

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **OLDMIXON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Weston-super-Mare

LEA area: North Somerset

Unique reference number: 109104

Headteacher: Mrs C Rush

Lead inspector: Mr C. Deane-Hall

Dates of inspection: 18 - 20 May 2004

Inspection number: 257086

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:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	235
School address:	Monkton Avenue Weston-super-Mare North Somerset
Postcode:	BS24 9DA
Telephone number:	01934 812879
Fax number:	01934 812457
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Bev. Russell

Date of previous inspection: November 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Oldmixon Primary School is slightly smaller than average (235 pupils) and caters for pupils between the ages of three and 11. In the main school there are 93 boys and 103 girls. The school has a nursery, which provides part time education for 78 children. Nearly all of the pupils live in the nearby community in the south of Weston super Mare. However, many of the children who attend the nursery travel into the school from further afield and do not continue into the Reception class. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority families and none speak English as an additional language. A significant proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals (33 per cent), which is higher than in similar schools. Children start in the nursery with widely differing levels of attainment but overall they are below average for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Few of those who transfer into the Reception class are able to reach the expected levels for children at age five. There are more pupils than in most schools identified with special educational needs and the proportion of those with a statement of special educational need is broadly average. Needs range from moderate learning difficulties to physical impairment. The school is set in an area where there is mostly rented and a few private houses; it is part of an excellence cluster, the National Primary Leadership Programme and is registered for childcare provision. Around 12 per cent of the pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual times of admission or transfer. However, some years are affected more than others by pupil mobility.

The school received a Healthy Schools award in 2003, a Schools Achievement Award in 2000, Investors in People in 2001 and a Breakfast Club Excellence Award in 2000. It is involved in

the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools, Sure Start and The Children's Fund. In recent years there has been a high turnover of staff, including some senior staff. The headteacher is relatively new to her post, having taken up her appointment just over two years ago. However, the school has now entered a period of stability and is fully staffed. A significant building development programme has recently been completed.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23757	Christopher Deane-Hall	Lead inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical Education English as an additional language
8992	Julian Vischer	Lay inspector	
12764	Wendy Thomas	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Music Religious education
23917	Tony Clarke	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Oldmixon Primary School is a satisfactory school with a few pockets of excellence.**

The decline in standards in recent years has been arrested and standards are now rising. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and good in the lower part of the school. The good quality of the leadership and management displayed by the headteacher, staff and governors is a key factor in this recent improvement. However, there is still work to do to improve provision in the upper part of the school. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- The excellent ethos which supports pupils effectively so that they have good attitudes to learning, behave well, respect one another and use their time in school productively
- Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children get off to a flying start
- Standards overall for pupils by Year 6 in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) need to improve still further.
- Teaching in Years 3 and 4 needs to improve
- Teaching and achievement are good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are excellent
- The school provides an inclusive and very caring environment; it has good links with parents
- A wide range of out of school activities help to support activities in lessons
- Financial management is very good

Improvement since the last inspection has been **satisfactory**. The school is recovering from a period of severe disruption brought about by a high turnover of staff. The new leadership team, ably supported by the governing body, is successfully forging ahead to improve the quality of learning. Effective action has been taken to address the issues for improvement identified in the last inspection. Standards in English are rising as a result of the school's focus on improving pupils' performances in speaking and listening and reading. Standards are also rising in mathematics and science as a result of improved use of assessment information. Links with parents have improved well and the curriculum is appropriately balanced. Provision for higher attaining pupils has improved and they achieve satisfactorily.

### 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	E	E	E
Mathematics	E	E	E	E*
Science	D	E	E	E

*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 enter the school with below average attainment, especially in their language and social skills. The school works hard to improve standards year on year so that **pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall**, good in the Foundation Stage and by the end of Year 2. The table shows pupils' standards in Year 6 in 2003 were well below the national average in English,

mathematics and science. In comparison with other similar schools pupils did not do well in English and science, being in the lowest five percent. However, when reviewing the standards against similar schools, it is important to recognise that just over 60 percent of the pupils in the Year 6 had special educational needs and that one third of these pupils joined the school after Year 2. Indications are that this year standards in Year 6 have improved but are still below average in all three core subjects. The school did not meet its targets in 2003.

Standards at Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics continue to improve and are now broadly average. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in relation to their low starting point but few are likely to reach the goals expected of children at the end of the reception year in communication, language and literacy. ICT is not used enough to support learning in different subjects.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** Pupils are keen to come to school. They behave well and show high levels of enthusiasm for their work and do their best. Attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.** Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The most effective teaching is in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 where it is consistently good. Here teachers use well structured plans to support the presentation of good quality lessons and this is the reason why many pupils do well. Teachers' morale is high; they are enthusiastic about their work and have high expectations of their pupils. Pupils respond by co-operating and working hard. The skills of support staff are harnessed well to support pupils' learning, particularly those pupils with special educational needs. The curriculum is suitably planned and includes a good range of interesting extra curricular opportunities, and visits to make learning stimulating. This is complemented by good links with the community and other schools. The care and support of pupils is very good and is based on secure monitoring information. The school is successfully involving parents more fully in the education of their own children.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is a strong leader and guides the work of the school well. There is a very strong commitment to running a fair and inclusive school. All staff are encouraged to respond to the actual needs of their pupils when supporting their learning. This is reflected in the increasing provision before, during and after the school day. The staff are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They demonstrate a very strong commitment to the school and show willingness to improve on their own personal best. Governors are very supportive yet provide a very useful critical forum for the school's leadership. They fulfil their roles sensitively but rigorously. Resources are used effectively though there is no library facility. The school's finances are managed extremely well.

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

Parents are very satisfied with the school. They are supportive of the leadership and management of the school and recognise the recent improvements instigated by the arrival of the headteacher. They recognise the good provision in the nursery. Nearly all parents feel that the school is well led and managed, very welcoming, increasingly involves parents and is open to their comments and suggestions. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and recognise that there is always some one they can turn to if in need.



## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve standards in Year 6 in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology and improve the use of ICT in different subjects
- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4
- Create a library/research area.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Standards in English, mathematics and science are below average, but because pupils' attainment is below average on entry to the school, this represents good achievement in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory achievement in Years 3 to 6. In the Foundation Stage, children achieve well because of the good provision. Standards improve well between the nursery and Year 2.

