

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ROCKWELL GREEN CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Rockwell Green, Wellington

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123800

Headteacher: Mr Peter Williamson

Lead inspector: Mr Graham R Sims

Dates of inspection: Monday 6<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2003

Inspection number: 257342  
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:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	174
School address:	Rockwell Green CE Primary School Brooklands Road Rockwell Green WELLINGTON Somerset
Postcode:	TA21 9DJ
Telephone number:	01823 662317
Fax number:	01823 661246
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Rachel Ellins
Date of previous inspection:	8th February 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Rockwell Green CE Primary School, a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school, is situated in the village of Rockwell Green to the south-west of the town of Wellington in Somerset. The school serves the local population, and the number of children admitted from outside its immediate catchment area is increasing. It has 174 boys and girls on roll between the ages of 4 and 11 and is smaller than most primary schools. In Years 3 and 4, there are significantly more boys than girls. In Year 2, the situation is the reverse. National statistics show that the socio-economic circumstances of the immediate catchment area are well below average. An above-average proportion of pupils claims free school meals. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and no pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The school caters for a small number of children from traveller families who now live in housed accommodation near the school. A significantly large proportion of pupils join or leave the school part way through their primary education. Over half of the pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, have joined the school since reception. Around one third of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is well above the national average. Five pupils, three of whom have Statements of Special Educational Need, receive help from outside specialists for a range of needs, including social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school is involved in various programmes which offer additional support to pupils and their families. Children start school in the September of the school year in which they have their fifth birthday. They attend on a part-time basis according to a phased induction programme, leading up to full-time attendance half-way through the autumn term. The attainment of children when they start school is generally well below average. Since the last inspection, the number of pupils on roll has decreased, in line with demographic trends. In September, the number of classes for pupils in Years 3 to 6 was reduced from four to three, and these pupils are now taught in mixed-age classes. The inspection of collective worship has been carried out separately by the diocese.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
28899	Mr G Sims	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology
19335	Mrs S Dixon	Lay inspector	
22556	Mr E Morgan	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
32136	Mrs L Brookes	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Science Geography History Religious education Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education Ltd  
102 Bath Road  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL53 7JX

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Rockwell Green Primary School provides an acceptable standard of education** and gives satisfactory value for money. Staffing problems over the last few years have resulted in standards which are well below average at the end of Year 6, but pupils currently make good progress up to Year 2 and achieve satisfactorily overall. The overall quality of the teaching is good, and the leadership and management of the school at various levels are satisfactory.

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

- Standards are well below average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, and not enough emphasis has been given to teaching the key skills of literacy and numeracy.
- The school now has a stable team of experienced teachers who provide good teaching throughout the school.
- There is a good ethos within the school. Pupils have positive attitudes and the staff work hard to foster good relationships and ensure that there is a very good standard of care for all pupils.
- The school provides a good range of learning opportunities and a very good range of activities outside the formal curriculum. Music makes a very important contribution to school life.
- Staff do not use their good assessment procedures as effectively as they could to match work closely to pupils' needs and to help pupils understand how to improve.
- Whilst the behaviour of most pupils is good, and older pupils take on responsibilities willingly and conscientiously, pupils are not helped sufficiently to become more independent learners.
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Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Results at the end of Year 2 have risen faster than in most schools, but results at the end of Year 6 have not risen as much. The school has responded conscientiously to the key issues raised in the previous inspection. It makes better provision for design and technology, the humanities and information and communication technology than before and has improved its planning of the curriculum and procedures for assessing pupils' progress.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Currently, **pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory.**

The overall level of attainment when children enter the reception class is well below average. They make good progress and achieve well, but do not reach all of the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year.

Standards at the end of Year 2 have risen significantly since the last inspection, and at a much faster rate than in most schools. Pupils achieve well, although standards are still below average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Standards at the end of Year 6 have been affected by significant disruption to the teaching over the last few years. As a result, pupils who took the national tests in 2003 did not achieve well, and results were well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. Although there has been some improvement in English and science since the last inspection, results in the national tests have not improved as much as in other schools.

Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology and music, but standards in subjects such as history, geography and religious education are affected by pupils' poor literacy skills. Pupils with special educational needs do not always achieve well in class because the work is sometimes too difficult for them.

The school's **provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good**. Overall, pupils' attitudes are good. Standards of behaviour are satisfactory. Attendance is below average. This reflects the poor attendance of a small minority of pupils and an increasing tendency for parents to take holidays during term-time. Punctuality is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **good quality of education**.

**The overall quality of the teaching is good** in all parts of the school. As a result, pupils make good progress in the reception class and learn well in Years 1 and 2. Learning in Years 3 to 6 is currently still only satisfactory. The school's arrangements for assessing pupils' work are satisfactory.

The school provides a good range of learning opportunities and a very good range of activities outside the formal curriculum. Music makes a particularly significant contribution to the life of the school. The overall range of learning resources and the quality of the school's accommodation are satisfactory, although classrooms are very small and impose limitations on teaching methods.

There are very good procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and for looking after pupils before and after school. Staff know their pupils very well and provide them with satisfactory support, advice and guidance. Induction arrangements for new pupils are very good. The school's links with parents, other schools and the community are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall quality of **leadership and management is satisfactory**. This reflects the satisfactory leadership provided by the headteacher and senior staff, the good leadership of some subject co-ordinators, an increasingly effective governing body and satisfactory management procedures.

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

Parents are generally pleased with the school. They feel their children are cared for well and that the teaching is good.

Pupils are generally pleased with their school. They like coming to school and have no major concerns about the way they are treated.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Place greater emphasis on the teaching and reinforcement of the key skills of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.
- Ensure that the school's improvement plan provides a clearer focus on raising standards.
- Make better use of assessment information to ensure that work is matched more closely to pupils' needs.
- Provide pupils with clearer guidance on what they need to do to improve.
- Help pupils to become more independent in their learning.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Although standards are below average by the end of Year 2, pupils' achievement in the reception class and Years 1 and 2 is **good**. Because of disrupted teaching in the past, standards in English, mathematics and science are **well below average** by the end of Year 6. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is currently **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well below the national average at the end of Year 6, and there has been insufficient improvement in mathematics in recent years.
- Poor literacy skills, particularly noticeable in the quality of pupils' writing in Years 4 to 6, are adversely affecting pupils' progress in other subjects.
- Children make good progress in the reception class and by the end of the year show improvement on the well-below-average standards exhibited by many when they start school.
- The school's results in reading, writing and mathematics in the national tests at the end of Year 2 have improved significantly over the last five years.
- Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is improving because of good teaching, but the legacy of disrupted teaching in previous years is still having an adverse effect on their overall progress.
- Pupils' achieve well in information and communication technology and music.

