

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MILBY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Nuneaton

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 130894

Head teacher: Paul Milner

Lead inspector: Rachael Andrew

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> February 2004

Inspection number: 256913

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	407
School address:	Milby Drive Nuneaton Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV11 6JS
Telephone number:	024 7638 2587
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr William Brindley
Date of previous inspection:	July 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average community primary school situated in the outskirts of Nuneaton. It draws its pupils from the surrounding area and, increasingly, from the town itself. The pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds, representing an average socio-economic context. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average because this is an area of high employment. There are a small number of pupils of minority ethnic heritage, mostly of Asian origin but several other ethnic groups are represented. A few pupils are in the early stages of English language learning. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, mostly moderate learning difficulties, is around the average. Relatively few pupils have written statements of their specific needs. Attainment on entry is usually average but this year it was below average, particularly in children's social skills and language development.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21460	Rachael Andrew	Lead inspector	English, music, physical education, religious education
1112	Peter Oldfield	Lay inspector	
16773	Raminder Arora	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, English as an additional language, history, geography
29989	Pauline Goodsell	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, special educational needs
18505	David Matthews	Team inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

This is an **effective school** that provides a good education for its pupils. The curriculum is broad and interesting, and teaching and learning are good. Pupils achieve well throughout the school and reach above average standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and in information and communication technology (ICT). They have positive attitudes to school, behave well and take an active part in school life. The school draws successfully on parental support, the community and local businesses to raise achievement. The school is well led and managed efficiently. It provides good value for money.

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

- The head teacher provides a strong steer to the school and is supported well by the deputy head teacher and governors.
- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school so that pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. At seven and eleven, pupils reach above average standards in core subjects and ICT.
- Children in reception get a very good start to their education.
- Pupils are keen to learn, live up to teachers' high expectations of behaviour and take on many responsibilities.
- The school does not check teaching systematically enough to enable teachers to share what they do best and identify particular aspects that need improving.
- Good quality planning for visits, visitors, school clubs and other worthwhile activities outside normal lesson times adds significant value to what is taught.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to be involved in investigative work, particularly in mathematics and science, to solve problems, to organise their own learning and to work collaboratively.

Overall improvement since the last inspection has been very good because senior staff and governors tackled the issues with determination. In particular, teaching, learning, and behaviour in the juniors have all improved significantly and now contribute strongly to progress rather than hindering it. Standards in religious education have improved and pupils are now doing well. There is further to go in evaluating and improving the overall quality of teaching and learning through observing lessons.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

**Achievement is good overall.** Children in reception do well and are on course to achieve the goals expected for their age by the end of the year in all areas of learning. A significant minority of children will do better than this. Pupils in the infants and juniors achieve well and reach above average standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT. There are examples of good quality work in art and design and design and technology. More able pupils could sometimes do better in both infants and juniors.

The table below shows that pupils in Year 6 in 2003 did better than pupils in other schools nationally and much better in English. Progress between infants and juniors, as shown in the 'similar schools' column, was around average in English but not as good as it could be in mathematics and science. Inspection findings show that there have been significant recent improvements in progress in the juniors and pupils now build well on their achievements in the infants.

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

Pupils' **personal qualities**, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development **are good**. The school provides well for personal development through a taught programme and in many other ways and has a successful code of conduct. As a result pupils grow in maturity, behave well and are keen to learn. They are interested in all the school has to offer. Attendance is very good although pupils arriving late in several classes often disrupt the start of the school day.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The school provides good quality education for its pupils. Teaching is good** overall and often very good, especially in the juniors. Pupils work hard and increase their knowledge well. They do not always have enough opportunity to apply skills and knowledge to solve problems. The curriculum interests them and provides many opportunities for further enrichment. The school gives pupils substantial responsibilities and involvement in the running of the school. There are good arrangements for pupils' care and support, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Parental support for the school and links with local businesses and the community contribute significantly to pupils' learning.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**The leadership and management of the school are good.** The head teacher leads the school well and is ably assisted by the deputy. The governing body has a clear view of the school's strengths and what needs to be improved. It supports the school well although there are gaps in the information it provides to parents.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have confidence in the school and are very pleased with what it provides. Pupils feel they can contribute to school life and appreciate this particularly. They are proud of their school council. They like coming to school, and know that teachers will support them and treat them fairly.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Provide better opportunities to observe teaching and learning so that teachers can gain from each other's expertise and improve specific areas of weakness.
- Challenge pupils to take a lead in their learning, organise their own work, solve problems and be more involved in investigative work, particularly in mathematics and science.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the school prospectus and governor's annual report include all the information that is required by law.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement is good throughout the school. Standards in the core subjects and information and communication technology (ICT) are above average.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of the provision in reception enables children to make a very good start to their school lives.
- Pupils have a good grasp of basic skills in reading, writing, mathematics and ICT because these are taught well from the start and throughout the school. This enables them to make the most of opportunities in other subjects.
- There are examples of high quality work in design and technology and art and design.
- The school responds well to the particular needs of pupils whose first language is not English and pupils who find learning difficult.
- More able pupils could sometimes do better if the work set for them offered greater challenge.

#### Commentary

1. The results in the table below show that in 2003 pupils in Year 2 did much better than pupils in other schools nationally. They did best of all in reading, where results were in the top five per cent of schools. Results have kept pace with the national upward trend. Pupils also did much better than pupils in similar schools.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.3 (17.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.9 (15.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.2 (19.2)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The results shown in the table below show that in 2003 pupils in Year 6 did better than schools nationally in mathematics and science and much better in English. Results have kept pace with the national upward trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3 (28.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.7 (27.9)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.7 (28.9)	28.6 (28.3)

*There 65 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Children in reception follow the curriculum set out for their age in six areas of learning<sup>1</sup>. They achieve well, particularly well in gaining social skills and early language and literacy development, areas that were below average on entry this year. They soon make up the deficit. Children are on course to reach the targets set for them in each area of learning and exceed the goals in personal, social and emotional development. The teachers respond well to individual needs because of the quality of assessment and make sure that every activity provides opportunities for listening and speaking, learning to get on with others and gaining independence.
4. Pupils reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the infants because basic skills are taught thoroughly and practised regularly. Teachers and pupils work hard because much is expected. The work in their books shows that they cover a lot of ground and move on rapidly. Their achievement is good. In the juniors pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science is much improved since the last inspection when it was found to be erratic. Standards are above average. There have been many changes in staff subsequently, and, for the first time in a long while, staffing appears stable. This is having a big impact on pupils' achievement in the juniors. This is now at least as good as in the infants. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls, pupils of different ability or of different ethnicity. Particularly in the oldest classes, but also elsewhere, achievement is often very good, in response to expert teaching. This provides pupils with a spurt at the end of the juniors that prepares them well for secondary school. In ICT, standards are also above average and pupils achieve well. Pupils make the most of good teaching of skills and the opportunities provided by the computer suite. Pupils' confidence and competence in all these subjects enable them to make the most of opportunities in others. Reading skills are put to good use in finding out information. There are many good examples of pupils using writing skills for a range of purposes across the curriculum that benefit their learning. ICT skills contribute to learning in many subjects, particularly design and technology.
5. Pupils have used a wide range of media to produce work of high quality work in both art and design and design and technology. It is not possible to make overall judgements about standards because no lessons were observed but there is a substantial sample of work on display. The school has done well to achieve work of this quality whilst continuing to raise standards in the core subjects. Standards in religious education have improved since the last inspection when they were below what was expected. Pupils now achieve what is expected by the Warwickshire Syllabus. The work of the subject leader in devising a supporting scheme of work has contributed to this and to improved resources and teaching skills.
6. Pupils with English as an additional language are disadvantaged initially until they reach a satisfactory level of competence in English. Once competent, pupils do well. Specialist teachers, class teachers and assistants provide good support so that pupils' spoken and written language develops well. There are frequent sensitive checks on their understanding of technical vocabulary in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs also do well because the curriculum is usually adapted for their needs so that they do not find the work too difficult. Teachers and teaching assistants keep a check on pupils' individual targets and provide work that helps pupils to achieve them.
7. There are a few occasions when more able pupils could do better. The work does not always offer sufficient challenge. In particular these pupils are not given enough freedom to design and carry out their own investigations in science or to apply their skills to problem solving and investigative work in mathematics. There are also occasions when pupils of all abilities do the same work. This is sometimes effective if there is scope for different levels of response but this is not always the case where worksheets are used.

