

## **RIDGEWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL, URN 130915**

### **Changes to inspection report as a result of revised guidance on judging governance**

#### Page 18, Leadership and management section

Second sentence should now read: 'The governance of the school is **good**'.  
The associated footnote (footnote 9) should be deleted.

In the bullets below the heading 'Main strengths and weaknesses', the first bullet point should be deleted.

A final bullet point should be added to read: 'Governance is good. However, the school does not comply fully with the requirement for a daily act of collective worship'.

#### Page 19, paragraph 34

The final sentence should be deleted and replaced with: 'The school fails to comply with the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship. This was also the case at the time of the last inspection'.

#### Page 36, Part D: Summary of the main inspection judgements table

The score for the governance of the school should be changed from 5 to 3 and the associated footnote (footnote 10) should be deleted.

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **RIDGEWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sanderstead, South Croydon

LEA area: London Borough of Croydon

Unique reference number: 130915

Headteacher: Mrs Anna House

Lead inspector: George Wallace

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2003

Inspection number: 257321

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;	630
School address:	Southcote Road Sanderstead South Croydon
Postcode:	CR2 0EQ
Telephone number:	020 8657 8063
Fax number:	020 8657 5438
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Steve Hinton
Date of previous inspection:	18 May 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is a Beacon School<sup>1</sup> and has achieved Activemark status, a nationally recognised award for a commitment to and high achievement in sports. It has also gained Investors in People because of its attention to the development of the staff that work at the school. The pupils mainly come from homes where the socio-economic background is favourable and pupils start at levels above the national average. There is a very small percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups. All pupils work and play collaboratively in a very positive way. Although growing, the number of pupils with special educational needs or statements of special educational need is low compared with schools nationally. The numbers of pupils for whom English is an additional language is also well below the national average. Less than 0.5 per cent of pupils require specific language support and it is evident that their acquisition of English is quite rapid. Most pupils stay at the school for their entire primary school education.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a school which excels at one or more activities and has applied to and been accepted by the DfEE for Beacon School status. There are over 600 Beacon Schools in England. The scheme is designed to raise standards in schools through the sharing and spreading of practical ideas and knowledge between schools. A Beacon School will receive a substantial amount of extra funding to allow staff to work with staff in other schools, arrange conferences, training meetings and any other activity that is designed to improve standards in all participating schools. For more information go to the DfES website: [www.dfes.gov.uk/](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/) then search: Beacon Schools.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10010	George Wallace	Lead inspector	Science, physical education
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7420	Ann Simpson	Team inspector	English, art and design, English as an additional language
21543	Kate Rawson	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology
24137	Gail Robertson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, geography, history, religious education
31975	Kay Andrew	Team inspector	Music, citizenship, special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Ridgeway is a **very good and successful** school with significant strengths. Standards are **high** and teaching overall is **good**, with **areas of excellence**, and learning generally **very good**. Adults trust pupils to behave **very well** and to care for each other, and that is exactly what happens. The headteacher and key staff lead and manage the school **very well** and this has helped the school to continue to improve. The school is inclusive and **very effective**. It is run at above average costs and provides **good** value for money. The school also uses its money to **successfully** advance and advise others throughout southern England. It also receives many visitors and organises conferences and workshops at the school. In the past three months the school has had **very positive** articles about its qualities printed in the Times Educational Supplement.

### Main strengths and weaknesses<sup>2</sup>

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

1. High standards in most subjects, including English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) and citizenship.
2. The quality of education and provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good, particularly in the nursery.
3. Leadership of the school through the headteacher and management team is very good.
4. The school curriculum is strong and planned extremely well. As a result pupils develop their creative and thinking skills and become independent, confident and well motivated learners.
5. Very strong moral and social development.
6. In recent years some pupils in Year 6 have not performed as well in their national test in mathematics as their end of Year 2 results would suggest. Therefore analysis of pupils' good results in mathematics at the end of Year 2 appears insufficiently focused on maintaining their achievement through to Year 6.
7. The strong and highly focused contribution made by teaching assistants and the way in which the school has ensured this happens for the benefit of all pupils.
8. Links and relationships with parents are excellent.
9. The school does not comply with the statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship.

Since the last inspection the school has built on the achievements and attainment of pupils from year to year. Success in national tests for English, mathematics and science is **above the national trend**. The previous inspection revealed a great many strengths about the school, and this inspection shows that many areas of the school have **improved further**. However, one aspect of school life that still requires improvement is the statutory compliance with a daily act of collective worship. Other areas for development at the time of the last inspection have improved.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### 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	A	A	A*	A
Mathematics	A	B	A	B
Science	A*	A	A	A

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Ridgeway Primary is a school of **high achievement** where standards in most subjects are **very high**. Standards and provision in the Foundation Stage are **very high**. Children achieve **excellent**

<sup>2</sup> Strengths and weaknesses are listed together in order of importance in relation to the key inspection findings.

**standards** in their personal, social and emotional development, **well above average** in communication, language and literacy skills, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Children's achievement in mathematical and physical development is **above average**. These high standards of achievement are reached by the end of the children's reception year.

By the end of Year 2 pupils' standards in English, science, history, geography, ICT and art are all **well above average** and those in mathematics, religious education and physical education are **above average**. Pupils' achievements continue through their remaining years in school and by the end of Year 6 standards are **well above average** in English, science, ICT, geography, and art, and **above average** in mathematics, religious education, history and physical education. No overall judgements were made about standards in design and technology or music because there was insufficient inspection time to gather detailed evidence. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of themselves and their place and responsibilities in school and as citizens beyond school are **excellent**. This picture reveals an improvement over standards from the last inspection.

Pupils with special educational needs make **excellent progress** and most reach levels of attainment expected for their age. This shows that the support that the school provides is **very effective**. This high level of provision and attention is also in place for pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Literacy across the curriculum is **very good**. Mathematics across the curriculum is **strong**, in particular the way in which statistical information is collected, represented and analysed for learning in other subjects. The performance of boys is slightly better than girls by the end of Year 2, but by the end of Year 6 girls have overtaken boys with regard to overall standards, but the difference is not especially significant.

The school makes **very good** provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is **excellent** in the areas of moral and social development, therefore helping pupils to take responsibility, learn about right from wrong and develop their self-esteem, confidence and independence. The personal and social development also ensures that pupils understand why it is important to work with and help others, as well as providing an atmosphere in school to help their emotional development. Pupils' attitudes to learning, to staff and other pupils are **very good** and in many areas, such as the Foundation Stage, their attitudes are **excellent**. Behaviour throughout the school and at any time of the school day is **very good**. Pupils are totally trustworthy and they care about others and respect each other's ideas, suggestions and commitments to learning throughout the school. As a result pupils enjoy their school and attendance is **well above average**.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **very good education**. Teaching overall is **good** and very well planned. At the heart of the school is a desire by the head and staff to ensure that all teaching and activities designed for pupils are done, not just to promote effective learning, but also to stimulate and ensure that pupils **enjoy learning** and therefore **enjoy school**. Teachers have been **successful** in achieving this aim and as a consequence pupils have **strong positive attitudes to learning** which have been developed over several years at the school. Work is interesting and exciting so that pupils want to learn more. They frequently receive visitors to the school or go on school trips which adds to their enjoyment and willingness to carry out projects at home. However, the school offers an insufficient number of topics within the school's 'contexts for learning'<sup>3</sup> about other cultures as their children grow up in multicultural Britain.

Relationships throughout are **very good** and because of this pupils have confidence to ask questions, or try one way rather than another to tackle a problem or task. They know that their teachers, other adults and peers will support them and certainly provide encouragement, which means pupils are always prepared to 'have a go', whatever the task.

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<sup>3</sup> The school curriculum is planned on the basis of 'contexts for learning'. These are major topics which are planned centrally for the whole school so that pupils make connections between subjects in their learning. The planning recognises the importance of all National Curriculum subjects as well as other enriching features including approaches to ensuring pupils personal and social development is thorough. The curriculum therefore ensures that pupils can build on their learning year by year so that progress is highly effective.

There are several new teachers who are in the early stages of getting to know their pupils and are working hard to ensure that they plan and carry out their teaching in the manner and spirit that is required in the school.

Teachers are **very well supported** by skilled and knowledgeable teaching and advanced skills teaching assistants. As a result, pupils have a **high self-esteem** and are nearly all:

- well motivated, thinking children
- willing learners
- eager, not just to improve their knowledge and understanding, but to evaluate their own learning
- pupils who cope very well with learning independently as well as in pairs and groups
- mindful of their responsibility to others in school and, by the time they leave school, aware of their obligations as young citizens, and
- able to talk fluently and sensibly.

