

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **PRIORY LANE INFANT SCHOOL**

Scunthorpe

LEA area: North Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 117756

Headteacher: Mrs S. White

Lead inspector: Mr G. D. Timms

Dates of inspection: 26 – 28 April 2004

Inspection number: 257236

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	145
School address:	West Common Gardens Scunthorpe North Lincolnshire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Julie Fletcher
Date of previous inspection:	18 May 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Priory Lane Infant School has 145 pupils, including 10 children in a pre-reception class who attend on a part-time basis. The roll has fallen recently due to changes to the housing in the area. Although there is a range of ability, and this differs from year to year, overall the attainment of most children when they enter the school is below that expected for their ages. This is especially noticeable in their communication, language and literacy, their mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. There are 28 pupils on the register of special educational needs, three of whom have statements of special need entitling them to extra support. This is above average when compared with schools nationally. The main needs are moderate learning difficulties, speech and communication difficulties and specific learning difficulties. The great majority of the pupils are from a white British background. One pupil has a different first language and is at an early stage of learning English. Although there were none in school during the inspection, the school provides for a small number of Traveller children. The proportion of parents who claim their entitlement to free school meals is above average. The school received an award in 2002 for taking part in the Healthy Schools initiative.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21038	Geof Timms	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Physical education English as an additional language
9504	Sheila Gurney	Lay inspector	
21372	Ken Hobday	Team inspector	English Religious education Music Personal, social and health education Special educational needs
32168	Ann Keen	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography History

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good and effective school and it provides good value for money.** The overall standards are average and pupils achieve well, given their attainment on entry to the school. The teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Inclusion is very good and the school is well led and managed.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in the last national tests in Year 2 are good when compared to schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds, and pupils achieve well.
- Current standards in information and communication technology and physical education are above those expected.
- Pupils achieve well due to the good quality of many aspects of the school's work.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership, and the overall leadership and management are good.
- The quality of the teaching is good overall with a significant amount that is very good.
- The school provides pupils with very good support, advice and guidance.
- Attendance is well below average.
- Transition arrangements with the junior school are very good and supported by an innovative science project.
- Teachers do not insist on a high enough standard of presentation.
- The buildings and outdoor facilities are in a poor condition, but teachers work very hard to overcome this.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection, even though there have been significant staff changes including two different headteachers. The main issues raised have been fully addressed. The quality of teaching has improved and lessons are better planned for different pupils' needs. The provision for the Foundation Stage children in the pre-reception and reception classes is good, although the outside area is underdeveloped and this limits the opportunities available to children. There are much improved systems for the monitoring of teaching and the curriculum; the subject co-ordinators have a more developed role and assessment is more consistent and accurate, except in science where it is not effective enough.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	B	B	D	B
writing	B	D	C	B
mathematics	C	D	D	C

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

**Pupils' achievement is good** throughout the school and they make good progress given their attainment on entry. By the end of the Foundation Stage standards have moved from below average to broadly in line with those expected, although a significant proportion of the pupils will not attain all aspects of the early learning goals in every area of learning. Throughout the infant classes, most pupils continue to achieve well and make good progress in their learning. The current standards are higher than those evident in the 2003 national tests shown above. These found standards to be below average nationally in reading and mathematics, and average in writing. When compared with

schools that take pupils from similar backgrounds, the test results are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics.

Current standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average. This is the result of good achievement in English and mathematics, and satisfactory achievement in science and is due to the good quality teaching, the improved curriculum and resources, and leadership that is more focused on raising standards. Standards in religious education are broadly in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in information and communication technology, and physical education, are above those expected at the end of Year 2. Pupils' personal qualities, their attitudes and behaviour are good. Their personal development is good. **The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory** overall, although their social and moral development is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.** The quality of teaching and learning is good. In a significant proportion of lessons it is very good. The teaching of the pre-reception children is very good because of the excellent relationships and very good planning evident. The curriculum provided for pupils is good and meets their needs effectively. There is a good level of enrichment through trips, visits and after-school activities. The school provides a very good level of support, care and guidance for pupils and provides well for their welfare, health and safety. The links with parents are good, as are the links with other schools through, for example, the very effective transition arrangements with the junior school. Parents are also positive about the induction of children starting school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership of the headteacher is very good.** She has a very clear vision and high aspirations for the school, and a clear focus on raising standards. The role of subject co-ordinators is good and the monitoring and self evaluation evident in the school has had a positive impact on the improvement since the last inspection. There is a very good management plan that provides an effective basis for school improvement. The governance of the school is good. The governing body offers the school a good level of support and challenge.

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

The parents' views of the school are very positive. No more than two or three parents are unhappy with any aspects of the school's work. They particularly think that their children enjoy school, make good progress and that the teaching, leadership and management are good. Pupils are also very positive about the school although a minority is concerned about some other pupils' behaviour.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the presentation of pupils' work and ensure that marking provides pupils with pointers for improvement, and that these are followed up.
- Seek ways to improve the condition of the buildings, and improve the provision and use of the outdoor facilities, particularly for the Foundation Stage.
- Improve attendance.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils achieve well given their attainment on entry to the school. Current standards are broadly average in English, mathematics, science and religious education at the end of Year 2. Standards are above those expected in information and communication technology and in physical education. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress through the pre-reception and reception classes due to the good provision.
- Standards in the 2003 national tests were below average in reading and mathematics but average in writing. Current standards are better than this.
- Standards in information and communication technology and physical education are above those expected and have improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

#### Commentary

1. When children enter the school their levels of attainment vary but overall they are below those expected in writing, mathematical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Their personal and social development, and their physical development, are closer to that expected. In their time in the pre-reception class, children learn to become part of the school and to develop good learning habits as well as making good progress in all areas of learning. During the reception year, this good provision is continued and progress is good resulting in children achieving well. Even so, by the end of the reception year, most children are unlikely to achieve the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.4 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.9 (14.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.7 (15.6)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. The results of the 2003 national tests showed that standards in reading and mathematics were below average nationally, while writing was average. However, when compared to schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds, standards were above average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. The overall picture of standards is that they have been maintained at similar levels to those found at the time of the last inspection. However, attainment on entry to the school is lower so these standards represent good achievement. Pupils achieve well in the school owing to the good teaching, improvements to the resources and the curriculum, and better monitoring of teaching and learning.
3. Since 1999, standards have fallen in reading and been maintained in writing. In mathematics, standards have remained roughly the same but have fallen behind the national rise in standards. When the changes to children's attainment on entry are taken into account, however, this does not represent how well the school is doing or the good level of achievement evident. The school's own assessments show that in science in 2003 the Year 2 pupils



attained well above average standards, and a high proportion achieved the higher levels. However, the teacher assessment in use at the time was unreliable and standards in science are in fact similar to those in reading, writing and mathematics. In all of the subjects, standards in the different attainment targets are consistent, although in mathematics pupils had higher standards in shape, space and measure. The current standards are average and most pupils are achieving well.