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

- Standards are rising across the school
- Standards in Year 2 are broadly average and represent good levels of achievement
- Pupils with special educational needs do well in relation to their capabilities
- Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress but many do not attain the goals that are expected for children of their age in communication, language and literacy
- Standards in ICT are not as high as they could be by Year 6

#### **Commentary**

1. National test results in Year 6 in all core subjects have been declining. However, in 2003, in addition to severe disruption in pupils' learning due to staff illness, over 60 percent of the pupils in Year 6 had special educational needs. This is a very high proportion when compared with other schools. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their capabilities. This is due to the high quality support given to them by their teachers and support staff, coupled with careful monitoring of their progress by the headteacher and other staff. From work observed during the inspection, it is clear that standards in Year 6 are much higher this year.
2. Children are assessed on entry to the nursery. The results of these tests and inspection findings show that attainment is below average for three year olds; especially in the areas of communication, language and literacy. Many of the higher attaining children do not move from the nursery into reception, but transfer to their local school. Although children in the Foundation Stage make good progress, few reach the expected levels for children in communication, language and literacy at the end of the reception year. This hampers their progress in other subjects. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2, achieving well. They build effectively on the gains made in the nursery and reception classes and achieve as well as they can. Trends over recent years show a steady improvement in standards. This year standards in Year 2 are likely to be very close to the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
3. Achievement in Years 3 to 6, though satisfactory overall, is not as good as in other parts of the school. This is directly attributable to the quality of teaching. Time is not always used to best effect, particularly in Years 3 and 4. This has a negative impact on pupils' achievement. However, the current Year 6 has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (over 40 percent) and this too has the effect of lowering overall standards. Work observed during the inspection and the school's detailed assessment records show that, given the capabilities of the pupils in Year 6, most achieve as well as

they can and improve at a steady rate. Although national test results indicate that there may be differences in the attainment of boys and girls, the inspection findings show they do equally well in National Curriculum subjects.

4. Pupils with special educational needs often achieve well. This is because their Individual Education Plans (IEPs) outline clear goals, which teachers and support staff work towards. The work planned for these pupils closely matches their needs and the support and guidance provided by learning mentors has a very positive effect in reducing barriers to learning. Work provided often closely mirrors that for other pupils, which helps to ensure that they feel included in all activities. Very good provision is also made for those pupils who have specific learning difficulties, in English and mathematics, through particular support programmes, including ICT programs. The provision for those pupils who have behavioural and physical difficulties is equally comprehensive and detailed, and they make the same good progress towards targets set for them. The learning mentors are particularly effective when working with this group of pupils.
  
5. Standards in ICT in Year 2 are average, but in Year 6 they are below average. This is because improvements in resources have not yet had time to impact on standards at the top of the school and opportunities for pupils to develop their use of ICT are limited. Pupils generally do not use their ICT skills as well as they could 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	14.3 (13.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.0 (12.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.0 (14.2)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	22.6 (23.4)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	22.1 (24.8)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	25.7 (27.2)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are both good. Attendance is satisfactory. Punctuality is very good. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Provision for spiritual, social and cultural development is good and moral development is very good.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils take a good interest in school life and the activities provided
- Pupils are free from bullying and other forms of harassment
- The school promotes good relationships very well
- The school sets high expectations of pupils' conduct
- Attendance is promoted well
- The principles that enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong are very well promoted.

## Commentary

6. Pupils take a keen interest in the school and are generally positive about it. Those who take up the extra provision of the 'wrap-around' care i.e. before and after the school day, are especially positive. In most lessons pupils show a steady concentration and commitment to doing the best they can. It is only in lessons where the teaching is less well directed that they show a tendency to become distracted and their normally positive attitudes and behaviour deteriorate. In assemblies pupils are patient and very well behaved. Pupils are keen to answer question in lessons and during collective worship. In the playground behaviour is respectful and considerate for much of the time. The 'lining-up' procedures at the end of playtimes and the midday break are carried out sensibly. There are very few instances of bullying, but when they do occur the school deals very effectively with them.
7. The rewards and sanctions system the school operates is succinct, very consistently applied and one in which all staff are involved. It is this simple but very effective program, coupled with the considerable effort put into pupil welfare, that has such a positive effect on improving pupils' self confidence and helps their learning. The program has recently been reviewed and modified by the school council. This process has also helped to give pupils a sense of ownership.
8. The atmosphere in the school is one in which each child is respected with a genuine care for their well-being and their all-round personal development. This stems from the example of the headteacher who leads both staff and pupils very purposefully in this direction. As a result, pupils have good relationships with one another.
9. The school's very good ethos underpins the good personal development of pupils. Staff very effectively build pupils' confidence and self esteem ensuring that all are valued. Assemblies and many lessons provide opportunities for pupils to think for themselves. Pupils show interest in the celebrations and values of different cultures. They listened with rapt attention to a visitor speaking about his visit to a school in South Africa and were fascinated to see pictures of the pupils there. They respect the views of others and know that this is important. Pupils have a very good understanding of what is right and wrong. They know the school rules well and behave responsibly in lessons and around the school.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

10. Attendance figures just edge slightly below the national average and unauthorised absences are higher in the reporting year. However, as the inspection took place almost at the end of the succeeding reporting period, attendance figures are given as satisfactory because this reflects an outstanding fall in unauthorised absences. This in turn reflects the school's very good procedures to support attendance. The range, depth

and balance of the attendance incentive awards and the popular prizes are a model that the Local Education Authority is now putting forward as an example of very good practice for other schools. As a result of the successful promotion of attendance, punctuality is very good. Pupils are keen to come to school and the popular early morning breakfast club provides additional incentive for pupils to arrive in school in good time and ensure a prompt start to the school day. No exclusions have taken place over the last year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The overall quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum contribute strongly to this judgement. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Pupils with special educational needs are supported really well.

### Teaching and learning

Although teaching and learning are only satisfactory overall, children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well because of good teaching. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 do not achieve as much as they should because teaching has a few weaknesses. In Years 5 and 6 teaching is more effective which helps to ensure that achievement improves in the top two years. Systems for assessment are satisfactory overall. Information gained from assessment is used effectively to support pupils in their next steps in learning.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well planned and carefully structured lessons in the Foundation Stage, coupled with excellent assessment procedures, mean that children have a really good start in each of the six areas of learning
- Teachers take every opportunity to promote and improve pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 build well upon pupils' prior learning
- Consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and warm and positive relationships contribute significantly to their personal development
- Teaching in Years 3 & 4 is not as effective as elsewhere in the school.
- Limited use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning in different subjects
- Very good support for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they achieve well.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	6 (17%)	15 (43%)	11 (31%)	3 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

11. The overall quality of teaching is similar to that found at the last inspection. Teaching is particularly effective in the Foundation Stage, helping to ensure that children have a good start to their formal education. Examples of very good teaching were seen in the nursery, in English, mathematics and science. In these lessons planning was very clear, relationships between teachers and pupils were extremely good and expectations of what the pupils could do, were high. Information gained from assessment is often used very well to support teachers' planning. This means that in the best lessons, pupils are provided with well-structured work, which builds effectively on what they have already learnt.
12. Teachers, across the school, help to ensure that pupils are well motivated and concentrate on their lessons. They are very aware that several pupils have particular learning difficulties and generally organise their lessons into different elements, thereby

keeping pupils focused on their tasks. They organise classrooms in such a way that pupils can easily focus upon the teacher. Lessons are characterised by a calm purposeful atmosphere where pupils engage in tasks and learning effectively. Teachers' high expectations of behaviour and their insistence on good manners at all times underpin this positive learning environment. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour consistently well, responding to individual pupil's needs calmly, sensitively, firmly but fairly. Consequently pupils know what is allowed and co-operate fully so that minimum learning time is lost through managing misbehaviour. For example, in science and numeracy lessons, expectations are made clear, tasks are explained carefully and pupils know how long they have to complete each activity. As a result pupils settle quickly to their work, often becoming totally engrossed, leaving support staff and teachers free to work with individuals or groups. This focus on learning helps pupils to progress at a good rate. This strategy successfully allows pupils of different ability to settle to their work and progress well; it is a particular strong aspect of teaching.