The school provides a **wide range** of extra-curricular activities including a wide range of sports, chess, Japanese, drama and music. Several of these are born out of the work that the pupils do in class. For example, shortly after beginning a topic about the Romans a lunchtime Latin club is available to pupils. Relationships across the school are of a **high quality** because the staff have a **strong** sense of care and well-being for pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is **very good, and often excellent**. Children joining the nursery and reception classes do so quickly, confidently and easily. Staff listen to pupils, are interested in what they say, and as such a **strong ethos of care, support, interest and pleasantness** is engendered throughout the school. Parents feel that they are **extremely well informed**, that they are welcome at the school and that the school promotes itself as part of the extended family for their children. The school has **good links** with the local community and local schools. It also has **strong links** with schools further afield as a consequence of its Beacon status. The high level of staffing as a consequence of this status has a **very strong, positive impact** on pupils' personal and social development and on the progress they make towards reaching **high and very high standards** from the nursery to Year 6.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The school is **very well led, by a strong headteacher** who knows what she wants in order to secure the best provision and outcomes for the children at the school. There are **outstanding features to leadership and management**. The head is **very well supported** by two very able members of the leadership team who share the same vision and complement and contribute fully in leading and managing the school. The governing body effectively directs the work of the school and holds it to account for the quality of education it provides. However, it does not ensure that the school fully complies with the requirements for collective worship. The school is constantly trying to improve and has a strong commitment to continuing to raise standards, ensuring that pupils enjoy coming to school and in promoting their self-esteem, confidence and social development. All staff **contribute effectively** to the way in which the school successfully continues to develop.

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

The school serves its area **very well** and its parents are **highly supportive**. They subscribe to the aims and values of the school and feel that the **school is open and honest**. Parents and teachers speak with ease to each other and parents feel that staff listen to any concerns that they may have. Events at the school are **well attended**. **Pupils speak with feeling and enthusiasm for their school.**

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- continue to analyse school assessment data, especially for mathematics, so that pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable, and
- meet statutory requirements to ensure that pupils receive an opportunity to take part in a daily act of collective worship.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

The Foundation Stage is a strength of the school and children's achievements are **very good**. All children will have reached their Early Learning Goals<sup>4</sup> and many will well exceed them by the age of five. Standards of achievement for pupils in **Years 1 and 2 are very good**. Pupils are consistently reaching standards well above average for pupils of a similar age nationally in reading, writing and mathematics as well as most other subjects. Pupils' progress continues in a similar way through Years 3 to 6 where standards are also **very good** and above average in all subjects and well above average in most, including English and science. Girls and boys throughout the school do equally well.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good literacy and numeracy skills that are used well and enhanced across all subjects
- Standards of achievement in the Foundation Stage are very good
- Standards throughout the school are above average and well above average in most subjects
- Pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress
- Standards of personal development, social skills and responsibility are very high
- Parents feel very strongly that their children work hard, make good progress and achieve high standards.

#### Commentary

1. Children join the nursery and the reception classes with levels of achievement above average for their age. By the end of the Foundation Stage, all will have reached their Early Learning Goals and many will well exceed them. Their personal, social and emotional development is excellent because of the way in which the whole area is organised, managed and the children taught and challenged. They are excited by what they do. Parents feel very welcome and are highly supportive of the way in which the teachers and staff work with their children in these early years. The very good quality of planning and teaching ensures that achievement is high, but teachers also ensure that children are introduced to approaches of learning and development which focus on their personal, social and emotional development. The success of this approach ensures that the children grow and mature as well-balanced, eager and happy children. Therefore, right from the start, the school provides a richness to children's learning which is built on throughout their life at Ridgeway so that pupils develop well as independent learners with a strong self-esteem and who are well motivated and enjoy learning.

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<sup>4</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 connection with communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

## Key Stage 1

### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores<sup>5</sup> in 2002 (2001)

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.6 (18.2)	15.8 (15.6)
writing	15.9 (15.9)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	18.8 (18.8)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 90 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 continue to make good progress and also achieve high standards. The school's results in the national tests for reading, writing and mathematics show that pupils consistently achieve well above average, not only when compared with all primary schools throughout England, but also when compared with schools with pupils of a similar background. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 3<sup>6</sup> in reading and mathematics is very high<sup>7</sup> and, whilst the proportion reaching this level in writing is high compared with the national average, it is not as high as for reading and mathematics. The results year-on-year over the past five years show an upward trend of success. The school deliberately sets out to plan and teach different subjects through a core set of contexts (see footnote 1). Therefore learning in one subject has relevance to learning in another which ensures that pupils are immersed in and absorbed by the tasks they are doing and therefore their knowledge and understanding is broadened.

## Key Stage 2

### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003 (2002)

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.4.(28.6)	27.0.(27.0)
mathematics	29.1.(27.9)	26.7.(26.6)
science	30.0.(29.4)	28.3.(28.3)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The creative work undertaken by the school extends through Years 3 – 6. Pupils become much more able to work independently whilst also finding it very easy to work in groups. Pupils value learning. They are taught to think in many different ways when approaching their class work. Another key to their success is the importance of making connections between different pieces of work so they recognise how one strand of their class work may fit together with another. As a result, pupils grow in confidence, levels of co-operation are high and relationships between all staff and pupils are invariably excellent. These features are the key reasons for the continuing high standards and overall good levels of achievement of pupils.
4. The school's results in the national tests for English, mathematics and science show that pupils consistently achieve well and reach standards well above average when compared with all primary schools. When compared with schools with a similar intake to Ridgeway, standards

<sup>5</sup> The average points score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades attained by all of their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in another school 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. A Level 1 = 9 points, a Level 2 = 15 points, Level 3 = 21 points and so on. Therefore the average points score in mathematics is worked out by adding up all of the points based on the Level attained by pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. This means that a school whose average points score for mathematics in the end of Year 2 national tests is greater than 15.0 is one whose pupils are performing above that expected for their age. The average points score for Level 4, the nationally expected level for pupils at the end of Year 6 is 27.

<sup>6</sup> The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils are, by the end of Year 2, when pupils are age 7, expected to reach Level 2. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

<sup>7</sup> The proportion of pupils gaining Level 3 at Ridgeway puts the school in the top five per cent of schools in the country for high standards in reading and mathematics. In writing, the school is in the top 40 per cent.

in English continue to be well above average and above average in mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 5<sup>8</sup> is very high. The school is in the top five per cent of schools for English and the top 25 per cent for mathematics and science. The overall trend of the national test results, as with the Year 2 tests, is upwards and above the increasing national trend.

5. As well as high standards in English, mathematics and science pupils also reach similar high standards in all other areas of the school. Standards in ICT, for example, are well above average and extremely high in the specific area of communication skills where pupils use computers from the time they start school and, by the end of Year 6, they have very successfully learned to write and then refine and reorganise their text. Pupils are also adept at using tables, drawing and labelling, transferring images from cameras to screen and re-organising the information, and in using sound. The use of spreadsheets and gathering material through different types of search on the Internet are also strong features of their work. Pupils' standards and understanding of subjects or topics are never lower than during the previous inspection and in most cases significantly above.
6. The objective of the school in working hard to ensure pupils enjoy learning is directly linked to the standards achieved. Hence the school is successful in enabling pupils to become mature, independent and responsible where pupils talk easily and confidently at any time on a wide range of issues. The work, for example, of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is impressive. The curriculum is designed to ensure that most learning of subjects occurs through major themes. Literacy and numeracy are taught in a very effective way, frequently through the major context themes, so that lessons are always relevant to learning in other subjects and pupils make connections in a stimulating and effective way. This approach is central to the school's learning policy and works for the benefit of pupils extremely well.
7. The achievements and attainment of pupils with special educational needs are monitored thoroughly so the head and teachers know and target their individual needs. This has ensured that they make very good progress. They are very well supported and teachers provide work that is at the right level for them. Overall evidence shows that their achievement is very high in relation to their prior attainment and many of them, as they move up through the school, are enabled to become successful, independent learners.
8. This type of provision and attention to detail is also in place for pupils whose English is an additional language. These pupils also achieve well. Many are fluent in more than one language and bring very good linguistic skills to their learning. A small number of pupils who are in the early stages of learning English, make rapid progress and are able to achieve good standards. Boys and girls achieve similar standards, although the national pattern of girls reaching higher standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 is also true at Ridgeway. However, the difference is not especially significant. Where such differences in levels of achievement occur the school works hard to ensure that the subject content through which learning occurs as well as the skills developed motivate both boys and girls. In some instances the content will be different.

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

9. The school's **innovative and exciting curriculum in turn stimulates tremendous enthusiasm** and desire to learn in all its pupils. Relationships are **very good** at all levels and everyone is fully included and supported. Pupils' attendance rate for the last full reported year (2001-02) was well above the national average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**.