4. In religious education, standards are broadly in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. In information and communication technology, standards are above those expected given the ages of the pupils; this reflects the improved resources, the training teachers have had and the very effective support evident from the subject co-ordinator. Pupils use computers confidently but there are insufficient appropriately planned activities in other subjects to use information and communication technology. In physical education, standards are above those expected. Children enter the school with good physical skills and these continue to be developed in good lessons and a range of activities. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make secure judgements about overall standards and achievement in the other subjects.
5. There are few pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds. They achieve standards in line with their peers. Only one pupil has a mother tongue other than English and is making very good progress in learning English. At times, the school provides for pupils from Traveller backgrounds. The evidence is that this is done successfully, with support from the local authority and these pupils achieve as well as their peers. Boys tend to underachieve slightly compared to girls but at a similar extent as nationally.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well compared with their previous levels of attainment. This is the result of good teaching, high levels of support from classroom support assistants and work that matches their individual needs well. Most younger pupils have made better progress than older ones. This is because their needs have been identified at an early stage, whereas many of the needs of pupils currently in Year 2 were identified only more recently. Nevertheless, the results of teacher assessment indicate that most of the latter pupils have achieved the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities are good. Their behaviour is good and their overall personal development is satisfactory. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Attendance is well below average.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance is well below average for primary schools and unauthorised absence is above the national average.
- Children's attitudes to school are good.
- Relationships are good throughout the school.
- Pupils' moral and social development is good.

### **Commentary**

7. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their lessons. They have a variety of clubs and activities to interest them and encourage their curiosity and excitement. They can participate in the fun club or computer club, for example. The relationships that pupils form with each other and with their teachers are good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and try hard to manage inappropriate behaviour. Consequently, children behave well. Staff signal clearly what is acceptable and there is a shared understanding which permeates the whole school.

8. Staff build the children's self-esteem and confidence by treating them with respect. As a result, the children learn that they are respected and valued. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and use their initiative in a variety of ways. Each week pupils are selected to be a 'friendly face', supporting others who need help especially in the playground. Overall, children's attitudes and behaviour have improved satisfactorily since the last inspection.
  
9. The school continues to provide children with a sound social, moral, cultural and spiritual development, although their social and moral development is good. Consequently, children are learning how to live within society. They are being taught how to behave and learning what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. Through assemblies, they are learning to be a good neighbour. They are introduced to the beliefs and values of those who may follow different traditions from those within their own family. For example, children have had the opportunity to see a variety of African masks and to create their own, and have experienced African dance. The daily act of collective worship contributes to the spiritual development of the pupils and they have time for reflection and prayer. A very good project is being developed in the school in conjunction with the local education authority. This has resulted in the creation of the atelier, a centre for creative art, and has enabled children to explore creativity and appreciate natural beauty through experimenting with a wide range of natural objects, like dried fruits, stones and seeds. They have used an Indian bedspread as a starting point to look at patterns and create their own designs.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.3	School data	0.6
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 is well below average. The school is helping to promote good attendance with more regular support from an education welfare officer. She now visits the school fortnightly and makes home visits to families experiencing problems. As this is a new initiative, it has yet to pay dividends in improved attendance figures. One reason for the level of authorised absence is that the school is more rigorous than many schools in the time it closes the registers. In addition, a significant number of families take their children on holiday in term time and a small number take more days than the headteacher has authorised. Punctuality is satisfactory but arrival times of late pupils are not recorded consistently enough.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of the teaching and learning is good overall and the curriculum meets pupils' needs well. The school offers very good support, advice and guidance for the pupils.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of the teaching and learning is good. The assessment of pupils' work is good and has a positive impact on standards in English and mathematics.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection.
- The nursery nurses and classroom assistants provide good support for teachers.
- Good use is made of learning objectives in the regular assessment of progress.

- Plenary sessions are not always used effectively.
- The marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory and the expectations for the presentation of pupils' work are not high enough.

## Commentary

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	8 (25%)	13 (41%)	11 (34%)	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 quality of the teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Teachers work hard and plan effectively to provide at least satisfactory and often good or very good lessons. Sixty-six per cent of the teaching observed was good or very good and none was unsatisfactory. There are strengths throughout the school. The teaching has improved through a range of measures introduced since the last inspection. Teachers have had the opportunity to visit other schools and to observe good practice with pupils from similar backgrounds. This has helped raise their expectations of pupils' capabilities. The headteacher and subject leaders have observed lessons and shared ideas and advice leading to improvements in practice. Improved resources and training for teachers, based on individual need and on the school improvement priorities, have had a beneficial impact on the quality of teaching.
12. In the best lessons, teachers make very good use of learning objectives. They explain to pupils exactly what is expected of them and they return to the objectives during the lesson to assess who has achieved them and who needs extra support with their learning. The objectives thus provide a very good basis for on-going assessment of pupils' progress, as well as ensuring that pupils are clear about what is expected of them and how well they are doing. For example, in one good information and communication technology lesson, the teacher explained the task and explained how doing it would enable pupils to achieve the lesson objectives. The assessment systems are good and teachers give termly levels to all pupils in English and mathematics. The system for assessing work in science is less effective. The marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory as too often untidy and poorly presented work is accepted or even praised.
13. Teachers' questioning skills are good and they target specific questions well at pupils, depending on their level of understanding. In particular, in some very good lessons teachers were very effective in getting pupils to explain their methods and reasons for coming to an answer. This happened in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 2 where the teacher also used pupils' misconceptions well to revise learning about place value. Lessons are well-planned and teachers make good use of information and communication technology to produce resources.
14. The teaching assistants and nursery nurses offer good support for teachers. This is particularly the case in the pre-reception group and with the less able pupils, or those with special educational needs. They are efficiently deployed and their work is well planned. They communicate effectively with teachers at the end of lessons to discuss pupils' progress. When working with the pupils with special educational needs, support staff show a high level of care and expertise in dealing with their specific needs and this supports their full inclusion into classroom activities.
15. Where the teaching was weaker, a lack of pace resulted in too much passivity among the pupils. This has a negative impact on their learning. Teachers at times used 'talking partners'