#### Commentary

1. Children's attainment on entry to the school is generally well below average, and the skills of many pupils in communication, language and literacy are very poor. Indeed, teachers and assistants have to work hard to elicit even one-word responses from some children, and many children find it hard to listen, either when spoken to individually or when they are working as part of a group. Children's achievement in the reception class is good, and this is because they are provided with a very well planned variety of activities and good-quality teaching which help them to make good progress in all areas of learning. By the end of their year in the reception class, standards are below average overall, but still well below average in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development.
2. Although they have fluctuated, the school's results at the end of Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup> have risen significantly since the last inspection. Results in the national tests in 2003 were just below the national average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. When compared to the results of similar schools, they were above average in reading

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<sup>1</sup> The words '**Key Stage**' refer to the different stages of learning in schools. Children start school in the Foundation Stage, which caters for children aged 3 to 5 and generally refers to children who are in the Nursery, Reception or Early Years classes. Key Stage 1 is the first stage of compulsory primary education. It caters for pupils aged 5 to 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2. Key Stage 1 is also frequently synonymous with the term Infants. Key Stage 2 is the second stage of primary education. It caters for pupils aged 7 to 11 and refers to pupils who are in Years 3 to 6. Key Stage 2 is also frequently synonymous with the term Juniors. At the age of 11, pupils start Key Stage 3, which marks the beginning of their secondary education.

and mathematics and average in writing. Given the well-below-average standards when they start Year 1, this represents good achievement. Pupils make good progress through Years 1 and 2 because of good-quality teaching. The inspection judgements paint a very similar picture to the national test results and show that standards are below average overall by the end of Key Stage 1, but that pupils are making good progress.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003 <sup>2</sup>		
Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.6 (15.5)	15.9 (15.8)
writing	13.7 (14.5)	14.8 (14.4)
mathematics	15.9 (16.1)	16.4 (16.5)
There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year		

3. The picture at the end of Key Stage 2 is complex. The national test results in 2002 looked reasonably healthy and marked a period of fluctuating but steady improvement since the last inspection, with standards improving more than in most schools in English and at a similar rate in science. The English results were just above the national average and the science results just below. In comparison with similar schools, the results were well above average in English and average in science. This represented very good achievement in English, with pupils making much more progress through Key Stage 2 than in most schools. The situation changed significantly in 2003, when the results fell markedly in English and science and were well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. Achievement in both subjects was unsatisfactory, with pupils making significantly less progress through Key Stage 2 than pupils in the previous year group.
4. Whilst pupils who took their national tests in 2002 had enjoyed relative stability throughout their time at the school, those who took their tests in 2003 had experienced a significant amount of disruption. In only two out of their six years did the pupils have a whole year of uninterrupted good-quality teaching. In other years, they had periods during which their teacher was absent for prolonged periods, either through illness or because of secondment by the local authority, or they received teaching from staff whose performance was less than satisfactory. Pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 have also experienced similar disruption during their time at Rockwell Green. Two further factors affecting their overall performance are the very high mobility rate, with well over half of the pupils joining the school partway through their primary stage, and the well-above-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
5. Results in mathematics have remained an enigma since the last inspection. After showing some improvement in 1999 and 2001, they fell again in 2002 and 2003 and, last year, were similar to the results achieved at the time of the last inspection. In contrast to English, achievement in 2002 was satisfactory and in 2003 it was poor, with pupils making much less than the expected progress between Years 2 and 6. In both 2002 and 2003, the results in mathematics were well below the national average and the average for similar schools. Although the school has been well aware of the relatively poor

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<sup>2</sup> **Average point scores** are used as a way of comparing fairly the performance of pupils in one school with those in another. The level achieved by each pupil in the national tests is converted into a points score. The points achieved by all of the pupils are added together and divided by the number of pupils who took the test to arrive at an average point score. An average point score of 15 at the end of Year 2 is equivalent to a middle of the range Level 2, which is the standard expected of seven-year-old pupils. At the end of Year 6, an average point score of 27 is equivalent to Level 4, the national expectation for eleven-year-olds.

performance of pupils in mathematics and has implemented various initiatives to improve pupils' achievements in this area, these efforts have not been sustained with consistent energy and have been hampered to a significant extent by two prolonged absences of the mathematics co-ordinator whilst seconded by the local authority to other schools.

6. The school has set itself sufficiently challenging targets in the past, although it fell well short of meeting them in 2003. Targets for 2004, although much lower than in previous years, are realistic given pupils' past experiences and their current levels of attainment.

<b>Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003</b>		
Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.9 (27.2)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	23.8 (24.6)	27.0 (26.7)
science	26.6 (27.7)	28.8 (28.3)
There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year		

7. Because the staffing situation in Key Stage 2 is now stable and pupils are enjoying good-quality teaching from three strong and experienced teachers, pupils' achievement at Key Stage 2 is now improving significantly once again. Although standards remain well below average in English, mathematics and science, pupils' achievement is currently satisfactory, as pupils of all capabilities are making satisfactory gains in their learning. The legacy of poor learning habits and significant gaps in pupils' knowledge, however, still remains and is having an effect on the rate at which they learn, despite the teachers' efforts to motivate the pupils.
8. One of the most significant areas of weakness is pupils' literacy skills. Although below average, skills are developing well in Years 1, 2 and 3. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 have poor writing skills and below average reading skills which also have an adverse effect on their learning in other subjects. Apart from the work of the most able pupils, the written work of older pupils is generally inaccurate, and they find it hard to maintain their concentration to produce extended pieces of writing. The school is trying various strategies to help improve pupils' attainment in this area and progress is being made, albeit slowly. However, not enough use is made of the many opportunities which present themselves to develop pupils' literacy skills through the teaching of subjects other than English.
9. The situation is similar in mathematics. Although pupils' mathematical skills are below average, they make good progress in Years 1, 2 and 3. At the top end of the school, standards in mathematics are affected by pupils' poor numeracy skills and their insecurity in carrying out mental calculations and handling numbers confidently and accurately. Good attempts are being made to bring improvement in this area, but much consolidation of basic number skills needs to be done to enable pupils to tackle the more advanced aspects of the subject, such as applying their knowledge to more complex mathematical problems.
10. Even though overall standards are well below average in English and mathematics, a small number of more able pupils achieve high standards, as indicated by their achievement of Level 5 in the national tests. The work in pupils' books shows that they are given every opportunity to achieve well and that the school has successfully dealt with a criticism of the previous inspection that staff were not providing sufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils. Good opportunities are also being provided for pupils in Key Stage 1 to progress beyond the nationally expected level, and over a third of the pupils achieved the higher level in reading in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003, and a third achieved this level in mathematics.

11. In determining the overall standards attained by the school, the good achievement of the more able pupils is outweighed by the significantly large proportion of pupils with special educational needs whose standards, in some cases, are very low indeed. The school has good arrangements to provide help for these pupils, but whilst most are successfully meeting the individual targets set for them, their progress is slow.
12. Pupils have made good progress in acquiring information and communication technology skills, and standards are at the expected level at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The installation of the computer suite, which allows all pupils greater access to computers, has been a significant factor in raising standards in this subject, which was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. Pupils have a sufficiently broad range of skills to enable them to use a range of programs to help them with their work in other subjects.
13. Another subject which has improved significantly in recent years is music, where the arrival of an advanced skills teacher had had a significant impact on the teaching of the subject and standards achieved across the school. Standards in all aspects of the subject have improved, but most noticeably in singing, where pupils' enthusiasm and ability to sing in parts also helps to lift corporate occasions, such as assemblies. The school's success in public performances is also having a positive impact on developing pupils' self-confidence which, in turn, is starting to have a positive effect on pupils' achievements in other subjects.

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

The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Pupils' attitudes are **good** and their behaviour is **satisfactory**. The level of attendance is **below average**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most pupils enjoy school and participate enthusiastically in lessons and other activities.
- Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are good.
- Most pupils behave well, but the behaviour of a small minority of pupils is unsatisfactory, and the school's behaviour policy is not always implemented consistently.
- Pupils in Year 6 carry out a wide range of responsibilities sensibly and with maturity.
- The level of attendance is below average, reflecting the number of parents who take holidays in term-time and the poor attendance records of a small minority of pupils.