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<sup>1</sup> The areas of learning for the children in nursery and reception classes are: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; and physical development.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

**Pupils have good attitudes and behave well.** They like school and their **attendance is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good** as a result of the school's provision for their personal growth.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's code of conduct is clear and expectations of behaviour are high.
- There are wide-ranging and substantial opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities in the day-to-day running of the school.
- Children in reception soon learn to play and work as members of a community because there is very good provision for their personal, emotional and social development.
- Pupils are very interested in school life and all the activities provided outside normal lesson times.
- Although attendance is well above the national average, pupils arriving late in the morning disrupt the start of lessons in several classes.

### Commentary

8. All pupils are involved in agreeing the code of conduct in their classes. As a result they have a good understanding of why rules are necessary and adhere to them well. Pupils' moral development is given importance. In particular, because of the clear message they hear from well-chosen themes in the daily assembly, they understand the consequences of their actions on other people. The school has high expectations of behaviour and the staff work hard to make sure pupils live up to them. The school's behaviour policy is carried out consistently and pupils know where they stand. Staff are quick to praise kind, helpful and considerate pupils and this builds good relationships. There have been no recent exclusions. Behaviour has improved substantially since the last inspection because there has been a concerted effort by the school to deal with it. There are few incidents of bullying and intimidating behaviour and those that are observed or reported are dealt with promptly. Pupils of different racial backgrounds get on well together and there have been no recorded racial incidents.
9. All pupils are expected to take on jobs in the classroom to help the day run smoothly. They do this quickly and conscientiously, for example organising the lunch-box trolley. There are opportunities as pupils get older to volunteer for more substantial responsibilities. Pupils in Year 6 look after the school office at lunch times. Those in Year 5 show visitors around the school. They are expected to explain the organisation of the school and answer prospective parents' questions. They do this very well. Many older pupils are involved in helping younger ones in various ways. This is helping to build trusting relationships and a sense of community in a school where infant and junior classes are in different parts of the building. Pupils are enthusiastic about these opportunities and gain confidence from them.
10. From the start, children in reception are taught to take turns, to listen to the teacher and to be considerate to other children. The teachers and assistants set a good example. They value what children say and are interested in their ideas and conversations. There is a strong sense of enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning. As they quickly gain confidence, children are encouraged to be more and more independent, to give a hand with classroom tasks and to help other children.
11. The school provides a wide range of activities and clubs outside normal lesson times. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about the visits they have made to support the work done in the classroom. Visits and visitors play an important part in developing pupils' understanding of the world beyond the classroom. They have provided an appreciation of the arts, local history and geography and an insight into different faiths and cultures. The residential visits encourage pupils to take part in more adventurous activities and to become increasingly self-reliant. Pupils

with diverse aptitudes and from different backgrounds show great enthusiasm for the wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs. These broaden pupils' experiences and develop their skills in many areas including sports, design and technology and ICT. All pupils have the opportunity to learn an instrument. There is wide choice that attracts a good take-up.

12. Attendance is very good and pupils are keen to come to school. There is a significant number of pupils who are regularly late, particularly, but not exclusively, in Years 4 and 5. Parents and some older pupils could do more to ensure that the first lesson of the day is not disrupted by late arrivals.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.0
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.*

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.** The curriculum is broad and interests the pupils. It is well supported by activities outside the classroom. Pupils make good gains in learning because teaching is effective. Parents support the school very well and there are productive links with local businesses. The school takes good care of pupils. Teachers guide and support them well.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good overall with much that is very good, especially in the juniors. Assessment is satisfactory overall but good in reception, and in English in the infants and juniors.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- At the start of each lesson, teachers make it clear to pupils what they are going to learn so pupils work with a sense of purpose.
- Much of the teaching in the juniors is very good, especially in English, and this helps pupils to develop their ideas well and extend their understanding.
- Resources are used effectively to extend pupils' understanding.
- The teaching meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs well and pupils new to English, and this has a positive effect on their progress.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively in groups, to decide how they are going to tackle the work they are given and to be involved in investigative and problem-solving activities.
- The assessment of pupils' writing is improving progress because pupils understand what they need to learn next.
- Although the quality of teaching is good overall and some is inspiring, not much is adventurous so the impact on learning varies considerably.

**Commentary**

13. Pupils know what they are going to learn in each lesson because teachers make it clear from the start. They work purposefully and quickly on independent tasks because teachers often give them time targets. Expectations are clear and pupils work hard. They are taught to check their work as they go along and this helps them to be accurate. Lessons usually move on at a good pace so pupils' interest is maintained. When teachers draw the lesson to an end, they check

pupils' understanding so that they can gauge how successful the lesson was. They identify misconceptions and deal with them so pupils are well prepared for the next steps. Pupils gain confidence because they know they have achieved what the teacher intended and are praised for their efforts.

14. In most classes in the juniors, examples of very good teaching were observed during the inspection. Teachers plan well together in year group pairs, share ideas and expertise and give each other good support. Lessons are interesting and on occasion inspiring. The erratic progress seen during the last inspection is a thing of the past as is pupils' inattention. Teaching is particularly effective in English and this continues to be the strongest subject. The school has successfully given prominence to reading and writing because it feels they are keys to success in other subjects.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	16 (36%)	12 (27%)	14 (32%)	1 (2%)	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

15. Teachers use a good range of resources to extend pupils' understanding. Effective use is made of the computer suite, for example, to enable pupils to apply their skills in many subjects. Judicious use is made of textbooks in English so that each pupil or pairs of pupils have copies of chosen texts to refer to. Occasionally in mathematics, the use of textbooks prevents pupils from moving on to the next step quickly enough. There are few books, dictionaries and displays around the school to support the home languages of English language learners. In reception, a wide range of resources, both inside and out, contributes well to broadening children's experiences, igniting their interest and developing their understanding in many areas of learning. Teachers' ongoing notes, about what children can do and understand and what they need to learn next, contribute to the quality of their learning experiences in reception and to good progress.
16. The co-ordinator for special educational needs, teachers and the teaching assistants plan together effectively. Careful consideration is given to identifying individual needs. The individual education plans for the pupils contain targets that are broken down into small steps so that pupils are encouraged by their progress. Plans are reviewed each term and new targets are set. The pupils are well supported within the classes and some are withdrawn on a regular basis so that they can be given more specific help. Thorough assessments of pupils new to English language learning and support from local authority specialist staff enable these pupils to make good progress. A number of new arrivals with little or no English are being targeted for extra support and their needs are tackled explicitly by both visiting specialists and class teachers. Both withdrawal and in-class sessions are effective but opportunities are missed for team teaching.
17. Pupils work hard but are given too few opportunities to take charge of their learning. They work in groups infrequently so they are not sure how to delegate tasks. They are often told how to go about their work when they are capable of making those decisions for themselves. As a result they are not sure how to break down problems into component parts. They are missing the extra level of challenge that problem solving and investigative work bring. Over-direction hinders the learning of older, more able pupils in particular.
18. Every term teachers make a formal assessment of a piece of each pupil's writing against a clear set of criteria. This enables them to judge the level of competence reached and what each pupil needs to learn next. Targets are set to help pupils move on. Teachers and pupils

keep these in mind and check progress towards them. This procedure is helping to improve progress and raise standards in writing.