to encourage pupils to discuss ideas before deciding on answers to questions. This practice was at times very beneficial but in some lessons lacked structure and some pupils took little active part. In some lessons, the plenary session at the end of the lesson was too brief and did not provide sufficient opportunities to consolidate learning or to lead pupils forward to the next stage.

16. The teaching of the children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. The youngest children in the pre-reception group are very well taught by a knowledgeable and expert nursery nurse. She has built excellent relationships with the children in a very short space of time. Lessons are well resourced throughout the reception classes, except for the outdoor areas, and the planning ensures that children's needs are met and they achieve well. Activities provided ensure a balance of teacher-led and self chosen tasks, giving children an appropriate amount of independence.

## The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum that meets all statutory requirements. There is a **good** range of additional activities to enrich the curriculum. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall, with support staff contributing strongly to pupils' learning, but there are some significant deficiencies in the accommodation.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well balanced, with good attention to the teaching of literacy and numeracy.
- Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of education.
- The school is increasing links between subjects and using innovative methods to make work more relevant to pupils.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school buildings are in a poor state of maintenance and repair.

## Commentary

17. Pupils throughout the school enjoy a broad, well-balanced curriculum in which literacy and numeracy are given suitable prominence but in which adequate time is devoted to other subjects. All statutory requirements are met. There is an adequate programme of personal, social and health education, including sex and relationships education and attention to the dangers of misusing drugs and alcohol. Work in this aspect of the curriculum led to a 'Healthy Schools' award in 2002.
18. There is a generous allocation of time for literacy. As well as the daily literacy lesson, additional time is provided for reading in groups, using the library and for listening to stories. The school is aware of the importance of listening and speaking, and ensures opportunities for these through discussion by pairs of pupils, role-play and drama. It has begun to use other subjects as a means of providing opportunities for pupils to write and to incorporate material from a range of subjects into the daily literacy lessons.
19. The school makes work relevant to pupils by making links between subjects and by emphasising active learning. Increasingly, the school is recognising that pupils learn in a variety of ways and is beginning to vary teaching styles to reflect this. It is working with other local infant schools to develop work in thinking skills. Practice in this area remains somewhat inconsistent, however. For example, exercises such as 'Brain Gym' are in use in some classes but not in others. The school constantly seeks to improve its curriculum, often using innovative methods. Following its identification of the need to improve provision in art, it has created a small, but well equipped, atelier in which a visiting artist works with small groups of pupils. This has been effective in raising the profile of the subject as well as the quality of

learning. However, the potential of art, and music, to contribute to greater understanding of cultural diversity is underdeveloped.

20. Pupils are prepared very well for their transition into the junior school to which most transfer. As well as visits to their new school, pupils undertake a special project with the assistance of teachers from the junior school and with financial support from the local Education Business Partnership. This year's joint science-based project on 'Changing Climates' has already begun with some effective writing by pupils about rainforests.
21. A good range of extra activities enhances the curriculum. Visitors to the school and visits to local places of interest make a sound contribution to pupils' learning. There is a good range of after-school clubs, well organised by teachers and classroom support staff. Clubs vary each term; each usually caters for a single age group and typically includes games, art, music and computers. Pupils make good progress in these clubs because groups tend to be small, enabling staff to provide individual attention.
22. In all activities, the school takes good care to provide equal opportunities for all its pupils. It ensures, through careful planning, that pupils in parallel classes receive a similar programme. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs to enable them to progress well. The individual education plans written for these pupils are of good quality and are well used by experienced support assistants to provide effective help. They identify the small, successive steps pupils need to take to succeed and cover the most important areas they need to develop. The provision for the small number of pupils with a mother tongue other than English and the children from Traveller backgrounds is good.
23. The school has adequate resources to teach each subject. Its resources for information and communication technology are good. There are also good resources for reading, particularly in the range and quality of 'big books' for teachers to use in literacy lessons with the whole class. The school uses its accommodation well. For example, it has converted a pair of classrooms into 'The Hive', an attractive combined library and computer suite centrally situated in the school. However, the outdoor accommodation for Foundation Stage children is unsatisfactory. Although well used, it is small and inadequately equipped to allow use to promote all areas of learning. Outdoor facilities for other pupils are spacious, but lack areas designed to promote a wider range of play activities. The school building is in a poor state of repair. In particular, the roof leaks. These faults have the potential to negate the hard work carried out by staff to make the interior the bright and attractive environment it is at present.

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

Arrangements to ensure children's care, welfare, health and safety are good. The school has a caring ethos and staff show concern for every individual. Pupils are given very good support and guidance, except when the marking of their work is unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils feel happy and secure.
- Children are well prepared for starting school.
- Good procedures ensure pupils' health and safety.
- Teachers know their pupils well and enjoy good relationships with them.

### **Commentary**

24. Staff support the pupils well and the ethos of the school is both friendly and caring. Induction procedures are good. Staff visit pre-school children at home, which helps them to settle quickly and easily in school. This gives the children a secure and happy start, and has a positive effect on their achievement. The school makes good provision for children's health and safety and is proud of its Healthy Schools award. There is secure first aid provision with four appropriately qualified staff. Despite the urgent need for roof repairs, safety within the school is

good and professional risk assessment regularly takes place. Arrangements to ensure child protection are satisfactory. The designated teacher is fully qualified and informed. Staff are made aware of basic procedures but training to reinforce their awareness of good practice is out of date.