13. The school has rightly recognised the development of pupils' literacy and communication as vital to their progress in all subjects. Teachers take every opportunity to promote and improve pupils' speaking and listening skills. The success of their intervention can be seen in the improving standards and in pupils' willingness to share their ideas and respond to teachers' skilful questioning. This is particularly evident in literacy, mathematics and science lessons in Years 1 – 6. By using oral approaches to learning, lower ability pupils and several of those with special educational needs, successfully consolidate their learning before committing their ideas to paper. This approach sometimes takes a little time but the results are clearly worth it. Homework is often used to consolidate and extend learning. Higher attaining pupils are provided with activities, including independent research tasks, which interest them and build successfully on prior learning.
14. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. All teachers are aware of the pupils' targets and make reference in planning to providing suitable activities to promote learning. Teachers work closely with support staff and learning mentors so that the work to be covered is clearly understood. Support staff are skilful in carrying out their work with the pupils. They use questioning particularly effectively when working in the classroom with individuals or small groups. Learning mentors operate in lessons times and out of lessons too. They provide a valuable means of reducing the barriers faced by some pupils in terms of their learning. The school uses ICT to help pupils in literacy and numeracy. To do this, pupils need to be withdrawn from lessons to work in the suite, however, this means that they work at the right level and benefit from one-to-one support. The provision and support given to those pupils who need it is a reflection of the school's caring ethos and commitment to inclusion. This support system is used successfully for higher attaining pupils as well as those with special educational needs.
15. A common weakness in teaching is the limited use made of ICT to support learning. It is used as a teaching resource, for example, in science, but has limited use as a learning resource, which is available to pupils. Too much reliance is placed on a whole class using the ICT suite at the same time, which is not always particularly effective, rather than planning ICT into lessons in different subjects. At present teaching in Years 3 and 4 is not as effective as in other parts of the school. This is because planning is not sufficiently clear. Learning objectives are not always well linked to the needs of the pupils and lessons are not organised to make the most use of the time available. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.



16. Written feedback to pupils, especially in Years 3 to 6, frequently lacks sufficient detail to help pupils move forward. Individual targets, for pupils to work towards, are not consistently used by teachers. Where they are used, they help to focus pupils on what they need to improve. Even where they are in place, limited subsequent reference is made to them, which is a lost opportunity. However, other forms of assessment are well developed. The use of praise and oral feedback to pupils on what they have done well and what they need to do next to improve still further, is well established and effective in lessons. Good use of questioning techniques helps teachers check what pupils have learned and guides them in what to teach next. In a Year 2 history lesson, the teacher expertly asked questions of pupils as part of a game to check levels of understanding. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own learning and a notable feature of lessons is that they are asked to tell their teachers whether or not they have achieved the learning objective. Evaluation of progress made over time is thorough and teachers use the information successfully to modify their plans. This helps to ensure that pupils of different ability are provided with work, which matches their learning needs.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a sound range of appropriate learning experiences for its pupils. Opportunities for pupils to participate in activities outside the school day are good. The quality of the accommodation is good, and learning resources overall are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision for special educational needs has a very positive effect on pupils' learning
- The good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education has a beneficial impact on their attitudes towards learning
- Opportunities provided to enrich the curriculum add to the quality of education provided.
- The match of support staff to the curriculum helps to ensure that pupils are provided with effective support
- The present library resource does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to enrich their learning
- In a few lessons English and mathematics sessions are too long and do not reflect the preferred learning styles of all pupils.

## **Commentary**

17. The curriculum fulfils all statutory requirements for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and generally meets the needs of all pupils. The allocation of curriculum time ensures that literacy and numeracy are well covered. However, the timing of a few lessons is not as balanced as it might be. Lengthy consecutive morning sessions of English and mathematics and the rigid adherence to the Literacy Strategy do not always meet the learning styles of less able pupils. Consequently, the concentration of these pupils wanes and learning is limited. The school has recognised this problem and a reorganisation of the curriculum is listed in the school development plan. A well-organised system of curriculum planning and monitoring ensures that information is used well to inform future planning and address areas requiring reinforcement. The school makes appropriate provision for religious education, which meets the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus.
18. All subjects and areas of learning have appropriate policies and programmes of work, which give good guidance to teachers and support staff. The regular monitoring of teachers' planning ensures that skills are developed progressively in all areas of the

curriculum and there are appropriately focused plans to challenge more able pupils and extend their learning. The school strives to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all activities. Generally work is appropriately set and the high quality support from all staff ensures that pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal and full access to all activities. However, occasionally in science and ICT curriculum planning, there is insufficient emphasis on challenging the more able pupils. The personal, social and health education and citizenship curriculum is well established, with much of it being covered through children's literature using the 'Telling Tales' materials. The school received the 'Schools for Health' award in 2003

19. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It is a strength of the school. Reference to individual and group education plans, discussions with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), class teachers, and learning support assistants indicate that all pupils are provided for well and most make at least good progress towards meeting their individual learning targets. Provision is very good for those pupils who have specific learning difficulties in English and mathematics. The provision for those pupils who have a statement of special educational need is equally comprehensive and detailed, and they make the same good progress towards targets set. Learning mentors, funded through the Excellence Cluster, are most effective in helping pupils address social and emotional issues that prevent them from taking full advantage of the learning opportunities on offer.

20. The school organises a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that appeal to the interests of a significant number of pupils. They have good opportunities to participate in sporting, artistic and musical activities. Field trips, 'cluster' activities, and the contribution of many visitors to the school all enhance the good provision in this area. Older pupils' social skills are developed well by the annual residential visits – this year to Exmouth.
21. The match of teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum is satisfactory and there is a good match of learning support assistants to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. The contribution of the well qualified and experienced learning support assistants, particularly when involved with the less able and pupils with special educational needs, is significant. The good progress that these pupils make owes much to their support.
22. The accommodation, particularly the new extension, is good overall, and the whole school is kept in very good order. External facilities are extensive with a large playing field, good-sized playground and a floodlit multi purpose area. The quality and quantity of learning resources is sound. The library areas in classrooms are provided with a good range of colourful books and other resources, such as listening centres. The provision of such interesting material and the emphasis placed on reading, both at home and in school, is having a positive impact upon pupils' achievements. However, currently there is no library area where pupils can carry out simple research or further develop their higher order reading skills. This has a negative impact upon pupils' achievement.

