

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LODDINGTON**

Loddington Kettering

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121981

Headteacher: Mr S Cleland

Lead inspector: Mrs V Davies

Dates of inspection: 2 - 4 February 2004

Inspection number: 256761

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:	60
School address:	Main Street Loddington Kettering Northamptonshire
Postcode:	NN14 1LA
Telephone number:	01536 710175
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David James
Date of previous inspection:	27/04/1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This is a very small Church of England village primary school for children between the ages of 4 and 11. The pupils transfer to local secondary schools at the end of Year 6. Most of the pupils come from this village or Thorpe Malsor and are almost all of white British heritage. Pupils come from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds and free school meals eligibility is low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. Attainment on entry to the reception class is broadly average. The school received a Healthy Schools Award in 2001 and a Schools Achievement Award in 2002.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20350	Vivien Davies	Lead inspector	English, Information and communication technology, art and design, design technology, Music, Physical education
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector	
2818	Graham Warner	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, Special educational needs, mathematics, science, geography, history, religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a fairly effective school** in which pupils attain high standards and achieve well. Teaching and learning are good overall. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. However, the headteacher does not focus sufficiently on promoting what the school community values and feels is important. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Pupils are achieving at least above average standards across the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and in art and design
- Teaching is good throughout the school, except occasionally in the oldest class
- Attitudes and behaviour are generally good, but there are insufficient, worthwhile opportunities for older pupils to take responsibilities that help them to mature or to have a say in the school's development
- There are some shortcomings in the timetable which inhibit some pupils' learning in history, geography, music and physical education
- Parents value the informal, easy access they have to classroom teachers and the quality of the reports. However, some are dissatisfied with the school's handling of complaints and suggestions
- The headteacher and governors have not established an effective approach to identifying priorities for school development, nor monitoring the success of their actions for school improvement

There has been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The provision and teaching of information and communication technology is much improved. As a result standards in the subject have risen. However, arrangements by the governing body to monitor teaching and the curriculum are still not in place.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

**Pupils are achieving well and standards are above average over time.** In the reception class the children are on track to reach the goals set in national guidance and some will exceed them. Pupils are taught well and achieve well. In the 2003 tests, Year 2 standards were well above average in mathematics but standards in English, particularly in reading, were well below the level expected. This decline, particularly in reading, has occurred over several years. However, inspection evidence shows that pupils are set to reach above national levels in the subject this year and more able pupils will do well.

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

*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.*

In Year 6 last year standards in English were well above average. Standards in mathematics did not match this result nor did they compare well to the pupils' previous results when they were in Year 2. This indicates underachievement by the most able. However this year pupils, including the most able, are achieving high standards across all three core subjects.

By the end of Year 6 pupils are doing well in art and design. They are achieving satisfactory standards in most other subjects including information and communication technology.

Most pupils like to come to school and learn and this is reflected in good levels of attendance and very good punctuality. Attitudes and behaviour are good in the lower two classes. However, in the upper class, on occasions a small minority of pupils sometimes exhibit silly, immature behaviour and are unenthusiastic about some of their lessons and some aspects of school. **Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.**

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is sound. Teaching is good overall;** in all classes thorough, knowledgeable teaching supports pupils' learning. However, in the oldest class one teacher does not consistently offer a good standard of teaching. In consequence, there is restless behaviour and some complaints about boredom. Classroom assistants offer very good support particularly to pupils with special needs. They also contribute strongly to the success of mixed age teaching. The very favourable adult pupil ratio contributes to pupils good levels of achievement.

The curriculum provides all pupils with appropriate opportunities for learning. However, history and geography are taught in blocks. In some cases two terms elapse before pupils return to a subject. They have forgotten many of the basic skills in this time so do not reach the high levels of which they are capable. The curriculum is enriched by a limited range of sporting, artistic and musical opportunities outside the normal curriculum. Some require payment. The care, guidance and support of the pupils are good. Children in the reception class are well cared for. Parents support their children well. However, the relationship between the headteacher and some parents requires strengthening. The school works well with other schools in the district and, in particular, the local secondary school provides French lessons for older pupils. The relationship with the local church is not as strong as it could be.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall.** The governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school but do not monitor work in the classroom. The headteacher leads the teaching team effectively but does not focus sufficiently on promoting what the school community values and feels is important. Management of staff is sound but the school's self evaluation of the non-academic side of the schools work is not sensitive enough.

