

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **SANDHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Great Houghton, Barnsley

LEA area: Barnsley

Unique reference number: 106583

Headteacher: Mrs Judith Hirst

Lead inspector: John Heap

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> April 2004

Inspection number: 257403

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	260
School address:	Rotherham Road Great Houghton Barnsley South Yorkshire
Postcode:	S72 0DE
Telephone number:	01226 753126
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs E Parry
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Sandhill is a primary school that caters for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11. It is situated in Great Houghton, near to the town of Barnsley. There are 260 pupils on the roll of the main school, 141 boys and 119 girls. This is above the average sized school in England. The roll has increased in recent years, mainly because of the new housing estates. Pupils enter Year 1 reflecting the full range of attainment levels but overall, attainment on entry is below average. Pupils are organised into nine classes, five of which have more than a single age group of pupils. The pupils come from a small, suburban catchment area which has some signs of deprivation. Housing ranges from local authority estates to private individual dwellings. The vast majority of pupils are white and there are representatives from a small range of ethnic heritages. Twenty-eight per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is above the national average. There are 63 pupils (24 per cent) on the list of special educational needs and the majority have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties. This is above the national average. Six pupils (2 per cent) have a statement of special educational need, which is above the national average. There has been upheaval on the staff with the deputy head being away from school for a long period of time. The school received the 'Investors in People' award in 2003. There have been two significant barriers to the school making progress:

- the long-term absence of the deputy headteacher;
- the enforced relocation of several classes due to major problems with the roof.

The school has a 52 place nursery which is full. Children enter the nursery at the age of 3 years and the children in the most recent intake have well below average attainment in English, mathematics and social skills.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18824	John Heap	Lead inspector	Science Religious education Geography History The Foundation Stage English as an additional language
8988	Joan Cross	Lay inspector	
4295	David Dodds	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music
15551	Pat Mitchell	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Overall, this is an unsatisfactory school** that has significant weaknesses. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Overall, teaching is unsatisfactory but strong in the nursery and reception classes. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. There is unsatisfactory leadership and management and an unsatisfactory and narrow curriculum. Value for money is unsatisfactory.

**In accordance with section 13(7) of the School Inspections Act 1996 I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that special measures are required in relation to this school.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Overall, provision and achievement in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) are good;
- By the age of 11, standards are below average;
- In Years 1 to 6, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory;
- Leadership and management are weak;
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress;
- The quality of care for pupils is good;
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good;
- In art and design, standards are above average and achievement is very good;
- The curriculum is too narrow;
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.

Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Aspects of the school have deteriorated, such as the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum and leadership and management. Links with other schools are very effective and better than at the time of the last inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	E	E	E
mathematics	E*	E	E	E
science	E	E	E	E

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

**Overall, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.** Children enter the nursery with levels of attainment that reflect a broad range, but are well below average overall. Children achieve well in the nursery and reception classes and, by the time they enter Year 1, a large proportion will meet the goals they are expected to achieve by this age in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Standards are below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and creative development. By the end of Year 2, standards seen are below average. This represents satisfactory achievement for most pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, results in national tests are well below average when compared to all schools and well below average when compared to similar schools. Standards seen are below average in English, mathematics and science and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. Standards in basic skills are not good enough in Year 6, because there are too few opportunities in the curriculum to use them extensively. Standards in

information and communication technology (ICT) are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory. Attainment in art and design is above average and achievement is good.

**Overall, pupils' personal development is good and the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective.** The strengths are in the good attitudes and behaviour and in the provision for developing children's self-esteem and capacity to take responsibility in the nursery and reception classes. Pupils enjoy school but attendance is unsatisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**Overall, the quality of education is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory and inconsistent.** The best teaching is seen in the Foundation Stage, where there is evidence of much good practice. Children are interested in the lessons and do a great deal of work. Overall, in Years 1 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. During the inspection the amount of satisfactory teaching outweighed the good and almost a fifth of lessons were unsatisfactory. The analysis of pupils' work shows inconsistencies in marking and in the matching of tasks to individual pupils. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support.

