listen to their teachers without interruption. Their very good relationships help them to co-operate well when working in pairs or groups. Pupils respect their teachers and teachers relate very well to their classes. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the classroom activities. Pupils with more complex behavioural problems are helped, both inside and outside the classroom, so that the teaching and learning environment is not disturbed. Around the school, pupils show good behaviour. They are very polite to adults and tolerant of each other. They relax and play safely together without any fear of harassment. Pupils value each other's differences and co-operate well together in their activities and school teams. They show obvious respect for their environment. Pupils eagerly accept meaningful opportunities to take responsibility through school and class councils, and older pupils helpfully befriend and look after younger pupils. The school has not had to exclude any pupils in the last three years.
11. The provision for pupils' moral and social education is good. It has improved since the previous inspection and many opportunities are provided for pupils discuss issues important to them. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural education is satisfactory. Opportunities for pupils to experience aspects of cultures from around the world have improved since the previous inspection, but this provision would benefit from being planned into lessons and being given more focus in school life than at present. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and pupils learn about, and have respect for, the celebrations and beliefs of other faiths. However, some classroom assemblies are too brief to have any impact on pupils' thinking and emotions. All pupils know the difference between right and wrong and often show concern for their

behaviour and their friends. They are taught strategies for how to resolve quarrels and pupils say they are embarrassed by the behaviour of new pupils to the school who do not know “how we behave at Knowl Hill”. The school’s ethos is strong in valuing the individual and all staff develop pupils’ confidence and self-esteem well within the context of co-operation and team work. Lunchtime, when the whole school comes together, is an extremely effective social occasion. The school has effective links with the local community, giving pupils opportunities to develop social skills with other adults and pupils.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory overall. In the Foundation Stage it is unsatisfactory but in the rest of the school it is good overall. There are strengths in the use of the community to enhance pupils’ learning opportunities, in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and in the development of reading, mathematics and science. There are weaknesses in the development of writing, and the time given to pupils’ learning in information and communication technology.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching in Years 2 and 6 is often good, but the teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of mathematics is good.
- Most teachers use assessment of pupils’ learning well and respond effectively to their needs.
- Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good.
- There is a good number of teaching assistants who contribute significantly to pupils’ effective learning.
- The structure for what children in the Foundation Stage are to learn is not clearly defined.
- Teachers give too few opportunities for pupils to consolidate their skills in information and communication technology and to use them across the curriculum.
- Teachers’ expectations for the quantity and quality of pupils’ work are often too low.

#### Commentary

- Lessons observed in the Foundation Stage were all satisfactory, but the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is judged unsatisfactory overall because children make unsatisfactory progress in their development and learning. There are only four children at present in the reception class, who are taught alongside most of the pupils in Year 1. The teaching assistant works closely with the class teacher and the individual support provided is of benefit to all pupils in the class. Assessment of children’s attainment is not used effectively to plan what they should learn next. Children are provided with a range of activities, which they often enjoy, but too many tasks lack a clear focus for learning.

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 17 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	1	4	12	0	0	0

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

- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall and in Year 2 it is often good. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is also satisfactory overall with some very good teaching in the oldest class. The teaching of English is satisfactory overall and the quality of teaching in mathematics is good. In the most effective lessons, teachers use their assessment of the pupils’ previous work to adapt the lesson planning so that a range of tasks, all linked to the overall teaching focus, are provided to effectively extend pupils’ learning. The pace of lessons is brisk so no time is

wasted. The teachers' subject knowledge is usually secure and a variety of strategies is developed to support and encourage pupils' learning. Pupils respond well to the good teaching and, in the best lessons, their productivity is high. Teaching assistants work effectively with groups of pupils, using skilful questioning to probe their understanding and to encourage further thinking. Opportunities to work in small groups develop pupils' collaborative skills well and they usually work effectively together, sharing ideas. In the less effective lessons, teachers do not set clear expectations for pupils' achievement so less is accomplished. The teaching of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory. Teachers' skills have improved but not enough time is given for pupils to consolidate their knowledge and skills and to use them to support their learning in other subjects. Teachers' marking celebrates good work and progress, but in Years 3 to 6 it does not sufficiently set targets for further improvement so pupils know what they need to do in order to improve. Teachers' expectations for the quantity and quality of pupils' work are often not high enough and this results in pupils' lack of care and productivity.

14. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. There are only a few such pupils. Their knowledge of English has developed well since they have been in the school and their achievement has been good. Teachers are aware of pupils' difficulty in understanding the meanings of some words and phrases and usually ensure that any misunderstandings are corrected. There are too few strategies, however, being developed to further assist pupils with English as an additional language to ensure they make good progress across all subjects.
15. Most teachers have effective systems for monitoring pupils' day-to-day learning and progress and respond well to pupils' learning needs. Their abilities are effectively identified and teachers provide suitable activities that extend pupils' knowledge and skills. Teachers are flexible in their teaching, and those pupils who show the potential for being very able, particularly in English and/or mathematics, are taught with older pupils, often in other classes, so that they continue their good progress. The teaching of pupils with learning difficulties is usually good, particularly in English and mathematics because tasks set are appropriate to their needs. Pupils are well supported by teaching assistants who provide the right blend of help and challenge. Good support is also given to those pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Staff use a range of effective strategies to build pupils' self-esteem and to help them recognise how to adopt appropriate responses.
16. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress over time in all subjects. Teachers know their pupils well and a careful track is kept of pupils' progress whilst in their class. Records for each subject are passed to the next teacher but the information does not give a clear view of pupils' skills development in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. The information on these core subjects is now effectively recorded so that the headteacher can track individual pupils' progress through the school. The system is still fairly new and is beginning to be used to monitor for underachievement so that additional support is provided. Data from the national tests are used to identify areas of weakness and strategies for improvement are being satisfactorily developed. This is having an impact on standards in mathematics and science but not yet on raising standards in writing.

## **The curriculum**

The curricular provision is satisfactory overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- There is a good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- There are good opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum.
- There is a good number of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of pupils and the curriculum.

- Aspects of the accommodation for younger pupils are unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

- Curricular planning has improved since the last inspection and now provides a broad and balanced range of opportunities to promote pupils' learning. Planning is now satisfactory in Years 1 to 6 because the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been implemented, and planning for other subjects is being developed using nationally recommended schemes of work. The school has a satisfactory long-term plan for coverage of all subjects to ensure that pupils make progress in their learning as they move through the school. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage, however, is unsatisfactory because children's attainment is not sufficiently taken into account and the areas of learning are not planned for progressively.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and meets statutory requirements. The pupils have full access to the National Curriculum and are fully integrated in classes. Pupils' individual learning plans are, on the whole, sharply focused; teachers and their assistants take these into account in lessons.
- There is a good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education. The policy has recently been reviewed, a specific time is identified on timetables and this area of development permeates all subjects. Broad aspects of sex education are incorporated into topic areas and this aspect is specifically addressed in Year 6. Links with the local police contribute to pupils' awareness of various aspects of safety, including raising their understanding of the harm that can be done by drug abuse. Residential journeys provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills outside the school environment. The school council is effective in promoting pupils' early awareness of citizenship. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of learning. They are confident and parents say they settle very quickly into the new school's expectations and routines.
- There is a strong inclusive ethos in the school and staff provide a curriculum which is accessible to all pupils. It is adapted very effectively to respond to individual needs as was observed in the support of pupils with significant emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- There are good opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum through extra-curricular activities and a good range of visits and visitors. The school facilitates the teaching of gymnastics and football by specialists, and there is a weekly table-tennis club. There are good links with the local Young Musicians' Trust, which gives school performances. Other visitors have included circus artists and Indian dancers. Visits to the local museums and to the Science Museum in London have also been organised to extend pupils' first-hand experiences. Some pupils also took part in 'swan upping' on the nearby Thames. Pupils join with other local schools for various activities. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, joined other schools to perform scenes from *Macbeth*.
- Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall in their range and are used effectively to promote pupils' learning. Equipment for information and communication technology is good but not sufficiently well used for pupils to achieve satisfactorily. There is a good number of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of pupils and the curriculum. Teachers and their assistants work well together, complementing each other's skills. Accommodation is safe and generally adequate for the purpose. The two classrooms used mainly by Years 3 to 6 are of a good size for the present number of pupils, and are well appointed. Accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage, and in Years 1 and 2, is less satisfactory because the area they use is open and activities in one area can be disruptive to learning in the other. The outside area for reception children is small and cannot accommodate climbing equipment and the use of wheeled vehicles; younger children have access to the playground, under supervision, for these activities.

## Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is good. Pastoral care is very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a safe environment for all pupils.
- Relationships are very good and pupils feel valued, safe and secure.
- The headteacher and staff have very good knowledge of their pupils and this enables them to provide sensitive and effective pastoral care and guidance.
- Very good induction procedures help pupils to quickly become part of the school community.
- The school makes determined efforts to listen to pupils and value their views.
- The limitations of playground space leads to an above average rate of minor accidents.