19. The process of observing lessons is not identifying and sharing adventurous and successful teaching well enough or picking up precisely what needs to be improved. Teachers are wary of formal observations and lack confidence in their own, often considerable, expertise. This applies to the work of teaching assistants as well as teachers. At times their contribution to lessons is highly successful, for example in the computer suite and with guided reading. At other times they are less certain of their roles.

## **The curriculum**

**The quality of the curriculum is good overall.** There are many good opportunities for enrichment outside normal lessons. The accommodation and resources meet the needs of the curriculum well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is broad and balanced and often good links are made between subjects.
- Good enrichment of the curriculum promotes the pupils' enthusiasm for learning.
- Planning and use of ICT skills across the curriculum are systematic and successfully underpin learning in other curriculum areas.
- The children in reception have good access to all six areas of learning and the literacy and numeracy strategies; they make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and consequently make good progress and achieve well.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to develop independence in learning, especially in mathematics and science.

### **Commentary**

20. Pupils achieve well because there are consistent approaches to teaching the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT and to applying them across the curriculum. However, limited opportunities are planned for pupils to develop independence in learning in mathematics and science through investigating topics for themselves or solving problems using the good numeracy skills that have been learned. The school is committed to making cross-curricular links between subjects and this can be seen in the school's planning. This means that the pupils often have good opportunities to make connections in their learning. A good example of this was seen in the history topic of the evacuation of children in World War II where writing, art and historical investigation combine to provide a striking and vibrant display.
21. Visits and visitors are very well used to create an interesting curriculum offered to all the pupils. This good enrichment of the curriculum promotes the pupils' enthusiasm for learning and contributes to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and personal development. The pupils are encouraged by the enhancement of the learning opportunities to have an awareness of culture and society outside of their immediate experience, particularly through working links with industry. The junior pupils are provided with a good range of activities outside of lesson times. A very good example of support for learning is the 'Knex' clubs that involve a large number of pupils from across the school who enthusiastically build a range of complex structures. The older pupils become involved in using ICT skills to control the models they build, and last year a group won the 'Young Engineer of the Year' national competition.
22. Resources for ICT are good and contribute to effective teaching and understanding of the use of computers. The school has a dedicated ICT suite and 'hubs' around the school with further computers. A well-qualified teaching assistant contributes expertise and frequently provides good support for teachers. She also organises the publication of the school magazine produced by the pupils at a popular lunchtime club.

23. The quality of the provision for the children in reception means that they get a very good start to their education. They benefit from a wide range of interesting and well-planned activities that contribute to good progress in all the areas of learning. Team teaching is used effectively to maximise the support teachers and assistants give to groups of children. Teachers modify the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies sensibly so that children gradually become used to the routines of Year 1.
24. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the teachers and the teaching assistants. A good level of intervention is in place to enable the pupils to sustain their attention and concentration and to participate in lessons and other activities. Good arrangements are in place to review the individual education plans on a termly basis, to decide which areas to concentrate on next and how this will be done. A clear distinction is made between pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. The activities planned for pupils new to English, the quality of support and teacher interventions ensure equality of access to the curriculum. The school is committed to their inclusion.

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

The provision for pupils' well-being, health and safety is **good**. There is effective support and guidance for all pupils. Pupils have a very good involvement in the work of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school takes pupils' care and welfare seriously.
- All pupils have good access to advice and guidance about their learning and personal development.
- The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs.
- Arrangements for seeking, valuing and acting upon pupils' views are very good.

### **Commentary**

25. The head teacher has overall responsibility for child protection and deals with such issues very well. A higher than average number of first aiders are in the school and minor accidents are dealt with in an efficient way. Accidents are well recorded. All appropriate testing and regular risk assessment ensure that the school is a safe place.
26. All pupils have access to good support in their academic work. They have specific targets in English and mathematics. Teachers explain to them what they need to do to reach a higher standard. A new tracking system is developing. This is intended to provide teachers with a much clearer picture of progress through each class. The school's tracking of pupils with English as an additional language is good and shows that most pupils do well after a period of regular support. These pupils become happy and confident members of the school community. There are a few occasions, however, when teachers' planning does not reflect the needs of these pupils well enough in lessons other than English and, for those pupils who have moved to higher stages of English language acquisition, academic support is rather thin. All pupils are well known to staff and regular assessments are made of their personal development. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good and pupils say they feel confident in seeking advice when they need to. The pupils appreciate the fact that the head teacher knows each one by name and they regularly stop to speak to him as they meet him around the school.
27. All statutory requirements with regard to special educational needs are being carried out. Throughout the school the pupils receive good support from the adults within the school. The special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers and teaching assistants are fully committed to helping the pupils to make progress in meeting their targets. The school's work with pupils with special educational needs is well supported by the good use of a range of outside agencies for individual pupils

28. The school values and respects the opinions of its pupils. Older pupils support staff at lunchtimes, such as helping in the dining room and reception office. The active school council gathers information from classes and has made a number of very positive suggestions, willingly accepted by the school. Because the school welcomes and supports these views and the head teacher attends their meetings, pupils are confident and feel able to be involved. This contributes greatly to their self-esteem and confidence.

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

The school has a **very good** partnership with parents. There are **very good** links with the community and **excellent** links with the business community. **Very strong** links are established with other schools and educational support groups.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents, including parents of pupils with special educational needs, support the school very well and contribute strongly to pupils' learning.
- Links with the business community have provided exciting opportunities for pupils in ICT and design and technology.
- The school provides good support for teachers in training and its links with the secondary school ease the transfer process.
- There are some minor items of information not included in the governing body annual report and school brochure.