Overall, the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The programme for the Foundation Stage is good. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient attention paid to providing opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the full range of their work. The steps taken to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. Links with parents are satisfactory, but there are too few opportunities taken to seek parents' views and act upon them. The school has good links with other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Overall, leadership and management are unsatisfactory.** Governance is unsatisfactory. The governors do not have a clear vision for the school and their role in checking and evaluating is weak. This is particularly serious at a time when the management of the school has undergone such difficulties as the prolonged absence of the deputy headteacher and the collapse of the school roof. The latter caused ensuing difficulties, with the pupils being taught away from the school for an extended period of time. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good.

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

In the main, parents have positive views about the school. They are particularly pleased with the quality of teaching, the school's approachability and the quality of leadership and management shown by the headteacher. Inspectors do not share their views. Pupils have a supportive opinion of the school; they like their teachers and feel that they work hard and do well. However, they do not always find lessons are interesting and they are concerned about the behaviour of a few pupils.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT;
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- Improve leadership and management;
- Improve the quality of the curriculum.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, achievement is unsatisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- At the ages of 7 and 11, standards are well below average in English and mathematics;
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress;
- Standards in art and design are above average and achievement is very good.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.3 (24.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.0 (25.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.3 (27.2)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

1. Overall, the average points scores show well below average results since 1999, which were nearer to the average. In English and mathematics, scores have generally been well below the national average. In science, apart from a profitable 1999, results have mainly been well below average. There has been some improvement in the last couple of years.
2. In the national tests for 11-year-olds, results were well below average in 2003 for English, mathematics and science when compared with the national average. In comparison with schools having similar proportions of free school meals, results were well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science. Overall, results were well below average in comparison to all schools and below average compared to similar schools. Based on pupils' prior attainment, results were well below average. Compared with all schools, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Over three years, results were well below average in English, mathematics and science. The trend is below the national trend. Girls outperform boys, particularly in science. However, there were significantly more boys with special educational needs in 2003.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.1 (14.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.3 (13.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.5 (14.5)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. Overall, results since 1999 have taken a significant downturn. In reading, writing and mathematics from close to average in 1999, results from 2000 to 2003 were always well below the average.



4. Standards in the 2003 national tests for 7-year-olds were well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics when compared with all schools. However, compared to schools with similar proportions of free school meals, standards are average in mathematics and below average in reading and writing. Compared to all schools nationally, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was well below average in reading and writing, below average in mathematics and very high in science (teacher assessment). Compared to similar schools, reading and writing results were below average, mathematics were average and science results were very high. Over three years, results in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average. Boys were doing better than girls. The school trend is below the national one.
5. Early indications of children's attainment on entry to the nursery show the youngsters having well below average standards, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Their achievement in the Foundation Stage is good overall. By the time the children enter Year 1, average numbers of them reach the goals expected in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. A below average proportion of pupils reach the goals expected in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and creative development.
6. In English throughout the school, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards at the age of 7 are below average. Nevertheless, basic writing skills are sound but there are far too few opportunities for pupils to write in other subjects. Higher attaining pupils read well but the other pupils are not gaining a love of reading. By the age of 11, standards are well below average and achievement is weak. Teachers do not expect enough of the pupils and, as a consequence, they have weaknesses in their reading to find information and in their general writing skills, which fall well short of expected standards. Standards are depressed, in part, because there are too few opportunities to use and develop skills across the curriculum. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their targets.
7. In mathematics throughout the school, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards at the age of 7 are below average. Work set is not challenging enough and there is very little advantage gained from the large amount of assessment that is carried out. As a result, basic skills are not sufficiently consolidated and the work set is regarded by pupils as being too easy. Similar problems occur in Years 3 to 6, where the standards are well below average. Again, the data from assessment is not successfully moving pupils on. However, the exception to this is the group of higher attaining pupils in Year 6 who are taught separately. These pupils are progressing well, because they are challenged to develop and explain the strategies that they use. Pupils with special educational needs progress well. Attainment and achievement are not enhanced by the use of numeracy skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.
8. At the age of 7, pupils attainment in science is below average and achievement is unsatisfactory. These standards are depressed by a narrow curriculum, insufficient use of skills gained in literacy, numeracy and ICT and the weak quality of marking and assessment. Eleven-year-olds do better and their achievement is satisfactory. Their work makes them think and experiment more and they have a clear idea of how important it is to test fairly and accurately. There is better balance in the curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress at the ages of 7 and 11.