### Commentary

23. The care, welfare and support of pupils have been maintained since the previous inspection and are a good feature of the school. The previously identified weakness caused by the turnover of staff has been eliminated. The headteacher and governors have developed effective policies and procedures, which are well implemented by diligent and caring staff. The school receives good support from outside professional agencies and the headteacher is skilled in negotiating the acquisition of external resources into the school for the benefit of pupils with problems. The Specialist Autism Mainstream Service (SAMS) is particularly helpful. The educational psychologist has developed a social skills group for pupils with behavioural problems and in creating a circle of friends for pupils with social difficulties.
24. Child protection procedures are thorough and conform to local statutory guidelines. Training is up to date so that the school is vigilant in spotting potential risks to pupils. The headteacher and a governor undertake regular reviews of the school premises. The school undertakes risk assessments for many activities. The use of the playground as a car park limits the space available for play and causes the pupils and staff some concerns in case pupils or cars get injured or damaged during ball games. Pupils sustain an above average number of minor bumps when the field is not usable.
25. The headteacher and staff give a high priority to the pastoral care of all pupils and are very proactive in dispensing tender loving care when necessary. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good. However, the pupil questionnaire shows that a quarter of pupils do not feel there is an adult to go to if they are worried at school. This was definitely not confirmed by conversations with many pupils during the inspection, who assured the inspectors that they do feel their teachers are friends and that they can trust them and other adults to listen with a sympathetic ear to their problems and anxieties. Parents also confirm that relationships between the adults and pupils are supportive and sensitive. The disparity between the questionnaires and the conversations with pupils is thought to be due to a misunderstanding in the completion of the questionnaires.
26. The arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good, and are a positive aid to the achievements of pupils. Teachers identify pupils with special educational needs and they develop effective individual educational plans with pupils and parents. The tracking of pupils' personal development is more informal, except for pupils with individual educational plans. There is good feedback and discussion of issues between the teacher and the headteacher at internal staff meetings, but this support would benefit from more formalised recorded information.
27. The induction of pupils new to the school is very good. A significant number of pupils join the school later in the year and the headteacher is very caring with both pupils and parents so as to integrate them into school life quickly and sensitively. Parents appreciate the school's

efforts in giving their children a successful fresh start when there have been problems at another school. At Knowl Hill they settle well and parents say they enjoy school.

28. Pupils are aware of their individual academic targets and feel that they can influence their performance and progress. Teachers also set individual targets for pupils' personal development. The school treats pupils with respect and they realise that the headteacher is approachable to discuss issues that they suggest, such as the wearing of trousers to school. The school consults with pupils well through the school and class councils.

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

The school has developed a very strong partnership with parents who consider the provision to be excellent. The links with the local community and other schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very good partnership with parents, which contributes greatly to the education of all pupils.
- The headteacher and staff work hard to support families as well as pupils and respond very effectively to their needs and concerns.
- Parents' confidence in the school has grown significantly since the last inspection through good communications and the headteacher's commitment to the school and her personal integrity.
- The school has a good relationship with local secondary schools and this assists the transfer of pupils.
- Pupils' learning and personal development are enhanced by their contacts with the local community.

### **Commentary**

29. The headteacher gives a very high priority to the school's relationships with all parents and as a consequence this aspect has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The headteacher is very approachable to parents from their first contact with the school and spends much personal time in assuring new parents that the small school will be right for their children. This is later confirmed for all parents, so that their judgement of the school is "it's fantastic." Parents are becoming good ambassadors for the school in the local community, and consequently the number of pupils on roll is growing. Parents show total confidence in all aspects of the school and particularly the headteacher's personal commitment to dealing with any problems and complaints. They feel that their role as a parent is valued and respected. The headteacher keeps in contact with parental views through monthly coffee mornings and questionnaires. The school opens early, out of consideration for working parents and it responded quickly to the need for an after-school club when the previous one closed unexpectedly. Parents said of the headteacher that she gives 110 per cent commitment to the school. It is her drive and enthusiasm that have made Knowl Hill the school it is. They are exceedingly supportive of the provision made for the benefit of both pupils and parents.
30. The statutory information for parents is good and shows the essential ethos and character of the school. Annual reports to parents are comprehensive statements of what pupils can do in all National Curriculum subjects, but do not contain academic targets, either past or future. Although parents are not requested to give written feedback on the reports, they feel comfortable with the opportunities for oral feedback they have with the school. Parents are happy with homework and many help their children at home. The school effectively supports parents, with information and advice, to help their children. Only a few parent helpers assist in the school, as most parents work.
31. Links with the local community are good and are of mutual benefit to the pupils and the local people. Relationships with the local church and minister are improving after some years lacking any church input to school life. The school uses the adjacent countryside and communities as important resources for the practical teaching of some subjects of the



National Curriculum. The school has many year's profitable links with the Knowl Hill Steam Rally and this has recently produced a large financial grant for school development from the trustees.

32. The school has very good links with other schools. It is well supported by a local secondary school for the teaching of French to Years 5 and 6. The school has been assisted in transferring vulnerable pupils to secondary schools both through the relationships it has built with the secondary schools and the support of the Specialist Autism Mainstream Service. There are links with other primary schools and a very good link with a small local primary school and together they share resources and staff training to their mutual advantage.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the headteacher is good and has led to effective improvement in many aspects of the school. Management is satisfactory. The governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher is responsible for the development of a strong inclusive ethos for the school.
- There is a clear educational philosophy that promotes very good relationships, effective teamwork and the drive for improvement.
- The school is evaluative and identifies appropriate priorities for improvement, but does not have the strategies to effect sufficient change in some areas.
- Financial management is much improved and is now good.