### **Commentary**

29. The school has a very good partnership with parents. The partnership has been strengthened since the last inspection by the school's determination to respond to parents' views. Parents feel happy with the work of the school and the academic progress of their children. They support the provision of regular homework and give good support to the Friends Association. The parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs are invited to contribute to and attend their children's progress reviews. They are always made aware of the targets set for their children in their individual education plans. Suggestions are made about support that can be given at home to extend the work being done in school, and the good support and assistance given by the parents help to promote the good progress and achievement of the pupils. Parental support for pupils with English as an additional language is sought where needed and translators and translations are available. The ongoing interaction between home and school in supporting these pupils is good.
30. The school organises a very good range of events for parents to attend and provides good information in the form of letters and newsletters. Reports of pupils' progress are also of good quality, including the recent introduction of a report half-way through the autumn term so that parents can judge how well their children have settled into work in their new class. The school works hard to establish and maintain this very good link with parents, actively seeks their views and responds to them.
31. There are excellent links with the business community which bring many benefits to the school. The Business Partnership has provided resources and sponsorship for the school. These contribute to good opportunities for learning and promote the self-esteem and confidence of pupils. This has been very noticeable in support for ICT and design and technology but has also extended to sponsorship of newsletters and the school brochure.
32. There are very good links with other local schools and with Warwick University. These bring mutual benefits. The school supports teachers in training and final practice students, in particular, contribute strongly to pupils' learning. The links with the main local secondary school are well developed and enable pupils to be well prepared for transfer.

33. Although the school values strong links with parents, it has not provided full information about school life and work. The governors' annual report and the current school brochure contain some minor statutory omissions of which the school is now aware.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good.** The leadership of the head teacher is strong and purposeful. Management is effective. Governors play a satisfactory role in the school's development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The head teacher has a particularly clear view for the school's future, and how it can develop.
- Although the leadership of some subject areas is effective, the impact of subject leadership overall is constrained by a lack of staff confidence.

### **Commentary**

34. The head teacher has a very clear view of the way forward for the school. He has a strong sense of purpose that is matched by his energy to carry out necessary changes. He has a positive outlook that he communicates very well to all those associated with the school. His high hopes for the school's development are focused very effectively on pupils' achievements, particularly how they compare with those of pupils in similar schools. In his one year at the school he has done very well to win the support of parents, pupils, staff and governors. He has worked effectively, mainly by being a good role model, to raise staff morale and to strengthen effective teamwork. He realises, however, that there is more to be done to improve staff confidence, notably with regard to the rigour with which co-ordinators monitor and develop teaching. Governors support the head teacher very well and they have a satisfactory role in the school's development. Apart from minor omissions in some of the information provided to parents about the school, the governors fulfil their legal duties effectively. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know, for example, that staff have an increasingly 'ready smile', reflecting their rising morale, and that this contributes well to the school's positive atmosphere where all adults and pupils feel valued. Governors are clearly aware that recent Year 6 pupils have not made the same progress as those in similar schools. They share the head teacher's commitment to initiatives to support the current improvements year on year. They have, for instance, been at pains to ensure that their procedures for appointing staff have focused emphatically on seeking the very best available candidates.
35. The school's well-chosen priorities for improvement are impacting well on what is achieved. For example, the focus on pupils' behaviour has been effective in helping school to remedy weaknesses at the time of the last inspection so that pupils now behave well. The head teacher is wisely developing the accuracy with which the school keeps a close eye on the learning of individual pupils as they move through the school in an effort to further support the improvements in pupils' achievements. While the school's curriculum is already enriched in a number of imaginative ways the head teacher wants to make learning increasingly vibrant for pupils so that the school can "fly".
36. While the head teacher has made very good headway in raising teachers' self-esteem, there remains a residue of lack of professional confidence. This restricts the rigorous analysis of teaching and learning by some subject co-ordinators and in deciding targets for improvement. Some very effective teaching is therefore not shared with other staff and some aspects that need developing are not energetically addressed. For instance, there are examples of high quality work in art and design in Year 3 where teachers' enthusiasm results in very good standards. Notably too, very effective teaching in Year 6 results in pupils making high quality design and technology products. While there are good examples of teachers enabling pupils, as in Year 4, to use their own initiative in science lessons, this good feature is not consistent

throughout the school in science and in mathematics. Such examples of good or very good practice are not shared sufficiently well to boost teachers' confidence while aspects for development are not dynamically identified and addressed. Some subject co-ordinators have made a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects or areas of learning. These include those for English, mathematics, ICT and the Foundation Stage. The co-ordination of provision for pupils with special educational needs is thorough and well organised and has a good effect on the way the school addresses the needs of these pupils. The co-ordinator works well with teachers and teaching assistant colleagues to promote the needs of these pupils. The governors are supportive of this work and provide extra resources of teaching and support time, and these are effectively contributing to the good overall progress and achievement of the pupils. Some co-ordinators, such as that for English, have been trained to talk to teachers in a way that clearly specifies what has worked well in lessons observed and what they need to focus on next to develop the quality of their teaching. Other co-ordinators have not had the benefit of such training and some are hesitant about how best to feed back to teachers in a positive way while incorporating points for improvement.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	697,105
Total expenditure	695,831
Expenditure per pupil	1,688

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-7,049
Balance carried forward to the next	1,274

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

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

37. Provision for children in reception is a strength of the school. It has improved further since the last inspection. Children are well prepared for transfer to Year 1. Achievement has improved since the last inspection. The four year olds are admitted to reception at the start of the academic year. Most have had pre-school experience in the independent nursery on site before starting full-time school. Children's attainment on entry to reception is usually broadly average. This year it was below average, particularly in the areas of language and communication, and personal, social and emotional development.
38. Children, parents and carers are suitably introduced to the school. Children are well prepared for their start in reception with frequent visits beforehand. The Foundation Stage staff have forged good links with parents, who feel welcome in school and consider that they receive good information. Parents and staff work in partnership to improve children's learning.
39. The teachers have a very good understanding of how young children learn and all staff work together as an effective team. Children are taught as one class with both teachers working efficiently in a team-teaching situation. The curriculum is carefully based on the recommended areas of learning and children are provided with a wide range of challenging and interesting activities.
40. The Foundation Stage is very well led. There is a clear action plan identifying areas for development. The staff are fully aware of the principles that underpin the good early years practice. There is a rigorous approach to monitoring children's progress on a regular basis.

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

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

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

- There are very good relationships with both adults and children.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Children's attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- Children are given very good opportunities to use their initiative and develop their independence.

#### **Commentary**

41. Some of the children enter school with immature personal and social skills. They settle down quickly and feel both happy and secure. Clear boundaries and the very good role models set by the adults, linked with very good quality teaching and learning, mean that children achieve very well. Most are on course to do better than expected by the end of the reception year. Most children are attentive and eager to learn, and the staff create a supportive atmosphere where each child feels very special. Most children find it easy to conform to the high standards set by the staff. They know routines well, settle to tasks with a minimum of fuss and behave sensibly at all times. Children of different backgrounds work and play in harmony and show developing confidence in trying new activities. Children are purposefully engaged and show consideration and respect for property and each other. They enjoy coming to school and take pride in their achievements. Children value the rewards they receive for good work and behaviour and this boosts their self-esteem. For example, when reading to an adult, children proudly shared their reading diaries showing stickers and stars for trying hard and succeeding.