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<sup>8</sup> The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils are, by the end of Year 6, when pupils are age 11, expected to reach Level 4. If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good enthusiasm for learning across the school, and excellent in the Foundation Stage.
- Behaviour is very good in and around the school, and excellent in the Foundation Stage.
- The school is a community where everyone is included and supported, especially those with special educational needs.
- Punctuality to lessons is excellent.
- The development of moral and social values is excellent; the development of spiritual and self-awareness is very good.
- There is some fidgeting and restlessness in some classes, often where teachers are new to the school.
- Pupils' cultural experiences are good, but there is not much evidence of preparation for life in a multicultural society, although the school intends to develop this.

## Commentary

10. The school creates an exciting and innovative place to learn, which in turn stimulates pupils' enthusiasm. They are eager to get to school, often arriving well before the official time to begin their early morning work, and a number are reluctant to leave at the end of the school day, saying 'I haven't finished learning yet!' This interest and pleasure in finding out is even more apparent in the Foundation Stage, where pupils are encouraged to become admirably independent.
11. Pupils' development of moral and social values is excellent. Pupils are encouraged and inspired to see themselves as part of the school community where everyone has a responsibility to others, because what they do matters. Staff are excellent role models who make it clear that they, too, are learning. Pupils are encouraged to learn, recognise and accept that good behaviour leads to more effective and enjoyable learning at school. Self-awareness and spirituality have a strong focus in the curriculum, resulting in pupils who are articulate, mature, confident and able to respond in surprising depth to their experiences. The warm inclusive nature of the school means everyone feels cared for and supported, and even pupils with quite severe behaviour problems are treated with loving kindness and thus behave much better than might be expected. Pupils know right from wrong, are responsible and totally trustworthy. Older pupils say that they have freedoms and that with such freedoms they accept that they come with responsibilities.
12. The inspection started in the second week of a new school year. In the classes of teachers new to the school, however, behaviour, which for the most part is excellent, is sometimes less good and a degree of restlessness and inattention can develop. There are a number of pupils in the school who come from minority ethnic backgrounds but there is little in the way of music, art or displays which would reflect and celebrate their own culture.
13. The school deals very effectively with pupils who have been identified as having emotional and behavioural difficulties. This is because teaching is so good and there is a high level of well-trained support staff who have very good relationships with their pupils. Evidence during the inspection shows that these pupils are well-integrated into lessons and are as equally excited by their learning as other pupils. They concentrate well and are keen to learn.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data:	4.1%
National data:	5.4%

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	0.0%
National data:	0.5%

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

## Ethnic background of pupils

## Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	357	0	0
White – any other White background	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	8	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	12	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	6	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	9	0	0
Black or Black British – African	10	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	4	0	0
Any other ethnic group	6	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	7	0	0

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 provided by the school is **very good** and contains some **excellent features**. This helps pupils to settle quickly, feel valued, cared for and grow in confidence so that they achieve highly throughout their time at Ridgeway. The varied, **very well planned and innovative** curriculum provides a **wide range of experiences, activities and challenges** for pupils and is underpinned by a **very strong** personal and social development.

### Teaching and learning

Overall teaching is **good**, varying within year groups but consistently **very good** in the Foundation Stage. It is evident that pupils have been taught in similar ways in the past and therefore their attitudes to, and the effectiveness of, their learning **are very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy school because lessons are interesting and stimulating because teachers plan a wide variety of interesting and exciting activities.
- Teaching observed is good overall with nearly one third of all lessons very good or excellent.
- Assessment by teachers and self-assessment by pupils is excellent. Pupils have an extremely good understanding of knowing how well they are doing and what they need to improve.
- Planning is thorough, involving all teachers in a year group. Teaching assistants with advanced skills work effectively with other teaching assistants and new teachers.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are very good at planning work to meet the needs of pupils.
- The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are very good.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 67 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4 (6%)	16 (24%)	33 (49%)	12 (18%)	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. The pattern of the quality of teaching is similar now to that of the previous inspection. For example, teaching is one of very many strengths throughout the school and contributes significantly to the effective learning and high standards reached by pupils. This coupled with other features of the management of the area ensures that children make a very good start to their life at school and by the time they leave confidently say that it has been a privilege to attend Ridgeway primary school.
15. It is evident from talking with large numbers of pupils of all ages, and analysing their past work that teaching has consistently been of a high quality. The year by year induction of new teachers into the aims of the school, the support structures from large numbers of staff, the support provided by teaching assistants and the lead given by the leadership team have all in the past contributed to the high quality learning by pupils. New teachers feel that there is much to learn and do to become fully integrated into the way the school works, and in particular the expected ways of teaching. Pupils say that the activities that they do are often practical and make them think. Large numbers of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have said that they enjoy learning, that they enjoy the links between different subjects and that the independence in learning that teachers often provide allows them to research information and find solutions for their tasks. In the earlier years of school, teachers work with all pupils to ensure that they behave well. The object is always to get pupils to recognise the importance of good behaviour leading to enjoyment of their school. By the time pupils enter Year 3 nearly every pupil has reached the stage of personal control and responsibility for their actions, including their own learning.
16. Everywhere one turns in the school pupils are heavily involved in their work. They tend to work independently or in small groups so that the work is strongly focused on their learning needs. Teachers are very good at providing the right challenge for pupils. Another very positive feature is the frequency and skill with which they get pupils to think, explore and explain themselves. Expectations are high and the pace of lessons normally brisk. Teachers are highly focused, know their subjects and how they relate to each other through the 'contexts for learning'. Teachers' planning is thorough and is the product of working with other teachers and teaching assistants as well as being based on an extremely thorough, clear and imaginative curriculum.
17. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is very good. This is because teachers have been trained to use and adapt an exceptionally wide range of strategies to deal with the many serious special needs in the school. Planned activities give good access for pupils of all levels of attainment for example, a range of responses to literature through drawing, discussion and role-play. Teachers have also been trained to ask more challenging questions and how to provide for all groups including pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils. The skills of questioning and individual intervention of most teachers therefore create an environment where individual learning needs and styles are recognised and allowed for. Teachers always involve these pupils in their own self-assessment and target setting and this has a very good impact on their learning and achievement. Class profiles for pupils with special educational needs are very detailed and thorough and carefully discussed with everyone concerned.
18. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language benefit from wide range of creative teaching strategies. The frequent use of oral and visual stimuli helps pupils to engage with the

area of learning and make good progress. Teachers model good speaking and listening. They teach basic reading and writing skills well. The support of the team of teaching assistants is highly effective in helping pupils to achieve.

## The curriculum

The school provides its pupils with a **very rich** curriculum. It is **innovative** and **very thoroughly planned** through a series of topics which link together the subjects of the National Curriculum. In addition the **high quality** of the curriculum is made even better by many trips and visitors from the community. This **excellent** curriculum allows pupils to build on the knowledge and understanding they gain year by year. Accommodation is **good** and resources are **very good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provides full coverage of the National Curriculum in a creative and imaginative way.
- Thorough planning ensures that pupils are able to build on the skills they develop and knowledge they learn from year to year.
- The excellent links made between subjects ensure that learning is a coherent experience.
- The curriculum is enriched through a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- A team of well qualified and highly motivated teaching assistants contributes very well to pupils' learning and achievement.
- The staff work very well as a team to develop and innovate within the curriculum.
- Planning in music and art does not take sufficient account of cultures beyond Europe.

## Commentary

19. The curriculum is broad, well balanced and has a wealth of exciting ideas and activities that successfully capture pupils' interest and imagination. It promotes high standards and ensures that all learners are able to achieve. The school has chosen to plan across a range of 'contexts for learning' and to make explicit the links between subjects and areas of knowledge. This approach to planning allows learning to be meaningful to pupils without losing the discrete nature of the individual subjects. It is an innovative scheme which moves well beyond the traditional primary school 'topic' and gives relevance to the pupils' work. It relies on highly knowledgeable and skilled teaching and the school works hard to ensure that this is available.
20. In addition to the 'contexts for learning' a central plank of the school curriculum is pupils' personal, social and emotional development. All staff are engaged in providing support and guidance so that pupils, from the first time they join the school until they leave, are taught in a way that fosters a love for learning.
21. Planning is rigorous and is well monitored so that links between subjects are clear and strong. The clear direction of the leadership and senior management teams together with the regular team planning sessions by teachers ensures that the curriculum is logical, understood by all staff and meets statutory requirements. The leadership team and subject leaders are active in developing the curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils.
22. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who have English as an additional language. The curriculum takes account of different styles of learning and of the need for stimulating and relevant experiences for all. In art and in music the school relies heavily, but not exclusively, on resources from a European context and insufficiently broadens pupils' understanding of artists, craftspeople and musicians from other cultures. This does not help pupils to understand better the nature of their own, multi-cultural society.
23. Extra-curricular activities are very popular and many are over-subscribed. They range widely from football to Latin and from chess to art. Pupils are well served by the opportunities on offer. These clubs take place during lunch times and after school. The accommodation is

effectively used and resources for learning are of a very good quality. The school is an attractive and comfortable place to learn. The library is currently being relocated and restructured as it does not meet the needs of the curriculum.

24. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very effective because it meets the needs of individual pupils and is fully inclusive. Pupils with very serious special needs are enabled to have full access to a rich curriculum. This is a strong feature of the school. Pupils' individual education plans are useful working documents that are regularly and thoughtfully reviewed and updated. There is much enrichment of the curriculum for higher attaining pupils to extend their interest and knowledge.
25. The school has an above average number of teaching and support staff, partly because it is a Beacon school, but also because it is central to the way in which the school aims to provide a school education for pupils. Teaching staff are effective and have a wide range of experience and expertise. A significant feature of the school's work is the formation of a very strong team of teaching assistants who are well trained to support pupils in their learning and to take important responsibilities within the school. The school has a team of advanced skills teaching assistants who provide a wide range of support functions, such as class cover, pupils with special educational needs and information and communication technology. They lead teams of teaching assistants and together are an extremely effective group of adults providing support to teachers and pupils.

### Care, guidance and support

Care and support for all pupils is a **major strength** of the school and therefore pupils are **very well** looked after and are safe. Coupled with a close knowledge of their needs and abilities, this helps pupils to develop in every way. **Teaching assistants are highly trained and very good** at supporting teachers and therefore the pupils. The school takes pupils' views and opinions seriously and acts on them.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have an excellent knowledge of pupils in their care and can tailor experiences to suit their individual needs.
- Children with special educational needs are extremely well looked after and supported, leading to very good achievement.
- Strong trusting relationships exist between adults and pupils.
- A high ratio of professional, well-trained teaching assistants work with teachers to continuously guide, monitor and assess pupils' progress.
- Toilets in the central library area are unpleasantly pungent.

### Commentary

26. Care and support for every pupil is at the heart of the school's philosophy by providing them with love and security. Staff simultaneously enable pupils to take risks and experiment with new ideas as well as gain a deeper understanding of what they already know. Each child is treated as an individual whose quirks, strengths and home background are well known to the staff, but at the same time they stress the importance of working together, taking responsibility and living and sharing in a 'community of learners'. Child protection procedures are exemplary. Teaching assistants unobtrusively manage and guide pupils towards better behaviour, new learning and thus increased independence. They work seamlessly with teachers, as do parent helpers, to assess how well children are doing and note where further help or challenge is needed. The views of pupils are taken seriously and for some years a questionnaire has been given to Year 6 to canvass pupils' views. In conversation with a group of ten Year 6 leavers in July they all felt that it was a privilege to have attended Ridgeway school.

27. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils with educational needs is excellent and as a result these pupils are happy and secure in their learning. A member of the special needs team trains support staff so that they can provide better quality support and deal quietly and unobtrusively with pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, enabling them play as full a part as possible in lessons.
28. The school has good systems for the identification and assessment of pupils with English as an additional language. Home visits in the early years help to provide information and a strong link with parents. National guidelines are effectively used to assess the level of language acquisition and the school builds on this through close support from teaching assistants. Pupils are able to learn and make very good progress.

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

There are **excellent** links with parents, and also with a range of other schools, which in turn contribute **strongly** to pupils' learning and personal development. Links with the community are also very **beneficial**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides very good information to parents, including its own handbook explaining national curriculum levels, and specialised workshops, for example on dyslexia.
- Very high regard is paid to parents' views through questionnaires, discussions and review meetings. Parents of children with special needs are very well informed and supported by the school.
- The school is very open and welcoming to parents and many of them help in school.
- There are strong links with a great range of local schools, because of the school's Beacon status, and it is very highly regarded by its partners both in education and in the community.

### **Commentary**

29. The partnership with parents is excellent and a real strength of the school. Tremendous efforts are made to inform and involve them in school life, from a detailed and helpful parents' handbook to informal phone conversations and ad hoc meetings with staff. Early morning classrooms are busy with parents and younger siblings settling in their children and reading with them. Parents themselves are hugely positive about the school, and truly value what it achieves with their children.
30. Beacon status means the school's educational philosophy and methods have attracted wide interest in the local area and much fruitful collaboration has arisen as a result. For example, advanced skills teaching assistants are involved in training other schools' assistants and the school recently 'lent' an assistant to a secondary school to enable an ex-pupil to fully settle in there. Community visits and visitors also form a vital part of the curriculum: the reception classes, with the help of a parent, visited a real estate agent in the area to find homes for the three little pigs!

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are both **very good**. The governance of the school is **unsatisfactory**<sup>9</sup>.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governance is unsatisfactory because the governors have not ensured that the school meets all statutory requirements. In all other areas of work, governance is good.
- Leadership is very good and very many aspects, including the headteacher's shared vision and values, are excellent.
- The leadership team offers excellent support to staff new to the school.
- Management is very good. The innovative use of teams in the school is excellent.

### Commentary

31. The headteacher's excellent strategic vision, shared, supported and disseminated by the leadership team, is characterised by high challenge and a high level of support for all teaching staff. This results in a school ethos which places the needs of individual pupils at the heart of what it does. Commitment to inclusion and to the needs of individuals is excellent. Pupils trust teaching staff and staff trust the leadership team. The school's approach to management is innovative and very effective. In particular the school's induction of new staff is excellent. The leadership team and other teams have established a climate in which teachers are supported to take risks; that is, try new approaches and think differently about teaching so that exploration and investigation may lead to interesting and sometimes different outcomes. At the same time teachers are required to expect only the best of themselves and their pupils. The innovative use of a variety of 'leading teams', including teams of teaching assistants, is also excellent and has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement in many subjects. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is excellent and has had a significant influence on standards, especially in the nursery. Over the past few years the school has gained Beacon status and several teachers have been recognised as Advanced Skills Teachers. The school has also established a team of advanced skills teaching assistants who contribute to school leadership and subject development teams. These developments, together with the targeted use of funding on teaching assistants and ICT, have been very effective aids to raising achievement overall.
32. The school is rightly proud of the way it uses performance management and focuses strongly on staff development through school-based training and external courses. This practice has enabled many staff to grow in professional expertise. The teachers are actively supported in developing their teaching from being a craft into being an art. All teaching staff seek to achieve the highest standards in their teaching and the leadership team supports this in a very sensitive way. Targets are discussed and understood by teachers but success criteria are not fully defined and measurable.
33. The perceptive and supportive leadership leads to very effective management through the school. There are excellent systems to manage teachers' workload. Staff have planning and preparation time. During this time, year teams are supported by the leadership team to evaluate and reflect on what has been achieved and to plan the next steps. The leadership team are very skilled at balancing this 'challenge and support' so that teachers are very confident in sharing their weaknesses as well as their strengths. This high level of open communication means that the school has a wealth of informal detail to support its very good self evaluation process. The school's development planning sets a strategic direction and subject teams produce detailed action plans to support this. The deputy head uses data from tests well to identify trends and patterns for the leadership team to evaluate. The school has

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<sup>9</sup> The work undertaken by governors is of a good quality. They are supportive of the school and effective in the work that they do, however, in view of the governing body failing to ensure that the school complies with the law on providing a daily act of collective worship, governance, according to Ofsted criteria for judging the quality of the work of a governing body, is unsatisfactory.

already looked in detail at those pupils who did not achieve as well as projected in both key stages and begun analysing the reasons, using their knowledge of the pupils as well as the statistical data. This is a good example of the school constantly challenging itself to do better.