### **Commentary**

14. The quality of pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities is very similar to what it was during the last inspection. Under the headteacher's leadership, the school continues to provide a positive and caring environment in which the establishment of good relationships is seen to be of fundamental importance. Staff set pupils a very good example in the way they work together and support each other. There has been an improvement in the way the school caters for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.
15. The pupils' views of the school are generally very positive. They appreciate the friendly and supportive treatment that they receive from their teachers. They enjoy all of their experiences in school. Large numbers of pupils take part in the numerous clubs and activities that are available. In lessons, pupils generally work conscientiously and seek to do their best.

16. The behaviour of most pupils is always satisfactory and quite often good, particularly when the teaching is stimulating and fully engages the pupils. The behaviour of a small minority of pupils, particularly in Years 4 and 5, is unsatisfactory and occasionally disrupts teaching and the learning of other pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants are not always consistent in the way they apply the school's agreed procedures when pupils misbehave. A very small number of pupils fail to respond to the considerable care and attention given to them by the staff, and one pupil was permanently excluded last year.
17. Relationships between pupils are generally good. Pupils are co-operative and mutually supportive. They get on well together when at play, and incidents of anti-social behaviour are rare. They take on well the special tasks and responsibilities they are offered, such as running a successful tuck shop where refreshments are available for purchase and the proceeds used to support charitable causes.
18. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Art and music contribute well to pupils' appreciation of the world around them. The singing in assembly is frequently uplifting. The school provides pupils with good opportunities to reflect and write about aspects such as faith, special places and their experiences in school. They develop well their understanding of the values of friends and family.
19. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils develop a clear understanding of right and wrong through the example of all the adults in the school. Expectations are prominently displayed, but the expected standards of behaviour are not reinforced consistently. The ethos of care and consideration for others pervades the school at all levels.
20. Provision for pupils' social development is good because of the very wide range of experiences in which they participate. Extra-curricular activities and visits out of school are numerous, and the residential experience at an outdoor centre is character building. Pupils develop respect for others and their opinions, and a good understanding of today's moral and social issues.
21. The pupils' cultural development is provided for well through religious education lessons, which include investigation of various faiths and cultures. Guided reading schemes include a good range of literature that extends pupils' awareness of various cultures and lifestyles. Pupils visit relevant places of interest related to their own and others' heritage.
22. Most pupils arrive at school on time each day and have a satisfactory attendance record. However, a few pupils miss too much school and, as a result, do not do as well as they might. Too many families take holidays in term-time. Whilst the school complies with the statutory requirements to record pupils' attendance, it could do more to promote pupils' and parents' awareness of the importance of good attendance. There are, for example, no short-term achievable incentives to motivate pupils and to recognise improvement and consistently good attendance.

<b>Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)</b>			
Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.3	School data :	0.1
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.5
<i>The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.</i>			

## 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	150	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	17	4	1

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 **good**. The overall quality of the teaching is **good**. The school provides a **good** curriculum, which is enriched by a **very good** variety of activities outside the normal curriculum. The staff provide a **very good** level of care for the pupils. The school's links with parents, the local community and other schools are **good**.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of the **teaching is good** in all parts of the school. As a result, pupils make **good progress** in the reception class and **learn well** in Years 1 and 2. Learning in Years 3 to 6 is currently still only **satisfactory**. The school's arrangements for assessing pupils' work are **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a group of experienced, well-motivated and talented teachers who provide good-quality teaching throughout the school.
- Pupils' learning is improving after a time of unsatisfactory teaching and considerable disruption in recent years caused by staff absence.
- Staff are very good at encouraging and motivating pupils to learn, although more could be done to help pupils to become less reliant on others and more independent learners.
- The school has a good number of experienced teaching assistants. They provide good support within the classroom and have a significant impact on pupils' learning.
- There is some particularly talented teaching of music which has had a noticeable effect on the standards achieved, particularly in singing.
- The school has thorough procedures for assessing pupils' work, but does not always make the best use of the information it gathers to ensure work is appropriately matched to pupils' needs.
- Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are not re-enforced sufficiently outside English and mathematics lessons.
- Not enough guidance is provided by teachers when marking pupils' work to help them to understand how they can improve.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	4 (12%)	16 (47%)	14 (41%)	0 (0%)	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.

23. As evidenced by the quality of pupils' work and the progress they have made, the quality of the teaching has varied over the last few years. Pupils' past work and the school's own evaluations show that there has been some unsatisfactory teaching in the past and pupils' learning has been affected by periods of long-term absence caused by staff illness or secondment to other schools. At the time of the inspection, however, the school's staffing situation was stable and all classes were being taught by permanent staff, nearly all of whom are experienced and well-qualified teachers. At the present time, the overall quality of the teaching is good. Pupils learn well and make good progress in the reception class and Key Stage 1, and there has been an improvement in pupils' learning in Key Stage 2. The learning of the older pupils is currently satisfactory, as teachers are working hard to help some pupils overcome their previous poor learning habits which have arisen because of the disruption to their teaching in recent years. A good example of the way the school is tackling these problems is seen in the class for pupils in Years 4 and 5, where it became very quickly clear to the teacher at the start of the year that this newly formed mixed-age class was not functioning well together, and a short-term integrated project has been devised to motivate the pupils to help them to function more co-operatively as a class, whilst at the same time receiving good input into developing their literacy, numeracy and other basic skills. Whilst some problems are still evident, especially in the behaviour of a small minority of pupils, the class as a whole has responded positively and an improved approach to learning is evident.
24. The quality of the teaching has improved since the last inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2 and the teaching of information and communication technology was unsatisfactory. The percentage of good teaching has risen. The teaching of information and communication technology has improved significantly as staff have become much more confident and competent in using new technology. In some areas, previously identified as weaknesses, there has been clear improvement, although there is room for aspects such as the use of assessment and marking to be developed further.
25. The quality of the teaching in the reception class is consistently good in all areas of learning and helps the children to improve on the well-below-average skills demonstrated by many when they start school. High-quality planning and a very thorough system of assessment provide solid foundations for some energetic and enthusiastic teaching which provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to explore and learn about the world around them and to develop their physical and creative skills. They have plenty of opportunities for imaginative play and access to a good range of resources, but more could be done to help children develop greater independence and become less reliant on the adult support which is constantly available. Many pupils have significant difficulties in communicating when they start school, but the staff provide many activities to help the children develop their speaking and listening skills and develop an understanding of letters and their sounds. In their eagerness to move children's learning forward, some activities are too complex and staff sometimes attempt to move children on to new concepts, for example, in their mathematical development, before they are ready for it.

The good teamwork between teacher and teaching assistants provides a good role model for the children to learn to work together collaboratively, and significant gains in pupils' development are evident from the poor social skills exhibited by many pupils when they start school.

