

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **RAY LODGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Woodford Green

LEA area: Redbridge

Unique reference number: 131305

Headteacher: Mr K Baskill

Lead inspector: Mr D Hayward

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2003

Inspection number: 257281

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;	550
School address:	Snakes Lane East Woodford Green
Postcode:	IG8 7JQ
Telephone number:	020 8504 7301
Fax number:	020 8504 7199
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Canon A Cross
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Ray Lodge is a very large primary school situated in Woodford Green, in the London borough of Redbridge. Just under 50 per cent of the pupils attending are from minority ethnic backgrounds and about 40 per cent do not speak English as their mother tongue. About 15 per cent of pupils belong to families who are refugees or those who are seeking asylum. Many pupils move to other schools as their families are placed in permanent accommodation. For example, in some year groups, over 60 per cent of pupils move into and out of Ray Lodge. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The percentage of pupils identified with special educational needs is broadly average, although the percentage with statements of special educational need is higher than average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Ray Lodge is **well regarded** in the area and provides a **satisfactory** standard of education. Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds and the school is a **caring** place where they work and play well together. The nursery and reception classes provide a **very good start** to children's schooling. Junior pupils make **good progress**, but standards of work are **not as high as they should be** for infant pupils. Teaching is **satisfactory** overall, with much **good** teaching observed in the Foundation Stage and junior classes. The leadership and management are **sound** and the school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Infant pupils do not achieve the standards they should and teaching there is unsatisfactory overall
- The nursery and reception classes are strengths of the school
- The teaching in the juniors is good and in the Foundation Stage it is very good
- The school does not plan the range of subjects it teaches carefully enough
- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school
- Too many pupils are late for school or are regularly absent
- The school makes very good links with parents and they think highly of it
- There are very good relationships between adults and pupils. The school is a caring, welcoming place.

The improvement since the last inspection is **satisfactory**. The school, which had recently been amalgamated, has become established in the area. The high standards of education in the Foundation Stage have been maintained. National test results for pupils in Year 6 are higher and junior pupils make more progress than they did. Teaching is not as good as it was in the infant classes. Most of the key issues have been addressed, although the school has not been successful in raising standards for infant pupils, making its curriculum broad enough or improving attendance.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 2 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	D	E	E	D
writing	D	E	E	D
mathematics	E	E	E	D

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

#### Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	E	C	B
mathematics	D	E	D	C
science	D	E	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 overall is **satisfactory**. Many children make **very good progress** in the nursery and Reception classes and achieve standards expected of children by the time they start in Year 1. Pupils' progress slows in the infants and many **do not achieve the standards they could** in national tests at the age of seven. They make **good progress** in the junior classes and **achieve well**. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection were **unsatisfactory**. Standards in English and mathematics in the juniors are **satisfactory**. Standards in science throughout the school are **unsatisfactory**. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make the same rate of progress and achieve similar standards as those of other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make particularly **good progress** in the junior classes. This shows that support for them is well planned. Support for pupils with English as an additional language from specialist teachers is **good**. Boys and girls achieve similar standards. Standards in the foundation subjects are at least **satisfactory overall**. Pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are not used regularly or well enough in other subjects, for example in science, geography and history.

The school makes **good provision** overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is **good** for social, moral and cultural development. Pupils learn about right and wrong, feel that they have a voice in the day-to-day running of the school and celebrate multicultural events and special days. It provides **satisfactory** provision for pupils' spiritual development. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are **unsatisfactory**. The school's attempts to improve these have been unsuccessful. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons and around the school are **good**. There is no evidence of bullying and pupils of all backgrounds mix well together and there is no racism. When opportunities are planned, pupils **work well** together in class.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education overall. Teaching is **satisfactory** overall, but there are significant differences between year groups. In the Foundation Stage teaching is consistently **very good** and is the main reason why children settle so quickly and make such **very good** progress. In the junior classes teaching in over half the lessons is **good** and teachers have high expectations of what they can achieve. This is not the case in some infant lessons, where teaching is **unsatisfactory** overall. Pupils are often not expected to do enough work. Lessons are not exciting enough to hold their interest and there are few opportunities for them to work together. When teaching is good and very good, work for infants and juniors is planned at the right level to make pupils think carefully about what they are learning, so that they are more likely to remember it.

The school's long term subject planning is **unsatisfactory**. The school has placed such emphasis on teaching literacy and numeracy that other subjects have often been neglected. There is a **satisfactory** range of visits out and visitors to school to help make learning interesting. The school is a **very caring** place where pupils feel safe and secure. Adults have **very good relationships** with pupils, so that they know that they have someone to trust and someone that they can ask for help in lessons. Parents **strongly support** the school. They say that their children really like attending and feel that it provides a **good** all-round education. The way in which the school supports parents who are new to the school, often without English as a mother tongue, is **very good**. The school forms **good** links with the community.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher and governing body provide **satisfactory** leadership and management. The headteacher, with the support of the staff, has raised the confidence of parents in a racially harmonious school that provides a safe environment. The quality of education that the Foundation Stage and junior classes provide is **good**. The major weaknesses are in not raising standards at Key Stage 1 and an over-emphasis on teaching literacy and numeracy to the exclusion of other subjects. Management roles and responsibilities do not have a sufficiently sharp focus to bring about consistent improvement. The governors have a **good knowledge and understanding of the school** and are committed to its success. They have not been sufficiently analytical about the

reasons for low achievement at Key Stage 1 or the strategies for focusing on how to raise standards.

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

Parents have a **very high** opinion of the school. They feel that the school listens carefully to any concerns that they might have and that teachers have their children's best interests at heart. Parents support the school very well and attend concerts in large numbers. Pupils say that they **like the school very much**. They are confident that teachers will listen to them, give freely of their time and help them if they need it.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- the leadership, management and governance of the school, to ensure that:
  - a. the school gets better at focusing on how standards of teaching and work can be improved, especially in the infants;
  - b. standards in science throughout the school are raised and all subjects are taught regularly;
  - c. the school undertakes rigorous self evaluation and uses the findings effectively;
- the punctuality and attendance of a number of pupils.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement for pupils in the infants is **unsatisfactory** overall. Boys and girls achieve similar standards. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve results that are similar to those of other pupils in their year groups.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many infant pupils do not achieve the standards they should and make unsatisfactory progress.
- Junior pupils make good progress and many achieve well.
- There are few opportunities for pupils to use their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects.