42. Teaching assistants are used particularly well, alongside teachers, to establish high standards of behaviour and social skills. A good range of activities is planned to ensure that the children's curiosity is stimulated. They are given every opportunity to develop their initiative and manage tasks. Children select activities and work on them for a good length of time. The children are managed very skilfully and kept purposefully occupied. Their play and responses are supported and extended sensitively through good questioning.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers provide a rich learning environment, with good learning resources, where children have plenty of opportunity to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
- Children achieve well in relation to their prior attainment because of the good teaching of basic skills.
- Teachers talk to children with respect, encouraging them to express themselves.
- The home reading system is very well established

### **Commentary**

43. Children make good gains in learning because they are taught well and have access to good resources. The well-planned curriculum provides interest, stimulation and challenge. The staff show that they value children's efforts at communicating. Children talk with interest about their experiences and develop new vocabulary quickly in all aspects of their work, for example when engaged in activities in the 'Gingerbread man's café' or dressing up and acting out the story of 'Hansel and Gretel' in the class's very own 'house of sweets'. Constant encouragement to do well at every step of learning ensures that all children achieve well. Most children are well on course to achieve the early learning goals and some will have exceeded them by the end of their reception year.
44. Most children in the class are gaining satisfactory control in developing early writing skills. They draw and paint with increasing control and a few higher attaining children write meaningful short sentences. Most children write their own names unaided and put together simple sentences for the teachers to write for them. Very good progress is made when adults work in small groups or on a one-to-one basis to give children individual attention. All the adults use talk to good effect and are good listeners.
45. The book area is very well resourced and inviting. Children also visit the school library regularly. They handle books carefully and know how these are organised. Many children associate sounds with words and letters and all are encouraged to take books home and share with adults. Teachers effectively familiarise children with written vocabulary through stimulating activities to focus on key words. The literacy lessons modified to suit the very young effectively promote the development of early reading, writing and spelling skills. Teachers make continuous assessments of children's progress and have a very good understanding of individual strengths and weaknesses. Their regular evaluations of planned work help build on what has already been achieved.
46. Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress because questions are well tailored to their individual needs and they are sensitively encouraged to express themselves clearly. Class discussions and well-focused play activities provide good opportunities for children to try out their ideas in words. This sensitive approach ensures time for thinking so that the children gain in maturity and achieve well. As a result, the majority of children in the reception year readily discuss, answer questions and offer opinions. Most express themselves confidently and articulately.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers provide good opportunities for children to use mathematics in a range of contexts.
- Children learn well because they are provided with stimulating tasks and good resources.
- Children like mathematics.
- Children have developed a good mathematical vocabulary.

### **Commentary**

47. Children are taught well, achieve well and most are on course to reach the early learning goals by the start of Year 1. Resources are used very well and this helps children to develop their mathematical understanding and vocabulary. Teachers plan well and use a good range of teaching methods. They make learning interesting, linking skills they wish the children to learn to exciting topics and themes. For instance, children count the number of buttons on the gingerbread man and use the language of 'more than' or 'less than' the given number. The use of number rhymes, games and songs is enjoyed by all and reinforces counting, recognition and understanding of numbers. Children are encouraged to apply what they know to practical problems, for example, counting the number of children at registration and working out how many are not there or how many are staying to lunch. Most children in reception correctly identify and put into order numbers up to 20 and can identify numbers that are more than or less than other numbers. They recognise basic shapes and gain knowledge of capacity and weight from practical experiences with sand and water. Some more able children describe objects by position, shape, size, colour and quantity. Some older children demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of how to solve simple problems involving addition and subtraction, and use vocabulary such as, "add one more" or "take one more away", "how many altogether?" and "how many left?" There is effective adult involvement in children's activities and useful timely assessments made of the individual children's progress.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are keen and eager to find out about the world around them.
- Good teaching ensures that children achieve well, often very well, and have good attitudes to learning.
- The support staff provide good quality, valuable support in lessons.
- Resources are used very well to broaden children's knowledge and understanding.
- Very good use is made of the outdoor space to improve children's learning.

### **Commentary**

48. Children achieve well because both teaching and learning are good, with some very good features. Teachers plan activities that engage and sustain the children's interest. During the inspection week, children in small groups used the stimulating outdoor play area and made very good progress as they participated in well-planned and organised activities such as a car wash, a garage and a petrol station. These activities were very well led by the class assistant, who kept children well focused on developing their knowledge, understanding and the use of related vocabulary. Children enjoy learning and remain totally absorbed in the range of activities inside

and outside. The current topic of 'senses' is very well developed to enhance children's understanding of 'good food' and 'tasting'.

49. There is effective adult intervention in activities and encouragement for children to explore new ideas. The guidance given by the teachers and support staff is very good, as children are encouraged to work independently to put their own ideas into practice. Children thoroughly enjoy the experiences of working with sand, water and malleable materials. They use paint, mix different colours and name basic colours correctly. They use different materials, such as paper, card and textiles to develop cutting, joining, folding and building skills and are encouraged to talk about their experiences. Children make good progress overall in learning computer skills. A good number of computers are well used and children get a good level of individual support. Most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good outdoor play facilities.
- Children are well co-ordinated and use the outdoor play area effectively.
- Teaching is good and contributes to children making progress and achieving well.
- Children handle tools with care and control and respond very positively to the good quality of teaching.

### **Commentary**

50. Children achieve well and most are on course to reach the early learning goals set for them in this area. Children have good opportunities to develop their skills in the outdoor play areas. They are confident and well co-ordinated in the use of outdoor equipment. The available large and small outdoor resources are effectively used. In the main school hall children have a regular opportunity for movement with music and use the large climbing apparatus. In a good lesson, children were effectively taught the skills of jumping and landing safely. Children move imaginatively, demonstrating good body control and awareness of space.
51. Children enjoy physical education lessons and respond very positively to the praise and encouragement that they are given. Teachers ensure that good opportunities are provided for children to repeat an activity which they have learned and they help children to improve their techniques. The children love to act out stories and, when playing outside, they choose games which suit the space and the context. Children all have good attitudes and behave sensibly. All children make good progress in manipulating small objects and tools such as scissors.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children work in a well-ordered environment in which creativity and expressiveness are valued.
- Children are provided with good quality resources and make good gains in learning.
- Teaching is good, providing plenty of opportunities for children to develop their creative skills.
- Children have positive attitudes to learning because they feel confident in expressing themselves creatively.

### **Commentary**

52. Achievement is good. Most children are on course to reach the early learning goals. They are well able to use a range of materials to produce attractive and interesting creative work. Teaching and learning are good. There is a range of interesting and stimulating learning settings. Children particularly enjoy their role-play in the well set-up imaginative areas. For example, they were observed playing different roles in the outdoor 'Mulberry Green village café' and interacting confidently. Children are given good opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form, through working with a wide range of materials to create collage or paint patterns, for example the large wall display of the 'Rainbow Fish'.
53. All the children enjoy making music. They sing enthusiastically and work with total involvement when using musical instruments and investigating the best way to play them. Teachers plan their lessons well and have a clear understanding of the needs of the children. All adults have high expectations of work and behaviour, and keep constant checks to ensure that all children are fully involved.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

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

- The teaching of the basic skills of reading is thorough and helps pupils of all ability to make rapid progress.
- Pupils are well prepared for writing activities because of the wide range of strategies that teachers use.
- The subject is very well led so that the provision and standards continue to improve.
- Writing assessments are used particularly well to indicate what pupils can do and to plan the next steps.