9. Standards in ICT are below average at the ages of 7 and 11. Achievement is unsatisfactory. The main reasons for this picture are:
- insufficient use of skills, knowledge and understanding across the full range of subjects;
  - the work given to pupils is mostly teacher directed and this provides pupils with too few opportunities to use and develop what they know;
  - the over reliance on the teacher shown by most pupils, for instance when they wish to access email.

Owing to these shortcomings, pupils do not have the necessary confidence to work on their own and increase their rate of learning.

10. In religious education, pupils aged 11 reach the expected standard and achievement is satisfactory. These pupils build successfully on the work in earlier years. Their knowledge and understanding of religions other than Christianity are improved by the use of artefacts, books and the Internet to find information for themselves. Seven-year-olds have an adequate knowledge and understanding of Christianity. However, the highly inconsistent teaching of Year 2 pupils, leads, overall, to unsatisfactory learning and achievement.
11. In art and design, standards are above average and achievement is very good. This is undoubtedly a strength of the school and identified as such by management. The reasons for these higher standards are:
- the good work of the specialist teacher;
  - the challenging nature of the broad and balanced curriculum;
  - the leadership and management are very good and the senior managers commitment to continue with the developments.

In all the other subjects, there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good in the nursery and reception classes and generally good in the rest of the school. Overall, provision to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Pupils usually arrive at school punctually but attendance is unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils want to learn. They show excitement and great interest when lessons stimulate them;
- Pupils lack independence as learners;
- Pupils are usually compliant in lessons and well behaved during their free time;
- Relationships are good throughout the school;
- Attendance is better than it used to be but is still quite a bit lower than the national average.

### **Commentary**

12. Staff have been hugely successful in maintaining pupils' largely positive attitudes and behaviour in the face of challenging circumstances, such as the prolonged turmoil caused by the eradication of dry rot on the premises. Over the past year, staff have worked hard at rebuilding whole school togetherness by strengthening provision for pupils' social and moral development. Pupils are actively encouraged to befriend others and be alert to their needs. Better provision of activities outside the school day is enabling pupils from different classes to socialise more. There are increased opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for helping staff in the smooth running of the school. Pupils also now have a good say in shaping the school's future through their class and school councils.

13. The pupils are delightfully friendly, open and considerate. Some parents expressed concerns about behaviour and bullying. The number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties has risen in recent years. Staff provide a strongly supportive, caring atmosphere within which expectations regarding the conduct of all pupils is consistently high. They firmly and fairly apply rewards and sanctions that work well on the whole to achieve good behaviour throughout the school day. Bullying is taken seriously by the staff and dealt with effectively according to most parents. Incidents of racism are rare and are similarly not tolerated. There were no exclusions from the school last year.

### Exclusions

14. There have been no exclusions.
15. Occasionally, when the pace of a lesson is slow or mundane tasks fail to motivate them, the pupils, not surprisingly, get bored, 'switch off' and become restless. They are not able to mature as learners because they have too few opportunities for independence in lessons. Pupils say, for example, that they rarely use the school library to find out information for themselves. They want to succeed, as shown by the number of Year 6 pupils who turned up very early in the morning for a pre-school 'booster' class in preparation for forthcoming national tests.
16. In the nursery and reception unit, the infectious enthusiasm of the staff sparks children's interest fully and well tailored activities stimulate and challenge them. Independence is promoted well. The majority of children are well placed to achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception in personal, social and emotional development.
17. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is promoted satisfactorily. Daily worship contributes well to the spiritual aspect but lessons, apart from in the Foundation Stage, tend to lack that 'wow' factor that produces excitement and stimulates curiosity and inner growth. Art and religious education lessons more effectively raise pupils' awareness of different world faiths and cultural traditions than at the time of the last inspection. Preparation of pupils for life in a multicultural society is still not strong enough. However, plans are well underway to tackle this weakness by developing email links with a school of greater ethnic diversity.