#### Commentary

1. Assessments show that many children's attainment when they start school is **well below** that normally found. They make **good, and often very good, progress** so that, by the end of their reception year, the majority of pupils now in Year 1 **attained standards that are expected** in all the areas of learning<sup>1</sup>. This is similar to judgements made in the previous report. However, the nature of children starting school at Ray Lodge has changed significantly in five years, with far more from minority ethnic groups who do not speak English as their mother tongue.
2. Infant pupils do not build on the progress they make in the Foundation Stage and their achievement is unsatisfactory. Their results have been below, or well below, those expected for the last four years in comparison with those in all schools nationally and in similar schools<sup>2</sup>. The school is well aware of the downward trend and has adopted different strategies to try to improve results, but these have been unsuccessful.
3. The National Strategies for literacy and numeracy have not been successful in helping to raise standards. In fact, an over emphasis on literacy and numeracy has meant that many other subjects have received little attention, consequently the range of pupils' work has become narrow. This means that there has been insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects. Opportunities for writing are very limited and reading does not have a high enough profile. This is reflected in pupils' attitudes to reading and writing, and in their standards of work.
4. The school faces significant problems caused by pupils' mobility. This makes it difficult to assess pupils' attainment when they start so that work can be planned at the correct level, especially if pupils speak very little English. However, the school is unable to show any significant difference between the results in national tests at the age of seven for pupils who started at Ray Lodge in the nursery and those who joined the school in Year 1 or Year 2.

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<sup>1</sup> Early Learning Goals – these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development' There are many goals for each area of learning; for example, in language and literacy children should be able to write their own name and begin to write simple sentences.

<sup>2</sup> Levels Key Stage 1 – By the end of Year 2, when pupils are seven, they are expected to reach Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards above those expected for a child of his or her age.

That is, it cannot claim to add value to pupils' results in Key Stage 1. The table below gives an indication of seven-year-old pupils' results in national tests in 2002<sup>3</sup>.

#### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.2 (13.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.2 (12.5)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	15.2 (14.2)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 68 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- There has been a gradual trend of improvement in junior pupils' results in national tests. The most impressive trend is in the results of eleven-year-old pupils who have attended Ray Lodge since the nursery. In the 2002 tests, those pupils attained results that were **well above average** in English and **average** in mathematics compared with pupils in similar schools. The same pupils achieved results that were **well above average** in all subjects at the higher Level 5<sup>4</sup> in tests at eleven years of age.

#### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (25.2)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	25.9 (25.3)	26.7 (26.6)
science	27.9 (27.0)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 97 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Standards in science for infants and juniors were below average. There are too few opportunities for pupils to carry out practical investigations, and science is not planned regularly enough for pupils to remember what they learn. Where there was enough work to make judgements on standards in the foundation subjects in the infants and juniors, they were those expected. Where judgements could not be made for infant pupils, they had done little work, or were not due to study particular subjects for some time to come; for example, no geography is planned for pupils in Year 1 until their second term.
- The inconsistency with which some subjects appear on the timetable means that pupils are not able to use literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. This is a significant omission because many pupils possess a very basic vocabulary and there are not enough opportunities to extend this through learning subject specific vocabulary; for instance, in science and history (**see paragraph 59**). There are regular visits to the computer suite, and pupils' attainment is as expected at seven and eleven years of age. However, they have few chances to use computers in lessons. Although they become more skilled in using technology as they get older, there are few demands on them to use those skills in other subjects. For example, different types of graphs in mathematics and geography, information sources in history or measuring devices in science.

<sup>3</sup> Average points score – The average points score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades attained by all pupils with the grades attained by pupils in other schools as well as an average for all schools nationally. The National Curriculum level attained by each pupil, for example in mathematics, is given a score. Level 1 = 9 points, Level 2 = 15 points, Level 3 = 21 points and so on. The average points score for mathematics is worked out by adding up all the points based on levels attained by pupils and then dividing the total by the number of pupils who took the test.

<sup>4</sup> Levels Key Stage 2 – By the end of year 6 when they are eleven, pupils are expected to reach Level 4. If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above those expected for a child of his or her age.

8. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and receive good support in classes and in small groups when they are withdrawn. The targets in their individual education plans are challenging, yet realistic, and regularly reviewed. The impact of the support is more successful in junior classes because teachers' expectations for them to do well and make progress are more demanding. Support for junior pupils with special educational needs is well focused and well managed. It includes daily sessions to improve their recognition of letter sounds as well as carefully planned work on an individual basis. Boys and girls achieve similar standards in national tests and during lessons observed. Pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue receive good support from specialist teachers, although the support they receive in classes is not as thoroughly planned. There is not enough recognition of the importance of developing their home language at the same time as English, and there are limited opportunities for pupils to use and experience success in both languages.

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

Pupils have **good attitudes** to school and their **behaviour is good**. Provision for pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good**. Pupils' **attendance and punctuality** are **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' attendance remains below the national average and a number are late for school every day.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes love school and behave very well.
- Relationships are very good throughout the whole school community.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development.

### **Commentary**

#### **Attendance**

9. Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory and it has not improved enough since the last inspection. The school has tried to improve attendance, for example with awards for pupils and frequent reminders to parents, but these have made little difference to overall attendance levels. There are high levels of authorised absence because the school is not as selective as it should be in giving permission for pupils to be out of school. Although the school has tried to emphasise the importance of punctuality, a number of pupils are regularly late to school each morning, which disrupts the start of the school day for their classes.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	8.5	School data :	0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.5

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

10. Pupils are positive about school life. They say that they are made to feel welcome and that all staff are friendly and are prepared to give their time to help them. They particularly like the fact that pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and say that they all get along well together and that there is no racism in the school. Pupils are enthusiastic about the opportunities to play sport, join teams and participate in clubs. In lessons, pupils are interested in what they are learning and try hard with their work.

11. Behaviour in the school is good because staff are consistent in their expectations. Those pupils who have behaviour difficulties are managed well and helped to improve their behaviour. Pupils say that they feel safe in the playground and that although bullying is rare, they would know who to go to if they had any problems and are confident that these would be sorted out.
12. Children in the nursery and reception classes are very happy at school and behave very well. They thrive on a range of stimulating activities. Their achievement in the Early Learning Goal for personal development is good because they are settled into school routines and are developing good levels of independence.
13. The school makes good use of the diverse nature of pupils and parents to promote positive understanding and respect amongst pupils from different countries and backgrounds. Pupils' spiritual development is not as well developed, however, because lessons do not consistently develop a real sense of excitement in pupils' learning and there are not enough planned opportunities for them to reflect on how well they have learned from their experiences. However, there is a good sense of community in assemblies and pupils demonstrate their appreciation of other cultures, for example when celebrating Diwali together.

**Exclusions: There has been one exclusion for a fixed period for bad behaviour in the school year prior to the inspection.**

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

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

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	276	1	
White – Irish	1		
White – any other White background	50		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	16		
Mixed – White and Black African	7		
Mixed – White and Asian	10		
Mixed – any other mixed background	15		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	30		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	30		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	20		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	7		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	27		
Black or Black British – African	78		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	7		
Chinese	7		
Any other ethnic group	9		
No ethnic group recorded	2		

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education the school provides is **satisfactory overall**. There are significant differences between the quality of education in the Foundation Stage and junior classes, where pupils make good and sometimes very good progress, and the infant classes where progress is unsatisfactory. The curriculum in the infants and juniors is not balanced, because pupils are not taught some subjects regularly enough. This means that although standards are generally in line with expectations, they do not have enough opportunities to improve.