### **Commentary**

33. Significant improvements have been made in many aspects of the school since the previous inspection because of the good leadership of the headteacher and her dedication to the well-being of the pupils and the parents of the school. The headteacher is responsible for developing a strong inclusive ethos for the school. Pupils of all capabilities and personal and social difficulties are welcomed at the school and their needs are effectively met. The headteacher has created a stable team of staff who share her educational vision and the desire to provide the best education possible for the pupils in their care. The majority of the key issues from the previous inspection have been effectively addressed and many other aspects have also been improved, such as standards and achievement in mathematics, the provision for higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, the partnership with parents, the provision for pupils' social and moral development and procedures for assessment. The area of weakness identified by the previous inspection that has not been sufficiently addressed is the provision for children in the Foundation Stage. Children in the reception group are taught with pupils in Year 1 and a curriculum appropriate to their maturity and stages of learning has not been effectively developed. With the admission of six more children after Christmas this becomes an urgent area for improvement.
34. The school is evaluative of its work and identifies appropriate priorities for improvement, but does not have the strategies to effect change in some areas. A significant difficulty of a small school is that there is the same number of subjects to be managed as there is to be found in a large school but with fewer staff to carry the responsibilities. The staff at Knowl Hill work well as a team and much of the co-ordination for curricular planning and assessment is shared by them all. Co-ordinators for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology have a satisfactory knowledge of standards in their subjects and have started to develop satisfactory strategies for monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. These strategies are still fairly new and have not yet had a significant impact on raising standards, especially in writing and in the teaching of information and communication technology.
35. The governors are kept well informed and are very supportive of the staff. They share the headteacher's vision for the school and their governance is good. The most experienced members of the governing body have had an effective impact on the strategic development of

the school. They have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are developing a secure understanding of the principles of best value and how to apply them. Financial planning is much improved. The school employs a very experienced bursar who, with the headteacher and governors, ensures the budget is effectively controlled and well managed.

36. Overall, taking into consideration the satisfactory achievement of the pupils and the quality of education provided, the school is judged as providing satisfactory value for money. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	174,538
Total expenditure	179,091
Expenditure per pupil	3379

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	16,755
Balance carried forward to the next	12,202

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **unsatisfactory**.

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

- Supportive relationships are being established and children show increasing confidence.
- Teaching assistants provide good support.
- Children's current levels of achievement towards the expected goals are not adequately taken into account in lesson planning; nor are lessons planned appropriately with reference to the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage.
- There is a lack of clear expectation of what each child should achieve in a lesson.
- Many of the activities in which children are engaged do not have a clear learning purpose.
- Equipment is inaccessible and the learning environment not very stimulating.

#### **Commentary**

37. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection, although the Foundation Stage is identified as an area for improvement in the school's development plan. The children enter reception in the term in which they become five. At the time of the inspection there were four children in reception, taught in a group with eight Year 1 pupils. In January it is anticipated that another six children will join the reception class.
38. Teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory. However, teaching is judged as unsatisfactory overall because planning for children's learning needs is unsatisfactory and as a result children do not achieve as well as they should. The majority are unlikely to reach the expected standards on entry to Year 1. Only one child entering Year 1 in September 2003 had attained most of the expected standards; several children did not achieve any of the goals. There is a significant proportion of children with special educational needs in each year group. Nearly all children that enter reception have attainment in all areas of learning that is below, and sometimes well below, what is expected for their age. They make unsatisfactory progress because the curriculum is not well planned to address the six areas of learning towards the goals they are expected to achieve before they leave the Foundation Stage. Assessment of children's attainment is not used effectively to plan what they should learn next. Children are provided with a range of activities, which they often enjoy, but too many of these tasks lack a clear focus for learning. The inside accommodation is satisfactory in terms of size but each class in Years 1 and 2 is disturbed at times by the noise level in the adjoining room. The reception area is equipped with the usual range of resources, most of which are not easily accessible to the children. The secure outside area is small. However, children are able to use the larger playground and climbing frames with adult supervision.