26. One of the key strengths of the school is the way the staff work hard to foster good relationships and develop positive attitudes amongst the pupils. The caring attitude, which is demonstrated very clearly by the breakfast club before school starts, by the attention paid to pupils' needs at break times and the very good range of extra-curricular activities, is also abundantly evident within the classroom. Teachers work hard to motivate the pupils and develop an enjoyment of learning. Good work is celebrated and there is plenty of encouragement for those who try hard. Much additional support for pupils who experience difficulties in their learning is provided by the good number of experienced and talented teaching assistants. They work closely with the class teachers, have a good understanding of what they are required to do and relate very well to the pupils. Good sessions were observed during the inspection in which teaching assistants were engaging in very effective discussion with small groups of pupils or helping them to develop their reading skills. At times, however, almost too much help is available. Pupils' concentration spans are very short and they find it easier to seek the help of an adult rather than work things out independently. This lack of independence restricts the progress which pupils make when working on their own, and more could be done throughout the school to promote this important skill.
27. There are no subjects in which the teaching is weak. Indeed, the teaching of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and of information and communication technology, is good. Lessons are planned thoroughly and teachers are well prepared. Much thought has been given to the school's planning procedures. New schemes of work have been introduced. Attention has been given to ensuring that the needs of all pupils are met through differing levels of challenge in most lessons. A particularly good feature is the way teachers are entering their planning into a computer database which allows planning information to be printed in different formats which avoids much of the repetitive drudgery of planning for different audiences. From one entry, for example, class teachers can print out their own weekly and daily planning, whilst providing a class overview for the headteacher and termly subject planning for subject co-ordinators. A particular strength is the teaching of music, which has been influenced in no small measure by the skills of the music co-ordinator. As a result, standards in music have risen significantly and visitors to any corporate school occasion cannot fail to be struck by the quality of pupils' singing, which has also had a significant impact on the overall ethos of the school and the sense of achievement of many pupils.
28. Since the last inspection, the school has made significant improvements to its procedures for assessing pupils' work and keeping track of their progress. In English, for example, pupils complete a termly writing assignment which is assessed carefully and gives a clear idea of the standards achieved and what pupils need to do to improve. Pupils are tested regularly and the results analysed to identify any areas of weakness. However, staff have yet to reconcile the perceived need to follow nationally recommended programmes of study with the information they are receiving from the assessment of pupils' work. As a result, work is not always as well matched to pupils' needs as it could be. This is particularly noticeable at Key Stage 2, where the school has a large proportion of pupils with special educational needs who take time to master new concepts and are not always ready to move on to the next stage of learning. The drive constantly to move these pupils forward is, at times, counter-productive, as pupils do not have the necessary skills on which to base new learning. Staff are aware of these problems, but do not take sufficient note of what their assessment information tells them when planning work, particularly for the less able pupils.



29. Another issue identified in the previous inspection was for teachers to use marking to stimulate improvement in pupils' work. As a result, the school has developed new marking procedures. However, these are not always followed consistently, and the teachers' marking does not give pupils sufficient guidance as to how they can improve their work. One of the problems is that teachers sometimes attempt to accomplish too much, for example, by starting a new piece of work in each lesson. This not only provides an insuperable marking load, which leads to cursory and unhelpful marking, but gives neither teacher nor pupil time to develop a given piece of work into something of real quality, where sufficient thought has been given to the planning, critical analysis made of the first attempt, and learning derived from mistakes which have been made. As a result, teachers and pupils rush from one piece of work to the next without gaining full benefit from each activity and without giving the time necessary to develop high standards of presentation. This also has a knock-on effect on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The school is now providing many more opportunities for pupils to write, but little attention is paid to the quality of pupils' writing on these occasions. As a result, mistakes not only go unnoticed, but are perpetuated and reinforced because they are not corrected. Teachers fail to capitalise on the good teaching which takes place in English and mathematics lessons by reinforcing the key skills and concepts taught in these lessons at other times during the day.

### **The curriculum**

The school provides a **good** range of learning opportunities and a **very good** range of activities outside the formal curriculum. The overall range of learning resources and the quality of the school's accommodation are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides good coverage of all subjects of the curriculum and a worthwhile range of learning opportunities.
- The school's curriculum caters well for pupils of all capabilities, including those with special educational needs.
- There are very good opportunities for all pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities.
- The accommodation for pupils in the reception class is good, although there are deficiencies in the accommodation available for other pupils.

### **Commentary**

30. The school is piloting the local authority's curriculum for small schools which incorporates provision for teaching mixed-age classes. The curriculum provided is comprehensive and fulfils all statutory requirements. Sufficient time is allocated to all subjects, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have full and equal access to the curriculum. As the curriculum has only recently been implemented, there has been little opportunity to evaluate it fully. Whilst sufficient emphasis is given to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in English and mathematics lessons, not enough emphasis is given to developing these skills across the curriculum. There are sufficient opportunities for pupils to learn new skills in information and communication technology and to develop these skills within the context of other subjects.

31. The headteacher provides a strong impetus to ensuring that pupils' educational experiences are enriched beyond the statutory curriculum. Provision for the development of pupils' personal, social and health education is good. In all classes, pupils have opportunities to discuss matters pertaining to their personal development through, for example, circle time. The school's extra-curricular provision is very good and is a notable

feature of the school which contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It also helps to develop pupils' self-esteem, co-operation and sense of fair play. Extra-curricular activities involve pupils from both key stages. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

32. The school has identified pupils who are gifted and talented. Teachers provide these pupils with appropriately challenging activities in lessons. In addition, further opportunities are provided for them through the school's extra-curricular activities, and they are invited to attend an Enrichment Club where they are offered further challenges to enable them to extend their talents and skills.
33. The school is well staffed, and pupils are supported well by classroom assistants. The accommodation for children in the reception class and Year 1 is good. Otherwise, though generally satisfactory, the school's accommodation has drawbacks. All of the open-plan classrooms are small, which necessitates some teaching in the adjacent corridor space, which is also used as a thoroughfare to other classes. This means that pupils in these classes are easily distracted. The library and computer suite are isolated from the main school and, consequently, their informal use is limited, as is their use in other subjects. Overall, resources are adequate to meet the needs of the National Curriculum.

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

The school takes **very good** care of its pupils. The school has **very good** procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides them with **satisfactory** support, advice and guidance and enables them to have a voice in the school's work and development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school offers its pupils a very caring and supportive environment where all are valued and respected.
- The support and guidance offered to pupils regarding their personal development are good, but pupils are not sufficiently aware of their own learning and what to do to bring about improvement.
- Pupils build confident and trusting relationships with adults and are treated fairly and equally.
- There are good systems to support pupils with special educational needs and to identify the needs of gifted and talented pupils.
- The induction arrangements for new pupils are very good.
- The opportunities for pupils to share their views and ideas are not as extensive or as regular as they could be.

### **Commentary**

34. The direction given by the school's leadership ensures that the school is a secure and very caring place. Pupils are very well known and are treated with great sensitivity and respect. The health and safety arrangements are very good. Risk assessments are carried out efficiently for all aspects of school life, and issues dealt with promptly. The school is well maintained and clean and provides pupils with an attractive learning environment. The child protection arrangements are good, with all the adults employed in the school having a good knowledge of the correct procedures to follow should they have a concern.

35. The good relationships that exist in this school community and the good provision for pupils' social and moral development create a caring, safe and supportive environment. Pupils are happy and confident, which has a positive effect upon their learning. Pupils feel that adults listen to them and treat them fairly and that someone will support them if they have any worries.
36. Pupils new to the school benefit from very good induction arrangements. There are various meetings and visits for new pupils and their parents, and a staggered start to the term for children in the reception class makes settling in easy. The school is sensitive to parents' views concerning these arrangements and reviews them regularly.
37. Whilst the personal support and guidance offered to pupils is very good, the academic support offered needs further development. Pupils are generally well motivated, but the recognition of success in lessons and in individual work is inconsistent across the school. Pupils do not always know enough about their own learning and the steps they need to take to improve. The guidance that pupils receive through the marking of their work is inconsistent. Some marking offers encouragement and ideas for improvement and some does not.
38. The school makes satisfactory provision for seeking and acting upon pupils' views. There is a school council, but its role in the school is underdeveloped. Pupils are aware that they can offer ideas and suggestions in this way, but meetings are infrequent and pupils are unsure about the impact of their views. The results of the pupils' questionnaire show that pupils are happy at school and feel that they are expected to work hard. They enjoy their lessons, but a significant number think they are not always interesting enough. They feel trusted, fairly treated and listened to. Other pupils are considered friendly, although some do not always behave as well as they should.
39. The school has good procedures to support and guide pupils. Progress against individual targets is reviewed and updated regularly. Teachers know the pupils well and have good support from the school's co-ordinator for special educational needs. Good use is made of additional services, such as the local authority's learning support services, and a counsellor visits the school for one day each week. Pupils may ask to be referred to the counsellor.