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

Provision for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is very good. The support advice and guidance they receive based on monitoring is very good. Involvement through seeking and acting on pupils' views is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The care, welfare and health and safety of pupils help ensure a safe environment in which they can flourish
- Pupils have access to very well informed support, advice and guidance.
- Induction arrangements for pupils when they start school help to ensure that they settle quickly into school
- Pupils have a very good trusting relationship with at least one adult

### **Commentary**

23. The school has maintained its very good quality of care, guidance and support noted in the last inspection. The smallest pastoral concern of any member of staff is logged. The school has a significant number of pupils who at any one time may need support and so the headteacher has three other, fully trained, members of staff who are in a position to relieve and support her. This is quite exceptional. New members of staff are carefully briefed about child protection issues to ensure a consistent approach is maintained.
24. Pupils' welfare is similarly supported by very good health and safety monitoring procedures. The member of staff and governor responsible are very diligent in their regular and detailed review of both large and minor risks. Any necessary remedial action is promptly taken. Detailed monitoring logs are kept and the governing body is kept fully

informed. A high proportion of the staff are first aid trained, but the school lacks a specific medical room for treatment.

25. Very good induction arrangements for children when they start the nursery help children to quickly settle into school. Parents are able to meet staff, talk over arrangements and answer any queries or concerns. This helps parents and their children feel confident about starting school.
26. Staff know the pupils very well and their progress and personal development are very well tracked. This coupled with the learning mentor provision, helps the school to provide excellent levels of guidance. Pupils have no qualms about turning to a member of staff for advice and help. Of the pupils who completed a questionnaire, 90 per cent felt there was an adult they could turn to in time of need. The school provides a very comprehensive range of out of school support. The Livewire and Breakfast clubs provide for pupils in Years 1 to 6, and younger children are well provided for through the Nursery Club – even at the lunchtime changeover. These provide good opportunities for personal development through responsibilities, interesting activities and socialising.
27. A positive foundation has been laid for the school to gain pupils' views, through, for example, the school council. This is a fairly new body and pupils have yet to make it their own and run it. However, they are already very proud of its impact on the development of their school. The well-established principle of listening to what is troubling pupils, clearly has a positive impact here.
28. The very inclusive ethos of the school, stemming largely from the headteacher's determined leadership, that pupils' self-esteem is the foundation of their success, finds its strongest expression in the care, welfare, support and guidance they receive. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

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

The school has good links with parents and the community. Links with other schools and colleges are good. Parents have very positive views about the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The approachability of the school and the way concerns and complaints are dealt with is good
- Pupils' annual reports are good
- The mechanisms for the transfer of pupils are very good
- The school involves parents well through seeking their views

### **Commentary**

29. Parents appreciate that staff are approachable and easily accessible. Parents are made welcome and invited to help in the school. They have few qualms about approaching the school with a problem and generally feel that concerns are dealt with well. Many speak warmly of the way that staff, particularly in the Foundation Stage, go out of their way to support children when they first go to the school.
30. There are good opportunities for parents to meet staff formally and informally to discuss their child's progress. Written annual reports for parents are good; they include detailed information about what pupils know, can do and understand. They also give details of

pupils' personal development and state areas for further development, which help parents know how they can support their child at home. In the Foundation Stage staff keep Learning Diaries. These are extremely thorough, cover each of the six areas of learning and include children's own ideas and views. These provide a very comprehensive record of a child's development and are kept by the children and their parents once they move into Year 1.

31. In an effort to support parents in helping their children at home, the school has provided workshops in ICT and mathematics in conjunction with a nearby college. It has also expanded specialist training – provided to two members of staff for the transfer of pupils with special educational needs to secondary school - so that all of Year 6 pupils might benefit. This is in addition to the standard arrangements of lesson sharing and teachers visiting from two other schools. The program helps pupils to make a smooth transfer from primary to secondary school. The school has good links with its Excellence Cluster of 10 schools; hosting two successful dance workshop.
32. Pupils benefit from visits by a range of visitors from the community, including the local policeman and representatives of the local churches. The local Anglican Church holds a monthly family service in the new Drama Hall. The Surestart link is well-established and the building for the 'Family and Child Centre' on the school site is expected to start soon. The work of the Learning Mentors has been so successful that parents too are working more closely with the staff concerned. The small but energetic Parent Teacher Association provides several events over the year that many parents, pupils and local people attend. The Association is successful in raising funds to support the school in enriching its learning environment.
33. Parents' views were surveyed in detail when the current headteacher took up her post and these helped informed how the school developed its links with parents. The Home/School Child Agreement was revised as a result of parents' views. Parents' views are also considered on policy changes, for example the behaviour policy, via either letters home or open meetings.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership, management and governance are good. There is a strong sense of teamwork between staff and governors and a clear focus on driving up standards.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a very clear vision of where the school needs to develop.
- Leadership in the Foundation Stage is very good
- There is a very strong commitment towards inclusion
- Information gained from the school's thorough self-evaluation is used well to bring about improvements.
- Staff performance management is very effective in bringing about school improvement.
- Very good systems for financial management, including the use of best value principles, help ensure that the school's priorities are met.

### **Commentary**

34. The leadership and management of the school remain strong. The headteacher has an excellent knowledge of the pupils and is able to monitor their progress as they move

through the school. She is supportive of staff and provides a good role model for her colleagues. The newly formed leadership team works effectively and together has a shared vision for the future of the school, rooted in high achievement for all, and a sense of purpose as to how the vision will be achieved.