### Attendance

18. Attendance took a sharp decline a few years ago but the school's considerable efforts to redress this are working, by making parents more aware of their responsibilities to get their children to school regularly and on time. Much of the absence results from parents taking their children on holiday in term time.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.4	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the quality of education is unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. The best quality is in the Foundation Stage. The school takes good care of its pupils. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

### Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. It is strongest in the Foundation Stage where it is good. However, almost a fifth of lessons in Years 1 to 6 were unsatisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching has deteriorated markedly from that reported at the time of the last inspection as a strength of the school;
- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school;
- Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is unsatisfactory;
- The use of assessment in the planning of lessons is unsatisfactory.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3 (7)	12 (29)	21 (50)	6 (14)	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.*

19. The proportion of good and very good practice is much less than at the time of the last inspection. There is a significantly higher amount of unsatisfactory teaching. There remain weaknesses that were identified in the previous report, for example:
  - assessment does not properly inform planning;
  - the marking of pupils' work is often weak and unhelpful;
  - the use and development of numeracy across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.
20. The practitioners in the Foundation Stage have a good knowledge and understanding of how to cater for the youngsters and they use assessment well to ensure that work is matched accurately to individual children. There is a welcome cohesion in the work of the nursery and reception classes and this is enhanced, on a daily basis, by the 'free flow' of children through both rooms and in the external areas. The children are learning to be more independent and this is fostered by good practices at registration time and in the range of activities available for their use. Basic skills of literacy, numeracy and personal development are given high priority in both classes and this is a significant reason for the children's good achievement. The six highest attaining reception children have, this term, moved into a shared class with Year 1. These children are confident and settling well. They are benefiting from the class teacher's enthusiasm and her skills in teaching literacy.

21. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is highly inconsistent. It is best in the class that has the mixture of reception and Year 1 pupils. The strengths are:
- the class teacher has an exciting and demanding style that captures pupils' attention. They are keen to take part and enjoy the activities on offer;
  - assessment is used well and promotes the good pace of the lesson. This was a particularly strong point in the mathematics lesson, when the use of small whiteboards provided the teacher with a clear insight into whether the children could do the mental sums;
  - the teaching of art, when the pupils go beyond learning basic skills and find enjoyment and success in their work. Achievement in this lesson was very good.
- In this class, the really good, interesting and challenging opening to lessons are not always matched by further activities that stretch all the pupils. This is because the worksheets provided did not challenge sufficiently all of the pupils and for some they were too challenging.
22. The weakest teaching is in the Year 1/2 class, where all the teaching observed was unsatisfactory. The problems stem from poor classroom management which, in turn, leads to pupils learning little, not becoming involved and doing much less work than they are capable of. Instructions and guidance for pupils are unclear and this means that they are largely unsure of what is expected of them. The support for pupils with special educational needs is sound and this is largely due to the satisfactory efforts of the teaching assistant.
23. In Years 3 to 6, there was a single very good lesson and only a small proportion of good lessons. The vast majority of lessons were satisfactory and two lessons were unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, the strengths were:
- good planning in a Year 6 religious education lesson that enabled pupils to learn about Judaism from artefacts and information they found for themselves;
  - two art lessons. In these sessions, pace and expertise ensured that pupils were motivated and encouraged to think and do their best work. As a result, pupils were fully involved in the lessons and learning and achievement were very good;
  - the good classroom management in the Year 3 personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson, overcame a potential disruption and allowed enough time for pupils with learning difficulties to be well supported. As a result, these pupils were encouraged to make a full contribution and their suggestions were valued;
  - the good teaching of the higher attaining mathematics group in Year 6. Particularly useful was the effective questioning that led pupils to explain their strategies and consider alternative methods of working. Assessment was used well to plan work that built on pupils' prior learning and skills.
24. The unsatisfactory lessons had a slow pace and lacked challenge. For example, in the Year 3/4 mathematics lesson, pupils felt that the work was too easy. As a result, the room was noisy and levels of concentration wavered. Too little work was done and pupils worked nowhere near their true capacity. In the Year 5/6 physical education lesson, the control and management of the class was weak and this led to poor concentration and a lack of attention. Too many pupils did very little work and learning was unsatisfactory. These weaknesses were seen in other lessons but they were balanced with some strengths, such as the occasional good use of assessment and resources. However, there were too many lessons that bordered on the unsatisfactory and this has led to weaknesses in achievement, particularly in English and mathematics.