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

The school's links with parents and the community are **good**. There are **very good** links with other schools and wider partnerships. Parents value the school and are pleased to send their children to it.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The information provided for parents about the school and about their children's progress is good.
- The staff are approachable and the school deals with parents' individual concerns well.
- The links with other schools and wider partnerships are very good.
- The contribution of parents to their children's learning at home and at school is satisfactory, but is hampered by the school's inconsistent approach to homework.

### **Commentary**

40. The school has effective links with parents. They are kept well informed about the life of the school and are well involved in all that it does. Many parents support the school well

and some provide help in school, on trips and with special events. This support for the school contributes well to the learning environment that is enjoyed by the pupils.

41. The quality of information the parents receive is good. There are constructive consultations twice each year and good-quality written reports in the summer. These present good information about what pupils have done and can do and offer some targets for future improvement. Class assemblies give parents an opportunity to gain insight into the work that pupils do. Useful and informative information about the curriculum and learning topics is provided each term.
42. The school knows its parents well, and the staff are readily available should parents wish to share information or concerns. Parents consider the school to be very approachable. They feel that they and their children are well supported and that any problems they have are dealt with swiftly and efficiently. The school is well informed about individual views and responds well to them.
43. Homework is generally supported well when provided and most parents want their children to do well. However, the school is not consistent enough in its provision of homework or in the clarity of its expectations and purpose. The school does not do enough to involve all parents in supporting their children's education in appropriate and imaginative ways.
44. The school's links with the community and its partnership with other schools support pupils' learning well. Community links include visits to the local shops and churches, and the school has a sensitive and valuable link with the Church War Graves Committee. In particular, the school choir is a popular and effective link with the community. Partner organisations and local initiatives provide very good support for families. Other schools provide opportunities for shared staff training, and pupils benefit from good links with the secondary school, for example, by taking part in science events and with support for the school's computers. Transfer arrangements for pupils in Year 6 are good. There are various induction visits, and the provision of information about pupils is efficient.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall quality of leadership and management is **satisfactory**. This reflects the **satisfactory** leadership provided by the headteacher and senior staff, the **good** leadership of a few subject co-ordinators and **satisfactory** management procedures. The governance of the school is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are increasingly helping to give it a sense of direction.
- The headteacher has created an effective team, with good strategies for the induction of new staff and teacher's continuing professional development.
- The school ensures that all pupils are treated equally and is well aware of the needs of individuals.
- Planning for school improvement, particularly its use of self-evaluation and strategic planning, is not sufficiently focused on improving pupils' attainment.

## Commentary

45. The headteacher provides good leadership in ensuring that the school offers a caring and welcoming environment to pupils, where good relationships are seen to be of paramount importance and pupils' lives are enriched beyond the normal curriculum. However, he has been less successful in rectifying the effects of disruption experienced by some groups of pupils and ensuring that they achieve sufficiently high standards in English and mathematics. The headteacher is approachable and very supportive of his staff. He has built up a strong team of teachers and support staff. However, current standards of pupils' work indicate some less than satisfactory teaching in the past. Absences of key staff due to illness and secondment to the local authority have disrupted the work of the senior management team and this has adversely affected standards. Curriculum co-ordinators are now in place but, in several instances, these are recent appointments and have had little time to develop their role, although a good start has been made in several instances, such as in music and art and design. The curriculum incorporates good opportunities to support pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship development.
46. The monitoring of the curricular provision is variable with a limited time available for co-ordinators to fulfil their roles. The school's strategic planning for development and for raising standards, particularly in mathematics, is underdeveloped.
47. The school shows good awareness of the differing needs of pupils and works hard to ensure that appropriate provision is made for different groups of pupils. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and much additional help is provided for these pupils. The school shows sensitivity towards, and caters well for, a small number of pupils from travellers' families, most of whom are now permanently settled in the locality of the school and have become fully integrated members of the school community. Boys and girls are treated equally and, although there are differences in the results achieved by boys and girls, there is no discernible pattern, with boys performing better than girls one year and the reverse situation the next.
48. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive document with many issues included for school improvement. However, targets tend to lack detail, such as success criteria, and do not focus sufficiently on raising standards and how this is to be achieved.
49. The current governing body is well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and governors are increasingly assuming their role in evaluating standards and shaping the direction of the school. They are bringing into effect a culture of self-evaluation and analysis that will enable the school to progress. Financial management is effective and the school ensures that services and purchases are provided at the best value. Overall, at present, taking into account the standards achieved, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003			
Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	478,311	Balance from previous year	60,200
Total expenditure	492,943	Balance carried forward to the next	45,568
Expenditure per pupil	2,544	<i>(NB. half of this balance is for capital expenditure)</i>	

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

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

50. Pupils in the reception class receive a good start to their education. The teaching is good in all areas of learning, and high-quality planning and assessment systems contribute to the effectiveness of these early years of education. Although standards on entry cover a broad spectrum, the majority of the children are assessed as being well below average. In their speaking and listening skills, a significant number are very well below average. During their time in the reception class, the children make good progress. By the time they move into Year 1, a significant percentage of children will not have achieved the Early Learning Goals in any of the six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum and standards remain well below average in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. The standards in the other four areas of the curriculum are below average. At the time of the inspection, all the children were attending school on a part-time basis.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

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

- Children are learning to work collaboratively.
- They concentrate for longer periods as they settle and become confident.
- They do not have sufficient opportunities to develop independence in some tasks.

#### **Commentary**

51. Most children are becoming more confident and learning to establish good relationships with one another, the class teacher and the classroom assistants. They generally behave well and are encouraged to be considerate of others. However, their personal, social and emotional development is not as well advanced as that of most children of their age. Teachers and assistants capture children's interest and attention by their enthusiasm and by good use of resources. These qualities, together with intelligent and sensitive planning, help to develop the children's ability to concentrate, although many find it hard to concentrate for a sustained period. The school has developed good procedures to familiarise children with the routine of the class when they first start school. All the children receive plenty of praise and encouragement. This is effective in building up their self-esteem and confidence. Although personal independence in toileting and changing for physical education is promoted, there are not enough opportunities for the children to gain independence during more formal activities.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

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

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

- The children's knowledge of letters and their sounds is promoted well.
- Their speaking and listening skills are fostered effectively through many activities.

- Children are not always given sufficient time to respond, or to think about what they want to say.
- Despite good provision and the good progress made during the year, standards in this area of learning are still well below average by the time children start Year 1.

### **Commentary**

52. Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their speaking skills through all areas of learning. Sensitive input from adults encourages them to talk about what they are doing. Although the adults are patient, they do not always give the children sufficient time to think about what they want to say and articulate their thoughts. When listening to stories, the children join in enthusiastically with repetitive phrases. Early writing skills are encouraged effectively with the use of sand, sandpaper letters and other resources, and some children are beginning to write recognisable individual letters. The classroom has a good range of picture, fiction and non-fiction books, which are accessible to the children, and which the teachers use well to promote good reading habits. Good use is made of classroom computers to support children's early reading and writing skills. Many children start the reception class with very poor language skills. Good teaching helps them to make significant progress in speaking and learning, reading and writing, but standards are still well below average by the end of the reception year.