35. The school is aware of how to support pupils' learning and there is a very strong commitment to removing any barriers so that all pupils achieve as well as they can. The strong leadership is evident in the very good ethos of the school. Respect for others, good manners and insistence on good behaviour is a very striking feature of the school.
36. The school has a strong commitment towards inclusion. All pupils are highly valued and respected and they are encouraged to take part in all that the school offers. . The well-qualified special educational needs co-ordinator is very experienced and is both diligent and very efficient co-ordinating and overseeing SEN provision. In association with other members of staff, she ensures that all pupils in need are brought to the attention of the local authority, and oversees the application for Audit Funding with a view to extra support. Funds are well deployed to support these pupils and together with support staff and the learning mentors, help ensure that these pupils achieve as well as they are able. Early contact is made with parents as soon as concerns are noted about their children. Parents' comments and those of the local authority are very supportive of the school.
37. Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively and support the school well. They bring many skills and considerable expertise to the school. They are actively involved in its life; monitoring its work through regular visits, meetings, presentations and reports from the headteacher, other staff and the local education authority. They have a good working partnership with the headteacher, monitor the school finances well and help shape its future.
38. Finances are very well managed and spending patterns are closely linked to the school improvement plans. The school ensures that the best value principles are in place. Despite the recent physical changes to the school building, the staff have maintained a pleasant school environment in which pupils can learn and grow. Parents at the meeting and in the questionnaires felt that the school was well led.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	756,183
Total expenditure	736,420
Expenditure per pupil	3133

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	37,016
Balance carried forward to the next	34,204

39. The school compares its performance with those of other similar schools and schools in the area. Standards of attainment and progress made by pupils in the core subjects are closely monitored and evaluated. The school's records over the recent past show that work in this respect is becoming ever more sophisticated and robust; resulting in increasingly accurate evaluations. Patterns identified, are beginning to influence how the curriculum is taught, for example, the school now has a high focus on improving pupils speaking and listening skills. However, more still needs to be done in this area to

improve achievement in Years 3 to 6. Standard tests are used regularly to set targets for year groups and progress towards these targets is monitored regularly. However, individual targets are not set consistently across the school. Management of the core subjects is effective but in other subjects monitoring and evaluation are at an early stage of development. The headteacher regularly monitors the quality of teaching and learning and uses information gained to support performance management for staff, including professional development opportunities. As a result teaching, learning, achievement and standards are improving.

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

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

At the time of the previous inspection, the nursery and Reception classes worked as separate units. Since the introduction of the Foundation Stage, they have worked more closely together to help ensure good continuity for children's learning. The nursery has places for 90 children and this means that many of the children do not transfer to the reception class, but transfer to other primary schools.

When children enter the nursery there is a wide range of attainment but overall attainment is below average. It is well below average in communication, language and literacy, and in personal, social and emotional development. Children make good progress in the nursery but the attainment of those children who transfer to the reception class is still below average and well below average in communication, language and literacy. There is still a variation in attainment and a small proportion of children are on course to attain the early learning goals expected of children, particularly in communication, language and literacy, by the end of the reception year. The school has identified a small number of children with SEN and makes good provision for them.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and occasionally very good. Time is used very effectively and teamwork between teachers and support staff is very good. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and manage them very well. Assessment procedures are excellent. Both informal and planned observations take place regularly and are recorded in children's 'learning diaries'. These are well annotated and illustrated with photographs of the children. Observations are analysed well to plan the next steps of children's learning. These very attractive books are shared with parents and help to involve them in their children's learning. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. The co-ordinator leads the Foundation Stage with imagination and is well supported by her colleagues. All adults are good role models for children and they encourage and support parents in taking a full part in their children's learning. Indoor accommodation is good. The outdoor accommodation is spacious but is still being developed and does not yet fully support all areas of learning.

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

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

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

- Induction procedures are very effective
- Very good individual care and support
- The priority given to independent learning

#### **Commentary**

40. When children join the nursery, many of them have personal and social skills that are well below average. Staff work very hard to support children and as a result they make good progress in this area of learning. The school's very good induction procedures include a



home visit for each family. When children join the nursery, parents are encouraged to stay with their children for a while. This varies, depending on how quickly children settle. Children quickly become used to school routines and are keen to attend. Teachers and support staff plan interesting activities, which motivate and interest the children. Children are well used to class routines and are appropriately encouraged to become independent and make choices in their activities. This continues in the reception class. Relationships are very good. They are based on mutual respect and close co-operation between children and adults, which helps to promote children's confidence and ensure a very positive learning environment where young children can flourish. In the nursery classes children take turns in leading the review of learning at the end of sessions. They respond very well in talking about their activities. During these sessions adults ask questions to assess children's learning. The majority of children are on course to meet the early learning goals for this aspect of learning by the end of the reception year.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good, and phonic skills are well taught
- Adults model language well for children
- Most children are not likely to attain the early learning goals for reading and writing

### **Commentary**

41. On entry to school children's skills in this area of learning are well below average. They enjoy listening to stories and looking at books. They listen well to adults and each other, but many have well below average speaking skills and find it difficult to express themselves. Adults provide a good range of opportunities to support children in developing their skills. They share books with them in small groups, talking about the pictures and asking questions. In the nursery, the children have their drinks and snacks in small groups, each supported by an adult. This provides further opportunities to develop children's speaking skills. In the reception class, children are developing good knowledge of sounds and some can recognise some familiar words. In all the classes, children have many opportunities to develop their writing skills. However, these skills are below average. Some of the older children cannot yet write their names independently and a significant proportion are unlikely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good
- Number skills are developed well through a range of everyday activities
- Children achieve well and a good proportion are likely to attain the early learning goals

## Commentary

42. As a result of good teaching and the provision of a wide range of mathematical activities, most children are on course to meet the early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1. In the reception class, children count reliably to 10 and some can count beyond this. They match objects to numbers accurately as they count. They are developing a good understanding of mathematical vocabulary and can name shapes such as circles, triangles and ovals. When looking at pictures of butterflies one child said that its wings were symmetrical. They can use the correct vocabulary to describe the position of objects, for example, it's behind the table. In the nursery, children count the drinks on their table and know that they don't need seven milks because there are only six children. Adults provide a wide range of activities for children to count and sort different objects. They use registrations to count the number of children present and when sharing toys can say if they need one more or less to match the number of children.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and staff provide good opportunities to develop this area of the curriculum
- Children have good access to computers
- The outdoor facilities are in need of further development

## Commentary

43. In this area of learning children achieve well and a small proportion are likely to attain the early learning goals by the time they start in Year1. In one lesson observed in the reception class children were learning about butterflies. Having read and listened to the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', many can explain the stages of development from egg to butterfly. In the nursery and reception classes, children have many opportunities to use computers throughout the day. They play a number of mathematical and language games using the mouse competently. They very much enjoy using the 'Paint' program to make pictures. Higher attaining children develop a good understanding of the world around them. For example, one child in the nursery talked about things floating in space and said 'it's because there's no gravity'.
44. The outdoor area is spacious but has not yet been developed to support all areas of learning. Children in the reception class use this for physical development but they have only a very small outdoor space for other curriculum activities. Staff are well aware of this and this area is a priority for development.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A well planned range of activities support this area of learning

- Teaching is good
- Some of the outdoor climbing equipment is not suitable for the older children

### **Commentary**

45. Children achieve well in this area of learning because of the good range of activities provided. The majority are likely to reach the early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1. Children ride tricycles, scooters and other wheeled toys with confidence. They show good awareness of others and work well together on toys that need two or more children to move them. A small number of children in the reception class can use skipping ropes very competently. Children are making good progress in throwing and catching. When climbing and balancing, children are agile and confident. However, the outdoor climbing equipment is not all suitable for the older children. In the classrooms children use pencils, crayons, glue, paint brushes and scissors accurately and safely.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good** and in music it is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good
- There is very good provision in musical activities