34. There are areas of strength of the governors' work. They receive very good information from the headteacher through regular reports and this allows them to know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are very supportive of the school and have played an active part in managing the buildings programme. They give good support to the leadership team and are involved in development planning. The application of best value is good. An area of excellence within this is the level of consultation with parents. Governors ensure that the leadership team challenge themselves to justify how effectively resources are allocated. However, governors have a duty to ensure that the school fulfils all its statutory responsibilities. In that the school fails to comply with the requirements for a daily act of collective worship, the governance cannot be satisfactory, not least because this was a key issue at the time of the last inspection.
35. The headteacher, who is also the special needs co-ordinator, the special needs team and all staff are very knowledgeable and concerned for the well-being and achievement of all pupils with special educational needs.
36. Since the previous inspection the school has made very good progress in many areas of its work. It has addressed the issues raised with the exception of collective worship. Standards in many subjects are now very good. The school's work in developing pupils' citizenship is excellent. Despite growing significantly in size the school has maintained the very high quality ethos seen at the last inspection. The leadership team has ensured that all staff work to the common purpose of developing very articulate and confident learners who have a clear sense of the purpose of learning as well as an enjoyment of learning. The school continues to provide good value for money.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,475,306	Balance from previous year	88,970
Total expenditure	1,520,475	Balance carried forward to the next	43,801
Expenditure per pupil	2663		

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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37. The Foundation Stage is a **strength** of the school's work. The quality of provision for children in the Foundation Stage is now **very good**. Since the last inspection, a purpose built nursery unit has opened. Teaching is of a **high quality**, often **excellent** in the nursery and consistently **good** in the reception classes. The teaching **challenges and excites** children's curiosity and desire to learn. Children **love coming to school** and say that they like 'everything'. The curriculum offered is now **excellent** and the balance between adult and child-selected activities is very carefully planned and resourced. The provision for outdoor play is **excellent** in the nursery and satisfactory for the reception classes where children do not have ready access to climbing apparatus. Children enter the nursery the September after their third birthday and enter the reception class in the September after their fourth birthday.

#### Outstanding practice

*There is an excellent induction process to the nursery and for the reception children who did not receive the school's nursery programme. The induction procedures ensures children and parents are fully and confidently prepared for starting school. Initially there is a parent meeting at which the parents are informed of the school's approach to learning, view the nursery/classrooms and are given excellent information about how they can help their children to learn successfully. Through the valuable home visit the teachers and teaching assistants build excellent relationships with the family. Children draw pictures for display in the classroom and the staff ask the family to complete a booklet with their child called 'All about me'. Visits to the school before entry are numerous. Through all these ways, the staff and family know useful information about each other. Staff work hard to provide a secure, welcoming and calm environment and the children are clearly very happy to come to school. The staff greet families individually when they arrive and parents stay whilst their children settle. Children calmly and confidently choose a well-planned activity and quickly become involved in their exciting learning. Parents said they were well pleased with the highly organised admission procedures.*

38. Parents feel most welcome in the nursery and reception classes. They are kept well informed about what their children will be doing from the very good range of information on the parents' notice board and regular newsletters. The reports show how well teachers and teaching assistants know the children. The assessments made of the children's learning and achievements are very good. The results of the new Child Profile, an end of stage compulsory assessment, are shared with the parents and form part of the children's formal school records.
39. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is excellent and the management is strong. The four classes are superbly staffed, and teachers and support staff work extremely well together. The nursery accommodation inside and outside is excellent and the three reception classes inside and outside are satisfactory. Resources throughout the Foundation Stage are of excellent quality, plentiful in quantity and are effectively used to support creative, imaginative, exciting learning.

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL EDUCATION

Provision in personal, social and emotional education development is **excellent**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong emphasis on this area of learning.
- Children are encouraged to work independently.
- Staff have great respect for the children.
- Children have a very well developed sense of fair play.

- Children take responsibility well.

### **Commentary**

40. Most children enter the nursery class and reception classes with mature skills in personal and social development and, at the end of the Foundation Stage, all will have reached their Early Learning Goals and many will have well exceeded them. Children's development in this area of learning is critical to the school's ethos and forms a very large part of its work. Children make very good progress and their very high attainment is due to every child being treated as an individual and the staff's expertise in developing every child's potential. Children are confident and happy, they know and understand the routines very well. Making decisions about the tasks for the day means that they can concentrate for extended periods. Children show great consideration for each other. They are excellent at sharing and taking turns. They often display a maturity far in excess of their years. They are very good at tidying up at the end of sessions and responding appropriately when told to do so. Staff are successful in developing excellent relationships and share a common view of how children can learn effectively through play.

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

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

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

- Children's listening and speaking skills are excellent.
- Vocabulary develops very well through role play.
- Children learn to recognise and write their names.
- Staff encourage a love of books.

### **Commentary**

41. A high number of children will exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception classes. Staff give a very high priority to communication, language and literacy and ensure that all activities have a strong language focus. The quality of teaching is consistently good and the high level of support given ensures that children make good progress.
42. Staff are very skilled at providing an exciting and stimulating range of activities for children to enjoy and talk about. All children are treated sensitively in the nursery and are not forced to respond if they do not want to. As a consequence, children's confidence grows and they talk unselfconsciously about their activities. reception children are articulate speakers, talk in long sentences and contribute well in group discussions. They can use language well to clarify their thinking and develop creative and imaginative role-play.
43. Children are encouraged to think of themselves as readers and writers. Large supplies of paper, pens, envelopes, crayons, pencils are always readily available and children make books, lists, greeting cards and letters. Children are very familiar with a good range of stories with repetitive passages and rhymes which enables them to develop a sense of the patterns of language. Staff read stories, rhymes and poems with a great amount of expression, which captures the children's attention.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers provide many appropriate, specific activities to develop mathematical skills.
- Children enjoy counting.
- Children develop a good awareness of measurement.

### **Commentary**

44. Children's achievements are good and most will attain the Early Learning Goals and some will exceed them. This is because teachers take opportunities throughout the curriculum to strengthen mathematical thinking. Teachers have a good awareness of each child's current level of mathematical understanding so that they are able to consolidate and extend concepts through the wide range of tasks that children tackle. The quality of teaching is consistently good and children make good progress.
45. All children enjoy counting. In the reception classes they go on a 'number hunt', finding numbers to 20 hidden all over the accommodation. More able children identify the numerals and can say the number that preceded and came after.
46. Throughout the activities children use terms such as 'bigger', 'smaller', 'taller' and 'same size' as they compare objects, build towers and play for long periods of time in the sand and water. In the nursery, during singing rhymes, children gain an awareness of basic mathematics, for example, when they act out the words of 'Five little monkeys jumping on a bed'.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers plan a wide and exciting range of experiences.
- Children are very curious and inquisitive because of the very exciting planned activities.
- Children use information and communication technology well.
- Extra-curricular visits enrich the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

47. Children make good progress and all will reach the Early Learning Goals. The teaching is very good. The activities teachers provide have major emphasis on 'hands on' experiences. Because of this, children make astute observations based on careful handling or watching closely.
48. Children are aware of different times of the year and staff plan very good opportunities to reinforce this. Children investigated sunflower seeds and enjoying the perfume of the lavender plant. Children are encouraged to create hypotheses about what might happen. This is true of their model making, using a wide range of large and small construction equipment. This is a favourite activity of all the children. Good resources and good teaching help children to solve problems of how they can counterbalance additional weights to make towers stay upright.
49. To enrich and extend their learning experiences beyond the school, children are taken to farms, have policemen visit and talk about their work and Muslim parents tell of the Eid celebrations. Very good teaching provides the children with a range of stimulating experiences.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Creative play is exceptionally well organised and enjoyed by all children.
- Children enjoy expressing creative ideas with a wide range of materials and media.

### Commentary

50. The majority of children make very good progress towards meeting the Early Learning Goals and are on line to attain them by the time they complete the reception year. Teaching is very good. The very good achievements in creative development stem from the rich variety of activities provided. Opportunities to paint, make models, work with a variety of materials and to play creatively in a range of environments are available everyday so children are able to extend their knowledge and skills and understanding steadily.
51. Children have opportunities to explore various media and materials; they love mixing their own colours. In all respects the provision for creative development is very good. Very good use is made of a very wide range of materials and staff plan very carefully to ensure that all children get opportunities to explore and develop their creativity.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Imaginative development of the indoors and outdoor play areas.
- Staff provide very good daily opportunities for children to develop skills using small equipment.
- Children's fine hand control is very good.

### Commentary

52. Children make very good progress in the development of their physical skills and most attain Early Learning Goals when they leave the reception class. This is because of the high quality of teaching and the imaginative exciting and stimulating resources. Children confidently and happily run, jump, balance and climb on the equipment and show a mature awareness of the needs of others in the space around them. They are particularly able when handling small equipment indoors. Every day there is a very good range of activities to develop and improve children's physical control and ability.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision for English is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average throughout the school.
- Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are consistently high and lead to good learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils experience a wide variety of ways of learning, including role-play, discussion and the use of information technology, which provide enrichment to the curriculum.
- Writing is both creative and purposeful.
- Pupils read with enjoyment and demonstrate very good knowledge of books and authors.
- Excellent links are made with other subjects in the curriculum to ensure that English is both lively and relevant.
- The library resources are not of a high quality and the school has correctly identified the need for improvement.