25. Parents agree that children are happy, well cared for and feel secure. The pupils feel that they can get help from a teacher if they are worried and that the teachers are fair and listen to their views. Teachers' relationships with the pupils are good. The support, advice and guidance provided for children are very good. Teachers and other adults know the children well and maintain very detailed and comprehensive records on their progress and personal development. These are very effective in helping staff understand some of the barriers to learning the children face.
26. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs. Classroom support staff are well trained and use the individual education plans devised for these pupils effectively. Many of them also fulfil the role of school meals supervisory assistants. This continuity of care has a very positive effect, particularly in ensuring acceptable behaviour during the midday break.

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

The partnership with parents is good. Most parents are supportive of the school and appreciate the partnership involved. Links with the community are satisfactory and those with other schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very pleased with the school's educational and personal provision.
- Links with other local schools are good.
- Arrangements for transition to the junior school are very good.
- There are some positive business links but those with the local community are underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

27. Just over one third of the parents completed the pre-inspection questionnaire and their views were very positive, as were those who attended a meeting with inspectors. They feel teachers are both accessible and helpful and they are comfortable approaching teachers with questions or complaints. The findings of the inspection support this view. Parents are encouraged to come in to class with their children and share their reading and other work for the first ten minutes of the day; this is good practice that reinforces the partnership with teachers. Home/school reading diaries were recently introduced and are well used as a method of communication. This is particularly useful for working parents. Most parents give good support for children's reading at home.
28. Formal parent/teacher consultation meetings are offered termly and are well attended. Pupils' annual reports are clear, helpful and offer targets for progress and improvement. Almost all parents feel well informed about their children's progress. The governors' annual report to parents is clear and informative, especially about the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs. Letters and newsletters keep parents well informed about the school's achievements, events, visits, and productions. Parents are pleased with the way the school seeks their views and takes account of their concerns. Though there is no formal parent/teacher association, parents help to organise fund raising events and enjoy accompanying educational visits and several volunteers regularly help in classrooms.
29. The school works hard to involve parents of pupils with special educational needs in their children's education. Most parents eagerly support the school, but a few are insufficiently involved in the process of negotiating ways in which they can help with specific targets at home.

30. Links with the community are satisfactory. There are some positive business links. For example, a local firm provided funding and resources for a major project about the weather. The school has the usual links with support services and welcomes student teachers in training. Pupils use the local environment for educational visits and theatre groups come to the school. However, there is little use of the premises by the public and links with the local community are limited.
31. There are good links with pre-school providers and schools within the geographical cluster group. Teachers share good practice with a local infant school. Partnership with the receiving junior school is very good. Very careful planning and co-operation ensure that children move confidently from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. Year 3 teachers visit the Year 2 children and get to know them and pupils from both Year 3 and Year 5 have positive roles in helping the newcomers to settle in happily. A joint science project intended to support the transition has proved so successful it has been recognised at a national conference. These transition arrangements are very good and have been recognised as examples of good practice by the local authority.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall leadership and management are good. The leadership demonstrated by the headteacher is very good. The governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a very clear focus on the need to raise standards.
- The school management plan is a very detailed and effective document.
- Subject co-ordinators provide good leadership and management in their areas.
- The school has made effective use of performance management as a tool for improvement.
- The very difficult falling rolls situation has been very well managed by the current headteacher.
- The governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

### **Commentary**

32. Since taking up the post, the current headteacher has established a firm grip on the direction of the school and has developed a clear view of the priorities for future improvement. There is a clear focus on the need to raise standards further. She has developed a system for the monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning and this has had a positive impact on teachers' practice. The performance management system is well planned and effective. The headteacher's objectives are planned early enough for a whole school objective to be part of the teachers' performance management, thus ensuring the school is focusing on some joint objectives.
33. The issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. These included a range of staffing and management issues. Changes in staffing and in headteacher since the last inspection slowed some aspects of the school's improvement but overall improvement has been good. Teaching has improved partly through opportunities to visit examples of good practice in other schools and teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of have been raised. Improvements to the management of the Foundation Stage are evident and these are well supported by the better deployment of teaching assistants and nursery nurses. In addition, the headteacher has dealt with the staffing and budget problems caused by the falling rolls very effectively.
34. The main tool for school improvement is the very good school management plan. This contains detailed planning for short-term priorities, lists of longer-term developments and a timetable for when they become priorities. In addition, there are detailed action plans that clearly show how developments will be organised and success evaluated.

35. The school has developed a good level of analysis of data from test results. This information is now being used to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching and to feed into the priorities for the future. The current priorities are appropriate for the further improvement of teaching and learning, and the raising of standards. Self evaluation is well-developed and provides an honest picture of the school's present performance and future needs.
36. The governors are supportive, ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements and have a good knowledge of its main strengths and weaknesses. They are also very aware of the difficulties the school faces due to the falling pupil numbers and the poorly maintained accommodation, and how these are a barrier to learning. There is an appropriate committee structure and meetings are held regularly, or as necessary. Governors review the school's performance through test result analysis and headteacher's reports. Individual governors are linked to the priorities in the school management plan, and some meet with subject co-ordinators to discuss issues surrounding the subject or any new developments in school. Governors who visit the school report back to the full governing body and this helps keep all governors informed about events and priorities in the school.
37. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed. The experienced co-ordinator has a suitable allocation of time to carry out her duties. The school has identified aspects requiring development and acted to improve its provision. For example, substantial training in behaviour management has been undertaken and better liaison arrangements have been instituted between the co-ordinator and classroom support assistants. The school works hard to make its aim of including all pupils a practical reality. The provision for pupils at and early stage of learning English is well managed and is effective in supporting the pupils' learning.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	357 113	Balance from previous year	-28 885
Total expenditure	377 959	Balance carried forward to the next	-20 846
Expenditure per pupil	2 392		

38. The present headteacher inherited a deficit budget in 2002, due to rapidly falling rolls and high levels of supply costs for absent staff. The school has planned carefully since then to reduce this overspend and in the current year the deficit is due to fall to around £12 000. The expenditure per pupil is below average. The school administrative officer attends the finance committee meetings and provides good information for governors so that they can monitor the budget more effectively. The school is working hard to ensure best value in all aspects of its work and provides good value for money.