25. The school's evaluation of its pupils' performance is ineffective overall. Assessment is over detailed and cumbersome, and insufficiently focused to provide clear evidence of the year on year progress of each pupil it is not used effectively to create individual targets for pupils. For instance, one set of data the school employs shows that almost half the pupils have made insufficient progress between the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in English, but the intervening data is not there to analyse when sufficient progress is not being maintained, or why. Short-term analysis of progress is marred by marking strategies that are not being used effectively and too individualistic lesson evaluations. Monitoring systems do not pick up the lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils in lessons nor the poor standards of literacy across the curriculum.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum provides an unsatisfactory range of opportunities. It is enriched satisfactorily by provision for sport and the arts and a programme of visits and visitors. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum for literacy, numeracy and ICT is too narrow and this contributes to the unsatisfactory achievement;
- The curriculum is unbalanced and pupils spend too much time on literacy at the expense of other subjects;
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good and they achieve well;
- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and pupils achieve well;
- There is good provision for art and pupils reach above average standards.

## **Commentary**

26. In literacy, numeracy and ICT, lessons are very teacher directed with too few opportunities for pupils to apply skills, investigate and make choices. This especially limits the achievement of higher attaining pupils. In literacy, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write for a variety of purposes and audiences, and insufficient focus on speaking and listening to develop communication skills. In numeracy, there are too few opportunities for pupils to try out their own ideas and develop different strategies for problem solving. In ICT, pupils follow instructions to complete tasks but then do not get sufficient opportunities to work independently to practise and use their skills. Consequently, they are not competent in the use of ICT and need a lot of adult help.
27. Far too long is spent each day on literacy at the expense of other subjects. In addition to the literacy hour, pupils have additional lessons on spelling, handwriting, grammar and reading. Too often tasks are unstimulating because of the limited time available for other subjects. As a result, too few opportunities occur that use and develop literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum. Pupils do not get enough chance to write freely in other subjects, where the overuse of worksheets also limits achievement. Specialist vocabulary in other subjects, such as mathematics, is not stressed sufficiently or the spellings taught, resulting in Year 6 with the poor spelling of basic words such as circle and hexagon. Opportunities to practise ICT skills in the classroom, or use ICT to support other subjects, are very limited and pupils do not get enough practice to become competent in its use.
28. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. There are good opportunities for children from both classes to work together in both classrooms and in the outdoor area. The accommodation is good, with ample space and resources to develop and extend their skills, knowledge and understanding in all the areas of learning.

29. Pupils with special educational needs are identified appropriately and have clear targets written for them to follow, which are reviewed regularly. A good team of teaching assistants works effectively with them and helps them to learn. The teaching assistants are valued by the school and are provided with a wide range of training. This enables them to work well with groups of pupils to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. There is also some thoughtful provision, such as 'befrienders' for a pupil with physical disabilities, who play with him at break and lunch times.
30. Provision for art is good throughout the school and pupils reach above average standards. There is a specialist art teacher who works with the class teachers and provides a range of stimulating experiences that pupils really enjoy.
31. Pupils are made more aware of the wider community through a satisfactory programme of visits and visitors. These are appreciated and enjoyed by pupils and bring outside expertise into school. A residential visit is effective in enhancing the geography curriculum and the local environment. For example, 'the wetlands' is used to provide habitats for study in science. There are some after school activities, particularly for sport, which are appreciated by the pupils, although most are for older pupils. Computer clubs are available for younger and older pupils and are well attended.
32. Resources have recently been improved and are adequate for all pupils, except for the library, which is too small, although the quality of the books has been improved. Accommodation is generally adequate for the purpose. However, classrooms are a bit small, particularly for the large classes. The hall, which is also used as a dining room, is too small, especially for physical education.