### Commentary

46. Children have many opportunities to develop their creative skills through carefully planned tasks, such as colour mixing, working with play-dough and through tasks of their own choosing such as painting. They enjoy cutting and sticking and making their own books. During the inspection, children in the nursery thoroughly enjoyed their music lesson in the hall. They sing known rhymes enthusiastically and respond well to the teacher's signals for loud or quiet sounds. One child was able to remember the terms 'crescendo' and 'diminuendo' (getting louder or softer). Children copy rhythmic patterns very well. A small number are able to maintain a steady beat which is above average for nursery children. Most children are likely to meet the early learning goals for creative development and a small number will exceed them.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory** overall;

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising in reading and writing.
- As a result of good teaching pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good in this subject.
- Many pupils show a lack of confidence in their speaking skills.
- The library provision is unsatisfactory.
- The good leadership is having a positive impact on raising standards.

### Commentary

47. Standards in English are rising as a result of the school's focus on improving pupils' performances in speaking and listening and reading. Year 2 pupils are likely to reach average standards by the end of the year; however, because of a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, standards overall in Year 6 will be below those expected nationally. A small number of pupils look set to achieve above average levels. The school's assessment data demonstrates that pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and in between Years 3 and 6 make satisfactory progress overall.
48. All of these pupils with special educational needs benefit from the school's very good provision, good teaching and the very good, informed guidance of the team of experienced teaching assistants. Consequently they achieve well and make good progress towards meeting the literacy learning targets set for them. Despite this, their literacy skills are still well below those expected, which makes learning across all subjects difficult for them.

49. Despite much effort, overall standards in speaking and listening are currently below those expected nationally. Many pupils enter the school lacking confidence in speaking and their listening skills are poor; many have a very limited vocabulary. Despite making satisfactory and sometimes good progress, inspection evidence indicates that a significant number of pupils attain below expectations in speaking and listening. As a result, many are hesitant, speak indistinctly with poor pronunciation, and become frustrated at their failure to express themselves. Consequently, there is a tendency for a few pupils to sit passively unless specifically encouraged by teachers to respond. In turn, this limits their ability to explain ideas and communicate their findings in writing and this is a barrier to learning in other subjects. The school has already identified this area as a priority and it is a focus of the school development plan. The modelling of specific subject vocabulary, the encouragement of discussion which features in many lessons and the introduction of a number of 'listening centres' are having a significant impact on improving pupils' oral skills.
50. Standards in reading are rising and are average at the age of seven and 11. The rise in attainment is due to the school encouraging pupils to read regularly and supporting them with a variety of teaching strategies designed to improve their phonic (linking sounds to letters) skills. Attention is paid to increasing the vocabulary of younger pupils, as their very limited language skills have a negative impact on their understanding of sounds and their ability to decode new words. As a result, although reading standards are just satisfactory, most pupils make good progress. A number of older, higher attaining pupils have developed fluency and confidence in their reading and express opinions about the main characters and events in a range of texts, but many average and lower attaining pupils do not have a positive attitude towards reading and by Year 6, a few have become disaffected.
51. Older pupils appear to understand the purpose and organisation of a library and the basic ideas about information retrieval. However, the present library area is unsatisfactory. It does not allow for pupils to engage in any form of research and consequently the development of their higher order reading skills is restricted. The school recognises this deficiency and is actively seeking to rectify it.
52. Standards in writing are in line with the national average at the end of Year 2 but because so many pupils in Year 6 have special educational needs the standards of the group are below those expected nationally. Pupils extend their range of writing to include stories, report writing, formal and informal letters, instructions and persuasive arguments. However, the opportunities for pupils to write creatively and extensively are limited, and this restricts their achievements. A significant number of pupils have weak language skills and do not understand how words are built up from individual letter sounds and blends, consequently their spelling is erratic. There are large gaps in pupils' knowledge; they find it difficult to write using correct spelling and punctuation and their writing is at a basic level. Overall younger pupils are achieving well, but their limited vocabulary affects their attainment, particularly in creative writing. Attractive word-processed displays celebrate pupils' efforts and achievements. Samples of work seen show that a small minority of higher attainers have a good command of language and their writing is exciting and interesting.
53. Teachers understand well how to teach reading and writing, and are knowledgeable about the structure of the literacy strategy. The splendid relationships enjoyed by staff and pupils, along with the very positive encouragement given, ensure that many pupils are enthusiastic learners who achieve well as a result. Work is appropriately graded in an attempt to meet the learning needs of all pupils. A team of knowledgeable, experienced and gifted teaching assistants very well supports teachers. The assistants give very good support to pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties, who make good progress and achieve well as a result. However, the timing of lessons is not always as balanced as it might be. Lengthy, consecutive morning sessions of English and mathematics do not always help pupils to maintain concentration and interest or maximise learning. For some

pupils the Literacy Strategy is not having sufficient impact because pupils dislike sitting for long periods of time and then having to spend equally lengthy sessions completing the main activities. Many low ability pupils find it difficult to concentrate in such blocks and learning suffers

54. The conscientious and well-informed co-ordinator has done much to develop consistency and quality to the school's provision of English. Opportunities for her to monitor the quality of teaching and planning are developing positively and have given her a good overview of strengths and areas for development. She has already identified the need to improve pupils' reading, and a whole school curricular target for reading together with regular assessments and the involvement of parents, is having a positive effect on standards. The co-ordinator has also been instrumental in introducing a whole school focus on improving pupils' speaking and listening skills across all subjects.

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

55. Pupils' competence in the use of language and literacy across the curriculum is below average. Although teachers try hard to encourage pupils to discuss and ask questions in lessons, there are not enough planned opportunities to develop pupils' writing in English or in other subjects. Displays show that in science, geography and history there are examples of writing for particular purposes, but standards are below average and work does not always do justice to the pupils' wider knowledge in these subjects. The poor library facility further limits pupils' opportunities to extend their knowledge through reading.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good as a result of well planned lessons
- The effective use of assessment information is helping to raise standards in Years 1 to 6
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and help ensure good achievement
- Standards need to improve by the time pupils leave Year 6
- ICT is not used as much as it could be to enhance pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

56. Results in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 have declined in recent years and have not kept pace with the national trend. In 2003, results were very low and below those noted in the last inspection. In contrast, those in Year 2 have improved and are likely to be close to average. Work seen during the inspection indicates that standards are rising in Years 1 to 6. Taking into account the school's thorough assessment and tracking records as well as information gained during the inspection, it is clear that pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. Standards in Year 6 are below average, but also show improvement from last year. It is likely that this year the proportion of pupils attaining level 4 or above will double and that there are a small but increasing number of pupils reaching the higher level 5. Achievement in this part of the school is satisfactory.
57. In the current Year 6, the number of pupils with special educational needs is high at 42 percent. Although lower than last year (60 percent), this has the effect of lowering the school's overall standards. Records of pupils' progress indicate that most pupils achieve satisfactorily, for their capabilities, and those with special educational needs often achieve well. These pupils achieve well because of the very effective help given by their teachers and support assistance. Support assistants are clear about how they can support pupils and concentrate on this during lessons. They encourage pupils to offer their ideas and respond to teachers' questions, so improving their self-esteem and

confidence. Pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs) often include targets, which link numeracy and literacy. Teachers and support staff ensure that these guide the support needed to help pupils learn.