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

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

The provision for children in the reception and pre-reception classes is good and has improved greatly since the last inspection when it was a key issue to be improved. In particular, the quality of the teaching has improved and is now good overall and very good for the youngest children. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is well planned and appropriately based on the agreed areas of learning for this age group. The changes since the last inspection have ensured better deployment of staff and better leadership and management of the provision. The outdoor accommodation has improved but the resourcing and imaginative use of this is still requiring improvement.

The Foundation Stage is organised into three groups, a small group of part time pre-reception children, one class of full time reception pupils and one mixed Year 1 and reception class. They are accommodated in two large rooms and these areas are supplemented by the recent improvements to the library and computer suite, or 'Hive', and the atelier used for creative work. The staff are very caring and make a strong team with a range of levels of experience and skill appropriate for the ages of the children. The assessment systems are strong and support the pupils' learning as the information is used when planning activities.

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

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

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

- Children have good opportunities to develop responsibility and independence.
- Relationships created between children, and between the children and adults are good.

#### **Commentary**

39. The children are clearly happy at school and this is largely the result of the very good relationships developed between the children and the adults with whom they meet and work. The teaching is good and this supports the good levels of achievement evident. By the time they start Year 1 the majority of the children are on course to achieve the expected early learning goals. Teachers provide a good range of activities to promote opportunities for children to work and play together, to share and take turns, and to develop good learning habits. The teachers have set out clear classroom routines and rules and children respond to these well. They stop at a given signal and most help tidy away activities appropriately. Children have a range of opportunities for independence and responsibility. They have jobs such as taking the register to the office and giving out drinks and biscuits, which are done well. Teachers use registration times at the start of the day very effectively as a good opportunity to meet with parents to discuss any concerns they may have and this helps children settle into school.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

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

- The weekly text is used well to provide a basis for a wide range of different activities.
- Many children have writing skills that are below the level expected.

## Commentary

40. The overall quality of teaching is good and most children achieve well, given their attainment on entry to the school. However, few are likely to fully attain the expected early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1. The teachers read texts well and ask a good range of questions to extend children's understanding. These questions include opportunities to use inference to predict future events and to imagine possible outcomes. Most pre-reception children learn to write their names over their time in the class, but the less able have not mastered this by the time they start in the reception year. In the younger reception class, the teacher modelled writing well, making deliberate errors to encourage them to evaluate and correct her work. When working on their own, children show a lack of confidence in their ability, resulting from the evident low standards they demonstrate on entry to the school. Children have a good knowledge of the characters in the reading scheme and enjoy sharing books with adults. Most know the sounds of individual letters well but are yet to develop good skills of blending sounds to recognise unknown words. They know some common nursery rhymes and fairy tales but their favourite reading tends to be based around film or television tie-in books. The home/school diaries are used well by staff and parents and provide a good method of communication between home and school, as well as a diagnostic record of children's progress.
41. Speaking and listening are developed through a range of play and taught activities that provide good opportunities for children to discuss their work with others. They are encouraged to talk to each other during drink and biscuit times. There are fewer planned opportunities for speaking and listening in whole class situations.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff make good use of counting songs and number rhymes.
- Children are developing good knowledge in using money.

## Commentary

42. The teaching is good and the children achieve well, so that by the time they start Year 1 they are broadly achieving the standards expected. In the pre-reception class, very good teaching of sorting objects by shape and colour results in very good levels of achievement and progress in learning. Songs and counting rhymes are used well to consolidate number skills and this makes tasks enjoyable.
43. Younger reception children are at an early stage of coin recognition. They are able to make larger amounts using one pence coins as a class activity, but in role-play they are less secure with the value of coins. The good support of a nursery nurse ensured that one group could match coins to correct amounts. Older reception children are developing a good understanding of coins and their values. Play activities are well used to support this work throughout the reception classes. Thus, for example, children use coins in a role-play situation to buy sweets and biscuits. Children can give the correct amount to a nursery nurse who then appropriately extends the tasks by asking them how much they have left.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's knowledge of plant life is good.
- They have good opportunities to use computers regularly.

### Commentary

44. The teaching is good and the majority of the children will achieve the expected early learning goals by the start of Year 1, and some will exceed them. This represents good achievement given the below average attainment on entry evident in this area of learning. Children have a good understanding of the common parts of flowers and how seeds grow into plants. Observational painting enables children to closely observe and talk about the parts of flowers. Art software is used to create pictures of plants. Computers are used satisfactorily, although not always with software that is appropriate to the ages or abilities of the children. They use the computer very confidently and carefully. Pre-reception children are able to click and drag on, for example, weather symbols to create their own weather charts. Older pupils have good opportunities to use construction kits to create and label wheeled models.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's physical development is one of the strongest aspects of their development when they start school.
- Support staff work very hard to ensure pupils with special educational needs can take a full part in lessons.
- Learning is hindered by the outdoor provision.

### Commentary

45. The teaching is satisfactory and most children are on course to achieve the expected early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The staff provide a good range of activities requiring children to use small tools and to work carefully on a small scale, and also to take part in activities with larger equipment designed to improve their all round physical skills. Pre-reception children show good scissor skills as they cut out quite complex shapes. There are good systems used in hall lessons to support the pupils with special educational needs and to enable them to have equal opportunities to take a full part in lessons. A number of higher attaining pupils have good throwing and catching skills, but these are insufficiently challenged by tasks aimed at the whole class. The provision is hampered by the lack of resources for outdoor activities.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with a good range of opportunities to work imaginatively.
- Provision is very good when the children have the opportunity to work in the atelier.