#### Commentary

53. By the end of Year 6 pupils are attaining standards which are well above average in speaking and listening, reading, and above average in writing. A good proportion of pupils attain the higher levels. They enter the school with good skills and a wide range of experiences and the school builds successfully on these to ensure that good progress is maintained through both key stages.
54. Pupils are articulate and know how to adjust their speech in a variety of situations. They speak with confidence in pairs, small groups and in front of the class. The school makes sure that they have a wide range of stimulating experiences to speak about and excellent opportunities to listen as well as talk. Pupils read with enjoyment and use their reading skills effectively when carrying out research. They use the Internet with enthusiasm to locate information and apply their literacy skills well when word processing stories and poems.
55. Pupils write with imagination and creativity. They write for a variety of purposes which make sense to them and writing is always given a meaningful context. Letters home from a World War 2 soldier give life to some learning in history. Persuasive writing about the destruction of the rainforest shows that pupils can engage in the current debates of society. Articles in the 'Sparta Sport' or the 'Daily Chariot' use modern journalistic techniques to explore themes of Ancient Greece. Pupils are encouraged to edit and revise their work but some are less secure in the technical aspects of being a writer. The school could do more to develop focused feedback through marking and to provide good models of what it is like to be an author.
56. A real strength of the way the subject is taught is a product of the careful, coherent and consistent planning which includes English as part of a wider curriculum context. Teachers plan for exciting activities and are able to set ambitious expectations for their pupils that demand the highest response. There are few mundane or routine activities in which pupils might become bored and lose interest. All teaching is at least satisfactory and most is good or better. Some teachers are highly skilled at questioning which demands that pupils make deductions as a consequence of reasoned thinking. Learning is always supported by well-designed materials and resources and teaching assistants are well briefed to pay attention to pupils' individual needs. Key reading skills are taught successfully with the result that standards improve through the school and pupils are confident learners.
57. The subject is well co-ordinated by a team of teachers who make sure that good planning and resources are in place and that teachers are given stimulating and innovative ideas for the

subject. This has a direct impact on the raising of standards. Leadership is a shared feature and this works well.

### **English across the curriculum**

58. The planning of English within the 'Contexts for Learning' is an excellent way of ensuring that the use of language is relevant to every area of the curriculum and that pupils practise and use their skills in positive and meaningful ways. The school has rightly developed the planning and teaching of the subject in an innovative way which provides opportunities for the highest quality of teaching and learning. English is taught effectively through history, science, art, geography and religious education. Subjects such as information and communication technology contribute greatly to the learning in English.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

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

- Standards at the end of both key stages are above average.
- Leadership is very good: the school is pro-active in managing, supporting and challenging teachers and pupils to achieve their best.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- Pupils' attitudes to mathematics and their knowledge about their learning are very good.
- The 2002 Year 6 national tests show that some pupils did not reach their full potential. The team managing the subject, however, are focused well on raising achievement and are very well supported by the leadership team.
- The partnership between teachers and teaching assistants makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
- The use of information and communication technology within mathematics lessons is very good.

#### **Commentary**

59. Standards in national tests for Years 2 and 6 in 2002 were well above average. Standards in these tests in 2003 suggest that they will be above average. Even though standards have been very high for the past four years at both key stages, the school has not been complacent. The last inspection noted that the school was on target to ensure that all pupils' progress was consistently good. This remains the school's aim but has not fully been achieved. The team leader and school leadership team have recognised that, by the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 has not been keeping pace with the level of attainment at the end of Year 2 where, for several years, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 3 has been excellent at 60 per cent. The school has high aspirations for all its pupils. Therefore the school is rightly concerned that high attainers in Year 2 continue to achieve at the same level through Years 3 to 6 and is taking appropriate steps to monitor this for the future in order to ensure continued high levels of achievement. This attention to the detail is very good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress over time. The school seeks to provide the pupils with a broad and challenging mathematics curriculum based upon learning and applying specific mathematical skills and teaching new elements of mathematics related directly to other areas of the curriculum.
60. The quality of teaching is good overall. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. The strengths in teaching include the teachers' and teaching assistants' very good use of questioning to find out how pupils are thinking mathematically. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the school's action planning since this was identified as an area to improve last year. The school's declared aim of enabling pupils to take command of their learning is strongly evident in the older pupils' own understanding of their learning which is very good. All teachers encourage

the pupils to give immediate feedback on their level of understanding in lessons and most use this information to plan the next lesson. Teaching assistants are very perceptive about pupils' learning and also give very well focused feedback to teachers. Pupils are convinced that the teachers know what their needs are. The use of information and communication technology in mathematics lessons is very good. The use of staff to support this initiative demonstrates how well the school's leadership supports new developments.

61. Areas where teaching is less effective are in teachers' management of their time and their management of groups of pupils within the lesson. This is most evident in classes where teachers are relatively new to the school and are new to the school's approaches to learning. The level of challenge and pace of learning for all pupils in a class is sometimes less than it might be. This often occurs when teaching staff focus their skilled input on only one pupil at a time. The fact that the mathematics team leader and senior leaders know about this and recognise the need for support demonstrates the school's effectiveness in monitoring what goes on in classes. All teachers plan for the differing levels of ability. Where this is accurately pitched the pupils achieve well. In satisfactory lessons the pupils' achievement is only sound because the level of challenge is not right to help them progress. They find the work 'too easy' or struggle because they have not grasped the ideas taught at the start of the lesson. Work from the last academic year demonstrates that there are areas of strength in teaching through the school. These are evident in very good files of work samples linked to lesson plans which helps teachers analyse their lessons in terms of the impact on teaching and learning. The school gives very high priority to teachers' ongoing assessment but also links this to national optional tests each year in Years 3, 4 and 5.
62. By the end of Year 6 most pupils attain good, and sometimes very good, standards in the separate strands of mathematics. There is a strong emphasis on number and pupils learn to use and evaluate a variety of methods of calculating, which is good. The school has already recognised that pupils' strengths in using and applying mathematics is an area to develop further and have already put plans in place to address this. Problem solving and writing about their mathematics are particular areas for development.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

63. The use of mathematics in other subjects is developing well, especially in geography, history and science. The use of ICT, especially tables and sometimes spreadsheets are aids to mathematics that are used usefully to enhance learning in other subjects.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

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

- Standards are well above average.
- Pupils are introduced to science through very practical routes that not only interest pupils, but also develop their curiosity.
- Teaching is good and in some cases excellent, with extremely effective support from teaching assistants.

#### **Commentary**

64. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2. However, teachers' assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2 (July 2003) shows 100 per cent of pupils reaching standards expected for their age with over 50 per cent gaining Level 3. This indicates very high standards and the fact that most pupils are achieving well.

65. All aspects of science throughout the school are taught equally well and as a consequence of the school's aims to involve, interest and develop independent learning, pupils' ability to research and investigate science is very good. Whilst some investigations are pure science others contribute and reinforce pupils' scientific learning, for example, in the observation of plants and animals through shape, texture, movement and habitat. In Year 3 pupils' research, for example, woodland creatures and use ICT to help with the presentation of their findings such as the shape of the creatures, their food, running speed and other characteristics.
66. Standards of achievement throughout Years 3 to 6 are well above average and this should be maintained. In some lessons pupils' levels of attention and motivation were incredibly high. In Year 3 pupils' work shows that they research scientific facts about the natural world and present their findings through information and communication technology, art and writing. It is clear that pupils not only learn science, but teaching also taxes their senses and feelings towards the science being taught, for example, the impact of spring on fostering new life in plants or creatures. Information and communication technology is successfully used to widen pupils' range of research, analysis and presentation of information. This also makes a valuable contribution to extending their already high standards in ICT. In Year 6, for example, excellent preparation by the teacher ensured that pupils ably extended their knowledge of the structure of a plant, its flower and fruit. The sensitivity of the teaching helped pupils to really think about the plants they were handling. The teacher's questioning and probing brought about genuine inquisitiveness from the pupils and ensured that learning was very effective. However, sometimes pupils' research skills are taken for granted and activities flounder rather than fly. Pupils know how to use reference books, the Internet and other features of ICT to gather and sort information, but the task has to provide a strong challenge if the pupils are to gain from their research. Teaching assistants work extremely effectively with individual and groups of pupils. It is evident that they have been thoroughly briefed so that their work with the pupils generates interest, proceeds at a very good pace and produces very good outcomes. In addition teachers' knowledge of pupils and their tracking of pupils' achievements allow for very effective planning and teaching. This ensures that teachers use a wide range of objects and stimuli.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **excellent**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at both key stages are well above national expectations overall and specifically in communication they are excellent.
- The achievement pupils make is very good because teaching is very good. In addition there are some excellent features and in all cases teachers focus on developing pupils' capability.
- Leadership and management of the subject are excellent.
- The trained team of teaching assistants make an excellent contribution to the standards pupils achieve.
- Resources are excellent and the school has carefully allocated these so that their use is maximised.