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

The school is not dealing effectively enough, in some important aspects, with the concerns of a significant number of its parents. In particular, it is not always perceived as dealing effectively with concerns and complaints. Pupils like school but do not feel they have sufficient say in its development.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- improve strategic planning so that it is focussed on improving the areas which concern the whole school community, including links with parents and the consistency of the quality of education for older pupils
- involve the governing body more in monitoring teaching and curriculum provision
- improve the provision for older pupils so that they are taught consistently well, have a greater involvement in school development and are helped to develop mature attitudes
- revise the timetabling of history, geography, music and physical education

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. In the core subjects and in art and design standards are above average. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards achieved in English in Year 6 are high. However lack of engagement in English and other lessons sometimes hinders pupils' achievement
- The comparative weakness in last year's mathematics results for more able pupils has been addressed
- The decline in standards in English in Year 2 has been halted and, in particular, more able pupils are achieving high standards similar to those reached in mathematics
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and most will achieve or exceed some of the early learning goals before starting Year 1
- Standards have improved since the last inspection and pupils' achievements in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.7 (27.0)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.0 (27.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.7 (26.4)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. The 2003 Year 6 national test results indicate that pupils are reaching above average standards except in mathematics, which is in line. A noticeable feature of the results is the variation in the performance of more able pupils, who performed very well compared to previous attainment in English and well below their previous results in mathematics. Inspection evidence, particularly pupils' work, shows that this underachievement in mathematics has been recognised and addressed. Standards are now even and high across the core subjects, including science.
2. The Year 2 results are also levelling out. Last year all pupils achieved very well in mathematics but English results were well below average. Indeed results in reading had fallen comparatively over some years. Thorough, knowledgeable teaching has halted this trend and pupils are set to match their high mathematics results in both reading and writing.
3. Since the last inspection standards across the school have improved in information and communication technology because of improved teaching skills and resources. Standards in art and design are above those achieved nationally.
4. Although older pupils are achieving well over time, there is variation in their performance on a day-to-day basis. In some lessons they are inattentive, do not put as much effort into their work as they should and some of the work they produce is slapdash. This is related to variations in classroom management, liveliness of lessons and effectiveness of marking.
5. In the Foundation Stage children attain the early learning goals set in national guidance. Children are achieving well in all areas. The development of speaking and listening skills is an important part of every activity. Teachers model language well and help children to acquire new language.



Children develop well in the reception class. They learn to concentrate on tasks and co-operate well with each other.

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

Most pupils like to come to school and learn and this is reflected in good levels of attendance and very good punctuality. Attitudes and behaviour are good overall and personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory.

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

- Most pupils are well behaved, work calmly and are polite
  - A few older pupils sometimes show a lack of respect to adults, are silly in lessons and say they are bored by school
  - Pupils are friendly and form good relationships with each other and there is a family atmosphere that includes all pupils
  - Attendance is good and punctuality very good
  - There are insufficient opportunities which older pupils consider worthwhile to take personal responsibility and develop mature attitudes
6. In the two lower age classes pupils show positive attitudes in lessons and behave well. Pupils in reception are settled well in the school and work well with older pupils. Their positive attitude to learning, and good response to the good range of activities provided, enhances their learning and personal development. This was seen in a mathematics lesson where they listened well and contributed eagerly to a class discussion about coins, and then their keen approach to supporting activities helped them recognise values of coins and carry out simple additions successfully.
  7. Some older pupils and their parents expressed concerns about behaviour and attitudes to school. These older pupils are basically mature and confident as was shown in their open and honest sharing of views. The school does not appear to them to value their views sufficiently. Their behaviour in the small playground is boisterous and this does lead to minor squabbles and accidents but there is no serious bullying, racist or sexist attitudes - pupils are friendly and relationships with each other are good. There have been no exclusions over the last two years, a further indication that pupils do generally behave well.
  8. The school does provide for pupils' personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities. However, most opportunities are linked to the good relationships provided in a small community and to the opportunities offered by good teachers in developing pupils' spiritual awareness in lessons like art and science. The school does not make enough use of collective worship, its Christian links or its place at the heart of a small village to enhance the personal development of its pupils. Although older pupils have responsibilities, they are frequently linked to tidying up and do not offer the challenge that perhaps a school council membership or house captaincy might offer.
  9. Attendance levels are above the national average with virtually no unauthorised absences. Punctuality is very good, allowing lessons to start on time. Parents and pupils value the importance of regular, prompt attendance and this is supported by the good systems the school has to promote and monitor attendance.

School data	5.3
National data	5.4

School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching is good and pupils learn well. The quality of the assessment of pupils' work is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall
- Occasionally in the upper class silly behaviour is not managed firmly enough and lack of sparkle in the teaching leads to boredom
- Assessment of pupils' learning is good. However, marking, particularly in the oldest class, is variable and does not always make it clear what is good and what should be improved
- Children in the reception class make a good start because every aspect of teaching is good

### Commentary

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	1(3%)	22(69%)	8(25%)	1(3%)		

*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.*

10. Teachers are very knowledgeable about the subjects of the curriculum. They are thorough in their approach, plan carefully and teach the core subjects of English, mathematics and science well. Although the teaching is good overall, a lack of effectiveness in dealing with silly behaviour in one lesson in the oldest class marred a well-planned lesson and diluted the impact and enjoyment of the pupils. However, in another lesson the same teacher dealt firmly with inattention and the lesson was good.
11. Teachers make very good use of the school's regular assessment programme to judge pupils' progress and diagnose their strengths and weaknesses. The information is used to set targets, amend teaching strategies and inform discussion with parents and reports. Marking and oral discussion is generally well used to give pupils the information and strategies they need to help them improve. However, in the oldest class there are inconsistencies and marking is not always focussed well enough on improvement. Sometimes sloppy work is accepted which does not measure up to the pupils' best effort.
12. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and children are provided with a good balance of interesting and appropriate activities. Their teachers work well together and have very good understanding of the needs of their pupils and of the areas of learning for the under fives. They receive a good level of direct teaching. Alongside this are opportunities to make choices from a wide range of interesting activities including role-play. Teachers make accurate assessments of their pupils and use the information to plan work to meet individual needs. They are quick to identify occasions when pupils require extra help with their learning.

