

## INSPECTION REPORT

**MILFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Belper

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112788

Headteacher: Mr S Moore

Lead inspector: Mr G R Logan

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Inspection number: 256916

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:	5 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	113
School address:	Chevin Road Milford Belper Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE56 0QH
Telephone number:	01332 841316
Fax number:	-
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Philip Harding
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Milford Primary School serves the village of Milford, south of Belper in Derbyshire. The school opened in 1874 and occupies a formidable stone building, originally a mill and now with Listed Building status, on an awkward sloping site. This is a generally prosperous, residential village where much of the housing is privately-owned. However, the majority of pupils come from outside the village, mainly from Belper, and the intake is socially very diverse. Though the school has grown significantly in the last ten years, it is still relatively small in relation to many primary schools. A very high proportion of the 113 pupils are from White European backgrounds, with around three per cent of pupils of mixed-race or other family background. No pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. A below average proportion of pupils (12 per cent) have special educational needs, for mainly moderate learning difficulties. Three of these have statements. This is a very stable community - only around three per cent of pupils left or joined the school during the last school year. In recent years, however, as the school has grown to its capacity, there has been a steady influx of pupils who had started their education elsewhere. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals, just under eight per cent, is well below the national average (19 per cent). The profile of pupils' attainment when they enter the school is average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11810	Mr G R Logan	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Music
14226	Mrs A Willatts	Lay inspector	
3751	Mrs T Cotton	Team inspector	English Art and design Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language
22421	Mrs V McGrath	Team inspector	Science Geography History Religious education Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage

The inspection contractor was:

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# PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

## OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** education for pupils. It has a supportive ethos and successfully includes all pupils. Pupils achieve satisfactorily over time, although standards fluctuate considerably from year to year. The headteacher and governors work well together to seek improvement. The school provides **satisfactory** value for money, overall.

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

- Provision, including teaching quality, in the Foundation Stage, is good.
- Standards in English and in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average. Pupils' writing skills are not used sufficiently in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Pupils' behaviour is good.
- The partnership between parents and the school is good. Parents are very supportive of the school.
- Leadership and management have improved and are now good. The Governing Body in particular has a clear vision for the future.
- Aspects of teaching need to be improved to ensure that pupils achieve more consistently. Pupils' interest and enthusiasm are not always engaged sufficiently.
- In spite of the school's efforts, the accommodation has some shortcomings and this affects pupils' learning. Planned renovations will resolve some of these issues.

The school has made **satisfactory** improvement overall since the last inspection. The current headteacher has had a considerable number of issues to deal with. Although the current cohort in Year 6 is the weakest for some years, standards have risen generally and pupils' achievement, for most other year groups, has been good. At present pupils in Years 1, 3 and 5 are achieving well. Aspects of investigative science remain a weakness and opportunities for extended writing have not been developed as rigorously as they should. However, standards in mathematics have risen. The proportion of good teaching has doubled, following an intensive programme to develop the quality of teaching, although there is further work to be done. Recently-appointed staff in particular teach to a consistently good standard. Planning and curriculum monitoring have improved. The development plan now provides the expected three-year overview.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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 achieve **satisfactorily** overall. Children in Reception are well on the way to reaching the goals set for them, with some exceeding the expected level by the end of Reception. Standards in Year 2 are average in mathematics and science and below average in reading and writing. Standards in Year 6 are average in mathematics, but below average in English and science. This is consistent with the academic profile of that year group over time. Their achievement has been satisfactory overall, in relation to their performance in Year 2. Standards in ICT are below average, particularly for the older pupils. Standards in other subjects, where a judgement can be made, are similar to those found in other schools. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily because of the effective support they receive from support staff.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are **satisfactory** overall, though better for the younger pupils than the older. Overall, older pupils are less engaged in learning than the younger. The teaching does not consistently inspire them. Younger pupils are benefiting from a more stable experience of school life, with well-established routines and higher expectations. Behaviour is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory**. Relationships between pupils are good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided is **satisfactory**. Though a number of good lessons were observed, teaching is **satisfactory** overall. Teachers have not used a sufficiently wide range of strategies over time to ensure that pupils are achieving consistently well. Some lessons are lively and challenging. The more recently appointed staff tend to engage more dynamically with pupils. But, in some lessons, the pace is too slow, challenge is limited and the focus on the development of pupils' skills is inconsistent. Teachers have satisfactory relationships with their pupils. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. In subjects such as English, and in some classes, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work successfully. However, they have too few opportunities to work independently and to become mature learners. Older pupils in particular have gaps in their learning. Planning to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Learning support staff are effective. The curriculum is satisfactory, other than in physical education in the main school and provision for outdoor play in Reception, where accommodation issues mean that the school is unable to provide a full curriculum. Extra-curricular provision is good. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. Pupils receive satisfactory care and support, though aspects of the building and the cleanliness of the school are weaker features. Good induction procedures help new children to settle quickly. Child protection procedures are secure. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The school has a good partnership with parents and good links with other schools and the community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good overall.** The headteacher has worked hard to take the school forward. He has successfully made improvements in challenging circumstances, but is well aware of what still needs to be done. He is well regarded by parents. Subject co-ordinators are generally knowledgeable and effective. The school evaluates its work well and makes good use of available data. Governors manage the school efficiently. Financial management is good. Statutory requirements are met. School administration is very efficient.

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

**Parents are happy with the school.** They are happy with the standards achieved and feel that the school is well led. The level of parental involvement is good. **Most pupils enjoy school.** They appreciate the care shown towards them and participate readily in the activities provided.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to provide a more consistent and stimulating experience for pupils, so ensuring better achievement by pupils across the school.
- Ensure that standards in reading, writing and ICT are raised. Make better provision for investigative work in science. Develop more structured opportunities for pupils to write at length in subjects across the curriculum.
- Sustain efforts to improve further the quality and cleanliness of the accommodation. Seek opportunities to enable pupils to access the full curriculum in physical education.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** overall. Currently, standards are average in mathematics, but below average in English and science by the end of Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children achieve well and are prepared well for the work in the main school.
- Standards in reading and writing are not high enough. There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum.
- Pupils' skills in ICT are underdeveloped, particularly in the juniors. The cross-curricular use of ICT to support learning is weak.