#### **Commentary**

54. Pupils read well from a young age because letter sounds and other strategies are taught thoroughly. In the infants, pupils learn to use a range of cues to help them make sense of print. They are encouraged to think what happens next and to listen to the flow of words, as they read, to check they make sense. They learn that information can come from pictures, from the shape of words, and from single letters and groups of letters. They become familiar with a range of stories and poems so they know book language and anticipate the pattern of words and rhymes. Teachers ask many questions about the text so that pupils learn to concentrate on the meaning. Pupils quickly become adept at checking the text for answers to questions. Pupils are encouraged to use the library and to read at home. Most say they enjoy reading. The annual book week, which includes visiting authors, contributes strongly to pupils' interest in reading. There is growing enthusiasm in the juniors since the arrival of new books and the new arrangements for guided reading each morning. Teachers and teaching assistants make good use of this time to help pupils make the most of their reading. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their reading and they do this well.
55. Pupils are keen to write and make a quick start to writing tasks because teachers prepare them well. Everyone is clear about what the teacher expects because the purpose of the writing is shared. Older pupils often write the learning intentions in their books as a prompt. Teachers in the juniors make very good use of the introductory part of the lesson to explain, for example how writers gain the readers attention and sustain it, how they describe the setting and introduce characters, and how different types of story develop. Pupils make good use of their reading when they try out different types of writing, often practising on whiteboards until they are confident. Different types of planning formats prove helpful to pupils when organising their

ideas. Pupils with special educational needs and others who find writing difficult gain confidence from these. Teachers place a strong emphasis on extending pupils' vocabulary. They challenge pupils to use more powerful adjectives for example, and ask for alternatives to overused words to make the writing more lively. They give good support to increasing the vocabulary of pupils with English as an additional language and in checking their understanding. Drama is used increasingly and successfully as a device to inspire writing and there are good opportunities for pupils to try out their ideas orally before writing them down. Homework supports English well.

56. The co-ordinator has ensured that she has kept up to date with new developments and guidance for the teaching of English. Training organised by the local educational authority has been put to good use in moving the school forwards. There have been workshops for parents and governors. There has been a strong emphasis on improving the already high standards in English and the school's results have kept pace with national trends. Weaknesses identified at the last inspection have been dealt with successfully, leading to better progress in the juniors. There is useful analysis of data to show where to concentrate efforts and this resulted in a focus on writing which has been effective. Teaching has improved as a result of these initiatives and is now good overall with much that is very good in the juniors. There is now good achievement throughout the school and high standards at the end of both infants and juniors. Both boys and girls do well because there has been good attention to books and texts that boys enjoy. There are some variations in the quality and style of teaching in different classes. There is much that is lively and challenging but some that is thorough but dull and undemanding so pupils' progress varies. There is a lack of confidence amongst teachers that is surprising, given the quality of much of their work. There is much to be gained in the school from acknowledging expertise, from sharing good practice more widely and from identifying what is less effective.
57. Each term, teachers make a careful assessment of each pupil's writing. What the pupil does well is noted and the next steps are indicated and agreed. These are translated into targets for the next term. Some targets are for individual pupils, most for groups of pupils. Teachers plan the work so that groups and individuals learn the skills they need to make progress towards the targets. Pupils keep the targets in mind and work more purposefully as a result. Assessment is also used effectively to identify pupils who would benefit from 'booster classes'. These classes are very well taught and pupils make up a lot of ground. Teachers' marking often provides very useful pointers to help pupils improve. This is especially true where pupils need extra help. Teachers are quick to praise more able pupils but are not so good at identifying how they could improve.

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

58. Pupils use a wide range of writing in many subjects. Because they write well this brings benefits to the whole curriculum. The following examples highlight some of the strengths. In Year 6, pupils write clear instructions and evaluate their work in design and technology. In geography they use computers to present their work on mountain environments using a range of devices such as charts, boxed text, tables and bullet points to make a strong impact on the reader. In Year 5 pupils describe different buildings in their local study work. In history, pupils in Year 4 imagine they are evacuees and write letters home. In Year 3 pupils write about their personal responses to the work in religious education. In the infants, pupils write about friendship as part of personal, social and health education. Because pupils read well they are able to use a good range of reference information, in books and on computer screens, to support their work in many subjects. Speaking and listening skills are developed well. Pupils are articulate and this helps them to explain their ideas and recount their experiences in many subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in mathematics are above the national average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and all pupils achieve well.
- Standards have risen in mathematics because the teaching is good and the subject is well led and managed.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to develop independence in learning in mathematics.
- The pupils' targets for improvement are not always made clear to them.

### **Commentary**

59. The standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection with all pupils making good overall progress and achieving well against their prior attainment. The majority of pupils enter Year 1 having achieved broadly average levels by the end of their reception year. These good foundations are built on well as the pupils move through the school because the teaching of mathematics is well organised and systematic. The pupils are grouped according to ability and this enables the teachers to match the work well to their needs. The pupils have enthusiastic and positive attitudes towards their mathematics lessons, and they work hard to complete the work that is planned.
60. Throughout the school the quality of teaching is good and two very good lessons were seen in the juniors. The subject is well led and managed and this is having a positive impact on the quality of the provision of the subject. Good use is made of homework to support, reinforce and extend the learning. The teaching of the basic skills of numeracy is methodical and thorough and all of the teachers have high expectations of how the pupils should approach their work and present it with care. They particularly foster the pupils' confidence in their ability to calculate and this results in the pupils achieving high standards. On some occasions the pace of the mental and oral introduction to the lesson is insufficiently brisk. The school makes thorough assessments of the pupils' progress and uses the information to group pupils and to set overall targets. Teachers do not always make individual pupils aware of what they need to learn next or what they need to do to improve and this is slowing progress.
61. The pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of numbers. They develop speed and accuracy in their calculations and have a good understanding of place value. Their mathematical vocabulary is developed effectively and the pupils have a good recall of number facts and knowledge of multiplication tables. There is good coverage of shape, space, measures and data handling. For example, the younger pupils quickly learn to sort two-dimensional shapes according to their properties. Year 3 pupils make very good progress in learning to add near multiples of ten to two-digit numbers and are delighted at their success. The older pupils can match equivalent fractions and decimals, draw angles and measure the sides of triangles accurately. However, limited opportunities are planned for pupils to develop independence in learning in mathematics through investigating topics for themselves or solving problems using the good numeracy skills that have been learned.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

62. There are good opportunities for the pupils to use and develop their mathematics in other subjects and they develop an appreciation of the practical uses of the skills they have learned. For example, in science, they use graphs and tables to record data such as the amount of friction when moving objects across different surfaces and to show the changes in pulse rate. In Year 1 pupils use ICT skills well to support their mathematical learning.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well so they reach above average standards.
- Teaching is good because it ensures that pupils work hard to acquire large amounts of scientific knowledge.
- Teachers enrich pupils' learning in meaningful and interesting ways.
- Pupils have good attitudes and take pride in their work.
- The chances for pupils to use their own ideas and initiative vary from class to class.
- Teachers do not always rigorously ensure that brighter pupils are challenged as much as they might be.
- Leadership of the subject does not have sufficient impact on what the school provides for its pupils.