### **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Although children's mathematical skills are well below average for their age, they are beginning to count with confidence and their mathematical vocabulary is developing well.
- Their emerging skills are used across a range of curriculum areas.
- Sometimes, the mental calculations required are too complex for their understanding.

### **Commentary**

53. The children make good progress in their very early understanding of number, shape and measure. One or two can handle simple calculations with numbers to 5 and above, and most can count to ten, and backwards. Children recognise basic shapes and colours. The staff provide good opportunities for children to develop their use of mathematical vocabulary, such as 'more' or 'less', but some children find it hard to understand these concepts. Occasionally, children are asked to perform, orally, calculations that are too advanced for their present knowledge.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have good opportunities to explore and learn about their world in the classroom, outdoors and further afield.

## **Commentary**

54. Children make good progress in this area of learning because they have plenty of opportunities to experience a wide range of activities. They show a curiosity and interest in all activities presented to them, and make suitable gains in their learning. They quickly learn to use computers and are developing good control of the mouse. They have good opportunities to use a Pixie roamer and understand how to program instructions to make it move in a planned sequence. The children learn more about their world by handling and discussing a variety of objects, and displays encourage their interest and curiosity effectively. Adults use questioning well to develop the children's vocabulary and the way they use language to explain their thoughts and ideas, and to encourage children to think about their world and appreciate the wonder of it.

## **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills in lessons in the school hall.
- They are developing their expertise in the use of pencils, scissors and other small tools.
- They have good opportunities to use a range of wheeled toys outdoors.

## **Commentary**

55. The school provides good facilities to develop children's physical skills, for example, through use of a small covered outdoor area adjacent to the classroom, which is used for sand-and-water play. Planned physical education sessions are used well to develop children's large muscle skills. The staff provide a good range of opportunities to help children develop their co-ordination and dexterity through the use of pencils, brushes, scissors, and small construction apparatus. Good use is made of timetabled sessions in the school hall. The children were observed in a lively session where they showed good awareness of the available space and each other.

## **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have plenty of opportunities for imaginative play.

## **Commentary**

56. Children have a suitable range of opportunities to develop their creativity, for example, through the use of a variety of pencils, paints and collage to create images. Musical skills are developed well as they learn to sing a number of songs and rhymes, and are given opportunities to listen to music as well as playing percussion instruments. They have many good opportunities to use their imagination through role-play and enjoy using the home corner.



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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1.
- Although standards in English are below average overall at the end of Key Stage 1, the school's test results in reading and writing have improved significantly over the last five years.
- Standards are well below average at the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils' progress has been adversely affected by significant disruption to their teaching over the last few years.
- Most pupils respond with interest to much of what happens in English lessons, but few pupils enjoy writing and many find it hard to work independently.
- The behaviour of most pupils is good, but a group of poorly behaved pupils in Years 4 and 5 occasionally disrupts the learning of others.
- Although there are good formal procedures for keeping track of pupils' progress, the teachers' marking does not give pupils enough help to enable them to improve their work.
- Not enough use is made of opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills in other subjects.

#### **Commentary**

57. Although standards in English are below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well below average at the end of Key Stage 2, there have been improvements in the school's provision for English since the last inspection. More able pupils now have more opportunities to achieve in line with their capabilities. As a result, 40 per cent of the pupils achieved above the national expectation in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2003, and 16 per cent achieved Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2. Procedures for assessing pupils' work and keeping track of their progress have improved, and the school now has a wider range of reading material than before.

58. Although there have been fluctuations in the school's results over the last five years, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have risen more than in most schools in both reading and writing. Indeed, results in reading in 2003 were very close to the national average and were above the average for similar schools. The school's systematic efforts to develop pupils' reading skills are bearing fruit. Pupils' writing skills are not as well developed, and results in 2003 were below the national average, although close to the average for similar schools. Speaking and listening skills are also below average. Some pupils still find it very hard to listen and many have difficulty expressing their thoughts in well-formed sentences. However, given the very poor literacy skills with which many pupils start school, these standards represent good achievement overall.

59. The picture at Key Stage 2 is complex. The pupils who took their national tests in 2002 had made very good progress through Key Stage 2, achieving results which were just above the national average and were consistent with the best of the teaching observed during the inspection. However, over the last few years there have been significant disruptions to the teaching and some teaching has undoubtedly been unsatisfactory. These factors certainly affected the progress of pupils who took their tests in 2003 and have also affected the progress of pupils currently in Years 5 and 6. The progress of

most pupils who left school in the summer of 2003 was unsatisfactory, with gains in learning between Year 2 and Year 6 less than expected. Many pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 have fallen behind and, as a result, standards are well below average at the end of Year 6. Pupils' reading skills are better developed than their writing skills, but too many pupils still read hesitantly. The most able pupils write well, showing clarity of thought and a good range of vocabulary, but the writing of many lower-ability pupils is poor, and some struggle to write with any coherence. The spelling of most pupils is inaccurate and the handwriting and presentational skills of many pupils are poor. As at Key Stage 1, speaking and listening skills are also below average, although the good relationships that exist between teachers help most pupils to develop the confidence to speak in front of others. Now that the staffing situation in Key Stage 2 is stable, pupils are starting to make better progress and are currently achieving satisfactorily, but they have much ground to catch up to achieve the standards expected at the end of Year 6.

60. Overall, the quality of the teaching is good. Pupils cover a good range of work during the year and much of the teaching is interesting and motivates the pupils. Pupils in Years 4 and 5, for example, were very keen to make progress with their project on puppetry, and pupils in Years 5 and 6 sat in rapt attention as they listened to the next instalment of *Goodnight Mr Tom*, and then plied the teacher with questions to find out more. The teachers' planning is very thorough and all are conscious of the need to provide differing levels of challenge to meet the widely differing needs in each class. At times, however, the teachers attempt to do too much. In one class, for example, pupils were given a new writing assignment each lesson, but this left insufficient time for the teacher to prepare pupils sufficiently for each task, or to draw learning points from pupils' completed work, and pupils had no time to go back over their work to learn from their mistakes or make improvements before being moved onto the next task. The school has developed good procedures for making formal assessments of pupils' work and keeping track of their progress, but staff do not always use the knowledge gained from these processes sufficiently well when planning their lessons. At times, they are too eager to move pupils on to the next stage before they are ready for it. Whilst the more able pupils benefit by making good progress, some of the less able pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, struggle and fall further behind. The quality of teachers' marking varies considerably, but generally does not give pupils a clear enough indication of where they have made mistakes or how they can improve, and not enough attention is given to helping pupils to learn from their mistakes.
61. The quality of pupils' learning is good in Key Stage 1, but does not always match the quality of the teaching in Key Stage 2. Although pupils respond with interest to much of what happens in English lessons, few pupils enjoy writing and many have short concentration spans and find it hard to work independently. Whilst the behaviour in most classes is good, a group of poorly behaved pupils in Years 4 and 5 occasionally disrupts the learning of others, particularly when working with their teaching assistant. Implementation of the school's procedures for managing such behaviour is not consistent enough to cope with such situations.
62. Evidence suggests that co-ordination of the subject has not been strong during the period of staffing disruption and, other than general lesson observations by the headteacher, not enough has been done to check how effective the teaching has been. However, the new co-ordinator, who has recently taken over the subject, has a very clear grasp of the issues facing the school and good ideas as to how to bring further improvements, including ways to motivate boys and ensure that the school caters equally well for its gifted and talented pupils and for those with special educational needs.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. The last inspection report noted that the school did not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills. Evidence from this inspection shows that teachers now offer many more opportunities by providing writing tasks in subjects such as history, geography, religious education and science. However, not enough use is made of these opportunities to help pupils to develop their writing skills. Teachers rarely comment on the quality of pupils' writing, mistakes are rarely corrected and not enough guidance is given to help pupils understand how they can improve their writing in these circumstances. The school has a significantly large proportion of lower-attaining pupils, many of whom have special educational needs. Their ability to retain concepts which are taught well during English lessons is often poor, and teachers do not do enough to reinforce these skills at other times during the day and thereby help pupils to consolidate their skills in other lessons.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1, although standards are below average by the end of Year 2.
- Standards are well below average at the end of Year 6.
- The current quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good, but the teaching has been unsatisfactory in the past.
- Assessment results are detailed, but are not used sufficiently to track pupils' progress and to inform planning.