### The curriculum

With a few exceptions, the curriculum provides all pupils with appropriate opportunities for learning. It is enriched by a limited range of sporting, musical and artistic opportunities. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory overall.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- History and geography are not taught sufficiently frequently and there are shortcomings in the timetabling of music and physical education
- The children in the Foundation Stage class are given a good start
- The village and local environment are not used enough to enrich pupils learning
- There is some lack of balance in the time allocated to the teaching of subjects

## Commentary

13. Teachers plan thoughtfully in order to meet the needs of a range of pupils in mixed age classes. The school places a good emphasis on the inclusion of all pupils in all activities. All pupils have very good access to all aspects of provision, mainly because of the small classes and size of the school. Pupils with special needs are carefully considered in the different levels of work that are regular features of teachers' planning. Learning support assistants are well deployed and make a skilfully sensitive contribution to the pupils' learning. Individual Education Plans precisely target what pupils need to learn. The plans are regularly reviewed but there is little formal recorded involvement of parents and pupils in order to support co-operative development of the pupils' learning. Effective use is made of interactive whiteboards in engaging pupils in their lessons. Information and communication technology skills are now developed well with good use made of the Internet as a research tool. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
14. The school provides effectively for the pupils' personal, social and health education. The school has appropriate arrangements for the teaching of sex education and the dangers of drug abuse. The induction programme for the Foundation Stage children is comprehensive, and is a strong feature of the school's provision. It is a good example that is followed through by the school in its preparation of its pupils for their further stages of education.
15. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are well established in the school. They support the teaching of English and mathematics well. A lot of time is devoted to the practice of English skills teaching. This leads to a lack of variety in the timetable and contributes to the feeling of boredom that some older pupils experience. As a consequence of the amount of time allocated to English there is some imbalance to time allocations for other subjects. For example, through the blocking of geography and history whole terms pass by before one of these subjects is included again in the pupils' learning. In consequence, skills in these subjects are not systematically developed and earlier learning needs too much revision. There is insufficient time allocated to music throughout the school, and to physical education for Year 2 pupils. Although there is a good programme of visits to enhance learning, there is little use of the richness of the local environment to develop pupils learning effectively. The village is a rich source of history and geography that is not used strongly enough. Special day events such as the Victorian day do enhance the pupils' learning effectively.
16. The school provides a range of extra-curricular activities, mainly through its after school club. However, some of these activities are subject to fees being paid and in consequence some pupils do not take part in them.
17. The accommodation is satisfactory overall for the present class sizes. Staff make good efforts to create an attractive learning environment by displaying pupils' work carefully throughout the school. This ensures that the fragmented nature of the old Victorian building is used to the best possible advantage. An adequate outside play area helps the Foundation Stage children to develop their physical skills appropriately. This becomes a play area for all pupils at break and lunch times. At these times it is a more cramped space. It is mainly used sensibly and older pupils take care and are thoughtful about the needs of younger ones. The school has good arrangements to use the village hall and recreation ground for physical education and older pupils make good use of a local swimming pool. Resources are satisfactory for most subjects with the

improvement in information and communication technology resources being a strong feature of the provision.

### **Care guidance and support**

The school takes good steps to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Appropriate support, advice and guidance are provided to each pupil. However, the school does not sufficiently involve older pupils in its development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in the reception class are well cared for, induction arrangements are very good
- Child protection and health and safety arrangements are good
- Older pupils are not given sufficient support to develop mature behaviour and attitudes

### **Commentary**

18. The good care provided for reception pupils, especially the very good induction process, helps them settle quickly into school and make good progress. Parents feel the induction arrangements are very helpful. The teacher takes very good account of the lack of nursery provision to provide a wide range of visits and a sensitive programme of induction for all new pupils. Close attention to health and safety, child protection, fire precautions and first aid procedures ensures pupils work in a safe and healthy environment.
19. Older pupils feel that their views are not heard and that they have little impact in the work or development of the school. This is because there are insufficient opportunities for them to state their views. This also applies to the personal and academic support given to pupils which is good for younger pupils but not for older pupils as they are not given sufficient personal support in line with their maturity. Standards of care are similar to those described in the previous inspection report.