### **Commentary**

67. Pupils' standards in communication through the use of ICT are excellent. In other aspects of ICT such as data handling and control and monitoring they achieve standards above those expected nationally. At the last inspection standards were above expectations, except in the area of control technology, and pupils made good progress. The team leader, with the excellent support of the school leadership team and the trained ICT teaching assistants, has been able to have a major impact on teaching and learning through the school. This subject is also an area of Beacon activity and the school has shared this aspect of their work through outreach work in other schools.

68. Pupils achieve very well throughout their school career, and in individual lessons. The strategy of using the teaching assistants, who demonstrate very good skills in ICT and good knowledge about the pupils' learning, to teach the skills of ICT leads to pupils developing a very high degree of competence. By the end of Year 6, pupils are very confident users of ICT. For example, they will decide they need some information and look it up quickly on the Internet. Teaching is very good overall and sometimes excellent. Teaching assistants plan with the teachers and then produce prompt sheets to which pupils can refer. There has been a very clear strategic view of resourcing to meet teaching needs. The solution of providing a computer in each classroom, laptops for all teachers and small suites of computers in several locations makes excellent use of the accommodation and has had a major impact on the use of ICT in other subjects. Through the use of digital whiteboards and digital projectors teachers are beginning to use ICT as a teaching tool in other subjects. The use of this equipment to teach ICT skills is excellent. The next steps the team leader has planned for the school include devising effective ways of assessing and recording pupils' attainment in ICT and in developing work in data handling and control so that pupils also achieve standards of excellence in these aspects.

### **Outstanding practice**

*A particular area of outstanding practice is the school's use of digital photography as a tool to help pupils talk about, understand and communicate to another audience what they have learned. In the nursery and reception classes the children take photographs and use them to talk about and reflect on what they can see and learn as day by day they observe caterpillars eat, pupate and eventually hatch. In science, Year 1 pupils photograph the development of seeds and make a PowerPoint presentation with the photographs and text explaining their scientific learning. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use photographs on geography field trips to help them reflect on what they have found out. The photography work, together with the way pupils are taught to consider the power of text and image together, helps pupils to make discriminating use of images when they use them to make information leaflets. Pupils are encouraged to have a very clear idea of audience and purpose. Teaching staff introduce key ideas about how layout creates an effect and the ICT skills to achieve this are taught explicitly and progressively so that all pupils become highly competent and independent in selecting whether to take their own photograph and manipulate it, select a photograph from the Internet, scan an object, use clip art or create their own computer-art. This exciting work enables pupils to have a very good understanding of the power of the visual image to communicate ideas.*

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

69. ICT is used extremely well as a way of supporting learning in nearly all subjects. The frequency of its use, development of pupils' skills and its contribution to learning across the curriculum is also an area of excellence in the school. This has been achieved because the pupils are so competent in their computer skills that using the computer is as second nature as using a pencil.

## HUMANITIES

History lessons were observed in both key stages but it was only possible to observe one lesson of religious education in Key Stage 2 and two Year 5 lessons in geography. Comments are based on these lessons, on examination of pupils' previous work and discussions with pupils and staff.

### Religious education

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils gain increasing insight into more complex concepts of religious understanding and practices as they move through the school.
- Pupils use their skills well.
- Good displays throughout the school.

### Commentary

70. Pupils' attainment at Year 2 and Year 6 are above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, achieve very well. This is an improvement since the last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 1. As it was only possible to observe a small amount of teaching in religious education no reliable judgement can be made on teaching. However from all the evidence, teachers are able to motivate, stimulate and interest pupils in world faiths, and help them to understand their spiritual inner selves.
71. The leadership and management of the subject are strong. There is a long-term plan that ensures each year group has a clear scheme of work. The skills learned in literacy are used well to record in this subject. Pupils take notes to help them with tasks. They research the Internet and use reference book skills to write independently. Pupils' response is positive, they are enthusiastic about activities offered such as drama and role-play and they are keen to join in. Pupils talk most knowledgeably and with understanding about world faiths.

### History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement are high.
- Pupils enjoy history.
- Pupils are learning to be 'historians'.
- Content of lessons is exciting and visits support learning.

### Commentary

72. Pupils' standards in history in Year 2 and Year 6 are good. They have a good understanding of issues because of thorough and stimulating teaching. Pupils talk expertly about dates and series of events and Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to empathise with people from the past. Pupils in Key Stage 2 show a greater degree of understanding and awareness that evidence about historical periods can be collated from a number of sources. Pupils' good English standards and wide vocabulary is used well in history to compare and contrast different lifestyles and express their feelings about what life might have been life a long time ago.
73. The stimulating curriculum is enriched by visits to places of interest to support history work. Pupils gain much pleasure from seeing history come alive for example, in a Year 1 visit to

Bodiam Castle. Their role-play in the classroom afterwards is creative, imaginary and factually correct. They use correct terms such as 'pull up the drawbridge', 'put on the armour on the horse' and 'to battle'.

### **Outstanding practice**

*The school writes its own drama packs for the teaching of history. They are written to encourage role-play. The guidance packs and materials are of an excellent quality. They assume that children love nothing more than to see their teacher doing something very different and making such a strong effort for them, whether the teacher looks and sounds daft or not. The importance is the engagement with the character by the teacher so that the pupils are locked into the performance and the character. Teachers prepare their pupils in advance, just in case such an historical character walks into the classroom, especially if their teacher is not there. She may have left to collect some books. Important to the well-being of the pupils is the fact that their teacher knows the pupils are interested in this person. The character the teacher plays is never fazed by questions, especially of disbelief and continues to act out the part, even if pupils, fascinated by the anachronism, point out, 'You are wearing a watch and they did not exist in your time. You just borrowed it for fun'. Conversely the pupils realise quickly how different life was in the time of the character when, for example, Queen Elizabeth I quizzes and questions the pupils about the simplest of things, for example, Her Majesty becoming absorbed about a girl's glittery hair band. The teacher becomes the character. Once the teacher returns to the classroom, blank denial has to be the order of the day – it works wonders.*

### **Geography**

The provision for geography is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection.
- Older pupils debate issues sensitively and maturely.
- Teachers make geography interesting and exciting for the pupils.
- Extra-curricular visits are well thought through to extend what is being learned.

### **Commentary**

74. The last inspection made no judgement of standards. Standards are very good at both Key Stages. The teaching is of high quality, and this has a strong positive impact on pupils' progress. The teachers' high expectations, their open questioning and their thorough subject knowledge help pupils increase their understanding of the world around them. The way that teachers plan geography so that clear links are made with other subjects is a further strength of geography.
75. Information communication technology is used well and there are good quality visual resources to help bring the subject alive for the pupils. Pupils' attitude to geography is most positive. They work hard and show a keenness to answer questions. They enjoy learning through high quality, first hand experiences, such as a visit to the local river.
76. Older pupils have a very good understanding of why some countries are poor and how this is reflected in their people's lifestyle, compared with their own. They debate sensitive issues in a mature, sensible way and make choices. They write eloquently about problems facing the world such as holes in the ozone layer and over-fishing and try to find solutions

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### Art

**Very high standards** are achieved in art throughout the school and it is a highly valued part of the curriculum.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' creativity flourishes through art.
- Very good progress is made in the acquisition of skills and techniques.
- Pupils receive a very wide range of art experiences.
- Very good links are made with other subjects and areas of learning.
- Pupils demonstrate high levels of enjoyment and engagement with the subject.

### Commentary

77. Little direct teaching of art was seen during the inspection but the amount and variety of pupils' work around the school and the coherent planning for the subject show that art has a high profile and is rightly seen as an important part of pupils' curricular experience. The standard of work is very high and pupils' achievement is good across a range of experiences. Drawings in charcoal, pencil and pastel demonstrate increasing skill and confidence from Year 1 through to Year 6. Very young pupils are encouraged to experiment, for example when mixing paint, and make sensible and frequently highly imaginative choices. Artwork at the end of Key Stage 2 is confident, thoughtful and often demonstrates high degrees of skill.
78. Art is planned within stimulating curriculum such as humans versus nature, or a world of contrasts and the pupils see their work as having relevance and meaning. Their attitudes to the subject are very good and they work with a range of materials and resources sensibly. They talk about famous artists and craftspeople with insight and can relate their work to their own attempts. Pupils in Year 4 exploring the use of paint to recreate Tudor costumes demonstrated how meaningful art is to their general learning as well as being significant in its own right.