### Teaching and learning

**Very good teaching** in the Foundation Stage helps children to settle quickly and many attain standards that are expected. **Good teaching** in the juniors has a marked impact on their achievement by the age of eleven. **Unsatisfactory teaching** in the infants affects the amount of progress they make. The quality of assessment systems and their use is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is always very good in the nursery and reception classes.
- Many infant lessons are not interesting or challenging enough.
- Teaching in the juniors helps pupils to make good progress in English and mathematics.
- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils.
- Support assistants help junior pupils with special educational needs to make good progress.
- Pupils are not always aware of their targets, and marking does not always help them to know how to improve their work.
- Formal assessments of pupils' attainment are not yet established in all the foundation subjects.

### Commentary

14. Teaching is better now than it was in the previous inspection in the Foundation Stage and junior classes, but not as good in the infant classes, where it was judged to be good in the last inspection. A quarter of the twenty lessons observed there were unsatisfactory. Ninety per cent of lessons overall were at least satisfactory throughout the school and almost 60 per cent were good. Apart from the Foundation Stage, where all teaching was very good, only 10 per cent of teaching was very good in the infant and junior classes. Almost all parents think that the quality of teaching is good. They say that teachers are approachable and have an 'open door' policy so that they are available to discuss concerns at short notice. Parents are happy with the school's arrangements for homework and say that they know what they are expected to do to help their children. Pupils themselves feel that the quantity of homework is not excessive. Homework is regularly marked and generally supports pupils' schoolwork
15. Very good teaching is characterised by pupils being engrossed in their work and making better progress than might be expected. In very good lessons, teaching is consistently challenging and allows planned opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Although there were occasions when these qualities were observed throughout the school, there were often inconsistencies in the level of challenge for pupils and lessons lacked the 'sharpness' that is found with very good teaching.
16. Nevertheless, in a significant number of lessons, especially in the juniors, teaching was good and pupils made progress. In those lessons pupils were interested and teaching methods were varied and often imaginative. Teachers had good subject knowledge and what the pupils were supposed to learn was made explicit at the start of lessons, and then checked at the end. There was a sense of urgency about the lesson, so that pupils knew that they had to finish work on time, and good opportunities were planned for them to work together. However, teaching was good in fewer than half the infant lessons. The lesson grades are given in the table below.

## Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 69 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
	14 (20%)	27 (39%)	22 (32%)	6 (8%)	1 (1%)	

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.

17. In almost all lessons it was clear that teachers have a good relationship with pupils. They are very positive about praising pupils for good behaviour and, while they expect pupils to behave well, they are quick to point out the positive aspects of good behaviour, rather than telling pupils off if they do misbehave. Teachers ensure that all pupils are included in lessons and the work of support assistants is well planned in junior classes to help pupils with special educational needs make progress. It is less effective in some infant classes, where teachers' expectations of what all pupils can do are not high enough. The support for pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue from specialist teachers is good. They make sure that pupils are aware of what the task is and whether they understand, using the pupils' home language to good effect whenever possible.
18. In lessons that were not consistently effective, time management was a significant factor. In some cases lesson introductions were too long, so that pupils began to lose interest. Sometimes this meant that the time allowed for activities was shortened and pupils could not complete their work. In some lessons, no clear time limits were set for pupils to follow and too much time was allowed for what was a relatively easy task. In a number of lessons not enough time was allowed for a worthwhile plenary session. In other lessons this was merely a time for pupils to talk about what they had done, rather than providing opportunities for them to reflect on their learning, for example by talking about things they had found challenging.
19. In unsatisfactory lessons, the work was often mundane and pupils were not given a chance to show what they could do and how much they knew. Tasks were not explained clearly and a long introduction, with pupils sitting passively, was often followed by a worksheet-based task that required little from them. Consequently, pupils made no progress and did not achieve as much as they could.
20. The school has recently established a database of useful information about pupils' attainment and targets for future performance. There is a whole-school timetable so that regular assessments are fixed throughout the year. This ensures that pupils' attainment is being checked at frequent intervals. Teachers use this information to adjust their lesson planning and to amend pupils' future targets if necessary.
21. Teachers assess pupils' work during lessons through questioning and listening, and through marking pupils' work. The quality of marking is inconsistent despite the school's marking policy. For example, very good marking was observed in mathematics in Year 6, but the quality and effectiveness of marking in other subjects such as English does not tell pupils what they need to do next to improve their work. Although nearly all teachers make the learning objectives clear at the beginning of lessons, there is less emphasis on specific targets for individuals or groups during the lesson. For example, teachers were not often observed setting challenging expectations for groups of more able pupils. Target-setting procedures vary between classes and year groups. In Year 3, for instance, all the teachers display pupils' literacy targets on their tables, so there is no doubt what the group's targets are for that lesson. In some years, however, pupils were not clear about what their individual targets were.

## The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**.

The school does not offer a broad enough range of subjects that is taught regularly. It plans a **satisfactory** range of trips out of school to enrich the curriculum. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Learning experiences in the Reception and Nursery class are exciting and imaginative.
- In Years 1 and 2 there is too much emphasis on English and mathematics.
- Some subjects are not taught frequently enough throughout the school.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply skills and knowledge learnt in one subject to others.

### **Commentary**

22. The curriculum in the previous inspection was judged to contain all the subjects it should and that they were taught regularly. This is no longer the case. In the last few years, teachers have planned a curriculum that focuses mainly on literacy and numeracy, in an effort to raise standards in English and mathematics. This has been successful in the juniors, but not in the infants. In Years 1 and 2 pupils do not always have a sufficiently varied curriculum to keep them alert and responsive. The school has now recognised that this does not match the learning needs of many of its infant pupils, particularly early in Year 1, where the curriculum is too rigid and subject based. The intention now is to introduce a more flexible way of teaching elements of the literacy and numeracy hour that will match pupils' earlier progress and present it in a way that is exciting and varied.
23. The school meets statutory requirements and all pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, are fully included. It teaches the required subjects in the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum. Long-term planning covers all the required work in each subject, but the impact of when each is taught has not been carefully considered. In most year groups there are large periods of time when subjects are not planned. For example, in Year 3, history is taught in the first term and not covered again until the summer term. In some classes science is not taught for four week periods. This means that pupils forget facts, vocabulary and key skills that they have learnt and this affects their progress.
24. The school recognises that the links that exist between subjects are limited. It plans to address this by linking subjects much more closely so that pupils skills learnt in one subject can be transferred successfully to another. For example, although a great deal of time was spent on literacy and numeracy lessons, pupils' literacy and numeracy skills were rarely applied in other subjects, so that they were taught in isolation. Pupils' skills in using computers have greatly improved. Outside specific subject lessons, however, their skills were not transferred to other subjects, for example using data handling programs in geography to make graphs to show the weather and rainfall.
25. During the inspection, extra curricular activities were mainly for the junior pupils and included science, art, needlework and football. Teachers help pupils to stage well-received performances for their parents and find opportunities for some pupils to sing at Christmas time within the local community. Pupils really enjoy visits out of school and say, *'they help you learn more'*. Pupils in Year 6 remembered in great detail a visit to a Suffolk Tudor house they had made in Year 4.
26. The accommodation and resources are sound. Teachers use the accommodation effectively, even though it is spread over three separate buildings and has a difficult layout with many different types of extensions and adaptations. Great thought has gone into the internal layout to improve facilities, for example the spacious library, and the internal

decoration is bright and attractive. The staffing levels are generous and resources for most subjects are at least satisfactory.

### Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' **care, welfare, health and safety** is **good**. Pupils are provided with **satisfactory** support, advice and guidance.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- This is a caring school where pupils from all backgrounds are looked after well.
- There are very good induction procedures for children who are new to the school in the nursery and reception classes.
- Pupils have very good and trusting relationships with adults.
- There is good, specialist provision to support pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.
- The school seeks pupils' views well and acts positively on them.
- Pupils are not always clear about their targets and what they need to do next to improve.

### Commentary

27. The school cares well for pupils. It values their backgrounds, appreciates their difficulties and works closely with their families to ensure that pupils are safe, secure and happy. Support for pupils with special educational needs or for those who speak English as an additional language is good. Pupils' individual education plans are regularly reviewed and parents, and often pupils themselves, are included in this process. Effective use is made of outside expertise. Teaching assistants work very well with teachers to support pupils and this is particularly effective in junior classes. Arrangements to ensure pupils' health and safety are good. Procedures for child protection and for monitoring pupils in public care are followed carefully.
28. Pupils say that adults care for them and that they trust them to give time to help them when they are worried about their work or personal difficulties. Pupils feel secure because they have very good relationships with adults and can go to any adult in the school if they have a problem. The induction procedures for children who are new to the school are very good, with the result that they settle in quickly and are happy in their surroundings. Older pupils who join the school in other year groups say how welcome they are made to feel by adults and others in their class.
29. The way that the school values pupils' opinions is evident in the confidence that pupils have to talk to teachers in lessons and around school. However, the support, advice and guidance offered to pupils are relatively informal and there is inconsistent use of target setting. While pupils know what they are to achieve in lessons because the teacher usually shares the objective of the lesson with them, they are less confident about their own individual targets for improvement. Some do not know what these are, some say that they have the same target for a whole year, while others, in Year 6, know that their targets will be reviewed each term and speak positively about how these help them to achieve well.



## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's **links with parents** are **very good**. The school has **good** links with the community and **satisfactory** links with other schools.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very positive relationships with parents and works hard to involve them in school life right from the start.
- Parents are very pleased with the school in all areas of its work.
- There are very good opportunities for parents to learn how to support their children through family learning classes and the parent and toddler groups.
- The school regularly seeks parents' views and acts positively upon them.
- Links with the local community are used well to extend the work of the school and pupils' learning.

### Commentary

30. The school has a very successful partnership with parents because it values and encourages their support and involvement. Parents think highly of the school and are particularly positive about the school's focus on developing the 'whole child' and the impact that this has on their children's confidence. Some parents are disappointed that some pupils are persistently late for school.
31. Very good induction procedures help parents to feel confident in the school when their children start and they know that they can discuss any difficulties openly with staff. This is very effective with parents of pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue. The governing body's annual meeting is, unusually, well attended by parents because they know that this is a forum for praising the school on what it does well and for making suggestions for improvement and that these comments are taken seriously. Parents receive good quality information, ranging from very helpful booklets in the nursery class to regular newsletters and informative end of year reports on their children's progress.
32. The school recognises the value of parental involvement in their children's learning and makes very good provision for parents to participate in family learning groups for literacy and numeracy. These are well attended and parents say that they have been significantly helped to understand how their children learn both at home and school. The parent and toddler group is another very good feature of the school. It is popular and plays an important part in introducing families to the school in the local area and in helping the youngest children to make a trouble-free transition to the nursery.
33. The school's links with the local community are good. It makes a great effort to publicise its events and achievements in the local press and to develop its reputation in the area. Good use is made of visits and visitors to make pupils' learning more interesting.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The headteacher and governors have created a **very caring** environment and ethos that the parents and pupils **value highly**. While the school has improved, its development is **not well enough managed or sufficiently focused** on raising standards.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has effectively raised the profile and image of the school in the community and amongst parents.
- Leadership and management roles are clearly defined but are not structured in a way to most effectively raise standards.
- Governors have been influential in helping to establish the school's ethos, but do not have a good enough knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Performance management is well managed and closely linked to the school's targets and development priorities.

### Commentary

#### Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,623,179	Balance from previous year	10,849
Total expenditure	1,606,594	Balance carried forward to the next	16,585
Expenditure per pupil	2921		

34. Since the last inspection the headteacher, governors and senior staff have worked very hard and successfully to create an ethos of care and mutual respect that is evident throughout the school. Staff provide very good role models for the pupils and promote mutual respect for people of different minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils and parents hold the school in high regard.
35. The governors are very knowledgeable about the school and they have effective systems in place to ensure that they are well informed. When the school faced a huge cut in its budget, they worked hard with the local education authority and headteacher to ensure that both the immediate and longer term prospects for the school were taken into account and that its main priorities were protected. However, while very aware of the school's standards, they have not taken effective action to raise academic standards for the infant pupils. Their statutory duties are fully met.
36. Although the school has taken effective and co-ordinated action to develop its ethos, pastoral work and the social development of the pupils, the work to raise academic standards has been less effective. Plans to develop the school, and their implementation, have improved, but still have some significant weaknesses. For example:
- the improvement plan does not identify precisely enough its targets for key areas such as raising academic standards. Nor does it say how they are to be achieved or give an exact timescale
  - the co-ordinators' action plans are detailed, but in many cases they assume that if certain procedures and resources are improved, standards will automatically rise. However, plans do not make clear how this will happen or provide precise statements about standards that will be achieved

- roles are clear, but too many people are involved with different aspects of the same responsibility. For instance, raising standards in English at Year 1 involves the year co-ordinator, the infant co-ordinator, the English co-ordinator for the infants, a deputy head with responsibility for planning and assessment, and the assistant head with responsibility for monitoring. No one person is responsible or accountable
- too many of the school's key developmental resources, such as staff training days, staff meetings and money, are bid for by staff rather than allocated strictly against the school's priorities. Staff have almost unlimited access to training at great cost, but again its value is not objectively assessed against the school's aims or improvement in pupils' performance.