#### Commentary

1. Attainment on entry to the school is average for most year groups, but with a wide range of attainment within each year group. A below average proportion of pupils have significant levels of special educational need, other than in the present Year 6. A very small proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic groups; none are in the early stages of learning English.
2. Until recently, numbers in each year group have been low and this has led, inevitably, to wide variations in performance from year to year, depending on the characteristics of each cohort of pupils. In addition, as the school has grown, there has been a steady influx of pupils who had started their education elsewhere, including a small number with significant special educational needs. Several of these are in the current Year 6.
3. Both the Year 2 and Year 6 cohorts in 2003 were considered to be the most able to have passed through the school in recent years. In the national tests, standards in Year 2 were well above average in reading, writing and science and very high in mathematics in relation to all schools nationally. Standards were above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics in relation to similar schools. Standards in Year 6 were very high in English and well above average in mathematics and science in relation to all schools nationally. Standards were well above average in English and science and average in mathematics in relation to similar schools. The rate of improvement made between the end of Year 2 and Year 6 was above average overall in 2003. Able pupils in Year 6 did well, with a well above average proportion of the cohort achieving the challenging Level 5 in English and science and an above average proportion in mathematics.
4. The school's tracking systems indicate that the current Year 2 cohort, which includes fewer pupils with a record of high attainment, are likely to perform less well overall than in 2003. Outcomes in Year 6 are likely to be significantly weaker than in 2003, given the make-up of the group, which has several pupils with statements of special educational need, and few higher attainers. Value-added data, however, are likely to be at least satisfactory, other than in science, given that the performance of the group in 2000, as Year 2, was well below average in all subjects.
5. Overall, pupils are achieving satisfactorily. In general, younger pupils are achieving more consistently than the older, having a more stable learning environment. Progress is best in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 3, where the teaching is strongest and most motivating. Planning for the needs of mixed-year classes, however, does not always ensure that the older pupils are sufficiently challenged and this also affects pupils' achievement.



6. The inspection found no evidence of any gender issues. Boys and girls make similar rates of progress. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is similar to other pupils, though occasionally better when they receive good support, with work that is well-planned to meet their needs. Overall, these pupils reach the targets set for them. The school does not at present formally identify pupils considered to be gifted or talented. However, all groups of pupils have access to the whole curriculum and there are no barriers to learning.

## Foundation Stage

7. Foundation Stage provision is good. Children benefit from good induction procedures and settle well into school routines. Good teaching, planning and assessment procedures ensure that children make good progress and achieve well. Almost all children in the current group are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas, with a significant proportion exceeding them. Provision in those areas of the curriculum observed is good. By the end of Reception, children are well-prepared for the work in the main school.

## Years 1 and 2

8. Standards by the end of Year 2 in 2004 are average in mathematics and science, but below average in reading and writing. Standards are average in several other subjects. Underlying literacy and numeracy skills are sound, but are not used sufficiently well across the curriculum. Pupils' speaking skills are developed effectively. Pupils have restricted skills in information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Year 2. ICT is not yet used well in other subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.1 (14.4)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.2 (14.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.7 (15.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

## Years 3 - 6

9. Currently, attainment in Year 6 is average in mathematics, but below average in English and science. Standards are average in most other subjects where a judgement is possible. Standards in ICT are below average, because the school has not taught ICT skills sufficiently well in recent years. In some elements of PE, standards are depressed because of problems relating to accommodation and outdoor facilities. Skill development in subjects such as art and design, history and geography has been patchy over time, but is now improving. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily across the curriculum, though progress over time has been erratic. The school exceeded its targets in 2003. It is likely to achieve its revised targets at Level 4 in the current year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.2 (27.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.4 (28.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.7 (29.1)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

10. Pupils' literacy skills are not promoted well enough across the curriculum in Years 3 to 6. There have been missed opportunities to record, write and communicate in subjects such as history and science. Numeracy skills are satisfactory. Standards are not high enough in science because of an under emphasis on practical and investigational activities. Pupils' skills in ICT are

only now beginning to improve in Years 1 and 2. Planned cross-curricular use of ICT is underdeveloped.

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

Younger pupils have **good** attitudes to school, although these have not, in the past, been effectively sustained through the school. Almost all pupils behave well. Attendance is around the national average.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Younger pupils have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils behave well. The school behaviour policy is implemented successfully.
- Relationships between pupils are good.
- Older pupils are not always motivated sufficiently to be keen learners. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to work independently.

### **Commentary**

11. Despite the constraints of the school environment, pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory overall, though good in the infants and very good in Reception. They work well in their groups or classes although the physical environment of the school limits active, independent learning opportunities. Pupils are adept, however, at making the most of the circumstances in which they work and concentrate very well despite the interruptions caused by the constant passage of pupils and staff through the classrooms or hall.
12. Behaviour is good. Pupils and staff do not accept poor behaviour. The standards expected are respected and the school behaviour policy is used effectively by staff and pupils. The use of rewards and sanctions works well. These procedures have proved to be very effective. No bullying or oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection. One fixed-term exclusion was recorded in the last school year.

### **Exclusions**

#### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	113	1	0

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

13. Older pupils have various responsibilities. They take an active part in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) fortnight where pupils work in 'family' groups. They have some responsibilities at play and lunchtimes looking after the younger pupils. PSHE and circle time form part of the timetable and the School Council, where important school issues are discussed by members of each year group, meets regularly. At break, despite the small area available, pupils play well and respect one another's needs - for instance, a space is reserved for those wanting to sit and chat. The football players avoid this area and confine their activities to their own space.
14. Attendance is satisfactory. Unauthorised absence and late arrivals at school are not problems. Pupils are happy to come to school. Registers are marked appropriately, analysed and checked regularly. Parents are contacted if pupils do not attend school without letting the school know the reason for absence.