## Commentary

46. The quality of teaching is good and the majority of the children are on course to achieve the expected early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. Teachers set up a range of imaginative art activities designed to enable children to use and develop their imaginations. In the pre-reception group, for example, the regular changing of the colour of a displayed giant's trousers results in children being very excited and interested, and keeps their attention focused on the displayed work for much longer than would normally be the case. Good observational paintings of flowers are made and these show how well children can work with care and attention to detail. Children have good opportunities to mix colours and to create different shades of a colour, as they do with green when painting the beanstalk leaves. Music is less highly developed but children have satisfactory opportunities to sing a range of songs, sometimes linked to literacy or numeracy activities. In one lesson, reception children composed sounds linked to a transport theme using their voices. They showed a developing understanding of long and short sounds.
47. When working in the atelier with a visiting advisory teacher, children have very good opportunities to think and work imaginatively, to discuss their work as they proceed and to discuss, evaluate and add to each other's work. The resources are very good and these sessions enable children to concentrate for longer than is possible in the class situation, and to become deeply absorbed in their work, thus developing their thinking skills very positively.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in reading and writing.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in all age groups.
- Pupils' written work is often poorly presented and skills learnt in handwriting lessons are not often transferred to other work.
- The school's programme gives good emphasis to developing skills in speaking and listening.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Resources to teach reading are good.

## Commentary

48. In the 2003 national tests, pupils' attainment was below average in reading and average in writing, but above average in both when compared to pupils in similar schools. Pupils in the current Year 2 have reached average standards in reading and writing, with many achieving above average standards in reading. At the last inspection, standards were broadly similar, although writing was then stronger than reading. However, current standards represent a higher level of achievement because the majority of pupils now enter the school with below average attainment in English. Pupils achieve well because of consistently good teaching throughout the school, making effective use of the National Literacy Strategy.
49. Standards in speaking and listening are average. Most pupils use clear voices to speak in complete sentences. They listen carefully to their teachers but tend not to listen so attentively to other pupils as they answer questions, and this slows their learning. Some pupils are less confident speakers and fail to articulate their words clearly. The school is aware of the importance of developing speaking and listening and provides extensive opportunities across a broad range of subjects. These include discussion with a partner before answering a question posed by the teacher.

50. Almost all pupils attain at least average standards in reading by the end of Year 2 and many higher attaining pupils read very well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Most pupils read accurately, using an increasing range of strategies to work out unknown words. Many are beginning to read expressively and most understand what they read. All are enthusiastic readers, taking books home each day. This positive picture is a result of the school's good provision. Teachers share their enthusiasm for books, using the extensive collection of 'big books', as they skilfully teach the process of reading. The school has emphasised the importance of reading by creating from two former classrooms a pleasant library and ICT area centrally in the school. Parents also support their children's learning well, writing useful comments in the home/school reading diaries.
51. Standards in writing are average overall. The content of pupils' writing is one of its stronger features. Most pupils write imaginatively, using their growing vocabulary to good effect. Punctuation and grammar are average, although some pupils fail to include even the most basic punctuation when left to write on their own. The weakest features of writing are handwriting and presentation. Work to practise handwriting is not carried over into pupils' everyday writing. Many pupils in Year 2 fail to form or position letters correctly and very few have begun to join letters.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the school. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and manage them well. As a result, pupils try hard and behave well, so that the learning process proceeds without interruption. Most lessons proceed at a good pace and include interesting and diverse activities, retaining pupils' interest well. Teachers ask questions that challenge pupils to think more deeply and to infer or deduce by referring to the text. The only significant weakness in teaching is that teachers do not expect high enough standards of presentation. They do not insist, for example, that improvements are made after work is marked.
53. The overall improvement since the previous inspection is good, because pupils are achieving well and the teaching of the subject has improved. The leadership and management by the subject co-ordinator and other senior staff are good. There is a good awareness of areas that need to be developed and the action plan to carry out improvements has been well thought out. Pupils' performance is monitored effectively through the analysis of data and through direct classroom observation and scrutiny of pupils' work. This analysis has indicated that a small number of boys are not making enough progress in reading and action has been initiated to remedy this.

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

54. The school is very keen to make meaningful links between subjects and is increasingly making use of literacy skills in other subject areas. The large collection of 'big books' includes fiction and non-fiction titles, enabling teachers to introduce other subject areas into literacy lessons. Effective use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in literacy, with many lessons taking place in the computer suite. There are good opportunities to use the computerised scanning system for borrowing books from the school library.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well overall, given their attainment on entry to the school.
- Their numeracy skills are developing well.
- The presentation of pupils' work is often very untidy.
- There is good assessment and recording of pupils' progress.

## **Commentary**

55. Current standards are broadly average, but this represents a good level of achievement as most pupils enter the school with below average mathematical skills. Analysis of the results in the 2003 national tests for Year 2 shows that 20 per cent achieved better than expected given their attainment on entry. Of these pupils, almost all were boys, although inspection evidence provides no particular reason for this. 31 per cent of the pupils did not achieve their predicted level and so the achievement of that cohort was only satisfactory. However, the current Year 1 and 2 pupils are achieving well and likely to attain standards at least in line with those found at the last inspection, although attainment on entry to the school has fallen.
56. Numeracy skills are developing well. During the inspection, most work in Year 1 was based on learning about coins. The younger Year 1 pupils are able to count to 100 accurately and can make amounts to 10 pence with smaller coins. They have made small pictures of shops with objects and prices, and these are used in a shopping game that effectively develops their skills and confidence in working out amounts. The older Year 1 pupils are very familiar with number pairs to 10 and are developing their knowledge of pairs to 20 effectively due to some very good challenging teaching. One higher attaining pupil quickly spotted a pattern in the number pairs and then pupils begin to complete the pairs and link them to the pairs to 10. The teacher encourages the use of pupils talking to each other and sharing their ideas before they answer or make final decisions about answers. This consolidates their learning well.
57. The pupils in Year 2 are set into two ability groups for this subject. This enables teachers to target their teaching more closely for particular needs. In one lesson, the less able pupils were introduced to the idea of difference between two numbers. They found this very challenging and needed more support through, for example, a number square. The group tasks were created at different levels using good teacher-made computerised resources. The higher attaining pupils are working at a good level and beginning to confidently add three two-digit numbers. Very good teaching results in a very pacy lesson that pupils enjoy and take a full part in. Misconceptions are used well to illustrate important teaching points or more effective strategies for solving problems.
58. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows a good coverage of the curriculum and appropriate use of the National Numeracy Strategy by teachers when planning lessons. The marking of pupils' work, especially in Year 2, is unsatisfactory as it too often praises untidy, poorly presented work, and does not always give pupils sufficient guidance about how they can improve. This is partly the result of a recent move away from the use of commercial workbooks to pupils doing their own recording; if so, pupils' skills need to be improved rapidly. Teachers use a good tracking system and give pupils levels every term, thus providing staff with a clear picture of how well individuals are progressing.
59. The subject co-ordinator has recently taken over the post. She has attended training to develop her co-ordinator skills and to keep up-to-date with issues around the numeracy strategy. In the past, there has been good liaison with the junior school, although this is less evident at present. The co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and has observed lessons. She has offered advice over terminology and activities and reminded staff about the available computer resources, and this has had a positive impact on teaching.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