### Commentary

63. Standards in the subject are above average and pupils achieve well, most reaching the levels expected for their ages, or above, throughout the school. This is mainly due to the teachers' strong emphasis on pupils in all year groups acquiring good amounts of scientific knowledge, which is reflected in the quantity of pupils' recorded work in all year groups. The school has effectively addressed pupils' erratic progress from Years 3 to 6 that was a weakness at the time of the last inspection so that standards by the end of Year 6 are higher. This success is largely due to better and more consistent teaching across the school, resulting in improved results in Year 6 tests year on year. Pupils now make good progress throughout, and the school is well placed to raise pupils' attainments further and notably to improve progress in the juniors.
64. The main reason why pupils are doing well is the good teaching. At the time of the last inspection some teachers had inadequate knowledge of the subject. The school's changes to planning for the subject, led by the co-ordinator, have contributed positively to their confidence and there are no longer weaknesses in their scientific knowledge. All teachers are good at making sure that pupils work hard. They focus strongly and effectively on pupils learning much scientific information, including correct scientific words. Because teachers in each year group plan closely together there is strong consistency in the amount of science work that pupils undertake in parallel classes. Pupils' books are full of recorded scientific information that reflects their hard work and concentration. Teachers use homework well to reinforce and extend learning.
65. Teachers enrich pupils' learning in interesting ways. Year 5 pupils, for example, talk excitedly about their forthcoming visit to a space museum where they expect to learn more about the solar system. Teachers make good use of ICT to support pupils' learning in science. Year 1 pupils, for instance, use a computer effectively to record the materials used for common objects such as metal for a ladder, while Year 6 pupils identify different organisms using a 'branching data base'.
66. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject, particularly when they are fully involved and engaged in offering their ideas. This is notable when they take part in scientific investigations such as when exploring the relationship between the earth and the sun using a torch in Year 5. Improved behaviour since the last inspection is shown by the good concentration of pupils during discussions, as when Year 2 pupils concentrated for long periods as the teacher poured out different liquids for the pupils to talk about. Pupils in all classes take great pride in presenting their recorded work carefully, including writing neatly and drawing with care, such as when drawing different types of food.

67. The chances for pupils to use their own ideas and initiative vary from class to class. Throughout the school, teachers show pupils that they value their ideas by listening carefully to them during discussions and praising them for their originality. As a result pupils are keen to offer their thoughts, for example when devising a fair test in Year 3 to investigate the extent to which different kinds of paper absorb water. There are good examples of teachers enabling pupils to use their initiative, as in a Year 4 class when the teacher let pupils play a full role in deciding how to explore the effects of different muscles. The pupils were well motivated as a result and they learned much about how muscles work. Sometimes, however, teachers do not involve pupils as well as they might in making decisions in their own learning and this, on occasions, limits their growing understanding. For example, teaching missed the opportunity to let Year 3 pupils use their very good ideas about how to set up a fair test to investigate the absorbency of different papers.
68. Teachers do not always rigorously ensure that brighter pupils are challenged as much as they might be. They want all pupils to do well and they strive to achieve this end, often through challenging questions in discussions. They place high demands on all pupils to work hard and to record their work at length and in detail. At times, however, teachers do not sufficiently differentiate between the abilities of different pupils and this is reflected in the similar work that pupils of the same age sometimes produce, regardless of their capability. Most pupils of differing abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, but with more attention to their different needs this could sometimes be more rapid, notably for the brighter pupils.
69. There has been some observation of lessons but this has not yet resulted in the rigorous sharing of what works well and what could be improved. For example, in Year 5 there is an imaginative system of involving pupils in assessing their own work and pointing them to what they need to learn next. This exciting initiative has not yet been used to improve the consistency of assessment arrangements through the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in ICT skills in both key stages are above those expected nationally.
- The subject is well integrated into learning across many areas of the curriculum.
- The quality of teaching is good and the teachers are very well supported by the expertise of a well-trained teaching assistant.
- Skills are used in a good range of activities that enhance learning outside of lessons.
- The subject is well led and managed.

### **Commentary**

70. The skills and knowledge displayed by pupils throughout the school and the sample of work seen show that standards are above those expected by the age of seven and eleven. Pupils' skills and the standards achieved have improved since the last inspection. The pupils achieve well in lessons, and around the school there are many examples of work showing that the pupils' ICT skills are developing at a good rate as they move from class to class. The work includes, for example, pictograms showing favourite fruits in Year 2, and assembling graphs that show rainfall and temperature in different mountain ranges in Year 6. Year 5 make good use of the Internet to research news stories, create summaries and present them with a striking headline and photograph.

71. The teaching is good overall. Lessons are well planned, well managed and result in the pupils achieving well. Pupils demonstrate confidence and competence because the work is well matched to their needs. The school benefits from the expertise of a teaching assistant who manages the computer suite and other ICT equipment. Together with the teachers she prepares very good quality teaching materials and works in conjunction with the teachers in the lessons. This results in the lessons having good pace and challenge for all of the pupils.
72. The profile of ICT throughout the school is high and the skills that the pupils learn in lessons are frequently used in contexts outside of lessons. A striking example of this is the lunchtime magazine club run by the teaching assistant. Following an editorial conference the pupils begin work on the areas they have suggested and agreed upon. During the inspection the team was working on the Easter edition of the magazine which will include jokes, competitions, and serious articles about the story of Easter and an interview with a teacher new to the school.
73. The co-ordinator is giving good leadership that is raising standards, improving equipment and resources, and extending the range of the pupils' experiences. She has formed many links with industry that enhance the ICT learning opportunities and contribute to the high standards seen. She also contributes to the pupils' learning opportunities outside of lessons by running the very popular and successful 'Knex' clubs. With her guidance and enthusiasm a group of pupils won the 'Young Engineers of the Year' national competition last year using a combination of design and technology and ICT skills.

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

74. The ways in which the school makes very good use of ICT across the curriculum are impressive and are consistently built into the planning for a wide range of subjects. Throughout the school the pupils develop their skills in word-processing and use these to write accounts, stories and poems, choosing the format that is the most appropriate, and editing their work. The youngest pupils use a program to model 3-dimensional shapes. In Year 4 pupils use digital cameras to take photographs representing their dreams and use an editing program to alter the images. Year 6 pupils have put together *PowerPoint* presentations that include graphics, animations, and sound to show what they have learned in geography, history and literacy. Through the very good links with industry the pupils have opportunities to use control devices and to model situations using a range of equipment and programs.

### **HUMANITIES**

75. Only one lesson was observed in **history** and one in **geography**. It is not possible to make judgements about overall provision, standards or the quality of teaching and learning. The analysis of pupils' completed work in books and on displays around the school indicates that lessons in history and geography make good links with literacy and other subjects such as ICT, art and design and design and technology. The work on maps, by pupils in Year 6, is developed through both history and geography, for example the map of Europe describes the geography of ancient Greece and the capital city, Athens, today. Some good research and interesting thoughts are recorded on Greek theatre. Letter writing, for example, "Send help to Spartans" by Year 6, demonstrate pupils' good use of skills learnt in literacy. There are relevant links with local history, for example when pupils study the bombardment of Coventry. Visits to the local museums and other places of interest make good contributions to pupils' learning. Pupils show positive attitudes to work, and demonstrate acquisition of good knowledge in lessons. The infants learn about the great Fire of London and make suitable attempts at writing reports for the London gazette. Their computer-generated pictures about the burning and spreading of fire are of good quality. In geography, the analysis of work indicates appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils. The work on mountain ranges by Year 6 is studied in good depth, also using the computer for research and creating presentations. Pupils learn about aspects such as tourism, the climate and how mountains are formed. A lesson in Year 6 was well enhanced by a visitor's input. A mountain climber in his full gear visited the class and talked to pupils about a

safe and successful camping trip. Pupils asked many sensible questions and enjoyed the opportunity to see the real items used by mountain climbers.