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year [%]

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.0
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.3
National data:	0.4

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

15. The provision for spiritual education is satisfactory. Pupils learn about other faiths as well as Christianity. Good use is made of the attractive local area. Opportunities arise which enhance pupils' spiritual experiences. For instance, during the inspection, pupils were enthralled by the hatching of pheasant chicks in the Reception classroom – as were the inspectors!
16. Pupils are well aware of the value of good relationships and the difference between right and wrong. Relationships between pupils are good. They know one another well and are happy to look after each other. They are respectful towards the adults in the school and are courteous to visitors. Year 5 and 6 pupils appreciate the residential visit they make each year. Teamwork is paramount during the time that they are away and the pupils benefit greatly from the experience.
17. The school tries to ensure that pupils have knowledge of their own and other cultures. The school has effective links with a school in Uganda. Pupils have studied African culture and are soon to have more experience of this when a specialist theatre group visits the school. Links with the local church and the community are enriching for the pupils. The local custom of Well Dressing features strongly in pupils' lives as an important tradition of the county.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils are cared for adequately. The partnership with parents is good.

#### Teaching and learning

Teaching is **satisfactory** overall, although the level of challenge varies between classes. Teachers make satisfactory use of assessment information to plan future work, particularly in Reception.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The proportion of good teaching has increased since the last inspection.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and promotes effective learning.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs.
- In the main school, teaching does not always challenge pupils sufficiently.
- Though the quality of planning has improved, there has been an inconsistent focus on the development of pupils' skills over time. Neither writing nor ICT skills are developed effectively across the curriculum.
- The rigour of marking of pupils' work could be improved.

#### Commentary

18. At the 1998 inspection, the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall. This remains the case, although there has been a significant increase in the proportion of good teaching observed, with no unsatisfactory lessons. The headteacher has worked hard, and with some success, to improve weaknesses identified at the last inspection and several staff changes have occurred. However, the strengths in teaching observed in individual lessons are not always reflected in the quality of pupils' recorded work over time, or in their achievement. The most effective teaching at present is in the Foundation Stage and in Year 3, when taught separately.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	16	10	0	0	0

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

19. In the Foundation Stage, staff have a good understanding of the areas of learning and work well in partnership with parents. Lessons are well prepared and planning is good, taking good account of individual needs. Teaching and learning in the lessons observed were consistently good, enabling children to make good progress. The teaching assistant is particularly effective. Staff engage well with the children and get an enthusiastic response. There is a good balance between child-initiated learning and activities planned by the staff and an effective focus on personal, social and emotional development and on the promotion of literacy skills. Relationships are very good. Children's progress is carefully assessed and recorded. Assessment systems are thorough.
20. Just over half the teaching observed in Years 1 to 6 was good. In classes, such as Years 1 and 3, where the approach is dynamic and engaging, the response is enthusiastic and achievement is good. However, achievement is satisfactory overall because the teaching is not always challenging enough and, on occasion, teachers do not motivate pupils sufficiently. This is because the methods used do not always encourage active response – such as overuse of worksheets (for example, in mathematics and science), extended periods spent listening on the carpet, and too little emphasis on pupils becoming independent learners. Questioning does not always open up debate or point towards new ways of thinking about a problem.
21. Planning has improved. It is good in Foundation Stage and satisfactory in the main school. Long-term planning, however, needs further revision, to prevent unnecessary repetition, - for example, in science topics - and also to promote more effectively the development of pupils' writing and ICT skills across the curriculum. Planning for the development of pupils' skills over time in art and design, science, history and geography, has been erratic and there have been discontinuities as staff have come and gone. However, this is beginning to improve.
22. Teachers encourage pupils with special educational needs to do well and to work more confidently. However, when the whole class works together, teachers spend too much time using questions and answers to stimulate and expand learning. Pupils join in more readily, and enjoy their learning, when a wider range of strategies is used - for instance, using white boards to jot down ideas, or enabling less capable speakers and writers to tape their ideas first. In everyday lessons in literacy and numeracy, work is planned to meet the broad ability levels found in each class. Pupils' learning targets (IEPs) are not used consistently enough to help plan specific, individual work.
23. Satisfactory use is made of assessment in Years 1 to 6 to support the planning of work which is appropriately matched to pupils' needs and systems have improved since the last inspection. However, pupils are not always given clear guidance, when their work is marked, to help them improve their future work. The school is beginning to train pupils to evaluate their work and that of others and there was evidence of good practice emerging in an English lesson in Years 5 and 6. There is more work to be done in developing the use of individual targets across the key subjects.
24. The school is making increasingly effective use of data to track pupils' progress and identify areas of weakness. Progress is tracked in writing and numeracy every half term, and the school is identifying potential attainment for the end of each year. They could now look at breaking this down further so that pupils' progress can be accurately assessed at more frequent intervals. Outline assessment procedures are in place for most foundation subjects. The use of

homework to support pupils' achievement is satisfactory and makes a satisfactory contribution to their learning.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum provides **good** opportunities for children's learning in the Foundation Stage and **satisfactory** provision in the rest of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory.
- Educational visits and extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum.
- Learning support assistants make a good contribution to promoting equality of access to the curriculum, particularly for lower attaining pupils.
- Resources have improved since the last inspection, but accommodation is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

25. The curriculum meets requirements in all subjects, except for physical education. Despite the best efforts of teachers to provide all activities in the PE curriculum, lack of space in the hall and playground, and the lack of a playing field, prevents full compliance with the National Curriculum guidance. Planning of the curriculum is satisfactory. Literacy and numeracy are well planned, in line with the national strategies. However, there is further work to do to ensure the use of writing skills across the curriculum. The school is beginning to plan links between subjects. In some subjects learning lacks depth because insufficient attention is given to developing the skills required. For example, the skills for using and applying knowledge about art and design, science, history and geography have not been systematically taught in the past. This is, however, improving. There is not enough focus in the investigative aspects of science.
26. Overall, provision for SEN pupils with statements is good. The curriculum is appropriately organised for those identified with special educational needs. Teaching assistants are experienced and receive training. They make a good contribution to promoting equality of access to the curriculum.
27. There is a good range of activities outside the school day. The school takes full advantage of sporting and arts opportunities for pupils outside the school. There is good enrichment of the curriculum through visits and partnership links. For example, learning in design and technology, science, geography, history and religious education (RE) is enhanced by visits to museums, stately homes, nature reserves and through linked projects with schools, local businesses and churches. During two weeks of each year there is a whole school focus on personal, social and health education (PSHE), and visitors are used to bring expertise to the taught themes. Sex, relationships and drugs education are taught in PSHE and in science. Pupils' social skills are well developed and this results in good behaviour and good relationships between pupils.
28. Accommodation is unsatisfactory, although the school has worked hard to develop the space available. Approval has been given to develop additional space for a staffroom, creating room for an ICT suite, a food technology area and resource storage. This is due to be completed soon. At present, there is no adequate space for a library or for small group work. A split class, using the hall during the mornings, is disrupted by noise from the hall. The toilets are poorly sited for the number and ages of the pupils, and there is inadequate space for physical education. Classrooms function as corridors, causing some disruption to lessons. The designated outdoor learning environment for Reception children does not provide adequate space or accessibility. In other respects, the school has tried hard to develop the restricted outdoor space as imaginatively as possible, making creative use, where possible, of available grant funding to upgrade surfaces and enliven the surroundings. Overall, resources have improved.