60. The use of numeracy skills across the curriculum is satisfactory. Work in ICT is supported well through a range of mathematical activities that are also linked to literacy tasks. For example, after reading a book about a picnic, Year 1 pupils collected data about their favourite foods and used computers to present this as a pictogram and a bar graph. In science, Year 1 pupils have used bar graphs to chart the growth of seeds they have planted.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator provides a clear direction for the subject.
- The school has usefully evaluated the provision.
- Pupils have good opportunities to participate in interesting science projects.
- The school takes good opportunities for links between itself and a local school.
- Assessments are not child-friendly and not as accurate as they could be.

### Commentary

61. Standards in science are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2. Overall, satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection and teachers now provide the higher attaining pupils with challenging work. Nationally recognised guidelines are used to ensure that the syllabus is being covered. The co-ordinator has evaluated the work in the school alongside the headteacher and a local education authority adviser to ensure they measure standards and observe teaching. The new co-ordinator is enthusiastic and increasingly aware of the improvements that need to be made. She has undertaken training and passed on her knowledge to the rest of the staff.
62. Pupils participate in a range of practical activities so that they have good opportunities to gain first hand experience, although the more able pupils do not always record enough work. Pupils are aware of what they are expected to learn in lessons and enjoy the practical elements of the lessons. In Year 1, the children enjoyed the many and varied activities connected with understanding that a force is required to push or pull. They visited the local park to investigate the roundabout and slide and investigated toys to decide what type of force was needed to move them. Pupils do not have individual targets that would enable them to understand how they can improve and where they should be heading.
63. Overall, the quality of teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 is satisfactory. Teachers structure the lessons well and draw the pupils' experiences together at the end of the lesson to provide sound summaries of the learning made. Teachers are aware of the need to assess the pupils' progress although the assessments sheets that they use are not always suitable for young children and therefore not as accurate as they could be. The school does not track children's progress as well as it could by relating it to the National Curriculum. Computers are used effectively to support science teaching.
64. The school is particularly proud of the initiatives that it has developed to integrate other subjects with science and to develop links with the local junior school to create joint projects. These are very successful in providing children with useful and practical insights into science and enable them to study a particular theme in depth, as well as supporting the transition arrangements.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected by Year 2 and most pupils' achieve well.
- The quality of the teaching is good.
- The 'Hive' offers teachers and pupils a very good resource.
- The activities provided often support the development of pupils' thinking skills.

- The use of computers to aid learning in other subjects is not sufficiently developed.

### **Commentary**

65. Since the last inspection, standards have risen and are now good throughout the school. Pupils' achievement is good and the use of computers has a much higher profile in a range of subjects. Only two lessons were observed, but from these and other evidence it is clear that the overall quality of teaching is good, with some that is very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic when using the computers and they treat the equipment with respect, demonstrating a good understanding of health and safety issues and following class or 'Hive' rules about behaviour. Displays of children's work in the 'Hive' show that Year 1 pupils create text using key words with word-processing software, while Year 2 pupils use a range of tools in art software to create a good variety of imaginative effects
66. In Year 1, pupils build on the good work done in the Foundation Stage to introduce children to computers. They can use software to display information they have gathered about favourite foods to take on a picnic. They are able to input the information accurately and create pictograms and bar graphs. In one good lesson, the teacher began with a useful discussion about the meaning of the term 'data'. Good teacher demonstration makes clear what is expected of the pupils through the learning objectives and she makes good use of deliberate mistakes to show how errors can be corrected. In Year 2, pupils use computers to support the development of their research skills, by reading text about minibeasts and then creating their own text from a word bank. The teacher demonstrated and modelled the activity well, showing pupils how to get the computer to 'read' their sentences. She stopped the lesson at appropriate times to make salient teaching points and to move the pupils' learning forward. The work is well matched to two different ability levels and this ensured the task was sufficiently challenging for the more able pupils, but not too difficult for the less able. Pupils also use the computerised library system well, scanning and checking out books themselves.
67. The use of appropriate software on the computers provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop their thinking skills. For example, in some mathematical activities pupils have worked together well, sharing ideas and suggestions for solving problems. Staff are making good use of computers to create resources and planning.
68. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has overseen improvements to resources and supported staff with advice as needed. This has had a positive impact on standards. The 'Hive' is appropriately timetabled to provide good value for money, and the co-ordinator has the appropriate target of developing further cross-curricular use of the computers in other subjects. The school has a governor linked to the subject, who has visited the school and observed some lessons, thus giving governors a better understanding of the work covered and the use of the resources.

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

69. Computers are used more widely in different subjects than was the case at the time of the last inspection, although this could still be developed further, especially through literacy and numeracy lessons. In mathematics, Year 2 pupils use software to support their skills in adding two numbers to make a given total. This work is made sufficiently challenging as there are different levels pupils can work at depending on their prior attainment and confidence. Other work shows good links to literacy and geography. When using factual text, Year 2 pupils recognise and know how to use the contents and the glossary from their earlier work in literacy lessons.