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

Links with parents and the community are unsatisfactory. Links with local schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A significant number of parents are unhappy with the leadership and the handling of concerns
- Reports are of good quality and valued by parents
- Parents have easy access to most teachers and they value this. They support their children's learning well

### **Commentary**

20. The parental questionnaire, pre-inspection meeting, discussions during the inspection and letters received show that a significant number of parents are unhappy with the leadership of the school. They indicate that complaints and concerns are not dealt with effectively; in particular, the school does not provide written explanations or record minor incidents. These concerns relate to older pupils; parents are pleased with and value the access and contact they have with other teachers, especially in Reception and Year 1. The poor relationship between school and parents has an impact on the attitudes of pupils in Year 6. The leadership has taken insufficient action to acknowledge and then remedy the situation. Information to parents on pupils' achievements is good, especially annual reports, which are of good quality.

21. Links with other local primary schools are good and provide the school with some opportunities for sport and the arts. Good links with the local secondary school have a positive benefit for pupils, for example in relation to the regular teaching of French for older pupils.
22. Links with the local church are underdeveloped and not as strong as they were as the parish currently lacks a local priest. The school does not make enough use of its position at the heart of the village to enrich provision, in particular for history, geography and religious education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management and the governance of the school are satisfactory overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher leads the teaching team effectively but does not focus sufficiently on promoting what the school community values and feels is important
- The governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school but do not monitor work in the classroom

### **Commentary**

23. The governors are aware that arrangements for monitoring teaching and the curriculum require tightening so that they can make a more informed contribution to the agenda for school improvement. Most of their knowledge of the school at present is based on discussion and analysis. Some governors are currently undergoing training so that they can monitor work in the classroom from a more informed viewpoint. The governing body is aware of the school's academic performance because they examine data. They receive regular, formal reports based on the school development plan. The arrangements for supporting performance management are secure.
24. The leadership of the school has a clear commitment to helping pupils achieve high academic standards. The headteacher has worked well with the teaching team to develop skills, particularly in information and communication technology and to improve English at seven. However, inconsistencies in the headteacher's own teaching and a perception among parents that their concerns are not effectively dealt with have undermined parental confidence in the leadership of the school. All staff, including part time staff, have management responsibility. They are conscientious in carrying out their responsibilities. In particular, the Foundation Stage manager and information and communication technology co-ordinator have made significant contributions to school improvement.
25. The school's strategic plan has provided a useful task list for the new headteacher and has provided a suitable agenda for the governors to monitor the school's commitments. However, it is not robust enough. It does not clearly identify the real priorities which the school community needs to improve and what impact, perhaps measurable, the actions taken to effect these improvements will have. It is not based on a sound enough evaluation of strengths and weaknesses. It did not identify, for example, the decline in reading at seven, nor the parental dissatisfaction with the school. The governing body has no direct monitoring of the effectiveness of the actions taken at present. This should be remedied.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	£205,622.37
Total expenditure	£197,752.41
Expenditure per pupil	£3,138.93

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	£54,542
Balance carried forward to the next	£67,809

Balance includes money allocated for building refurbishment.

The school manages its affairs prudently. It has money available to improve the building and is careful in its spending. Staff development is good and the newly appointed staff are making a good contribution to teaching and subject development. The school supports a student undergoing teacher training and is about to be involved in evaluation.

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

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

The children join the school when they enter the mixed age class of Reception/Year 1 children. Nearly all of them have had some form of informed pre-school experience. The children's attainment on entry is broadly average in all areas of learning. They are well supported in settling into the routines of the school by the comprehensive and extremely well organised induction programme led by the Foundation Stage senior teacher. Visits are made to pre-school providers. Children then come into school with parents and carers weekly for half a term. They finally come for a half-day in the half term before beginning school on a full time basis.

The quality of teaching is good. As a result, the children are well on the way to achieving the early learning goals in all areas of learning. All children's needs are catered for expertly, with the small number of special needs children being well supported, as they are involved in all activities. Learning support assistants work closely with the teacher to give sensitive help to all children. All staff are involved in the on-going assessments that are an important feature of ensuring the children's good progress. In turn the systematic approach makes certain that the children are achieving well in all areas of learning.

The teacher gives an effective lead to the staff who work with the children. Provision is managed well with the Foundation Stage curriculum being just as clearly identified as the National Curriculum pattern of learning is identified for Year 1 pupils. Children in the Foundation Stage are being effectively prepared for their work in Year 1.

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

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

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

- The teacher plans with care and, together with support staff, works sensitively to enhance the learning of basic skills
- Purposeful practical activities underpin the learning so that good progress is made
- The children settle well into routines and work with enthusiasm

#### **Commentary**

26. The children begin full time attendance in the reception class already aware of the routines and staff expectations. Good routines ensure that children are secure in their understanding of what they need to do in order to be settled and happy. In consequence, they become confident learners. They share toys and equipment with one another well, and move into a circle on the classroom carpeted area and share important news about themselves. They speak clearly and listen with care, well supported by adults who listen to them with equal thoughtfulness. They are encouraged to expand their language by adults asking perceptive but unobtrusive questions. When the children move into their activities staff give them appropriate opportunities to reflect on the effects of their actions on others. The good relationships that are developed underpin the good progress that the children make personally and socially.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Knowledgeable teachers provide a good range of interesting opportunities for children to develop their skills
- Teachers discuss work with the children and help them to develop appropriate language and think clearly