## Care, guidance and support

The school takes **satisfactory** care of pupils.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff and governors work hard to ensure that the building is safe and secure.
- Toilet facilities are barely adequate and poorly located, with limited facilities for staff.
- The premises are not as clean as they might be.
- Pupils' learning can be disrupted because of the poor layout of the building.

## Commentary

29. The safety and wellbeing of pupils is adequately looked after. The premises are reasonably tidy with fairly satisfactory storage, but are less than adequately clean. Toilet facilities are a concern. There are no low level toilets or washbasins for Reception children and other younger pupils. Distances between the furthest sited classrooms and the toilets are considerable. The layout of the classrooms means constant disruption to pupils in their classes as others needing the toilets pass through, though staff and pupils continue to try to work effectively. There are no toilet facilities for the staff other than the disabled toilet. The school has satisfactory arrangements for fire protection and first aid.
30. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. Staff have a good knowledge of the procedures. The school works well with the local health authority and social services when necessary.
31. Attendance is around the national average. The arrangements for promoting good attendance are satisfactory. Parents are conscientious about notifying the school when their child is away and, in general, make sure that their children arrive at school on time.
32. Staff and governors make every effort to provide a safe and secure environment for pupils. However, the lack of space, both in the building and outside, is a significant disadvantage. Pupils taught in the hall are particularly affected by the movement of other pupils, the setting up of the hall for lunches and other disruptions.
33. Relationships are satisfactory between pupils and staff. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are respected by both pupils and staff. Pupils are able to voice opinions about the running of the school and their own responsibilities through the School Council which meets regularly. Personal, social and health education topics and circle times are part of the timetable for all pupils. These sessions are useful opportunities for pupils to discuss personal and social matters with the staff; for instance, one class had explored friendships, making use of Barnaby Bear as a trigger point.
34. The school has an effective relationship with the pre-school group which shares the school site. Children make visits to school during the term before they enter Reception.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents and with the community. Links with other schools are **good**. Overall, the school's partnerships make a positive contribution to pupils' learning and progress.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The partnership between the school and its parents is good.
- There are good links with the community. This enhances the curriculum.
- Links with the local secondary school are good.

## Commentary

35. The partnership between parents/carers and the school is good. They support the school in many ways. They help in classes and support outings and field trips. Parents can readily speak to teaching staff at the beginning and end of the school day. Newsletters and other information are regularly distributed. Parents are invited to parent/teacher meetings and educational workshops on curriculum themes such as ICT and literacy. Annual reports are informative and tell parents about the progress their child is making. Parents and staff appear to communicate well and complaints from parents are dealt with effectively.
36. The Friends of Milford School is a thriving organisation. It promotes social and fundraising events which raise valuable funds for the school. The functions are supported well by parents so that the social side of school life is good.
37. A recent questionnaire to parents was very positive in its response. Parents are happy with most aspects of school life. Homework is satisfactory and the communication between parents and staff about this is positive. Many parents use the homework books to record comments and progress.
38. The school values its relationship with the local community and the Parish Church. The school invites local people to school functions such as the May Fair. Pupils go to the local church for a carol service at Christmas. Well Dressing, a local custom, involves pupils in the decoration of the Derbyshire wells. The school has important links with a local chemical company and with the Rolls Royce organisation, based in the area.
39. The school has a good relationship with the local secondary school. Year 7 staff visit the school and Year 6 pupils have a 'taster day' at the secondary school, prior to transfer.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is **good**. Both management and governance of the school are **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear strategy for the way forward.
- The governing body is committed and has a strong shared vision for the development of the school.
- Financial management is very good.
- There is a strong team spirit among the staff, governing body and parents.

## Commentary

40. The headteacher gives clear educational direction to the work of the school and has created a strong team spirit, which has enabled the school to move forward after a period of instability. He has, over time, tackled a number of difficult issues, including the quality of teaching, and, while there is more to be done, has enabled the school to make progress. He has worked particularly hard to tackle the many issues relating to accommodation and has worked well with governors to identify, attract and retain new, lively staff. Strategic planning builds well on self-evaluation and sets challenging but achievable targets. The headteacher is held in good regard by parents and the community. The school has established a good reputation and many parents choose to send their children there.
41. The management of the school is good. There are increasingly effective systems to monitor the school's work and to identify strengths and weaknesses. The school development plan has improved since the previous inspection, but still focuses on too many priorities. Sound analysis

of information from pupil assessment is helping to track pupils' performance and to tackle any dips in progress. Teachers and support staff have benefited from continuing professional development, which in turn has helped to raise the quality of teaching in school. Key staff are currently involved in the Primary Leadership Programme initiative, with a view to strengthening leadership at all levels.

42. In this small school, many staff have responsibility for more than one subject area. Whilst subject leaders are committed to do their best, the quality and expertise of leadership varies, and is better in the core subjects than in non-core subjects. Monitoring of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection. There is now a cycle of monitoring in place, but more astute checks on teaching and standards across the mixed-age groups would identify where best to target help. In English and mathematics, good use is made of the information gained from analysis and tests results to help with strategic planning, as well as everyday teaching.
43. Leadership of special educational needs provision is sound and procedures are fully in line with the Code of Practice.
44. The governance of the school is good. Governors work very hard to do their best for the school and have a good grasp of its strengths and weaknesses. Links between governors and subject leaders play an important part in nurturing a strong team spirit and promoting a shared vision for the school. The chair of governors provides a pivotal role as a critical friend, and has been invaluable in helping the school with its strategic planning.