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

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

#### **Commentary**

39. The personal, social and emotional development of the current intake is well below what is expected for their age. Most children have weak social skills; they find it difficult to share and to take turns so positive steps should be taken to enable them to become more aware of the needs of others. Their concentration span is short and they rarely sit still even for a brief period. They respond well for very short periods if their interest is aroused, such as when they distinguish between loud and quiet sounds. The lack of a definite focus for some activities

means that children approach what they are doing without any clear idea about what to do next; as a result they do not gain a sense of achievement. It is difficult for the children to develop individual responsibility and to take initiative when much of their equipment is inaccessible to them. The teacher and teaching assistants are sensitive to children's needs. The children enter school happily and with increasing confidence, gradually responding to the adults' calm approach.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Commentary**

40. Early indications are that the majority of children will not meet the expectations in this area of learning. They enter the reception class with speaking and listening skills which are well below those expected for their age group. The immaturity of most children means they do not listen well to each other, and have difficulty following instructions. However, they enjoy listening to stories because these are well chosen and well read by the teacher, retaining children's interest, for example 'The Tiger Who Came to Tea' proved particularly enjoyable. Children take books home to share and like the individual attention they receive when sharing a book with an adult in school. They handle books with care and turn pages correctly, using pictures as they begin to think about the sequence of the story. Sometimes children choose to sit at the 'writing' table, where they like to draw and colour pictures. Most of the activities in which children are engaged require a more structured approach which takes into account the progress they are making towards the expected goals. Children are not making the progress they should because the focus of the teaching is not upon what they are expected to learn next.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for mathematical development is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Commentary**

41. In the one lesson seen, children were developing their counting and coin recognition. They are beginning to recognise some numerals and to count up to six objects accurately. Good questioning by a teaching assistant raised children's mathematical awareness during a shopping activity. The children are in the very early stages of progress towards the expected standards; this is because of their low attainment on entry, combined with inadequate planning to meet their learning needs appropriately.

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

Provision for the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Commentary**

42. The one lesson seen was satisfactory but inadequate planning and a rather restricted range of experiences make provision unsatisfactory overall. Children were investigating the sounds made by musical instruments, sorting them into those that made quiet sounds and those that were loud. They tested their theories by listening for sounds over a distance in the playground. Children show an interest in information and communication technology, are able to use a mouse with some facility, and independently use a tape recorder and headphones to listen to taped stories. Their knowledge, skills and understanding are in the very early stages of development. There are few interesting displays in the classroom to stimulate children's curiosity.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

43. In a music lesson with pupils in Years 1 and 2, reception children showed that they were beginning to recognise long and short sounds, and responded satisfactorily to these sounds with body movements. One child was able to tap a simple rhythm. They join in singing enthusiastically. There was little work on display to provide an indication of the breadth and standard of children's creative experiences.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

44. No whole lessons were observed, but children's participation in a dance session with pupils in Year 1 was seen. The children responded well to the visiting teacher leading the lesson and showed satisfactory spatial awareness. They moved appropriately to the music provided, showing satisfactory balance and co-ordination. Observation of children in the playground suggests they may achieve the expected standard set out in the early learning goals. They used the large playground climbing frame with a reasonable degree of control. Children have appropriate opportunities to use tools of various kinds and to manipulate malleable materials and show satisfactory levels of skill. Their standards when using pencils, scissors and paint brushes are developing slowly.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils' reading skills are well developed on an individual basis.
- Lessons are well planned using the guidance in the National Literacy Strategy.
- Teaching assistants provide good support in lessons.
- There are too few opportunities for extended writing.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to achieve in a given time are not high enough.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to develop their reading skills through discussion in groups with a teacher.
- The presentation of pupils' work is untidy.
- The subject co-ordinator does not have sufficient time to monitor work in classrooms.

#### **Commentary**

45. There are variations in standards from year to year because of the range of abilities in each year group and because cohorts are small. The range of attainment within classes is very wide, and a significant proportion of pupils have special educational needs. Many pupils enter the school with attainment that is well below what is expected for their age. Pupils make good achievement to reach average standards in reading by the end of Year 2 and they continue to make satisfactory progress in the next key stage. During the inspection, standards in writing were found to be well below average throughout the school. Pupils make satisfactory achievement in Years 1 and 2, but there is underachievement in writing in Years 3 to 6.
46. Overall, pupils' achievement in speaking and listening, and in reading, is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. The school's focus on improvement in writing has not so far raised standards.
47. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards in speaking and listening, which are below average. Their confidence grows as they move through the school. They speak clearly and are able to make themselves understood. The majority of pupils have a restricted vocabulary and this hampers the ability of all but the most able to explain and develop their ideas. Pupils are encouraged to talk with a partner in lessons and some teachers use good questioning to challenge pupils'

thinking. There are opportunities for role-play in the younger classes and pupils in all year groups take part in weekly drama lessons. The few pupils with English as an additional language are provided with similar levels of support as the other pupils. Their knowledge of English has developed well since they have been in the school and achieved well, especially in learning English. They have a satisfactory range of vocabulary, but their inferential skills are often below that of other pupils because they are unsure of the meanings of some words and sayings. Teachers are aware of this difficulty and usually ensure that any misunderstandings are corrected, but there are too few strategies being developed to further assist pupils with English as an additional language to ensure they make good progress across all subjects.