### **HUMANITIES**

70. Although work was sampled in **history and geography**, there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement of provision in either subject. Both geography and history are taught with regard to national guidelines. They are planned to cover the requirements of the National



Curriculum. In **history**, good emphasis is often placed on the comparison between the present and a specific time in the past. Consequently, pupils are given good opportunities to consolidate their understanding of times in the past. By the end of Year 2, the children have learnt about famous people like Samuel Pepys and Florence Nightingale. Lessons are planned to provide them with a useful comparison between toys of today and those in the past. In one good lesson, pupils enjoyed looking at photos of seaside holidays in the past and gained useful knowledge. They participated in helpful discussions to help them realise how times have changed. **Geography** is planned in line with national guidelines. No lessons were seen during the inspection, so no judgement can be made on teaching. By the end of Year 2, pupils are learning about ways of travelling, for example, which type of transport would be needed to travel to Australia. Through the travels of the school bear, lessons are planned so that children can learn about other places. They learn about their local park and comment on the quality of the environment, deciding whether they like specific features or not. The children's work is assessed at the end of each unit of work so teachers know what children have learnt.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- A balanced programme of study is provided for each age group.
- The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership.

## Commentary

71. There is only limited evidence about overall standards. Very little written work is undertaken as most lessons concentrate on developing pupils' understanding through stories, visiting speakers, discussion and the examination of artefacts. Two lessons were seen and these indicate that standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as was the case at the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 2 are aware of some of the features of mosques and churches. By listening to a range of prayers from around the world, they identify purposes for prayer and some understand the feelings of those composing them.
72. The two lessons observed were insufficient to make a judgement about the overall quality of teaching throughout the school. Together with discussion with the co-ordinator and an examination of the scheme of work accompanying the locally agreed syllabus, they indicate that both learning about religion and learning from religion are included in the school's programme. The school has recently made sensible adaptations to the scheme of work to reflect more closely its local circumstances, substituting the study of Islam for that of Hinduism.
73. The subject co-ordinator leads the subject effectively. She provides termly plans for each age group and this ensures the programme is balanced and builds pupils' skills progressively. She has written a good development plan for the subject. However, she has had few opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching or of pupils' work to form an overall view of strengths and weaknesses in the subject.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

74. No lessons were observed in **art and design**, but sufficient evidence is available from displays and other examples of pupils' work to say that standards have at least been maintained at the satisfactory levels found at the last inspection. However, there have been some significant improvements to the provision and these are beginning to have an impact on standards. The development of pupils' creativity is high on the school's agenda for future development and this has been supported with the creation of an atelier, or resource centre for creative work. During

the inspection, children in the reception class were working in this area with an advisory teacher and this was giving them very good opportunities to create a range of pictures, patterns and designs that demonstrated high levels of creativity and resulted in some very effective discussion as they explained and justified their creations. In another good project, a visiting mask collector showed Year 2 pupils a range of masks from different cultures and this resulted in them making their own, well-finished papier-mâché versions, brightly coloured and varnished. The older pupils are also developing the use of sketch books and this gives them good opportunities to experiment with a range of media.

75. Too little work was observed in **design and technology** to make judgements about teaching or standards attained. Pupils are provided with a range of activities, such as making vegetable soup from fresh vegetables. They have made vehicles from boxes and experimented with joining the wheels. Pupils are helped to evaluate their own work. They identify areas of their designs that need improving and are able to record their ideas accurately. In one good lesson, the children were able to experiment with mechanisms through the use of slides and levers.
76. No lessons were observed in **music** and because of this there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of provision across the school. The only music observed was singing, in an assembly and in short sessions for whole year groups. Pupils' singing lacked confidence and many failed to participate enthusiastically, partly because of a lack of familiarity with the words. This made it difficult for pupils to sing accurately. At the previous inspection, standards in music at the end of the key stage were unsatisfactory.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good** and has improved since the last inspection.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' skills are well developed for their ages.
- Pupils enjoy the subject, are well behaved in lessons and take a full part in the available activities.
- The outdoor facilities are not developed and resourced sufficiently to take full advantage of the space available.

## Commentary

77. The standards in games skills, and in the movement observed in dance lessons, are of good quality and better than those expected given the ages of the pupils. Pupils are confident and agile and their work builds appropriately on the good levels of physical development evident on entry to the school. Most pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their attached support staff, and by the teachers. Good systems and routines are used, such as giving them a specific marked area to work in, and these enable them to take a positive part in the lessons.
78. In a good Year 2 hockey lesson, pupils demonstrated good skills at controlling the stick and ball, and a good awareness of the movements of others during the activity. They can pass and control the ball accurately. They work well together, sensibly co-operating and collaborating and this makes a good contribution towards their social development. In a Year 1 dance lesson, pupils controlled their movements well, creating some good thoughtful swooping movements, and mimes to illustrate waking in the morning and falling asleep at night. Teachers provided appropriate music for this, which supported pupils' efforts well, giving them a good level of guidance regarding the rhythm and speed of their movements.

79. The teaching was good in all of the lessons observed. There is an appropriate focus on safety with regard to equipment and the use of the multi-purpose hall. In most lessons, there are insufficient warm up opportunities and not enough is done to make pupils aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies. However, lessons normally finish with an appropriate cooling down activity. Teachers have a good subject knowledge regarding the techniques or skills to be learned. So, for example, in dance lessons there is an appropriate focus on pupils using different levels or different pathways. Although the weather did not permit the use of the playground or field for lessons during the inspection, observations of the available facilities show that these are very basic and do not provide for the full range of activities and opportunities commonly found in many infant schools.

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

80. Only one lesson was observed in this subject, plus a brief excerpt from a second. This was insufficient to make judgements about standards, teaching and learning. A commercial scheme has been adopted as the programme of study. This ensures that a coherent curriculum is taught to all pupils, with the opportunity to acquire skills across all aspects of the subject in a progressive way. The objective of the lesson observed was rather peripheral to the aims of personal education, although the lesson derived from the scheme and was competently taught. However, it is evident that the school places a great emphasis on this area of the curriculum. It has recognised the need to adjust the programme to increase its relevance to pupils and to introduce elements of citizenship education. Before introducing a new unit of work on sex and relationships, the school ensured parents were well informed through a process of consultation.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
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	4
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	2
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).*