58. In Year 2, pupils are developing good mental recall skills, for example, several correctly add ten more to single and two digit numbers. More able pupils have a secure understanding of place value to hundreds. Average pupils demonstrate similar skills and accurately sequence numbers to 100. The analysis of pupils' work indicates that standards in shape, space and measures are broadly average; most pupils recognise and name simple two-dimensional shapes. Standards in using and applying mathematics are average. Average and higher attaining pupils use standard units of measure confidently and deepen their understanding of measure by using and applying their knowledge in practical problem solving activities. For example, in one lesson, pupils estimated and compared capacity and then checked their ideas by measuring how much water different containers would hold. They are beginning to develop their mathematical vocabulary and use it appropriately when explaining their work.
59. In Year 6, pupils increasingly use and apply their knowledge to solve problems. For example, they use their understanding of co-ordinates to plot conversion graphs and calculate the time taken to travel a distance given speed and distance. Average and higher attaining pupils attain levels which are average and above average respectively. They use a range of strategies to solve problems, including 'partitioning', rounding to the nearest ten, and mental estimation. Lower attaining pupils correctly reduce simple fractions to their lowest term and nearly all understand equivalent fractions and percentages.
60. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Lessons' are well planned and build upon what pupils already know. Teachers use the National Strategy as a useful framework to support their planning but are flexible enough to match learning objectives to what pupils need to learn. Lesson plans are very structured which means that pupils receive clear instructions to allow them to learn successfully. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do, use a range of strategies to help keep pupils' concentration and insist on and receive high standards of behaviour. As a result pupils behave well, settle to their work quickly and work well together. They often help one another in their work as necessary and are very happy to share their ideas with their teacher and classmates.
61. There are however, weaknesses in teaching, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Opportunities to enhance learning through the use of computers are limited. Pupils need to have more hands on' use of computers and not simply observe the teacher using a computer. This means that teachers need to be secure in their knowledge of programs and how they can best be used to support the learning of different abilities. Where teachers are not sufficiently clear about what pupils need to learn next, too much time is wasted in lessons and learning suffers.
62. Teachers use a range of resources to support learning. Individual whiteboards are often used by pupils to note calculations and teachers often use overhead projectors to illustrate learning points, help pupils understand new concepts and show different strategies when solving problems. Pupils respond well to these teaching and learning aids and pay close attention to what is happening.
63. The leadership and management of mathematics is satisfactory. The subject leader knows the areas where the school needs to develop and provides a good level of support for her colleagues. Staff have received a high level of training to enable them to teach the subject effectively and this is helping to raise pupils' standards. Teachers' planning and pupils' progress are monitored effectively but these activities are not always closely

linked to issues that are emerging from the analysis of pupils' work. The quality of teaching and learning are monitored effectively and issues arising have in the main been addressed. As a result teaching is satisfactory and often good. There is a detailed action plan for the development of mathematics and the subject is suitably resourced.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

64. Mathematics is used effectively in different subjects. For example, in science pupils record their findings of animal habitats using a database and measure time during experiments. Curriculum plans show that topics covered in design and technology, and physical education provide opportunities for pupils to measure correctly and work was seen where line and block graphs were used to represent findings in science.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in science are improving as a result of effective use of assessment information

### **Commentary**

65. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in science for seven year olds were in line with those expected nationally. The present inspection findings are that standards have been maintained and are average. Standards for 11 year olds were well below average. Over the past four years, standards have varied and in the 2003 test results were well below average. Early indications are that test results in 2004 show significant improvement. The proportion of pupils predicted to attain average standards shows good improvement though the proportion of pupils likely to attain the higher level 5 in science is still well below the proportion attained by pupils in schools nationally.
66. Pupils in Year 2 show enthusiasm for science. They are given opportunities to explore and investigate scientific processes and develop their skills in independent learning. Pupils enjoy devising experiments, for example, when investigating how well bean plants grow in different conditions. They are enabled to make their own choices about the conditions for their experiments and make predictions about what might happen.
67. Pupils' recorded work is hampered by their weak writing skills. Work in pupils' books indicates that they achieve satisfactory standards. It also indicates that their scientific knowledge and understanding is in line with standards achieved by pupils nationally. However, there is limited evidence to make a secure judgement on pupils' investigative skills.
68. Further evidence was obtained from scrutiny of planning and pupils' recorded work. Teachers generally demonstrate good subject knowledge which they use well to help pupils to develop their scientific skills. Pupils are engaged and enthusiastic about their work and often make good progress in deepening their knowledge and understanding.
69. Strengths in teaching include well-planned and resourced lessons, good use of scientific vocabulary, and good use of the interactive whiteboard. However, activities are not always sufficiently matched to the learning needs of different groups of pupils, which means that lower attaining pupils are not always well supported.
70. The management of science is satisfactory. The subject leader has a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has made an effective start to the role. She

has begun to develop systems to monitor teaching and review pupils' work. She has developed a good action plan for developing science in the school. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The attainment of seven year olds is satisfactory and they often make good progress
- Pupils aged 11 attain below average standards in ICT because they do not have sufficient opportunities to use their skills in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

71. Standards attained by pupils in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. Pupils confidently log on to the correct programme. They know how to save and print their work. They make good progress in classifying the information they have previously collected and record it using bar charts. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 attain standards that are below those expected nationally. Pupils know how to enter instructions to move a screen turtle. However, they have weak keyboard skills which slows their progress in using the program. Year 6 pupils are competent in using the Internet to research sites about activities on their forthcoming school journey. However, planning shows that pupils do not experience the full range of ICT activities expected of pupils of their age. The headteacher and staff are aware of this and the subject is an area for development.
72. Teaching is satisfactory overall though it is inconsistent. Although teachers have had training in ICT, a few still lack confidence and need to develop their skills further. The ICT suite is newly established and there are plans to improve resources further. Not all teachers make sufficient use of ICT in other subjects, which means that pupils do not have enough opportunities to use the skills learned in specific ICT lessons.
73. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader has a clear idea of the strategies needed to improve the subject. She has reviewed the curriculum provision and a new scheme of work has just been purchased to support learning. This is about to be introduced. She monitors colleagues' planning effectively and monitors the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observations. Standards in ICT are lower than those seen during the last inspection, though the requirements for the subject are now much more rigorous.