***Financial information for the period September 2002 to March 2003***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	287,913	Balance from previous year	£9,071
Total expenditure	285,753	Balance carried forward to the next	£11,231
Expenditure per pupil	£2,483		

45. Day-to-day financial management and administration are good. Routine procedures run smoothly and the recently appointed school administrator provides good support for staff and pupils. The school was last audited in October 2003. A number of relatively minor procedural matters were raised at that time. The school has since advised the local authority that it has dealt with these issues. Financial management is currently good. Funding is targeted effectively to secure the best available provision for pupils. However, there are still some inconsistencies in teaching and in pupils' performance. At present, the school provides **satisfactory** value for money.



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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

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

- Teaching and learning are consistently good.
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is good.
- Children's attitudes to learning are very good.
- Relationships and care for children are very good.
- Learning support assistants and voluntary helpers make a very positive contribution to teaching, learning and care of children.
- The indoor and outdoor learning environments are unsatisfactory for promoting good physical development.

46. Children join a combined Reception and Year 1 class either in the September or the January before they become five. Most children have attended the pre-school on the school site prior to starting school. These children visit the Reception class regularly during the half term before starting school and good links have been established with the pre-school. When they start school the majority of children are attaining levels in line with expectations for their age, with the full range of ability represented. The individual needs of children are met well because they are identified through good assessment procedures. The good ratio of adults to children enables good support to be provided for individuals and small groups. Overall, almost all children achieve the expected level in all areas of the curriculum, other than physical development, with a number exceeding that level. The indoor accommodation is satisfactory for all areas of learning except physical development. In spite of the school's best efforts, the outdoor learning environment is unsatisfactory because it is too small and is not adequately accessible from the classroom.

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

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

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

- Very clear expectations are consistently set, leading to very good behaviour.
- Very good relationships between adults and children promote good emotional development.
- A good balance of child initiated and adult led activities leads to good personal and social development.

#### **Commentary**

47. Good management of space, staff and resources enables children to develop concentration and perseverance well. In child initiated play activities children select construction toys, sand, water, paint and malleable materials, showing good levels of independence. The range of equipment available in each area is limited, however, because there are insufficient storage and display areas. This constrains opportunities for developing children's initiative and autonomy. Teaching is good. Staff and children clearly enjoy each other's company and this promotes very good attitudes to learning and behaviour. Adults listen to children with interest and they regularly give positive responses and encouragement. This leads to good levels of self-confidence and self esteem in children.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching and learning leads to good achievement in writing, speaking and listening, and average standards overall.
- Standards in reading are above those normally found.

### **Commentary**

48. Good achievement in reading is promoted by good teaching and good use of resources. Children regularly share books with adults at home and school. Books are well organised, enabling children to enjoy texts which are well matched to their competences. There are regular, stimulating opportunities for learning about sounds and letters. Children also develop a good understanding of how pictures, rhyme and sentence patterns can help them predict words.
49. Teaching and learning are good. Children are given good individual support when they are writing and are encouraged to use their knowledge of sounds and letters to build words and sentences. The majority are able to write, using plausible spelling and simple punctuation. Children respond well to questions and express their views and feelings well. Good use is made of role-play for promoting speaking and listening and this is well promoted by adults. For example, children visit a garden centre and observe people at work, before engaging in role-play in the classroom 'garden centre'. This is a stimulating and well resourced area and adults regularly join children in their play, interacting well with them.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Well-planned activities in small groups underpin good achievement for all children.
- A good level of support for individuals means the curriculum is fully inclusive.
- Stimulating activities lead to very good attitudes to learning.

### **Commentary**

50. In whole group sessions children learn well as they count forward and back and practise subtraction in rhymes and read numerals. Almost all children record simple addition number sentences, writing numerals and mathematical symbols correctly. They recognise and name coins and use them to pay for grocery items. Good problem solving opportunities enable children of all competencies to respond and enjoy good levels of challenge. For example, children were asked to find different ways to make 12 pence with their coins. They also self selected from a range of prices and arranged different combinations of coins to pay. They use ICT to create repeating patterns, using different shapes, symbols and colours. They can name common shapes and know which shapes are symmetrical. Standards are at least in line with those expected for their age, with good achievement overall. Teachers' planning maximises the use of resources and ensures all ability groups are challenged well. Very effective use is made of the learning support assistant and a voluntary helper, who make a very positive contribution to children's learning.

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

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Stimulating activities promote high levels of interest and motivation.
- Adults use questioning and practical activities to good effect for promoting observation and exploration.

## **Commentary**

51. Good use is made of the limited space outside to encourage children's observations of living things. Plants have been well selected to attract insects and children are encouraged to create their own pretend gardens and to care for plants. They observe the effects of sowing cress seeds in different conditions. They observe pheasants' eggs hatching and this stimulated high levels of interest and genuine care and wonder at the emergence of new life. Children talk about their observations enthusiastically: 'They use a special sharp beak to break the shell'. When handling lemons children were encouraged to use all their senses. Adults promoted very good use of vocabulary as children described fruit as sour, sharp, bitter, 'looks like a flower or a rugby ball'. There are, however, few resources, photographs and books to promote children's awareness of other cultures. Visitors and visits to the local area are used to good effect to promote learning. Children enjoyed a visit by a grandparent who talked about Judaism. They have also visited Hardwick Hall, the church and garden centre to extend learning related to class topics.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

52. It is not possible to make a judgement of provision in creative development because no teaching was observed. However, children were seen engaging in creative opportunities during child initiated activities. Good learning opportunities in role-play promote children's understanding of characters and events in stories well. Children also play imaginatively when they use play dough, play people, construction toys and puppets. They develop good control of tools and materials as they cut and stick. The classroom has a discrete art area and children select from a range of materials when making their own pictures. Standards by the end of the Reception year are likely to be in line with those expected for their age.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

53. No overall judgement on provision for physical development was possible as no lessons were seen, although children were observed using the outdoor learning environment. Whilst the provision of wheeled toys has improved recently, there is insufficient space for children to develop skills in controlling different speeds and directions. There is no provision outside for climbing, sliding, swinging and balancing. The outdoor area is too far away from the classroom and toilets to enable children to access it independently, or to exercise their own initiative when choosing outdoor activities. The hall is currently used as a class teaching space in the morning sessions and is occupied by the school office and classroom furniture in the afternoons. This constrains access to a safe space for physical activity for the youngest children.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **sound**.