76. Good use is made of pupils' speaking and listening skills in most lessons. Opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy skills were noted in their work entitled, 'Frenzy over field'. As part of the local area study, Year 6 pupils have written extended accounts illustrating arguments for and against the proposals 'to build houses on the school field'.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject leader has developed a programme of work that is relevant to the school's needs and provides a secure framework for teaching.
- Pupils are involved in well-planned visits that broaden their experiences and understanding.
- The tasks set for pupils do not always move the learning on well enough.

### Commentary

77. Since the last inspection, standards have improved and pupils now achieve what is expected of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make sound progress because the work builds systematically and is supported by a good range of resources. Teachers have gained confidence because the programme of work makes it clear what is to be taught at each stage and the subject leader gives supporting information and guidance. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils' work in books is completed carefully and shows good understanding of a wide range of topics. The work is relevant to pupils' interests and is often linked effectively to work being studied in other subjects. The topic on conflict is a good example. In history, pupils study World War II and at the same time learn about the many human situations that cause conflict. This includes the need for rules in different communities and settings and the consequence of breaking rules. It draws in the study of the rules and codes of the major faiths and how these influence the lives of believers. It culminates in a visit to Coventry Cathedral where pupils learn about forgiveness and reconciliation. The work contributes well to pupils' spiritual development and is given prominence and importance in displays, for example about the major faiths.
78. Previous visits to places of worship support other aspects of the work, develop pupils' understanding further and bring the subject alive. Work in class draws on the experiences of Christian and Moslem pupils who explain what it means to them to be part of a religious community.
79. Pupils have good opportunities in lessons to learn from their teachers, other pupils, books, videos and texts and to answer questions. Some of the work demands a challenging personal response, for example about conflict. Other work has involved pupils in thinking about mystical experiences such as encounters with angels. This has inspired good quality art work and poetry. On the other hand pupils find some tasks dull, when they require no more than recalling and writing about facts. Religious education lessons often take place at the end of the day when pupils are getting tired and this compounds the problem. Although there is much useful overlap, there are occasions when there is insufficient distinction between religious education and personal, social and health education and this duplication of work slows progress.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

80. This area of learning includes **art and design, design and technology, music** and **physical education**. No overall judgements can be made about provision, teaching and learning, standards and achievement in any of these subjects because too few lessons were observed.
81. No **design and technology** or **art and design** lessons were observed but there is substantial evidence of art and design work on display in school and a selection of design and technology work has been retained in school following the completion of last term's topic. Pupils' completed work, including photographs and the additional enriching activities that the school provides, indicate the following **effective features**:
- Teaching enables pupils to produce examples of high quality work in both subjects.
  - Activities outside normal lessons make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, notably in design and technology, and to their personal development.
  - There are effective links between subjects that enhance pupils' understanding and skills well.
  - Teachers' enthusiasm inspires pupils and helps them to produce examples of high quality work. Two examples best illustrate this effect:
    - Teachers in Year 3 greatly value the place of art and design in the school's curriculum and they talk energetically about how pupils benefit from the skills that they learn. Because of the teachers' strong commitment to the subject, Year 3 pupils produce very rich, detailed art work such as images of children relating to each other. Pupils take great care when applying their skills in paint, oil pastels and graphite pencils to produce pictures that are mature for their age.
    - Teaching in Year 6 enables pupils to design and make slippers in their design and technology work, that are finished to a high standard in a range of materials. The footwear has original and imaginative design features. Teaching effectively ensures that the pupils reflect on their finished work to evaluate the extent to which it is suitable for its purpose
82. Activities at lunch times and after school make a significant contribution to pupils' skills and attitudes, particularly in design and technology. For example a large number of Year 2 pupils enthusiastically engage in constructing different items, some with moving parts. Older pupils volunteer to sacrifice their playtimes to support them and the opportunity contributes well to the social development of all pupils. The energetic teacher makes very good use of links with other schools and outside organisations to acquire a wide range of resources to build up pupils' skills.
83. The school makes links between subjects that enhance pupils' learning and understanding well. For instance, art and design is used well to help Year 2 pupils to visualise what houses along a street would have looked like at the time of the Fire of London. The care with which pupils draw the buildings gives them a good impression of the historical setting for the event. Design and technology is well linked with ICT to support the skills of each subject. In a remarkable example one pupil had used the Internet to download onto a microchip a program for a vehicle made from a construction kit.
84. Two lessons were seen in **music**. The subject leader for music has introduced a scheme of work that builds systematically through the school and provides guidance for teachers. In one of the lessons observed in Year 6 the work was demanding and resulted in groups of pupils using a wide range of instruments to compose music to create different moods. The teaching was lively and skilful, and inspired pupils to work hard. Many pupils lacked the skill of collaborating as a group, however, and so the finished compositions did not do justice to the quality of the teaching. Although this hampered progress, the work was of the standard expected of eleven

year olds. Pupils sang well in the lesson and in assembly. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn an instrument with county music service personnel, and many take up the challenge. Pupils have good opportunities to take part in the school choir and orchestra.

85. No lessons were observed in **physical education**. The school provides a full range of activities, gymnastics, games, athletics and dance, at different times of the year. In addition pupils in Year 3 learn to swim. Almost all the pupils reach the expected standard of 25 metres. The school makes good use of the large halls, spacious grounds and resources. Older pupils have the opportunity to take part in more adventurous activities during residential visits planned for them. There are opportunities for other pupils to experience orienteering on the school field. A range of after-school sports clubs extends opportunities further.

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

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good** and helps pupils to become mature and responsible.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- This area of learning is managed well and planned carefully in the curriculum.
- It makes a strong contribution to pupils' behaviour and the school's ethos.
- The school values pupils as individuals and takes their views seriously.
- Sometimes teachers miss opportunities for pupils to use their good ideas and initiative in their work.

### **Commentary**

86. In only a few weeks the new co-ordinator has effectively revised the planning for this part of the curriculum. Because there is useful written guidance for teachers, pupils' learning is good, notably in the classes where teachers make a clear distinction between the subject and religious education. This approach ensures, as in Year 5, a more specific focus on issues such as pupils considering who they might trust to talk to and what concerns they would share with them.
87. The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' behaviour and it has helped the school in its improvement since the last inspection. Pupils now behave well, they show respect to adults and they are polite, holding open doors for other people. The school is good at developing in pupils a sense of citizenship by giving them ample opportunities to take responsibility, for instance for the care of younger pupils. One older pupil wrote, "We went to play with our 'book buddies' on the playground so we get to know the younger children better".
88. Teachers value what pupils think and feel, so that pupils develop good self-esteem. Teachers listen carefully to pupils' ideas and show they appreciate them. The school acts on the propositions of the school council, as when the governors agreed to improve the conditions in the pupils' toilets. Pupils like the opportunities for talking about their opinions. For example, one pupil wrote, "I like circle time<sup>2</sup> because you get to share your feelings and get to know each other well."
89. Often teachers enable pupils to think creatively across the range of subjects. Almost invariably they welcome pupils' original ideas and explanations. Just occasionally, however, having effectively encouraged pupils to make innovative suggestions, teachers sometimes miss

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<sup>2</sup> Circle time is time set aside for pupils to share their thoughts and feelings, and to learn to value the opinions of others.

valuable opportunities for them to try out their ideas. This happens, on occasions, in mathematics and science and it limits pupils' independence in their learning.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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