48. Pupils' achievement in reading is satisfactory. This is because there are good procedures throughout the school for pupils to read individually to an adult, and to take books home to share. Pupils enjoy books and handle them well from the beginning. There is a good range of fiction and non-fiction in classrooms and in the small well cared for library. Pupils say there is plenty of choice for them to read. Older pupils understand how to find books but have little opportunity for independent study. A weakness in provision is that pupils rarely have the opportunity to discuss texts in a group with a teacher; this means that the higher order reading skills, such as inferential comprehension, character study and prediction, are not as well developed as they might be.
49. Writing has been a focus for improvement since the last inspection but this has not resulted in a rise in standards. This is partly because the wide range of abilities within classes means a significant proportion of each year group is unlikely to attain the expected average level. However, there is also evidence of underachievement in writing in Years 3 to 6. Pupils do not make satisfactory progress because:
  - pupils have too few opportunities for extended writing;
  - opportunities for writing in other areas of the curriculum are not well planned;
  - teachers' expectations of the quantity and quality of pupils' work are not high enough;
  - the weaknesses identified in the co-ordinator's monitoring have not been addressed.
50. The school is continuing to target writing for improvement. Other factors which would contribute to improvement, and which were identified by the co-ordinator, are:
  - clearer marking related to pupils' learning targets, or to the lesson objectives, so pupils understand what they should do to improve;
  - sharper objectives for pupils' learning in lessons that are shared with pupils, so pupils understand what the teacher is expecting.
51. In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory overall, and in one lesson it was good. Lessons are well planned and managed in terms of adhering to the chosen structure. Sometimes the whole-class part of the lesson is too long, although teachers usually target questions well to ensure all pupils are involved. The part of the lesson in which pupils work independently, or in groups, is sometimes too short to enable them to complete tasks even when they make good efforts. Pupils are given good opportunities, through the use of writing frames, to plan and draft their writing before completing it, but they are not always challenged to work at a reasonable pace.
52. The subject leader is knowledgeable, and understands what needs to be improved, but she has insufficient time to monitor work in classrooms to ensure that areas for improvement are addressed.

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

53. Pupils reading skills are satisfactorily used and further developed when carrying out independent research in other subjects. Opportunities to write in other subjects has helped to extend the range of purposes for which pupils write but these opportunities are not identified in the medium-term planning and are not well enough developed to ensure that good progress is made.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good** and ensures pupils achieve well.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in mathematics.
- Teachers use assessment well to identify the attainment of individual pupils and to provide activities that build on their previous learning.
- Higher attaining pupils are challenged and provided with effective opportunities to extend their learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported so they make good progress towards their individual targets.

### Commentary

54. Pupils' achievement is good in mathematics. Standards fluctuate from year to year according to the proportion of pupils in the group with special educational needs. In the national tests in 2003 for example, pupils in Year 2 attained standards well below those found nationally because there are more pupils identified with special educational needs than is usual for such small year group. In the national tests in 2003, pupils in Year 6 attained average standards. Less than half of this year group of pupils had started their education at the school; the others transferred to Knowl Hill during Years 3 to 6 and a significant proportion of them had special educational needs so reducing the overall standards attained by the school. However, pupils made better progress than was found nationally and achieved well.
55. During the inspection, pupils were achieving satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 and achieving well by the end of Year 6. Pupils make good progress in their learning because their abilities are effectively identified and teachers provide suitable activities that extend their knowledge and skills. Teachers are flexible in their teaching, and pupils who show the potential for being very able in mathematics are taught with older pupils, often in other classes, so that they continue their good progress. Pupils in Year 1 are mostly taught with the reception children and their progress is satisfactory overall. Those pupils in Year 1 taught with pupils in Year 2 make better achievement, and pupils' progress in Year 2 is often good because of the teachers' clear expectations for their learning and effective planning.
56. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6, with sometimes very good teaching in the oldest class. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the teaching assistants and by class teachers. They are provided with activities that challenge their understanding but also are well matched to their capabilities so with support they succeed at their tasks. In the most effective lesson, the teacher used the assessment of pupils' previous work to adapt the lesson planning so that a range of tasks, all linked to the overall teaching focus, was provided to effectively extend pupils' learning. The pace of lessons is brisk so no time is wasted. Support staff are used very well to support and monitor the learning of different groups. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and a variety of strategies are developed to support and encourage pupils' learning. Pupils respond well to the good teaching and, in the best lessons, their productivity is high. In the less effective lessons teachers do not set clear expectations for pupils' achievement so less is accomplished. Teachers' marking celebrates good work and progress but does not sufficiently set targets for further improvement so pupils know what they need to do in order to improve.
57. The co-ordinator has a secure knowledge of standards and achievement in mathematics. She analyses data from tests and uses the tracking systems to monitor pupils' progress. With the teacher in Year 6, she identifies those pupils who need greater support, which is provided for pupils in Years 5 and 6 in the form of 'booster' lessons. Satisfactory monitoring of teaching

has ensured effective provision, except in the youngest class where there are insufficiently clear objectives for the pupils in Year 1 who are taught with children in the Foundation Stage.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