### Commentary

27. The children have many opportunities to develop their basic skills in communication, language and literacy effectively. When they are sharing news with one another they listen carefully. They show good levels of concentration. They speak with confidence because they have secure relationships with one another and the adults supporting them. They are continually well focused by a teacher who is alert to their needs as developing communicators. When the children have a chance to change their library books the teacher discusses the authors, pictures and words in the books. This develops a love of books and sets the children on the pathway as “readers”. Initial sounds of words are accurately identified with the teacher. This leads the children into understanding the clues that pictures and words give them in order to develop their competency as “readers”. The children are avid listeners when the teacher reads an interesting story to them with lots of good expression. The enjoyment of books is further well developed in the children’s role-play in the classroom café as they read the menu with accuracy. In the café they also begin to skilfully develop as writers when they compile their shopping lists as another part of their role-play.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers ask good, purposeful questions so children think about their work and use correct mathematical vocabulary in their explanation
- Mathematical activities are interesting and practical so children enjoy their learning

### Commentary

28. The children are given practical experiences in order to develop their mathematical knowledge and understanding. They equate numbers to amounts of money up to five pence with good levels of accuracy because they have coins to handle. This confident starting point for the children enables them to go on to deal with numbers up to nine and money up to twenty pence in their group activities. They take the correct amounts of coins out of a purse with accuracy.

29. Children learn about shapes as they skilfully compose pictures of trains with coloured papers. They identify the different shapes and talk about some of their properties with secure knowledge and understanding. Staff question thoughtfully to confirm the children’s understanding when observing what they are achieving. This beneficial questioning is not always available to the children when they are organising their learning more independently. Nevertheless, children do gain much benefit from the opportunities given to them to “learn from doing”. This is confirmed in the school’s photographic evidence of activities. Children accurately construct shapes with plastic materials. They repeat patterns on a carpet board with skill and dexterity.



## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of well planned activities excites children's curiosity and makes them eager to learn
- Carefully managed discussion, revised frequently, enables children to develop good vocabulary to describe their work

### Commentary

30. The practical nature of activities gives the children good levels of support in developing their knowledge and understanding of their world. They are delighted when they are able to “stick” and sort objects accurately as they use magnets. The teacher has proved a good role model for them when demonstrating how different shaped magnets all have the same properties. In their groups the children then find out which materials can be attracted to magnets and those that are not attracted. The children’s learning is well developed when the teacher intervenes perceptively because of no trace of iron in a metal. The children make effective shadow puppets when looking at the sources of light. They take part in the school’s Victorian day as a starting point to their understanding of the passage of time. The control of the mouse is introduced to them carefully when they use the computer. The extent of their skills is carefully monitored so that they can be improved upon by further practice.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

It was not possible to observe any **physical development** lessons during the short time spent in the school. However, from the photographic evidence supplied and the discussion with the Foundation Stage teacher, it is clear that appropriate opportunities are given to the children to develop their skills effectively. The finer physical skills are often well developed when children are engaged in cutting and sticking materials together. The children used mod roc and tissue paper together carefully when creating different sorts of fruit. They are equally adept at developing their larger physical skills as they construct shapes from plastic materials. The children make good use of an enlarged area outside their classroom with care and thought as wheeled toys provide a focus for physical development.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a very good range of interesting purposeful activities so children are excited, challenged and want to participate

### Commentary

31. The children enjoy wide ranges of creative experiences. The experiences are fostered in their imaginative play, story time, art and music. The children quickly become absorbed in painting stones to change and blend colours. They are concentrating well because they know that the stones will be presented to their mothers as Mothers Day gifts. The purposefulness of this activity is an important feature of many of the children’s other activities. The children are making apposite choices of colours and are being well guided by the learning support assistant discussing choices with them. They confirm their growing understanding of being able to make good choices as they work independently at making pictures of trains from different shapes of coloured paper. Their imaginative play is well developed in the café that has been created in their classroom. This area

of their classroom constantly changes its character so that the imaginative experiences offered are wide ranging. More recently photographic evidence shows that a florist shop has given children a different learning opportunity. The children learn from older pupils when they join with Year 1 and 2 classes to develop their singing skills. They are learning competently about rhythm and pitch as they make actions to their songs. The children sing sweetly when they join in with a good variety of songs. Instruments are added to re-enforce their understanding of the rhythm in the songs.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

#### English

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 2 have improved and younger higher achieving pupils are now achieving well across the subject
- Standards in Year 6 have improved since the last inspection and are high. Pupils, including the more able, are achieving well over time
- Teaching and learning is good overall
- In some lessons in the oldest class pupils lose enthusiasm and do not work as hard as they could
- Marking is mostly good but, particularly in the oldest class, is variable and does not always make it clear what is good and what should be improved