### Outstanding practice

*Monet, Seurat and Constable all found inspiration in painting rivers and pupils in Year 5 show that they too are able to consider colour, movement and reflection through the eyes of these great painters.*

*The teacher sets up an activity in which the pupils take a detail from a famous painting and reproduce it in their own work. They do not rush to get brush to paper though, because the most important part of their learning is the discussion and exploration of their own ideas. In pairs they talk about their reaction to the paintings.*

*'I like it when the painter slaps the paint on with energy.'  
'How did he make those shimmering lights on the water?'  
'That colour isn't just black. It has green and yellow inside it.'*

*The responses to the pictures are mature and enthusiastic and show how the pupils understand that personal response will lead to better outcomes for them. They have visited art galleries and been given the experiences which give depth to their understanding of art. They go on to paint with care and concentration and produce high quality results.*

*But this is not just a painting lesson. The teacher's skill is in making the links between the uses of rivers and the pupils' creative responses. Her approach promotes learning in the round, so that activities make sense within a wider context. Other pupils are involved in geographical research and in poetry writing about rivers. The teacher builds on previous*

*knowledge and helps them to see links and make connections. She models what she wants from them and establishes the high standards of learning that she expects from them. Pupils are challenged to stretch the boundaries of what they can do.*

*Such learning demands the highest level of response but no pupil is left without support. There are visual, oral and written cues available to all. Pupils are swiftly involved with eyes, hands, brains and imagination and become artists, geographers and poets in their own right.*

## **Design and technology**

79. Insufficient work was seen to form overall judgements about the effectiveness of provision in design and technology (DT). No lessons were observed. Teachers' planning shows that this subject is well integrated into the school's 'contexts for learning' and teachers make very good use of the opportunities in design and technology to extend pupils' literacy skills. There is very good use of ICT to support work in design and technology, especially the extensive use of digital photography to help pupils think about designs and help them reflect on the work they have done. Photographs of examples of work and pupils' comments show that they enjoy the tasks, such as making a light in Year 3.

## **Music**

The limited evidence gathered for music indicates that provision is at least satisfactory, often good, but an overall judgement cannot be made.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The level of provision for extra-curricular instrumental playing is excellent with many opportunities for talented pupils to develop their musical skills well.
- The school is totally committed to ensuring that all pupils are fully involved in music making, including pupils with serious special needs difficulties.

## **Commentary**

80. The only lesson observed in Key Stage 1 was a singing lesson, taken by a part time musician that involved all Year 2 pupils. This was satisfactory. The teacher was very well prepared and pupils sang tunefully and enthusiastically and showed obvious enjoyment during the session. Songs were well chosen to expand the pupils' current topic of work. There were, however, no opportunities for individual or group performance and no instruments were used to enhance the singing.
81. Teaching and learning in the 3 lessons observed in Year 4 were good. These lessons were taken by another part time musician who oversees provision through all classes in Years 3 to 6. Most pupils make good progress in their learning and achievement overall is good. This is because the teacher knows her subject very well and her knowledge of pupils' learning needs leads to good planning, revealing a very good range of activities that provide suitable challenges. Pupils have some knowledge of the work of famous composers and feel they benefit from occasions when they listen to music, both around the school and in lessons, and when they engage in practical music making, such as a recent workshop led by an African steel band.
82. Extra-curricular provision for instrumental playing makes an excellent contribution to the musical development of many pupils. This includes violin, clarinet, brass, piano, flute, guitar and recorders. Pupils are invited to join recorder playing in Year 2. These lessons are free, but parents contribute to all other instrumental tuition. The choir performs publicly on a number of occasions and has entertained groups in the local community. There are plentiful, good quality resources for all pupils to engage in practical music making. All these things have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and planning is very good and therefore pupils' learning is effective.
- Standards of achievement are good.
- Overall planning for physical education throughout the school is very good and teachers are given strong support to ensure that pupils succeed and make good progress.

### Commentary

83. Pupils achieve better standards than reported at the time of the previous inspection. In Years 1 and 2 teaching is good and well planned. The approach to teaching physical education is one which ensures that pupils have a maximum amount of time in lessons to be active and participative. Therefore pupils' skill development is ensured. Teachers also work hard to ensure that pupils know what the rules of learning are and that the behaviour of any one or group of pupils can affect the learning of others. Teachers encourage positive behaviour, for example, when pupils demonstrate and explain skills such as throwing and catching. Equally teachers gently but firmly draw unsatisfactory behaviour to the attention of individual pupils, getting that pupil to realise that he or she should be more responsible. Those who settle less quickly are taught to realise that they gain much more from working collaboratively.
84. Pupils achieve well in lessons, mainly because they are involved and therefore have time to practise and refine their skills. Through Years 3 to 6 a similar approach to teaching and promoting pupils' learning occurs as in earlier years. Teachers and support assistants expect pupils to behave well and will frequently let pupils complete something before correcting and pointing out what is expected of them. This approach is working well and pupils become highly responsive, accepting responsibly for their and others' learning.
85. Pupils are enthusiastic in physical education, whether it is the beginnings of a dance they are developing out of some poetry they have written or basic skills of passing, for example using a hockey stick, or playing games. They listen well and follow instructions. They also speak confidently about their actions; whether these generate further success or are a handicap to success. Other links to other class activities include pupils' creative responsiveness to words specifically about Roman soldiers that they generated at the beginning of the lesson. In practising hockey skills, pupils showed very good stick and ball skills for their age. Pupils listened to their teacher and as a consequence they achieved well during the lesson. The school has successfully gained a national award known as an Activemark which recognises above average provision and achievement in sports. The subject leader is highly responsive to supporting teachers in their planning for the development of skills and enjoyment of lessons.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

### Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **excellent**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very successful in its aim to launch pupils in Year 6 as Global Citizens.
- Provision is carefully and very thoroughly planned across the school in all curriculum areas.

- The work of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is impressive. They have a particularly good understanding of environmental issues.

### Commentary

86. Teaching and learning are so good that by Year 6 pupils have benefited greatly from many opportunities to develop and extend their awareness and understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship in areas right across the curriculum. This enables them to demonstrate a good understanding of what it means to be a 'young citizen' and overall achievement is high. Pupils talk thoughtfully and maturely about the need to be caring - for each other, the environment and themselves - and describe in some detail various projects that they have been involved in, for example, in improving the environment of the school. Adults in the school and parents recently showed their very good commitment to supporting pupils' learning by establishing a 'Ground Force' team to help carry out the pupils' plans. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs are fully supported so that they can benefit fully from the lessons and achieve outcomes that are similar to other pupils.
87. In the wider world, pupils have benefited from well-planned topics, for example, 'Endangered Species' which exist within school contexts, such as 'Save the Planet'. They research and discuss, for example, global warming, landmines, drought, terrorism, racism and human rights analysis. Teachers build on this good work by helping pupils to reflect on their own views and beliefs in personal diaries. In science they are very clear about food chains and webs and the importance of eco-systems, but the curriculum takes them that step further, where they are encouraged to discuss topics that affect all life such as over-fishing in certain areas. Overall achievement is excellent.

### Personal, social and health education

Provision in personal, social and health education is **excellent**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is successful in its aim to enable pupils to become mature, independent and responsible.
- The school has achieved its aims of ensuring that all teaching promotes pupils' personal and social development.

### Commentary

88. This area of learning is a very high priority for the school and much time and effort is expended to ensure that the emotional development of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, can flourish in an ethos of strong relationships and high personal achievement. By Years 5 and 6, as a result of this very good teaching, pupils demonstrate great maturity and self-knowledge in discussion about issues such as sex education, drugs use and misuse, relationships, self-care and personal hygiene, care of the world around them and the environment. Pupils have confidence to talk comfortably about a wide range of topics and to express their feelings about issues.
89. Written work is also of a very high standard right across the school. For example, in Year 1 pupils compile interesting pocket books with their own views of what it takes to be 'a good person'. In Year 5 pupils study qualities that make a good leader and then ponder thoughtfully on whether their influence might be a positive or negative one. In Year 6 when pupils research into how the press uses language to manipulate people, their conclusions are mature and thoughtful. In these, and many more instances, pupils' achievement is very high.
90. The school acknowledges that its high level of staffing contributes greatly to its effectiveness in delivering this broad programme of work, but it is not complacent. All staff are regularly

trained and updated on how to help pupils deal with complex issues such as conflict resolution. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and monitored to ensure that teaching sets high levels of challenge, particularly in pupils' ability to research and become independent learners.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	1
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school <sup>10</sup>	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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

<sup>10</sup> The work undertaken by governors is of a good quality. They are supportive of the school and effective in the work that they do, however, in view of the governing body failing to ensure that the school complies with the law on providing a daily act of collective worship, governance, according to Ofsted criteria for judging the quality of the work of a governing body, is unsatisfactory.