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

- Progress by the end of Year 6 has improved since the last inspection.
- The school has partly rectified the issues identified in writing in the previous report.
- Pupils enjoy 'guided reading time' and make good progress.
- The school needs to extend the range of strategies in teaching and learning during class work in literacy lessons.

#### **Commentary**

54. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in reading and writing are below average. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are average. These standards are well below the high levels attained in the 2003 national tests in English. Results have varied greatly over time and this uneven pattern can be linked partly to small year groups and to the characteristics of different cohorts of pupils. The high proportion of pupils with difficulties in reading and writing is also affecting overall attainment in English in the current Year 6.
55. Progress and achievement in English are satisfactory by the end of Year 6. This is an improved picture on the last inspection. Greater stability of pupils within the school, teachers' improved subject knowledge and clearer lesson planning have promoted reading and writing skills in a more consistent and progressive way.
56. All groups of pupils are included in work in English. Pupils with statemented provision for their special educational needs make good progress towards the specific targets set for their learning. In the two classes where there are fewer girls than boys, teachers ensure all contribute in lessons. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language.
57. Standards in speaking and listening are average. At all levels of ability, pupils achieve soundly in small co-operative groups, where they are encouraged to discuss ideas and explain their thinking more precisely. In Year 4, effective work on persuasive argument enables pupils to give their point of view, but also to listen carefully to what others have to say. However, when the whole class works together in literacy lessons, teachers use a limited range of strategies to promote and sustain interest in learning. Often class sessions are too long and rely on the teacher's use of question and answers to develop learning. Despite attempts to involve all pupils, the same, more confident speakers often take the lead, while others take a more passive role. In a Year 3 lesson, a more effective use of teaching and learning strategies enabled a pupil with special educational needs to achieve well, using a tape recorder to tape his contribution to the class discussion.
58. By Year 2 and Year 6, standards in reading are below average. However, new approaches to 'guided reading' are motivating junior pupils to read. Older pupils enjoy the range of experiences provided by the 'reading carousel' and appreciate the time to read quietly by themselves. By Year 6 more capable readers reach the higher levels in their reading and read in an expressive and mature way. Less able readers benefit from extra adult support in class and make sound gains in their learning. In the infant classes pupils follow a structured scheme, learn to recall words by sight, link letters with their sounds and read accurately and with understanding. A lack of opportunity to make choices from a range of more challenging books can set a ceiling to learning and hold back achievement. This is shown in teachers' predictions for Year 2, with fewer pupils reaching the higher levels, and nearly three-fifths of pupils attaining lower levels in their reading.

59. Writing was identified as an issue at the last inspection and has been a focus for development. The school is beginning to raise standards by using a range of exciting poetry and texts as models for good writing. Effective teaching enables pupils in the infant classes to expand and enrich sentences, and for junior pupils to draft and organise ideas in stories and non-fictional writing. As yet, fewer opportunities exist whereby pupils can draw together different aspects of their learning, such as creating mood or developing character, and produce longer pieces of original work. Work in pupils' books shows satisfactory progress in basic skills development, but a tendency to use undemanding worksheets makes learning less purposeful at times.
60. Teaching and learning are sound, with aspects that are good. A good feature is the use of feedback time (plenary) to share success and consolidate learning. Expectations of good behaviour also ensure lessons run smoothly. Introduction to lessons and 'class' time in the literacy hour can be too long and loses pupils' interest. Teachers ensure there is time to collaborate in small groups, where learning is well paced and fun. Work is marked consistently, but it varies in its usefulness in helping pupils to improve. The good examples of Year 5 and 6 pupils being involved with assessing and improving their own and each other's work are not typical of practice in other classes. Teachers' planning has improved since the last inspection, but work is not consistently planned at different levels in order to meet the needs of the different age and ability levels in each class.
61. The management of English is good. The co-ordinator has drawn from guidance outside the school to enhance her own expertise in English. This has enabled her to analyse test data and to try out new initiatives in order to raise standards and to take the subject forward. There are established procedures to monitor and track the quality of curriculum coverage and pupils' progress. Further monitoring of teaching and learning should ensure greater consistency in quality and style.

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

62. The use of language and literacy, and the development of pupils' writing skills across the curriculum, are weaker areas at present. Teachers are not creating sufficient opportunities in subjects such as history, geography and science to develop a range of writing and literacy skills. The library provides limited access for research in English and in other subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in mathematics fluctuate from year to year. At present standards are average in Years 2 and 6.
- The learning of Year 1 pupils benefits significantly from the time spent with Year 2 pupils.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall, although the pace of lessons is occasionally slow. Standards of presentation and the quality and rigour of marking could be improved.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning in mathematics.

### **Commentary**

63. Standards in mathematics are average in Year 2 and Year 6. Although not as high as in 2003, these outcomes fairly reflect the academic profile of the current year groups. Neither year group has a significant group of higher attainers and, in the case of Year 6, there is a disproportionate number of pupils with special educational needs. Standards are highest overall in the current Year 5. Across the school, the achievement of pupils with special educational needs is similar to the others, particularly when they receive good support.

64. On the evidence available, the achievement of pupils in Years 2 and 6 has been at least satisfactory, though variable across the school. Aspects of teaching, while satisfactory overall, contribute to this variability. For example, where pupils from different year groups are taught together (Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6), the younger pupils tend to benefit more than the older. Planning provides greater challenge for the able younger than the able older pupils. This was evident in lessons observed during the inspection. Also, the pace of lessons is occasionally slow, with too much time spent on the introductory section and too little time for pupils to work independently and develop their skills. This was the case in a Year 2 lesson observed.
65. One factor which affects the progress of younger pupils is the excessive use of worksheets. Pupils have few opportunities to develop independence in their written calculations and recorded work and do not begin to take responsibility for structuring and organizing their work until Year 3, so that the recorded work of Year 3 pupils – a particularly able year group - is relatively immature. Only now, as the year nears its end, is the quality of their written work beginning to improve, the result of the consistently good teaching received during the year.
66. There is a satisfactory focus across the school on reinforcing basic numeracy skills, although more emphasis could be placed on the presentation and organisation of work in exercise books. The school is making satisfactory use of practical work to secure pupils' understanding of key mathematical concepts at present. It is adequately resourced to support this approach.
67. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the better lessons, teachers challenge pupils to think and to develop strategies which enable them to deal with mathematical problems. They plan lessons effectively, give clear explanations, support individual pupils well and question them carefully to ensure that they understand. This was evident in a Year 4 lesson, where pupils were being challenged to identify errors in addition strategies. In some classes, teachers stimulate a lively response from pupils. In a few lessons, pupils are reluctant to contribute orally and this affects the quality of their learning. There is limited use of computers to support learning in mathematics.
68. Teachers use assessment satisfactorily to guide their planning of future work. The school has identified targets for each year group. Individual target-setting in mathematics, with short-term, achievable targets, has been a focus recently and staff are working towards a manageable system. Marking is broadly satisfactory in most classes, but, occasionally, pupils lack guidance as to how they can improve their work. Homework arrangements are consistent and satisfactory.
69. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory, though the management is good. The level of monitoring and data evaluation is good. Areas for development are recognized and the co-ordinator now has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to move the subject forward.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