58. Pupils' knowledge and skills in mathematics are effectively used and further developed in geography and science. Pupils use their skills well to measure distances, time and temperatures in science and record their findings on tables and as graphs. Pupils' knowledge of co-ordinates is used satisfactorily to extend their knowledge of spreadsheets and in reading maps.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good focus on developing pupils' knowledge and understanding through the use of investigations.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support for groups of pupils of all capabilities.
- Pupils' writing skills are insufficiently used and further developed in science.
- The quality of care shown in pupils' presentation of their work is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

59. Pupils make satisfactory achievement in science in Years 1 and 2 and good achievement in Years 3 to 6. Standards fluctuate from year to year because of the small number of pupils in each cohort. There is also a large proportion of pupils who are admitted throughout the school year, many of whom have special educational needs. This has a significant impact on the standards attained. Standards currently are broadly in line with those expected in Year 2, but they below average in Year 6. Most pupils are working satisfactorily at the expected standard in Year 6, but there is a smaller proportion of pupils attaining the higher standards than is found nationally because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6. This affects pupils' ability to use their knowledge to solve problems. In a lesson observed in the class of Years 5 and 6 pupils, they were tackling a problem of separating different materials. Most pupils quickly recognised that filtering was a possible strategy and a few pupils in Year 6 remembered that a magnet would take out iron fillings, but it took the higher attaining pupils to recall what they had learnt about solutions to suggest the use of evaporation to separate salt from the water.
60. The quality of teaching is good overall. There is a strong focus on teaching science through investigations and experimentation and this has a positive impact on developing pupils' understanding and scientific knowledge. Teaching assistants work effectively with groups of pupils, using skilful questioning to probe their understanding and to encourage further thinking. Opportunities to work in small groups develop pupils' collaborative skills well and they usually work effectively together, sharing ideas. This was well illustrated in a Year 2 lesson when pupils were exploring how sound travels through vibrations. Pupils' ability to co-operate with one another whilst solving scientific problems continues to develop satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6 as pupils of differing abilities support one another to carry out tasks. In the most effective lessons the teachers promote pupils' ability to observe carefully and to predict what they think will happen. Tasks are satisfactorily matched to pupils' age and capabilities. Pupils are beginning to develop simple ways of recording their findings in Year 2 and this is effectively developed through Years 3 to 6 so that pupils create tables and graphs and use diagrams to explain the results of their investigations. A weakness in teaching through the school is teachers' low expectations for the presentation of pupils' work. The standard and quality of pupils' presentation, consequently, is unsatisfactory. Pupils show a lack of care and pride in their work. Teachers do not sufficiently encourage pupils to use their writing skills when describing their investigations or to fully explain their predictions and hypotheses. This is a



missed opportunity to further developing pupils' ability to write in logical steps and create information texts. Opportunities to create graphs using a computer program and to research for scientific information are appropriately provided but information and communication technology is not being sufficiently used to support and further promote pupils' learning in science.

61. The co-ordinator provides good support for colleagues and suggests different strategies for teaching that enhance pupils' learning well. She has, for example, effectively supported staff in the development of investigative work. She does not, however, have a secure knowledge of standards or of the quality of teaching and of pupils' learning through the school. Assessment procedures are used to satisfactorily monitor pupils' attainment, but the data from tests are not yet being analysed to identify areas of weakness in pupils' learning so that standards and achievement continue to improve.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good number and range of resources and equipment.
- Insufficient time is given to developing pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Information and communication technology is not sufficiently used across the curriculum to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

62. Provision in information and communication technology, although improved since the previous inspection, is still unsatisfactory because pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop their skills to the expected standards or for pupils to use those skills to support their learning in other subjects.
63. The provision for information communication technology was judged as unsatisfactory at the previous inspection because the curriculum did not meet statutory requirements. This has been improved and a recommended scheme of work underpins teachers' planning and ensures all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study are taught. Teachers' subject knowledge was not secure and this has also improved so teachers are now more confident in their teaching. However there is no one on the staff with high levels of expertise that can lead the subject effectively and give staff guidance on how best to manage pupils' effective learning. The number and range of computers and other equipment have been much improved since the previous inspection with the ratio of computers to pupils being much greater than is found nationally. What has not sufficiently improved is the number of opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to use the computers and other equipment to develop their knowledge and skills to the appropriate standard. Standards in Year 2 are broadly in line with those expected and pupils make satisfactory progress in developing the appropriate range of skills. A variety of games and tasks enable pupils in Year 2 to develop skills when creating diagrams with labels for science, writing short accounts in literacy and playing simple mathematics games to support learning in numeracy. In Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory range of experiences, but many pupils are not confident to carry out tasks on a computer independently as they have had insufficient time to practise and consolidate their new knowledge.
64. Lessons observed were all satisfactory. The lessons in Year 2 and that for pupils in Years 5 and 6 were satisfactorily planned and new knowledge and skills were suitably introduced. Teaching overall is judged as unsatisfactory, however, because insufficient time is given for pupils, especially those in Years 3 to 6, to use the computers and other information and communication technology resources to develop the skills to the expected standard.