37. The management of special educational needs is good. Good use is made of support staff and throughout the school they are well trained and have the pupils' best interests at heart. They work closely alongside teachers and their role in raising standards is particularly effective in junior classes. They effectively run programmes such as the Early Literacy Support and make accurate assessments in class of the behaviour of pupils with special educational needs, which provide good information about their progress.
38. The school provides a satisfactory standard of education overall, although it is very good in the Foundation Stage and junior pupils make good progress in English and mathematics. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although it is never less than very good in the Foundation Stage and good overall in the juniors. It forms very good links with parents and pupils are well cared for. The headteacher and governors provide satisfactory leadership and management. It has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. It provides satisfactory value for money.

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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good** and is a strength of the school.

39. All children have a very good start to school and very good opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in all six areas of learning. The quality of leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is very good. The strong spirit of teamwork amongst all staff within the Foundation Stage has a very beneficial effect upon the quality of education that children receive.
40. Staff have successfully established very good systems to assess children's attainment and progress. The new national assessments are very well used but, in addition, staff conduct very detailed and informative day-to-day assessments which help them to monitor children's progress. Children who are presently in Year 1 made very good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage. An analysis of their work and discussions with staff indicate that about three-quarters achieved the Early Learning Goals. This is a remarkable achievement given the very high number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Many children presently in the reception classes are well on course to reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they go into Year 1.

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children form close relationships with each other and with adults.
- Children learn the conventions of taking turns, listening without interrupting, and sharing resources.

#### Commentary

41. Children settle very well into school. Considering that many of them speak hardly a word of English when they start and are often unable to converse with each other, the way in which they learn to negotiate with each other and reach a compromise is quite remarkable. They successfully use the many opportunities provided to choose their own activities, settle quickly to work, and tidy up after themselves when they have finished. They are aware of basic hygiene practices, such as washing hands, and take responsibility for washing up their own cup after drink time. Children work together very well, for example assuming the roles of '*Bob the Builder*' and his mate, helping each other to build a wall. They willingly share attractive equipment such as musical instruments, computers and robots, treating them with care.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**, especially in developing children's speaking and listening skills.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are very good at extending and enriching children's knowledge and understanding of English.
- Children have very good opportunities to talk, discuss what they are doing and ask questions.
- There is not enough specialist support for children who have English as an additional language.

### Commentary

42. Teachers plan many very good activities to foster children's speaking and listening skills. This is vital considering that many start school with no English or just a few words. Staff use their good questioning skills very effectively to encourage children's responses. Children regularly practise their letter formation and learn to write their own names correctly, for example when signing Divali cards and stories they have told to their teacher. Some children who are at the early stages of acquiring English do not have enough specialist support in their home languages to help them understand instructions fully.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers seize many opportunities to develop children's numeracy skills in other activities.
- Children learn a good range of mathematical vocabulary and use it properly.
- There is not enough specialist support for children who have English as an additional language.

### Commentary

43. Teachers are astute in using good opportunities to promote awareness of number in day-to-day events. For example, during registration times, they count how many children are present, how many are absent and how many arrive late. There are many very good opportunities in the outdoor play area, too, to gain knowledge and understanding of mathematics. Some build tall towers using large wooden blocks, comparing the heights using a good range of mathematical vocabulary such as, '*too tall*' and '*shorter*'. Some children with English as an additional language do not have enough specialist help to help them gain a full understanding of mathematical vocabulary in English and in their home language.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

- Very good use of computers enables children to develop their keyboard skills with confidence and dexterity.
- Very good use is made of a range of local places of interest to enrich children's experiences.
- Staff have been creative in developing an outdoor area to foster children's experience of weather, plants and growth through first-hand activities.

### Commentary

44. Teachers plan an exciting and relevant range of events to help children gain an understanding of the world around them. For instance, children enjoy valuable visits from community police officers, closely examining their uniforms, truncheons, helmets and '*hand-things*'. Teachers and parents are constructing a stimulating outdoor garden where children adopt plants and search for 'creepy-crawlies'. Limited staffing, however, hinders the spontaneous use of this area. Opportunities for children to use computers and other technology such as tape recorders are good, and reception children are adept at controlling a small robot using their knowledge of distance and angles to make it travel along a grid. However, there is no regular access to a digital camera to record spontaneously happenings of immediate interest, such as a butterfly that wandered into class.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good, safe areas for outdoor exploration and exercise.
- Regular access to the school hall for more formal activities using apparatus.
- Very good opportunities for the development of children's dexterity and fine motor control.

### Commentary

45. A wide variety of equipment successfully fosters physical development through role play. For instance, a building site, complete with clerk of work's office with a telephone enables children to practise construction and communication skills realistically. Children enjoy using wheeled apparatus and do so with care for others, making good use of a set of traffic lights. There are very good opportunities for children to explore features such as pebbles, wind-chimes and kites. Children in the reception classes develop their physical skills further through using a very good range of apparatus enabling them to climb, crawl, balance and jump safely. Teachers take every available opportunity to reinforce counting skills, displaying large numbers as a number line. Speaking and listening skills are also fostered through the use of tape recorders and music, encouraging children to dance and chat together. Dexterity and teamwork are practised well through the use of scissors and pencils, keyboards and keypads, and in moving large apparatus such as benches in the school hall.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good opportunities for drama through story-telling.
- Very good links with other areas of learning.

### Commentary

46. Children have many very good opportunities to explore and investigate a range of different media and tools. For example they use paint and crayons, fabric and glitter, glue and pencil with increasing skill. They handle brushes of different sizes, glue sticks and scissors safely. They particularly enjoy watching their teachers and staff dress up and act the story of '*The Gingerbread Man*'. They use their creative skills well to enhance other areas of learning. For example, having learnt about the festival of Divali, they make cards and decorations to illustrate their knowledge and understanding. After learning about the sounds made by the letters c and o, they make swirling patterns of these letters, effectively using their fingers in trays of thick shaving cream. They enjoy singing songs and use clapping and clicking to indicate the pulse. Children love acting out the stories that their friends have written for everyone else. They perform confidently, following the author's stage directions meticulously.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### English

The provision in English is **satisfactory** for juniors and **unsatisfactory** for infants.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards achieved in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 are well below average and pupils do make enough progress.
- Standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with national averages in reading and writing, and pupils make good progress in the juniors. Pupils who have been in the school throughout the juniors make very good progress.
- The time devoted to English teaching in infant classes is not structured or used well enough;
- The quality of teaching in junior classes is good.
- The school's approaches to the teaching of reading are inconsistent and do not always lead to pupils developing good reading habits.