### Commentary

64. Pupils' mathematical understanding is well below average when they start Year 1, but they make good progress and achieve well in Key Stage 1. The school's results have improved significantly since the last inspection, and in 2003 they were not far short of the national average and were above the average for similar schools. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of number, but their ability to carry out mental calculations quickly and accurately is below average. Most pupils, for example, are hesitant when answering simple addition and subtraction problems to 10, and addition and subtraction of money problems often show basic errors. Most pupils name a few two-dimensional shapes but with a very limited idea of their properties, such as the number of corners or sides they have. The more able pupils in Year 2 measure length and draw lines accurately to the nearest centimetre and are beginning to recognise simple patterns in mathematics.

65. Standards have not improved since the last inspection at Key Stage 2. Whilst the pupils who took their national tests in 2002 made satisfactory progress through Key Stage 2, the disruptions to teaching experienced by those who took their tests in 2003 resulted in poor progress and standards which were well below the national average and the average for similar schools. Now that the staffing situation has stabilised and there is good teaching in all of the classes in Key Stage 2, pupils are making much better progress and their current achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support, often working with an assistant whilst more able pupils are provided with more challenging work. Nevertheless, standards are still well below

average at the end of Key Stage 2, and relatively few pupils exceed the standard expected for their age. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of place value and can use the four mathematical operations, though their ability to carry out mental calculations is poor. In the main, pupils' ability to estimate and use approximations is unsatisfactory, as is their ability to apply and use mathematics and handle data.

66. The quality of the teaching at present is good, and it is very good in some classes. However, the teaching in the past has not developed pupils' knowledge and understanding progressively and pupils' current low standards in Key Stage 2 are a legacy of inadequate teaching in the past. The good relationships evident in all classes motivate pupils and help to raise their self-esteem. Lessons are well planned and the pace of lessons helps to keep pupils on task, although not enough emphasis is given to developing pupils' mental skills. In most lessons, different groups of pupils are provided with work of differing levels of complexity, but the very wide range of abilities in the mixed-aged classes in Key Stage 2 makes it difficult to draw the work together at the end of each lesson. In some lessons, teachers attempt to move pupils on too quickly and provide work which is too difficult for some of the less able pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy their mathematics, particularly when challenged. They readily co-operate when working in pairs and small groups, and such activities make a substantial contribution to pupils' moral and social development.
67. The management of the subject is satisfactory overall. Standards in mathematics are of concern to the school, and several initiatives have been put in place in an attempt to raise them. Assessment procedures are clear and the school has detailed records of pupils' performance. However, these records are not used sufficiently well to match work to pupils' abilities and to guide teachers' planning. Some of the targets set for pupils are too general, and not enough use is made of short-term targets. Whilst some monitoring of the teaching and curriculum has taken place, the school's progress in developing its provision for mathematics has been adversely affected by the absence of the curriculum co-ordinator, especially during the time when a new curriculum was implemented.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

68. Insufficient use is made of opportunities to teach basic skills of numeracy across the curriculum. Teachers' planning incorporates some opportunities to develop pupils' mathematical skills, but there is no clear curriculum plan to ensure that pupils' mathematical skills are developed in lessons in other subjects. Pupils measure and record in science, such as when investigating differences in individual characteristics as part of their work on 'Ourselves' and record their food likes and dislikes graphically. Overall, however, pupils have insufficient opportunities to use their mathematical skills across all subjects.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teachers' planning is good, ensuring good coverage of the National Curriculum.
- The school has a good range of resources.
- Pupils' poor literacy skills mean that written work does not reflect their scientific knowledge and understanding.

- Assessment is not used as well as it might be to identify shortcomings.

## **Commentary**

69. At the time of the last inspection, standards were well below average throughout the school. A review of last year's written work shows that pupils in Key Stage 1 are making better progress than the older pupils, and that standards have improved until they are just below average. In Key Stage 2, standards remain well below average and, by the end of Year 6, very few pupils are working within the higher levels of the subject. Results improved in 2002, but fell again in 2003. A major contributory factor to this fall and the current low standards has been the turbulence in staffing experienced by these pupils. Now that the staffing situation is stable and pupils are being well taught, achievement across the school is satisfactory. Progress in some aspects of science, however, is adversely affected by pupils' poor literacy skills.
70. Two science lessons, one in Key Stage 1 and one in Key Stage 2, were observed with a mix of satisfactory and good teaching. In Key Stage 1, pupils are grasping research concepts well and are given the opportunity to present their own research. In Key Stage 2, pupils show good understanding of concepts in oral and practical work, but their reporting skills do not reflect their knowledge. In a practical demonstration, pupils in Years 5 and 6 showed good understanding of how the earth's rotation causes the changing seasons. However, when required to draw and label diagrams of the process, despite good planning and good discussion beforehand, their written recording was poor and often contradicted their oral statements. The pupils do not receive sufficient guidance or clear examples of how to present their work or produce written accounts, and this makes it particularly difficult for lower-ability pupils or those with special educational needs to make as much progress as the more able pupils in recording and presenting their work.
71. Assessment is carried out regularly, and careful records of achievement kept, together with examples of work. However, insufficient account is taken of the results when planning future work. The staff have not identified the effect that poor literacy skills are having on overall achievement. The co-ordinator has a good grasp and knowledge of the subject. The planning has recently been adapted to include a four-year rolling programme of topics to ensure good coverage of the subject and a logical sequence in learning. Resources have been built up to a good extent. They are stored well, labelled and easily accessible to staff.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has continued to improve its provision for information and communication technology.
- Pupils achieve better standards in information and communication technology than in many other subjects and reach the nationally expected standards by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers make good use of new technology to promote pupils' learning in other subjects whilst, at the same time, developing pupils' information and communication technology skills.
- The quality of the teaching is good.
- The subject has been led and managed well.