65. The school has made significant progress in improving many aspects of the provision but has not yet developed strategies for managing the use of information and communication technology within the timetable and during lessons so that pupils' skills are effectively learnt and consolidated. The co-ordinator, who is also the headteacher, has shown good management in ensuring that the provision for information and communication technology has improved. All teachers and teaching assistants have been given their own laptops to use and this, along with the in-service training, has improved staff knowledge and confidence. There are many demands on the headteacher's time and she has not sufficiently ensured that the management of information and communication technology in the classroom has improved so standards meet those expected.

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

66. Opportunities to use and further develop pupils' skills in information and communication technology are not being sufficiently made in other subjects. Information communication technology is also not effectively used to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. There are satisfactory examples of pupils using the computers in literacy lessons to present stories and poems. Suitable programs are used to provide opportunities for pupils to correct grammatical mistakes and to practise their tables and mathematical calculations. The Internet and CD-ROMs are used satisfactorily for research in subjects such as history, but all these activities are limited in number and infrequently used.

## **HUMANITIES**

67. In humanities, work was sampled in history and geography. History was not being taught during the inspection and only one lesson in geography was observed. It is not possible therefore to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. Indications from the work scrutiny and discussion with pupils are that standards are broadly average and similar to those at the last inspection. Long-term plans show that the themes and topics identified in the National Curriculum are covered, following a two-year rolling programme and using nationally recognised schemes of work. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. Curricular provision is enhanced by visits to places of interest around the school. Pupils have two opportunities to make a residential visit to the Isle of Wight. Pupils also explore the local area, make a river study and go to the local museum.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Commentary**

68. No lessons took place during the inspection, but a scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils indicate that standards remain in line with the expectations in the locally agreed syllabus. Much of the work covered revolves around discussions so there was little written work to look at. However, there was sufficient evidence from looking at books and talking to pupils to indicate that coverage of the agreed syllabus is thorough.
69. Pupils could talk about their visits to the local church for different Christian festivals. They made comparisons between a church and a mosque they had visited, identifying similarities and differences between the buildings and what happens within them. They understand that the Ten Commandments are the rules by which Christians are expected to live. Pupils recall events from both Testaments of the Bible, and are beginning to understand that the stories Jesus told have a moral dimension and are intended to show us how to live. They understand that there are similarities as well as differences between the beliefs and practices of different religions.

70. The curriculum is planned on a two-year cycle to accommodate mixed-age classes. Teachers use the comprehensive planning guidance in the agreed syllabus well to ensure appropriate coverage. The headteacher is the subject leader and she has a clear understanding of current practice.

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

71. Art and design, design and technology, physical education and music were not aspects of focus for the inspection and consequently only a sampling of pupils' learning was made. All subjects have a broad and balanced curriculum which has improved since the previous inspection with the implementation of recommended schemes of work for all subjects. The school has also introduced satisfactory procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects, which are effectively reported to parents each year. The records do not provide an effective system by which teachers can easily monitor the pupils' development of skills through the school and this is a focus for their review. Lessons in art and design were not taught during the inspection and it was not possible to observe the lessons in design and technology. Examples of pupils' work were examined but there is insufficient evidence of standards or teaching and learning to make a judgement on the provision. Lessons in PE during the inspection were taught by a visiting teacher to all classes in the school. This was an example of how the school enhances its usual provision by the use of outside expertise. These were the only examples of sessions in physical education during the inspection and were insufficient for the team to give a judgement on standards or teaching in the school. Observations of these dance lessons gave examples of pupils' standards in movement and creative expression. The teacher has been employed to promote pupils' dance skills and the sessions are linked to the Healthy School's project so they also focused on pupils' awareness of keeping fit. Pupils through the school go swimming at a local pool each year and the school uses its satisfactory range of small games equipment and large gymnastics apparatus in its rolling programme of activities. There is a satisfactory range and variety of sporting activities provided after school. The provision for music is in a period of transition. The additional teacher employed to teach music to all classes has just left and a new teacher is shortly to take up post. In the meantime the gap has been filled effectively by the student teacher working at the school. A brief observation of a lesson showed pupils in Year 6 to be working at standards in singing that are broadly in line with those expected. Music does not have a high profile in the school. Music was not played during the assemblies observed to set the mood for an act of worship and singing was unaccompanied.

## 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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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