#### Commentary

32. Standards in English have risen in Year 6 since the last inspection. National figures indicate that more able pupils are performing well and doing better than pupils in similar schools. They are also doing well compared to their prior attainment. Results for Year 2, particularly in reading, were falling and test results, particularly for more able pupils, were disappointing. However, inspection evidence indicates that pupils are now achieving high standards in reading and writing and achieving well. The newly appointed teacher has good subject knowledge and teaches early reading and writing skills well. Speaking and listening are above average throughout the school.
33. Teachers pay good attention to the needs of individual pupils and plan thoughtfully so pupils achieve well. They focus questions carefully during class discussions so pupils of different abilities are appropriately challenged. However, in the top class, teacher-led sessions are sometimes spoilt because pupils do not pay full attention. In part, this is due to some ineffective classroom management and also to too much teacher talk that does not engage pupils sufficiently. During group and individual work pupils are given suitable tasks that match their learning needs. However, the effort that pupils put into their work varies. In some books there were marked inconsistencies in individuals' work, sometimes indicating a slapdash approach.
34. Classroom assistants work well with teachers to help pupils make good progress, sometimes making use of special aids to support their learning. In the top class they often make a very effective contribution to behaviour management. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support. As classes are small, pupils receive good levels of individual attention and misunderstandings are picked up and dealt with and good levels of oral feedback given. Teachers make good use of assessment information to set targets. Marking is mostly good. At best it is informative and gives clear guidance to pupils so they know what to do to improve their work. However, some of the marking in the oldest class is confined to evaluative comment so pupils are not helped to make improvements to their work.
35. Resources for teaching are good. Teachers make good use of interactive white boards to share text, for example humorous poems. The school has a good stock of books in good condition and has worked hard to establish a library. Volunteer reading support provides regular assistance for the development of reading. The teaching of English dominates the timetable. For some pupils, particularly older more able pupils, this lack of variety contributes to a perception of boredom.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum

36. English is used well to support learning in most subjects. In particular, pupils are encouraged to learn and use appropriate vocabulary. In many subjects, including science and geography, the quality of pupils' written work is good. However, presentation and handwriting are variable because of inconsistent expectations. Pupils make good use of reading, and particularly of research skills, to support their learning.

## French

One short French lesson was seen. It was provided by a visiting teacher. The lesson was lively and very well taught, and pupils were achieving well. The teacher made good use of puppets, games and interactive techniques. The lesson was almost wholly in French and pupils were acquiring confident and accurate pronunciation. Mostly pupils were enthusiastic, but a few were restless because they found it difficult to accept the necessary repetition needed to learn a new language.

## MATHEMATICS

The school's provision for mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 6
- The pupils make good progress and achieve well as the good teaching of mathematics interests them
- Marking is not helpful enough to support pupils in knowing what they need to do in order to improve their work

### Commentary

37. The pupils make a good start to their learning in mathematics in the Foundation Stage class, which is built on effectively throughout the school. In infant and junior classes the pupils make good progress and achieve well as interesting tasks are often presented to them. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. The work is regularly matched to pupils' needs, so that the pupils with special needs achieve as effectively as all pupils.

38. Pupils' understanding of the numbers system is imaginatively established by the end of Year 2 in the opening mental mathematics sessions of lessons. In a Year 2/3 lesson the class teacher ensured that it was the pupils who used the interactive whiteboard to add on numbers in one hundreds. This visually helpful demonstration enhanced the pupils' understanding because they moved the numbers themselves with great accuracy. In a Year 6 lesson the interactive whiteboard was used equally successfully. Pupils focused accurately on the ordering of fractions that supported them in converting fractions into decimals. These briskly conducted sessions develop speed as well as accuracy in arriving at a secure understanding of mathematical processes. The understanding of other aspects of mathematics such as symmetry is developed effectively through practical activities in infant classes. The pupils' growth in knowledge is well developed through these practical activities. This is good preparation for work in junior classes where pupils deal with more abstract aspects of mathematics with confidence. The class teacher asks a rapid series of open-ended questions to pupils when converting fractions into decimals. This makes pupils think carefully before answering with good levels of accuracy. Pupils concentrate thoughtfully and are enabled to deal with tasks adeptly.

39. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers generally plan with care. They give great thought to the different levels of pupils' abilities. Tasks are devised at appropriate levels so that all achieve well. Resources such as the interactive whiteboards are used so that pupils have constant reminders and prompts about the focus of their learning. Teachers deploy their support

staff adroitly so that pupils receive the maximum amount of help to enable them to achieve well. There is less care taken with some marking. This has the effect of not supporting the pupils clearly enough in what they need to do in order to improve upon their work.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

40. The pupils have a number of opportunities to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects. This is particularly true of the practical knowledge and understanding that they have gained. For instance, the work on symmetry develops skills in art and design profitably. Graphs are used accurately to record findings in science.

### **SCIENCE**

The provision for science is **good**.

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

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6
- The teaching and learning in science is good overall and the pupils achieve well
- Some more able pupils need more challenge in some tasks

#### **Commentary**

41. As the pupils move on through the school, their scientific skills are being well developed. This ensures that the pupils' standards are above average by the end of Year 6. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection.