70. Pupils use mathematics satisfactorily to support their work in other subjects, mainly in science, geography and design and technology. They use graphs and tables to record data in science and practise their skills in measuring when they undertake practical tasks in design and technology. However, cross-curricular use of mathematics could be improved further. ICT links are underdeveloped.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have been above average in the last two years.
- Pupils' written work, tracking information and discussion with pupils indicate that standards are below average in the current Year 6.
- There is good enrichment of the science curriculum through visits and visitors.
- The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator.
- Opportunities for scientific investigation and exploration could be improved.
- Marking does not help pupils improve their work.

## **Commentary**

71. In Year 2 most pupils are on course to achieve average standards. In Year 6 standards are below average. This reflects the exceptional cohort in the current Year 6, which has an above average percentage of pupils with special educational needs. This group has also experienced a lack of continuity in their teaching in the past. However, pupils in this and other year groups have achieved satisfactorily, overall. Test results show that Year 6 pupils attained well above average standards in 2003 and above average standards in 2002.
72. Scrutiny of pupils' work and curriculum planning shows that pupils experience all aspects of the science curriculum, including learning about materials, life and physical processes. They also undertake some science investigations and make observations. These are not consistently used, however, to draw scientific conclusions. There are also too few opportunities for pupils to raise questions and make predictions before investigating their own theories. There are a few examples of pupils repeating the same science activities and planning needs to be tightened in order to ensure that the year-on-year teaching of scientific skills and knowledge builds effectively on previous work. The quality of marking is variable. Overall, pupils are given too little guidance as to how they could improve the quality of their work.
73. Discussions with pupils show they are motivated by practical activities in science. For example, they were positive about their visit to the nature reserve to learn about habitats and about the opportunities to handle reptiles and insects at a science exhibition. They recalled enthusiastically the use of keys and decision trees for identifying the bones in owl pellets, following a demonstration by a visiting speaker. They were less motivated by aspects of the curriculum which they perceived as repetitive and by completing worksheets.
74. Subject leadership is good. Assessment data is used to identify strengths and weaknesses in science provision and the monitoring of teaching has begun. Resources have been improved. Good links have been established with the local secondary and beacon schools, enabling enrichment through pupil involvement in science workshops. The co-ordinator has acknowledged the need to improve opportunities, throughout the school, for exploration and investigation. This was also an area of weakness at the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

75. There were few opportunities to see information and communication technology being taught during the inspection. However, indications from the evidence seen, and from the school's own analysis, suggest that standards are likely to be below average across the school. Although the school is now adequately equipped, there has been insufficient consistent teaching of ICT skills over time, so that older pupils in particular, other than those who have computers at home, have not acquired a base of skills appropriate to their age. Younger pupils now coming through are better provided for, in that they are receiving more regular opportunities to access ICT in Reception and Year 1 and there is some evidence of their recent work in the work samples provided. There is minimal evidence of recent work in the upper school and little use of ICT to support learning in subjects across the curriculum.

76. The school has commissioned a plan for the future development of ICT. A revamped and well-resourced suite will be available once renovations to the building are completed, enabling larger groups to be taught together. The governors have funded additional teaching time, together with enhanced hardware and software, to enable skills teaching of ICT to be prioritised from the beginning of the new school year. On the evidence of the previous report (though the context for and expectations of ICT teaching were different at that time) improvement has been unsatisfactory. Leadership of the subject in future will need to focus on the consistent implementation of the subject across the school.

## **HUMANITIES**

77. No overall judgements can be made about provision in **geography** and **history** because no lessons were seen during the inspection. However, from teachers' planning and work completed by pupils, it is evident that standards are likely to be similar to those normally found, and the curricula offer the expected range of opportunities. The subject leader for history and geography demonstrates good vision for improvement in these subjects. Having acknowledged the need to improve the teaching of skills, a review of the curricula has led to a reduction in the number of topics. This reflects a commitment to promote study at more depth and to sharpen the development of subject skills as pupils move through the school. Resourcing has improved since the last inspection.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are similar to those normally expected for pupils aged seven and 11.
- Good links are made between issues raised in religious teaching and pupils' own experiences.

### **Commentary**

78. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils show satisfactory knowledge about world religions and festivals. They listen well and respond satisfactorily when given the opportunity to discuss ideas with each other.
79. When considering moral issues teachers encourage pupils to draw on examples that are both close to and distant from pupils' lives. For example, Year 6 pupils considered issues of status, race and compassion when learning about the 'Good Samaritan'. They also reflected on how rival football supporters might have responded in a similar situation. Pupils in Year 4 consider how symbols are used to communicate ideas in world religions and they discuss how symbols are used in their daily lives. Year 3 pupils identified personal characteristics such as determination and perseverance through the Bible story of the lost coin. There were few examples, however, in the lessons observed, or in pupils' work, of learning from stories in other world religions or from other cultures.
80. Analysis of pupils' work indicates that ideas related to spiritual or moral issues are not developed to a sufficient extent. Too often, good ideas explored in whole class discussions are left at that level. An over-reliance on worksheets offers insufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for extending their individual thoughts in writing or art. Literacy skills are under-developed through pupils' work in religious education.



## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

81. No lessons were observed in **design and technology** and it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of provision. However, on the evidence available it is likely that standards are similar to those normally expected at the end of Year 6. Within the juniors, the most thorough body of work was found in Years 3 and 4. Here there was good evidence of a wide range of experience, with effective use made of the design process and useful evaluations at the end of each unit of work. The units of work in Years 5 and 6 are structured around national projects which can be supported by the school's industry partners and the evidence indicates that this is a creative and successful opportunity for the pupils concerned. Very little evidence, however, was found in Years 1 and 2 and it is not possible to indicate likely standards at that level.
82. Overall, the subject appears to be given appropriate prominence within the overall curriculum. It is largely taught through a series of brief, but intensive, topics. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and effective and, though lacking time directly to monitor teaching, has worked hard to revive the subject and to ensure that it is taught effectively. She feels, and the evidence would support the view, that good progress has been made and that design and technology is now better-established. Only the food technology units are more challenging for the school, because of the limited facilities available – though this is likely to improve from the beginning of the new school year. Good guidance is provided to help teachers plan their lessons. There is good emphasis, at least in Years 3 and 4, upon the design, construction, evaluation and review of products made.
83. Only a small number of lessons were observed in **music** and it is not possible to judge overall provision. However, on the evidence available, it is likely that standards in class music are similar to those normally found in the juniors. No evidence is available to indicate likely standards in Years 1 and 2. In the lessons observed in the juniors, pupils had a secure grasp of the elements of music covered, mainly rhythm. Though not always very responsive, the oldest pupils were able to sing in rounds and develop simple compositions which could be adapted as rounds for performance. Teachers appear to have secure subject knowledge and are well provided with commercial material to help support their planning. Pupils sing satisfactorily in assembly and have good opportunities for performance at functions during the year. Most pupils take part in year group activities and there is no selective choir. While a small number of pupils learn recorder, there is no individual instrumental provision at present. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator who, though part-time, uses her specialist skills well to support colleagues. Assessment is quite thorough. There is very little use of ICT to support pupils' learning. There was limited reference to music in the last report and the subject appeared to have a low profile. On that basis, improvement has been satisfactory.

### Art and design

Provision in art is **sound**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of observational drawing is good.
- In the past, skills have not been developed in a progressive way in each year. This has now improved.
- Interesting work has emerged, linked to the study of other artists.

### Commentary

84. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain the expected standards for their age and make sound progress in relation to their prior attainment. They achieve satisfactorily. No judgements were made about standards at the previous inspection.

85. Pupils create imaginatively in paint, pastel and collage. They study the work of famous artists and experiment successfully with different styles and techniques. For instance, well crafted paintings of fair-grounds in Years 5 and 6 capture the dream-like qualities of work by Chagall. Evidence of pupils' past work indicates sound achievement.
86. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils achieved well with their observational drawings, while learning to draw with finer detail and accuracy. Effective teaching provides the skills needed to experiment with mixing paint and blending pastels. Pupils show a good level of concentration and make good head way with their work. In a lesson in textiles in Year 3 and 4, pupils develop their weaving skills in a progressive way and use their study of landscape as a basis for their weaving patterns.
87. Teaching in art and design is sound overall. In the most effective lessons, teachers have the expertise to develop and extend pupils' skills and learning and so achievement is good. Less effective learning is linked to limited opportunity for pupils to make choices about the materials they wish to use. Overall, a lack of clear assessment procedures and the uneven development of skills over time, have led to some gaps in pupils' learning. This is now improving.
88. The subject is led soundly. Portfolios of work and photographic evidence show coverage of the curriculum. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning remains at an informal level.

### **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **unsatisfactory** as a result of the limited facilities available.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Unsatisfactory accommodation, with limited indoor and outdoor space for physical activities, restricts the curriculum available to pupils.
- Pupils in all junior classes have the opportunity to learn to swim. Standards in swimming are good.

### **Commentary**

89. In the lessons observed, pupils achieve the expected standards for their age and make satisfactory progress. These standards are similar to those found at the last inspection.
90. By Year 2, pupils move confidently in the outdoor space, follow instructions, change direction and speed and stop by command. They are aware of the changes taking place in their body during 'warm up' sessions. Sound teaching develops skills in rolling, throwing and catching small apparatus satisfactorily. Pupils make steady progress with their co-ordination and control as they respond to the gradual increase in challenge. In a dance lesson in Year 6, a number of pupils, mostly boys, found it difficult to perform with others and lacked confidence and fluency in their movements. From their personal starting points achievement was satisfactory, but it was evident that skills have not been built upon in a progressive way over time. Teaching and learning in the lesson, however, were sound, and the teacher provided pupils with the opportunity to share, but not always evaluate, their own performance and that of others. Standards in swimming are good, with almost all junior pupils achieving the expected standard (25 metres unaided).
91. Accommodation within the school is unsatisfactory and the lack of suitable indoor and outdoor space constrains some aspects of the curriculum in PE. For instance, the hall is partly used as a classroom for morning sessions, houses the school administrator and is the main thoroughfare of the school. This can significantly affect the quality of lessons taught and limits the time available for hall sessions.

92. The school has worked hard to improve the quality of outdoor space, but it is still very cramped for games lessons. Resources for games and the range of small apparatus have, however, improved since the last inspection.
93. Given the constraints of accommodation, the subject is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has yet to monitor teaching and learning in order to ensure delivery of the National Curriculum and progression in skills development.

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

94. No specific personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons were seen during the inspection and it is not possible to judge the overall quality of provision. The PSHE programme is organised as a series of blocked units, of one week's duration, which are taught at least once during each school year. The units cover topics such as living and growing, keeping safe, friendships, feelings and healthy eating. These specific units are supplemented by weekly circle time sessions and specific input to drugs and sex education, as necessary. The blocked nature of the teaching, with long gaps between specific units of work, does not contribute well to continuity in pupils' learning. However, there is good evidence of recorded work relating to recent themes, particularly towards the top of the school. PSHE provision is regarded as a significant part of pupils' development and the programme is regularly revised to deal with current issues. The subject contributes positively to the satisfactory ethos of the school and the tolerant attitudes of the pupils, helping them to develop respect for each other, the environment, the local community and the wider world. Further input could be made to raising the quality of teaching in circle time sessions.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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