#### Commentary

47. The amount of time devoted to literacy teaching in the infants is generous, but best use is not made of it. Pupils often spend too long sitting on the carpet for lesson introductions and the work is rarely linked to first hand experiences. The activities are not sufficiently well focussed on developing basic skills, such as letter formation and expressing ideas simply. They do not have enough opportunities to write, and rarely finish the tasks they are given to do. In some lessons too much time is spent on cutting and sticking activities that have limited literacy value.
48. Some good practice was seen in the infants. In a phonic session the successful revision of sounds was achieved by giving pupils a variety of strategies to help them remember them. In two lessons, effective links were made with work in science on food groups and in one of them pupils were helped to remember difficult vocabulary and concepts through actions. Pupils responded well when the pace was quick and the focus sharp, showing that they are capable of achieving well when lessons are sufficiently stimulating.
49. Pupils' writing skills develop very well in the juniors and the quality of teaching is good. Pupils in Year 6 studying *'Macbeth'* found the vocabulary and style of the writing difficult. However, the teaching was carefully handled so that they were excited by the challenge, rather than frustrated by the language. They had a good understanding of different writing styles, the development of plot and of characters and motives. Teachers throughout the school make little use of word processors to allow pupils to experiment with different styles and sizes of fonts to add extra impact to their work.
50. There is a 'whole school' approach to the teaching of reading, but its impact is inconsistent. Each day pupils are grouped for a range of reading activities for 20 to 30 minutes, one of which is led by the teacher. In all the classes seen, achievement for the pupils working with the teacher was good, but this was not necessarily the case for the other pupils. In some classes pupils work on activities that have a clear reading focus and successfully develop their interest and skills. However, in most lessons the activities and emphasis are on merely time filling activities for many pupils, so that the work of the teacher-led group was not interrupted.
51. The school has redeveloped its library and it benefits from a computerised loan service, well organised by a part-time librarian. The pupils value the library and it makes an important statement about the status of books and reading. However although a lot of money has been spent on new books, they are not always easily accessible. Pupils see their various books as

all having different purposes, for example group readers, personal readers, library books and books at home. They complete some books very slowly and get little pleasure from them. Most junior pupils have only read two or three 'personal readers' in half a term. However, many of them talk enthusiastically about their reading habits at home.

52. The development of pupils' language skills is not sufficiently well planned. While pupils want to contribute to discussions and make their views and ideas known, their responses are often expressed very simply. There are too few opportunities provided for pupils to share and discuss their ideas and to work collaboratively. In the very few cases where it was seen, pupils responded well and it raised achievement.
53. At both key stages the rate of progress for the more able pupils is not fast enough. The school has decided not to set pupils in ability groups for specific subjects, for example mathematics. However, teaching strategies have not been well enough developed within classes to stretch and challenge the more able pupils. Lesson introductions over-prepare the work for them and limit its challenge, and pupils are rarely set to work independently. Teaching assistants are usually well deployed in classes and give effective support, especially for pupils with special educational needs who consequently make good progress. At other times teaching assistants work effectively within the classroom to support behaviour management, observing and recording pupil responses in lesson introductions. Boys and girls attained similar standards in lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported by specialist teachers. Their levels of spoken and written English develop well. There are few opportunities for pupils at an early stage of learning English to show their proficiency in their home language, alongside their developing English
54. There are many members of staff who have responsibility for raising standards in English at all management levels and who are working hard to achieve it, but with limited impact. Roles often overlap, resulting in too little accountability. What *is* effective is the shared approach to planning that gives a consistency of approach across and within most years.

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

55. Planning in many subjects does not take account of the contribution they could make to the development of language and literacy skills. Subjects are planned in isolation and even the use and development of specialist vocabulary are not usually identified. Where pupils are asked to work together they do so well and the opportunities to develop their speaking skills are valuable.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Progress for juniors is good.
- Progress in the infants is unsatisfactory.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to practical investigations.
- Teaching is good overall.

### **Commentary**

56. Pupils' standards and progress are directly linked to the quality of teaching and the breadth of the curriculum in mathematics. Pupils do not make sufficient progress in the infants, but junior pupils make good progress. Standards are unsatisfactory for seven-year-olds and have fallen since the last inspection when standards were satisfactory. Junior pupils work hard and



achieve well, reaching satisfactory standards when they leave the school. This is a considerable improvement since last inspection, when standards were judged to be well below average. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve similar standards as other pupils in their classes.

57. The National Numeracy Strategy has been fully implemented in both key stages, but its impact is much more successful with junior pupils than with infants. Numeracy lessons in the infants are often too slow and pupils sit for too long, listening to the teacher's explanation. This does not suit infant pupils, whose attention span is short. Consequently, by the time pupils get down to work, they have lost concentration and many have not remembered what the teacher was teaching. There are not enough practical activities planned to consolidate their learning and an over dependence on worksheets. In some cases teachers are not building on what pupils have already learned, with the result that the work does not match their needs. Sometimes it is too easy, so that the more able pupils are not challenged.
58. Junior pupils respond well to the mainly good teaching. They are enthusiastic and keen to progress. The snappy introduction and enthusiastic teaching ensured lessons proceed at a good pace, encouraging the majority of pupils to remain focused, listen well and show enthusiasm and application to succeed.
59. There is a strong emphasis placed throughout the school on developing pupils' understanding of number in 'sums'. However, pupils are not confident using mathematical language to explain their answers or to follow instructions. This hinders the amount of progress many pupils can make. Pupils throughout the school do not have sufficient opportunities to use mathematics to solve problems and apply what they have learned to new problems. All teachers praise pupils for their efforts, which motivates them to learn and take an active part in their learning. Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. Lesson plenary sessions are often too short to allow enough time for pupils to reflect about what they have learned or to prepare them for the next lesson.
60. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and management. He provides a good role model for the teaching of mathematics and is always prepared to give advice and support to his colleagues. He is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has produced a purposeful action plan to help improve standards.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

61. Insufficient use of mathematics is made in other subjects, for example geography and science. Opportunities are not rigorously planned to link learning in other subjects to pupils' numeracy skills. Additionally, information and communication technology is not used sufficiently well to promote and extend pupils' learning in mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations.
- Timetabling of science in some year groups allows too long between topics.
- There is little use of information and communication technology.
- The subject has not been managed well. Pupils' standards of work have not been carefully monitored.