42. The pupils show a keen interest in developing scientific skills and understanding. Teachers carefully prepare the tasks they intend to present when planning. A good level of opening discussions supports them well as they are mainly briskly conducted, although not at the expense of clarifying understanding. There is a good level of practical work that gives pupils effective opportunities to carry out experiments. The principles of fair testing as an important element of the experiments are regularly part of the way that knowledge and understanding is being developed. Good use of the computer interactive whiteboards engages pupils well in focusing on what they are being asked to do. Small group or paired work develops the pupils' co-operation and collaboration skills effectively. In a good lesson in Year 2 the teacher used a video thoughtfully by adding points to the commentary. Pupils were then clear about the strata in rocks forming fossils. The pupils then moved into small group activities fully aware of how to sequence their written work in a booklet on how fossils are formed. In a good lesson in Year 6 the teacher involved the learning support assistant in role modelling a fair test. It was then clear which materials are useful for different purposes. This supports the good level of pupils' achievement throughout the school. However, as the emphasis is on including all pupils in achieving well there is sometimes a lack of challenge for some more able pupils in some tasks.

43. The school has a good system for monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils in science. The work is thoughtfully co-ordinated and managed efficiently through the provision of good quality resources. Written work is not always carefully enough presented. Marking is not always clearly indicating what the pupils could do in order to improve.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision has improved since the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory
- Teachers are confident and knowledgeable, so pupils are achieving well
- ICT is well used to support teaching across the curriculum, particularly for research purposes, though some pupils find these tasks undemanding and repetitive

### Commentary

44. There was only one opportunity to see direct teaching of ICT during the inspection and it was good. Nonetheless, discussions with pupils, who demonstrated their skills and talked about their knowledge, indicated that teaching was thorough and teachers' subject knowledge secure. Pupils are reaching national levels and making up lost ground, so they achieve well. Teachers used interactive whiteboards effectively to enhance their lessons and pupils were also able to operate the programs, for example during French. The co-ordinator is recently appointed to the school and is working effectively to embed ICT in the curriculum.

45. In Years 1 and 2 pupils create stories and pictures and improve and save their work. They take particular pleasure in art related software, drawing a butterfly and discussing its symmetry. Pupils construct graphs using data they have collected and can instruct a floor turtle. Older pupils have easy access to a bank of computers, many newly installed. They can access and use the Internet and are aware of safety rules. Pupils are skilled users of the LOGO programme to control a screen turtle. They use the Internet frequently for research but were not always aware that some sources of information may have more validity than others. Work for these older pupils was enhanced by a visit to a local robotics centre where they had access to a rich assortment of equipment and were able to photograph their work, save and bring it back to school to view and use.

### Information and communication technology across the curriculum

46. Opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their learning in other subjects are developing well. They use the research capability of the Internet to further their knowledge when studying subjects like geography. In mathematics, data handling capabilities are gradually developing. Recently, older pupils have successfully programmed a screen turtle. Word processing skills are well developed and most pupils are confident when using the computer for graphics work.

## HUMANITIES

No lessons were seen in **history** and it was, therefore, not possible to make a secure judgement on the overall quality of provision, or of the quality of teaching and learning. The evidence from a small work sample of junior pupils, together with discussions with Year 2 and 6 pupils and a scrutiny of planning, shows that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met adequately. In discussion with pupils there is good recall of activities such as a Victorian day in school at a time when the period was the focus of their work. Too little use is made of the richness in the village, which is a good historical resource because of the different ages in its development.

History and geography are blocked against each other so that consecutive terms are devoted to one of the two subjects. With this arrangement, it is difficult for most pupils to sustain the development of their knowledge and skills over time.

Although it was only possible to observe one lesson in **geography** in the Year 4/5/6 class, there was a good amount of other evidence. Though we were unable to make a judgement about the quality of

the provision, a secure judgement could be made that standards are average by the end of Year 6. There was a considerable amount of work on display as geography is the current focus in the history/geography cycle of work. Discussion with pupils from Years 2 and 6 confirmed their secure grasp of geographical knowledge and understanding. However, the skills of geography, such as mapping using scale and compass direction, are only beginning to be practised. This is because of the gaps in time before the subject is again a focus of the pupils' learning.

The sample of work shows that by the end of Year 6 the pupils are achieving satisfactory levels of understanding in a range of topics. They focus on the water cycle before contrasting different environments that develop their knowledge and understanding appropriately. Contrasts are made between their own village and a seaside town; this makes good use of the pupils ICT research skills. The use of their Internet research skills is re-enforced when they study the environment of a different country. In the lesson observed these skills were being used effectively in a study of India. When the pupils are given the opportunity to develop their learning in this meaningful way they respond very positively to their tasks.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall although in the lesson observed the teaching was good. Where the teaching is good planning is completed carefully and resources well chosen and used. Practical experiences are given such as the correct dressing of a sari in the lesson on India. Group work is planned at different levels so that all pupils, including those with special needs, learn effectively. Pupils with special needs are well supported by learning assistants as well as being able to work at a level indicated in the targets of their Individual Education Plans. However, there are missed opportunities to make more use of the immediate environment around the school. Although used as a contrasting environment there is too little use of the village as a rich source of possible geographical learning in work on local studies. Work is not always marked effectively enough for the pupils to understand what they need to do in order to improve.