## Commentary

72. The school has consolidated the initiatives which were starting to have an effect at the time of the last inspection and has made further improvements which have established information and communication technology as one of the more successful aspects of the school's work. The school's resources have improved significantly, and the creation of a small computer suite in the same area as the school library now provides pupils with much greater access to computers than before. Coverage of the full curriculum for information and communication technology is now much more secure. All of the teachers are skilled in using new technology for their own professional use and have sufficient confidence to teach the subject well. Teaching assistants have also received good training and play an important role in helping pupils to learn. As a result, standards have improved and are in line with the nationally expected standards at the end of both key stages. Given the well below average standards of many pupils when they start school and the standards attained in other subjects, this represents good achievement.
73. The teachers provide good contexts within which to teach information and communication technology skills. In a good lesson in Year 1, for example, the teacher combined the consolidation of basic spelling patterns with activities to help pupils develop skills of controlling the mouse, entering text from a word bank and, for the more able pupils, entering text via the keyboard. In another good lesson, this time in Year 3, pupils learnt how to locate images and paste them into a document as they learnt about changes to their village over the last hundred years. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are confident users of a range of programs and have a sound understanding of how to use technology in a variety of ways, such as capturing and logging data in science to creating a simple multimedia presentation to convey information to an audience.
74. The quality of the teaching is good. Teachers are competent in their use of new technology and they use the interactive whiteboard well to introduce lessons and demonstrate new skills. Pupils enjoy this feature which brings the teaching alive and helps to sustain their interest. In one lesson, for example, pupils were captivated by different pictures of Rockwell Green as it is today and as it was some years ago. Lessons are well planned, and good thought is given to meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs as well as those who are more able. However, pupils find it hard to use their own initiative. In a lesson for pupils in Year 3, the teacher had given the more able pupils a choice of producing their own information sheet about landmarks in Rockwell Green or using a prepared template. Some pupils started off enthusiastically but, as soon as they encountered a problem, they opted for the easier route of using the prepared template. Teaching assistants are used effectively. In two lessons, for example, they supervised groups of pupils using the computers whilst the teacher taught the rest of the class as a group, thus helping to ensure the most effective use of the available resources.
75. The subject is led and managed well. The co-ordinator has provided training for all staff, as well as running courses for other schools. The school provides a well-planned curriculum and ensures efficient use of the available resources. Most classes have two lessons a week in the computer suite, one used specifically for teaching new information technology skills, the other for using the computers to promote pupils' learning in other subjects. Resources are adequate, but there are good plans to improve the school's facilities by increasing the number of computers in the computer suite, which will allow more pupils to use computers simultaneously.

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

76. The school makes good use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. Teachers strike a good balance between teaching new information and communication technology skills and using information and communication technology as a tool for learning. Wherever possible, the skills teaching sessions are set within meaningful contexts, so that they enhance work in other subjects. Teachers make very good use of computers in a variety of ways, such as planning their lessons and producing teaching materials, which have a positive impact on the quality of teaching in all subjects.

## **HUMANITIES**

77. No geography or history lessons were observed. A discussion was held with the co-ordinator for humanities and planning for both subjects was seen.

78. Resources for both geography and history have been audited and have improved since the last inspection. The scheme of work for geography has been reviewed and revised so that coverage is now satisfactory. Both these areas were key issues at the last inspection.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good lesson planning ensures good coverage of the locally agreed syllabus.
- Teaching makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural and multi-cultural understanding.
- The subject fosters pupils' spiritual understanding well.

### **Commentary**

79. Standards in religious education are below those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. While pupils demonstrate their understanding satisfactorily in question-and-answer sessions, their written work does not reflect their knowledge. This is due to pupils' poor literacy skills. There is no difference in the progress of boys and girls, or those with special educational needs, and progress overall is satisfactory. The curriculum for religious education is firmly based on the locally agreed syllabus, and topics are taught as part of a well-planned cycle. Good planning lays the foundation for balanced coverage and pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the school. Most pupils have a satisfactory attitude to the subject, and they benefit from learning about other cultures. As it is not easy to arrange visits to non-Christian places of worship, good use is made of videos and artefacts to support pupils' learning.

80. With only one lesson observed, it was not possible to make an overall judgement about the standards of teaching. In the lesson observed in Key Stage 2, the teaching was of a satisfactory standard. However, pupils' knowledge demonstrated during the lesson was not reflected in the written work which followed, and many inaccuracies were noted. Based on suitable planning, the lesson moved at a good pace, although the pupils' enthusiasm waned during the writing activity.

81. There are ample resources, and collections of materials for each of the faiths covered in the syllabus are stored and labelled well. Resources are supplemented by those which can be borrowed from the diocesan resources centre. There are some good displays, which show good attention to learning about faiths other than Christianity, an aspect of teaching which was reinforced well when the staff attended an inset day at Wells Cathedral which included a session on teaching world faiths. Assemblies reinforce pupils' learning in this subject. Good links with other subjects, such as citizenship, are included in teachers' planning. The subject is managed satisfactorily and makes a good contribution to the all-round education the pupils receive.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

82. The pre-inspection evidence indicated that music was a strong feature of the school's curriculum and the inspection of music formed a major focus for the inspection. Insufficient work was seen in art and design, design and technology and in physical education to make a definitive judgement on provision. However, from conversation with the co-ordinator and scrutiny of her planning and preparation of resources, art and design and design and technology are managed and co-ordinated well. The co-ordinator has initiated good procedures for evaluating pupils' work.

### **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is always at least good and frequently very good.
- Pupils achieve well and the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

### **Commentary**

83. By the end of Year 2, pupils recognise sounds of different pitch and repeat short rhythmic and melodic patterns. Most pupils can keep a steady pulse and sing with an awareness of the contribution of others in the class. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to use different sounds to accompany their singing, and a few pupils are confident enough to sing individually. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are aware of how rhythm can support their own melodies and how their own compositions can be improved by practice. More able pupils evaluate their work and suggest how it can be improved. They are developing a satisfactory musical vocabulary and have good opportunities to listen to music of different times and cultures, which supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

84. Pupils of all ages enjoy singing, and this is a particularly good feature of the school. They have a good sense of pitch and sing in tune. Pupils in Key Stage 2 set good examples for younger pupils and take a full and active part when singing hymns and songs. They are proficient when singing in unison and in two parts; their diction is clear and they have good control of pitch, sense of phrase and musical expression. Pupils' self-confidence is further enhanced through performing to audiences, both in the school and in the



community. They have also taken part in concerts and dramatic performances. The school's extra-curricular provision of musical tuition is good and improving. The opportunities provided in music have had a particularly beneficial impact on developing the confidence and self-esteem of less able pupils and those with special educational needs who play a full part in the school's musical activities.

85. The teaching and learning are good and very good in classes in Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned and combine elements of composing, performing and appraising. Pupils have opportunity to use their own ideas and the recording of group work enables pupils to evaluate their composition. They also have opportunities to play their compositions in class. Little use is made of computers, as yet, for composition or to support pupils' learning.

86. The subject is led and managed well by an enthusiastic and proficient co-ordinator. The school uses her expertise well, and pupils have benefited through taking part in school activities based on her compositions. The co-ordinator teaches the older pupils in Key Stage 2, but her influence pervades the whole school. This is particularly so in whole-school singing practice.

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

Two lessons devoted to personal, social and health education were visited briefly, and discussions were held with teachers and pupils. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. All classes have a weekly lesson devoted to this aspect of pupils' education, and teachers deal with matters which are relevant to pupils' personal development with sensitivity. Major themes are reinforced well through school assemblies, and notices and displays in classrooms indicate a consistent and caring approach. A number of important initiatives, such as the breakfast club for pupils before school starts and the programme of extra-curricular activities make important contributions to this aspect of pupils' education. The school has also recently started an initiative for pupils in Year 1 with Forest Schools to promote pupils' personal development, but as the project has only just started it is too early to evaluate its effectiveness.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4
<i>Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).</i>	