### **Commentary**

62. Standards for seven and eleven year old girls and boys, including those with special educational needs, are below average. Teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to carry out their own investigations. For example, no science was taught during the inspection in Years 3, 4 and 5. This is not often enough to revise and reinforce scientific vocabulary and knowledge that pupils will remember. This is a similar situation to that found in the previous inspection. It has resulted in pupils having little idea of what might happen in an investigation, so that their ability to predict, based on scientific knowledge, is extremely limited. They are not accustomed to using scientific vocabulary to describe what they see when teachers **do** plan investigations. Additionally, their very basic vocabulary does not equip them to describe events with any accuracy, and their very limited general knowledge means that many scientific concepts are not within their experience. For example, when a solid tablet of washing powder was dropped into water and initially floated on the surface, some pupils in Year 6 said simply that, *'There is stuff on top of the water'*. When bicarbonate of soda dissolved in water a pupil stated that, *'It has not dissolved because the water is clear'*.
63. Teaching ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. In Year 2, very good teaching helps pupils to understand how living things grow. In Year 6, teachers organise worthwhile experiments for groups of pupils to carry out, which they enjoy very much. However, their experience of practical work has been so limited that they are unsure of how to carry out tests without a lot of support and even more unsure of how to interpret results. In some infant classes there is too much emphasis on completing works sheets rather than observing and discussing. There is a similar pattern throughout Years 3 to 6.
64. Older pupils are not at the stage where they are able to predict what might happen without guessing and they do not understand the idea of fair testing or how different factors might alter results. For example, when dissolving solids in water, they did not understand that water temperature might affect the rate at which a substance dissolves. There is little planning that allows more able pupils to select their own approach to investigations or to use sufficiently precise methods of measuring their results. For example, there is no evidence of them using sensor equipment to measure the impact of different insulating materials on temperature.
65. Work is generally presented neatly in an accepted school format that helps pupils to lay out their work in a logical sequence. This is much better use of pupils' time than sticking undemanding worksheets into their books. The subject has not been well managed in the past. There has been a lack of focus to try to find out why pupils' results have been so consistently low and what can be done to improve them. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator is extremely enthusiastic and has devised a very good plan to raise the profile of science in the school, including subject training for herself and for staff, as well as monitoring teachers' planning, pupils' work and class teaching on a regular basis.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information and communication technology is not used well enough in other subjects.
- Many teachers have improved their own level of skill and have become much more confident.
- The school's computer suite provides a good resource for pupils to use.
- Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils with specific special educational needs.
- Subject leadership and management have not been effective.

### Commentary

66. Standards for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and regardless of gender, are similar to those found in the previous inspection. The emphasis in lessons is developing pupils' information and technology skills and this is done in a logical way that helps pupils to build up their level of skill. As pupils move through the school tasks become increasingly challenging, especially as few pupils have access to computers at home and have to practise their skills in school. Pupils in Year 6 prepared a complicated and demanding multi-media presentation very well that showed their ability to merge text and graphics effectively.
67. The computer suite offers good accommodation and hardware. Lesson introductions are invariably well focused with teachers using an interactive whiteboard very effectively to make relevant teaching points. In some lessons two pupils sharing a computer is not effective in terms of time, some having to wait a significant time before they can use them. In other classes pupils have specific and useful roles, for example reading out information that one pupil inputs into the computer. Computers are used well to support pupils with specific special educational needs. There is planned support for them in lesson time from a knowledgeable support assistant.
68. The subject co-ordinator has only recently taken over responsibility. Subject leadership in the past has helped to improve standards, but has not been effective in extending its use. The current co-ordinator has prepared a thorough action plan for the subject, which includes extending the use of technology in other subjects and improving the way that pupils' skills in technology are assessed.

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

69. Computers were often not in use in classrooms during the inspection. This means that pupils are unable to apply their skills on a more frequent basis than their lessons in the computer suite. The lack of application of pupils' skills is evident from the absence of information and communication technology in their books and displays. Very little writing is word-processed to add impact. There are few examples of data handling in mathematics books, despite pupils' ability to do so. There are hardly any examples of technology in science and pupils make little use of the Internet to access information for other subjects.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory** in the juniors. It was not possible to observe lessons in the infants, and only a very limited amount of pupils' previous work was available for examination.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Junior pupils remember many facts they have learned about religions.
- In some year groups, the subject is not taught on a regular basis.
- The school makes good use of visits into the community to provide pupils with experiences of places of worship.
- Subject leadership has not been effective in making sure that the subject is taught regularly across the school.

### **Commentary**

70. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, when standards in the juniors were judged to be below the expected level in the locally agreed syllabus. The rate of learning is now satisfactory and is due mainly to teachers' good understanding of, and interest in, the subject. Teachers are good at using their pupils' own personal knowledge and faith

backgrounds to bring further information and ideas to lessons. They use questioning skilfully to help their pupils to develop an increased understanding of how we view people, for example the 'goodies' and 'baddies' in stories like Robin Hood and Dennis the Menace. Pupils reflect well on new ideas and know that it is not what a person looks like, but more about how they behave to others.

71. The good range of visits enriches the curriculum. Pupils recall visiting a church, a synagogue and a gurdwara. Through these visits, and the very good school resources and artefacts, pupils develop a genuine interest in religious education. This contributes to their thoughtfulness and respect for each other's religions. Assemblies also contribute well to pupils' understanding. Pupils in Year 4 presented to their parents a very informative assembly on the Hindu celebration of Diwali. They were justifiably proud of their performance. The co-ordinator has a huge task, managing all the humanities subjects. She has produced a good action plan to further raise the profile of religious education.

## Geography

72. It was not possible to make a judgement on pupils' attainment in geography. No lessons were timetabled during the inspection and the limited amount of pupils' work available to examine was insufficient on which to make a judgement. Long term plans indicate that all areas of the National Curriculum are planned for, but not enough links are made between these subjects and English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. The subject leader has not been able to monitor standards or the quality of teaching in geography.

## History

The provision for history is **satisfactory**. Pupils achieve standards **in line** with those expected.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils talk enthusiastically about the topics covered in history.
  - The school makes good use of visits to enrich history.
  - Literacy skills are not developed well enough through the subject.
73. Pupils are enthusiastic about their history lessons. The choice of topics, together with the good quality of teaching, help to interest them. For example, they love learning about the mummification of bodies in Ancient Egypt and they spend a long time deciding the sequence of entombing the Pharaoh before acting out the ceremony. Teachers put up attractive displays supported by good replica artefacts and colourful, attractive reference books. Younger pupils in Year 1 experience a 'Tea Party of Yesteryear'. They watch and listen with awe as the teacher shows them how tea was made using a teapot and tea leaves. In their role-play pupils show how well they have absorbed the information when they hold their own tea party.
74. The school arranges good excursions into the local community, and further afield, to provide real learning experiences that help to bring history alive. A visit to the British Museum, for example, has meant that pupils in Year 4 were able to see and touch the Pharaohs' coffins. They were surprised at the size and the condition of these artefacts. In discussing the coffins, they were able to use good technical vocabulary to talk with confidence about Ancient Egyptian burials.
75. The co-ordinator knows the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and has written a strong action plan to develop it further, but there has been a lack of focus on raising standards in history and ensuring that pupils experience the subject on a consistently regular basis.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### Art and design

Provision in art and design is **sound**. Pupils achieve standards **in line** with those expected.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new co-ordinator has good subject knowledge, but has no opportunity to improve standards by monitoring and working alongside teachers.
- Some teachers lack confidence in their own ability to teach drawing skills.
- Pupils are not being systematically taught the skills they need to improve their work.
- Classwork is enriched by a weekly art club.
- Pupils enjoy art lessons and behave well.