### **Religious education.**

The provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is well balanced and interesting
- Pupils are beginning to learn from religion as well as about religion

### **Commentary**

47. Standards have been sustained at the same level as those found at the last inspection. The pupils' standards are average at the end of Year 6 when measured against the local syllabus requirements. By the end of Year 6 pupils are beginning to learn from religion as well as about religion. This is because many of the learning opportunities are being related meaningfully to real life situations. An example of this is when the pupils' focus on worship but relate it to the worship of figures from the world of sport. Pupils with special needs are well supported in bringing their understanding into discussions with the help of class teachers and learning support assistants.

48. The teachers' planning covers the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus and has also been carefully aligned to national advice and guidance. There is a good focus given to Christianity but a wider range of other world faiths are effectively studied. Infant pupils consider aspects of Christianity in appropriate detail whilst junior pupils move on to studying Islam and Sikhism amongst other world religions. The pupils are supported efficiently because teachers provide good resources to help to develop their understanding. Books, the use of the Internet and the interactive whiteboard are all good supportive resources that are used regularly by the pupils. Literacy skills are developed well through the discussions and written recording, which are appropriate features of lessons. Tasks are often completed in well formed groups that include

pupils from different age groups and levels of ability. Religious education makes an effective contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

49. The work in religious education is satisfactorily co-ordinated throughout the school. However, too little attention is paid to presentation of work. Pupils are not clearly supported in understanding how they could improve their work because not enough teacher attention is given to helpful marking of work.

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

There were no lessons seen in physical education or design and technology. One lesson was seen in each of the following subjects: music and art and design. It is, therefore, not possible to make firm judgements about the quality of provision in any of these subjects. In addition to observing lessons, pupils discussed their learning and shared their books. Work on display and curriculum plans were examined. Teachers work closely together to co-ordinate these subjects. There is a teacher responsible for each subject overall. Monitoring, particularly of teaching, is at an early stage. There are secure programmes for all four subjects that follow national guidance, generally over a two-year cycle. However, the balance of subjects across the week results in too little music overall and too little physical education for younger pupils.

Pupils were very enthusiastic about their work in **art and design** and standards throughout the school are above average and pupils achieve well. Work seen in sketchbooks and around the school is of a high standard. The lesson seen in the Year 2/3 was well taught. The teacher provided good skills teaching so pupils were able to make attractive repetitive prints. They made good use of mathematical vocabulary to describe aspects of symmetry in their patterns. Pupils clearly had a well developed sense of colour and were keen to create exactly the right shade of purple prior to printing. All pupils had sketchbooks. Older pupils work demonstrated a good understanding of perspective. It also showed an interesting series of drawings related to the body in motion that were lively and showed rapid progress in skill development. A series of portraits on display in the class demonstrated above average skill in drawing and the use of pastels. Currently, pupils are studying India in geography lessons and are creating beautiful patterns using simple needlecraft skills.

Pupils also enjoy **design and technology** lessons and there were examples of interesting investigative work in their sketchbooks as well as in their design and technology books and around the school. Standards across the school are at least average and pupils achieve well. There were good examples of evaluation, when, for example, pupils sketched and analysed designs for mugs. Older pupils could talk knowledgeably about making and designing slippers, torches and chairs. They constructed bus shelters using real tools. There was good evidence of their ability to plan carefully. They were able, for example, to draw a plan using photographic evidence and then to describe the processes necessary to make a room. Younger pupils made good use of their skills to construct Roman chariots.

The school makes good arrangements overall for **physical education** despite the lack of on site facilities. The nearby village hall is used on Friday afternoon for gymnastics and dance. Swimming lessons are provided on Thursdays for Year 3 to 6 pupils and they achieve good standards. There is also the opportunity to use the local recreation ground for games activities that replace swimming in the summer term. The timing of these lessons, at the end of the week, affects the balance of the curriculum and some younger pupils have limited opportunities for physical education, particularly in the winter months. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and unhappy that recent staff changes have resulted in less extra-curricular activities in this area. Nonetheless, there are some opportunities including basketball and sports activities involving the local cluster of schools.

The amount of time allocated for **music** is limited and is insufficient to support the thorough implementation of the national guidance adopted by the school. However, pupils sing well in assembly and respond well to the challenge of holding a part. Younger pupils clearly enjoy the subject. They can keep time, respond to differences in pitch and rhythm and use actions to support and demonstrate their knowledge. Older pupils, in discussion, talked about creating contrasting



pieces of music using electronic sounds. However, their knowledge of music and musical vocabulary was limited. Some pupils learn to play musical instruments including strings and woodwind.

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

During the inspection no personal, social and health education lessons were seen. There is a well-planned two-year cycle of lessons that are timetabled on a weekly basis. The outcome, particularly of personal education, is variable. This is most apparent among some older pupils who sometimes display immature behaviour and attitudes.

## 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>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>4</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
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	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	5
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	5
The quality of the school's links with the community	5
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	4
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).*