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

74. Provision across the curriculum is not satisfactory. The school has yet to ensure that ICT is used systematically in all subjects and in all classes. Aspects of the subject are used in mathematics and literacy, for example, in Year 6 where pupils evaluate the content of various websites for the persuasiveness of the text. There is some use of ICT to help with data handling in mathematics but this needs to be developed further.

## **HUMANITIES**

It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision and standards in geography as too few lessons were observed. Teachers' planning, the curriculum plans and pupils' work were examined and discussions held with subject leaders and pupils.

## Commentary

75. In the **geography** lessons seen, work was focused on the local weather patterns and a study of two contrasting environments, Weston super Mare and Calcutta. Standards were broadly in line with expected levels. Pupils in Year 3 recognise the effect that weather can have on people's lives and are beginning to compare that effect of weather in different locations. In Year 4, most pupils are able to locate the major cities of India on a map and use maps to identify countries in Europe. They successfully compare village and city life in the country and know about the effects of climate on people's lives. There is indication from subject planning, displays and pupils' work that the curriculum is fully taught and links with other subjects are included in teachers' planning. Good use is made of the national schemes of work.

## History

Provision for history is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum plans are effectively organised and ensure that pupils develop secure knowledge and skills as they move through the school.
- Good subject knowledge gives depth to pupils' understanding.

## Commentary

76. Pupils enjoy their history lessons and this is reflected in the response to the subject and their work. Achievement is satisfactory Year 2 pupils are interested and knowledgeable about what happened in the past and the differences between then and now. They understand the importance of Samuel Pepys' diaries to our understanding of the events surrounding the Great Fire of London. Many can give reasons for why people in the Stuart period did things as they did and the causes of important events. As they move through the school, pupils widen and deepen their knowledge and understanding of the past.
77. They have a secure knowledge of the events surrounding the Roman invasion and settlement of Briton and the similarities and differences of the Celts and Romans. Many pupils correctly identify and place different periods of history on a time line. By the time they reach Year 5, pupils are increasingly skilled at using primary sources of evidence, for example, when studying the effects the expansion of Weston super Mare in the Victorian period.
78. Teaching is satisfactory. In the few lessons observed, teachers had a good subject knowledge, which they used well to add interest and depth to pupils' learning. Where teaching was particularly effective, teachers ensured that pupils were helped to put themselves in the position of people in the past, thereby supporting them to understand the importance of primary and secondary sources.
79. The subject is effectively led and managed. There is a clear policy and programme of work. The knowledgeable co-ordinator has reviewed and improved resources. Monitoring of the subject coverage is effective. There is a planned programme of observation of lessons to see how well pupils are learning. However, more need to be

done to monitor the standards within the subject since assessment procedures are not consistently applied.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus
- ICT is not used as effectively as it could be to enrich pupils' learning in religious education

### Commentary

80. The school uses the locally agreed syllabus as the basis for planning, adapted to meet the pupils' needs and specific characteristics. Pupils enjoy their work, which provides effective support for pupils of differing abilities. They are respectful of the beliefs of others and show good attitudes towards their work. Pupils show a secure understanding of Christian stories and develop an understanding of some of the main characteristics of the other world faiths such as Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. For example, in Year 5 pupils deepen their understanding of what it is like to hold the Jewish faith.
81. In Year 1, 2 and 3, the focus of the curriculum is building on pupils' experiences through the family, friends and their community. These lead well into aspects of well known people and then into beliefs and expressions of beliefs. The provision benefits from visits to the school by local Christian leaders, but as yet, no links have been developed with other faiths. Limited use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning in the subject.
82. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching overall. However, teachers' planning shows a close match to the locally agreed syllabus. From discussions with pupils and the subject leader, and an analysis of pupils' work, it is clear that achievement for all groups of pupils is satisfactory overall.
83. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has good subject knowledge and has worked hard to support colleagues with planning. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning needs to be developed further to help raise achievement. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

84. No lessons were observed in art and design, design and technology or physical education. As a result, no secure judgement can be made on provision or standards in these subjects. In all subjects an examination of planning, pupils' work and discussions showed that pupils experience a full range of activities, and skills are taught systematically.
85. It is clear from teachers' planning and the observation of pupils' work that the topics planned in **art and design, and design and technology** are varied and interesting. The curriculum is enriched by a number of visits and visitors, such as artists in residence who oversaw the creation of large wooden sculptures and a particularly eye-catching ceramic wall mural.

86. In **music**, no lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. Two lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6. Pupils enjoy singing though their tuning is not always accurate. They enjoy listening to music from a range of traditions and styles. There is little evidence pupils compose and record their own pieces.
87. From examining school's **physical education** documents and talking with staff and pupils it is clear that the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met. The school makes good use of the national scheme and tailors it to the needs of the pupils. Pupils enjoy their lessons, they appreciate the links with local organisations such as a local football club and cricket club and benefit from specialist teaching which these links provide. Pupils also benefit from a carefully planned enrichment programme which builds in an aerobics day, an athletics day (Year 4), an orienteering day (Year 6) and joint activities within the Excellence Cluster, where pupils widen and deeper their involvement in dance; for example, through links with the English National Ballet. Resources for the subject have been improved since the last inspection and are adequate to meet the needs of the pupils. The subject co-ordinator is well qualified and has a clear view of how the subject will develop. He has exciting development plans, which include close liaison with other nearby schools.



## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)**

Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) including citizenship is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- PSHCE forms an integral part of the caring ethos of the school.
- The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to explore sensitive issues and to share their feelings and concerns with each other and adults.
- The very good provision for social education supports this area well.
- The school has worked well to achieve the Healthy School Standard qualification.
- The PSHE curriculum provides very good opportunities for visitors to contribute to pupils' education and to extend their experiences.

### **Commentary**

88. Personal, social and health education is a valuable extension to the school's curriculum and enhances pupils' awareness of the school's high expectations for their behaviour and attitudes. Pupils achieve well because personal and social education is part and parcel of their every day learning in school. The health education programme is successfully woven into the curriculum and staff deal effectively with any particular issues as and when they arise. The school's very good commitment to inclusion, together with the very good provision for social education, positively guides pupils' social development. Staff provide good role models in the way that they value the opinions and contributions of all pupils during lessons and discussions. Pupils appreciate how important it is to work together and readily celebrate and value each other's achievements in and outside of lessons. They understand the importance of taking care of themselves through a healthy diet. The school places strong emphasis on independence and responsibility, which promotes self-esteem and encourages pupils to develop strategies to overcome problems and achieve success. Through the school council they have a growing understanding of decision making in school and in the wider community.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	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>2</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	3
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).*