#### Commentary

76. There are no apparent differences in attainment between boys and girls. All pupils including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language have equal access to art lessons and the weekly art club. There were few opportunities to observe art lessons during the inspection. Judgements are made on the basis of scrutiny of pupils' work and displays, discussions with staff and pupils, and looking at documentation such as the co-ordinator's portfolio of pupils' work, the art policy and lesson planning.
77. Teaching is satisfactory, providing opportunities for pupils to work with a range of media including pencil, oil pastels, crayon, charcoal and paint. Pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy art, especially when they are challenged by teachers' high expectations. For example, in Year 3 where teaching is good, pupils begin to observe and reproduce accurately proportioned facial features, depicting feelings. Their achievement is high because of the teachers' high expectations, requiring pupils to persevere and try their best to improve their work during the lesson.
78. Junior pupils have sketchbooks, but these indicate that pupils' drawing skills are not developed systematically year by year. They reveal that there are limited opportunities for pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of the elements of art, such as perspective and proportion. However, pupils in Year 3 are beginning to appreciate the work of artists such as David Hockney and some have used their skills well in information and computer technology to produce work in the style of Paul Klee.
79. The new co-ordinator has not yet had opportunities to monitor standards. She has written a good action plan, which includes intentions to develop teachers' expertise and confidence, and to enrich the curriculum through extra activities, for example visits to art galleries and a wider range of resources including large reproductions of artists' work. She has not had opportunities to use her own expertise to influence teachers' practise and pupils' standards by monitoring art throughout the school.

### Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **sound**. Junior pupils achieve standards **in line** with those expected.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the juniors, pupils' making skills are good but design and evaluation skills are not well developed.
- The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge.

## Commentary

80. Judgements have been made on one lesson seen in the juniors, discussions with pupils and from samples of pupils' previous work. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards for infant pupils. Standards for junior boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, are in line with expectations.
81. The full range of the curriculum is planned for and taught. In the lesson observed, pupils in Year 6 used tools safely and well and could identify other tools and methods they might have used to improve their work. They measured, cut and constructed accurately in almost all cases. They were making models of fairground rides using cogs and were able to refer to work in a previous year to say why cogs were more effective in their model than cams. Pupils were able to identify the important features of the design accurately. One girl explained in detail how it would need to be changed to accept an axle on an angle. Previous work showed making and finishing skills of a good standard.
82. The basic construction of the models was too prescriptive to enable pupils to incorporate significantly different design ideas of their own. Too few of the designs used keys, labels or information that would have enabled someone else to accurately make the model. While the teacher encouraged on-going evaluation notes to be made, they were very simplistic.
83. The school is currently furnishing a designated technology classroom. The co-ordinator has correctly identified the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and produced an action plan. However, it focuses too heavily on resources and organisation issues, and not enough on raising pupils' standards in planning and evaluating.

## Music

Standards in listening to, composing and evaluating music are **in line with those expected nationally**. At the time of the last inspection singing was judged to be unsatisfactory: now, singing is **good**.

## Strengths and weaknesses

- The expertise, determination and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator who is a very good role model through her own very good practice.
  - Few opportunities for the co-ordinator to have an impact on raising standards.
  - The expertise and contribution to some teachers' knowledge and understanding of music by the peripatetic teaching service.
  - Significantly improved standards in singing.
  - Assessment of pupils' attainment is not yet formally in place.
84. There are no apparent differences in the attainment of boys or girls, or between pupils from different minority ethnic groups. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, are all included in all music lessons and extra-curricular activities. The teaching of music throughout the school ranges from satisfactory to good, depending upon the expertise and confidence of teachers. Good teaching includes efficient management of resources, interesting activities and a stimulating pace and lessons have clear objectives and a strong sense of purpose. Interesting activities follow in rapid succession, leaving no room for any inattention or lack of concentration. Pupils enjoy these lessons and behave well. For example in Year 2, pupils enjoy silently 'stealing' musical instruments from a sleeping dragon's hoard without waking him up.
85. A very good feature of music is the weekly singing assemblies conducted by members of staff. These are exciting occasions which pupils greatly enjoy because teachers choose

interesting songs and enliven the singing with actions and movement. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are particularly enthusiastic and achieve very well because of very good teaching by the co-ordinator who has excellent control of this large group. She chooses songs and raps with lyrics that make good links with pupils' personal development. Good use of pupils' literacy skills is made in Year 2 as the teacher links music-making with a story about the power of the wind and the sun.

86. The curriculum is enriched through visits from the peripatetic instrumental music service. The school's small orchestra plays confidently and rhythmically but does not yet play regularly in school assemblies, although they do give termly concerts for their parents. The very large school choir practises regularly and performs annually at the nearby elderly persons' home, and at a local superstore. These promote good opportunities for the development of pupils' personal and social skills and spirituality. Performing annually in the Royal Albert Hall provides very good opportunities for pupils to experience awe and wonder because they are thrilled by the event and the sheer size and shape of the auditorium.
87. The co-ordinator is a skilled singing teacher. She is enthusiastic and determined to raise standards, but has had only limited opportunities to have an impact upon these so far. For example, opportunities for other staff to gain from her expertise are wasted because they are not present during her weekly singing assemblies. She has established close and fruitful links with the peripatetic music service.

### **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **sound**. Pupils achieve standards **in line** with those expected.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Junior pupils' achievement in gymnastics and games is good.
- Achievement in some lessons is affected by pupils' behaviour.
- Subject co-ordination is good.

### **Commentary**

88. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have access to the range of activities that the school provides and they achieve similar standards. Pupils have good levels of co-ordination and can use space and equipment well. In Year 6 they demonstrated good hand-eye co-ordination in a hockey lesson and quickly grasped how to use the sticks properly. They worked well together to develop their skills. Pupils also demonstrated good skill levels in other lessons. However, their achievement and progress in some lessons were unsatisfactory because of poor pupil behaviour and slow lesson pace.
89. The amount of time devoted to the subject is good and is one reason why standards by the end of Year 6 are higher than expected in games and gymnastics. Lessons take place throughout the day and the school benefits from having two halls. There is a sound allocation of time to each aspect of the curriculum apart from swimming, and, consequently only about half the pupils can swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6.
90. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and is regularly updating this through in-service training. Fundraising, such as 'Jump Rope for Heart' sponsorship, has helped to raise funds for charity while raising the profile of physical education and the level of resources for the subject. She has successfully developed the outdoor areas and provides a good range of equipment for use at lunchtime that improves pupil behaviour and enables their skills to be developed outside lesson time.

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

### **Personal, social and health education**

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **satisfactory**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Circle time is effective.
- The school makes the most of its ethnic diversity to make pupils aware of issues.

### **Commentary**

91. Through the example set by staff and discussions in personal, social and health education lessons, pupils are developing a good understanding of right and wrong. Relationships amongst adults and pupils are very good and the racial harmony that exists is a very positive feature of the school. They are taught about the importance of looking after themselves as well as respecting others as they grow up. Infant pupils learn how people and animals grow and how important it is to eat a balanced diet. The arrangements for sex and drugs education are soundly established. Through the school council and discussions in the class, pupils have good opportunities to make suggestions about how the school could be improved. Parents say that this is an 'inclusive' school where children learn respect for others.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
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	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