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

Staff take good care of the pupils and support their personal development effectively. They involve pupils in the life and work of the school satisfactorily. Academic support and guidance is unsatisfactory overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff provide a generally safe and secure environment for the pupils and establish trusting relationships with them;
- Staff do not set specific enough targets for improvement in pupils' work nor involve them enough in assessing how well they are getting on;
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and guided;
- Pupils are actively encouraged to choose healthy lifestyles;
- Good induction arrangements help pupils settle into school life.

### **Commentary**

33. Staff continue to provide a happy, caring environment for the pupils. They place a high emphasis on pupils' welfare, health and safety with the help of governors. Matters relating to child protection, including safeguarding of pupils from harm when using the Internet in school, are given high priority.
34. The school's approach to behaviour management is more consistent than at the time of the last inspection and provision for pupils with special educational needs has also improved.

35. Nursery staff visit the homes of families before their children start school. These visits enable important information to be exchanged and any concerns or anxieties to be discussed. The children attend part-time initially and there are three intakes per year. These and other arrangements help staff to respond effectively to pupils' needs and sensitivities, and are highly appreciated by parents. Nursery children regularly join in lessons with the reception class and this prepares them well for the next stage in their education.
36. Attendance and lateness are very closely monitored and concerns suitably followed up through the efforts of the attendance assistant, who contacts parents and involves the education welfare officer appropriately. A common approach to promoting regular and punctual attendance has been adopted by local schools and is helping parents to be clear about their responsibilities. The school responds to absence without explanation on the first morning, by getting in touch with parents to find out their child's whereabouts. This is an important safety feature that clarifies who is responsible for looking after the child.
37. Lessons, such as PHSCE, are used effectively to discuss bullying or other issues that arise and actively encourage pupils to empathise with others' feelings. Pupils appreciate having adults in school that they can turn to if they have problems.
38. Pupils are not involved enough in improving their work, which limits their achievement. They undoubtedly receive a lot of help in lessons but lack encouragement towards greater independence as learners. They lack clarity about what they need to do next to improve and the satisfaction that comes from realising that they have reached small attainable goals. Teachers are not tracking pupils' academic progress effectively enough to be able to provide them with this information, despite the enormous time and effort that they put into assessment which is largely to no avail. Pupils' lack of guidance through marking to improve their work remains a weakness from the last inspection.
39. Staff successfully encourage pupils to make informed choices about their lifestyles. The 'Young Encounters' initiative, for example, offers appealing healthy eating options at lunchtime and the school council has set up a healthy tuck shop. Healthy eating is rewarded by tokens that accumulate towards a weekly team trophy, which is much sought after according to pupils.

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

The school's partnership with parents and the wider community contributes satisfactorily to pupils' learning and their personal development. Links with other schools and colleges are good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Home visits get the partnership with parents off to a good start;
- Staff are trying to get parents more involved in their children's learning;
- Some of the information that the school provides for parents could explain things better;
- Very strong links with local primary schools bring many benefits.



## Commentary

40. Many of the staff work very hard at winning the trust of parents and are getting them involved in school and at home. Nursery staff, for example, establish the home-school partnership at the earliest opportunity. They visit the families of children who are about to start school and build upon this strong foundation effectively throughout the Foundation Stage unit. The reception/Year 1 class teacher is also particularly successful at encouraging parents to cross the threshold into the classroom, where they work with their children for a few minutes each morning. Quite a number of parents and other adults volunteer to assist the staff with activities outside lesson time, such as
- the healthy schools task group;
  - the 'Friends' association.
- Workshops and family learning courses, sometimes arranged by external organisations, help to raise parents' own skill levels. These are good initiatives that strengthen bonds between home and school.
41. Parents' views about the school are satisfactory overall. Whilst expressing very few concerns about teaching and appreciating that staff expect their children to work hard, they feel, justifiably, that some aspects of the partnership could be improved. Some, for example, indicated that they would like to be better informed about their children's progress and ways that they might help them to learn at home.
42. Parents of pupils with special educational needs have good opportunities to meet formally with class teachers each term to discuss progress. Parents of other pupils have a long gap between the autumn and summer meetings, although they are welcome to make their own arrangements to see the staff at other times. The written annual reports about children's progress often fall short of telling parents clearly how well their child is doing in relation to national averages. This was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. These reports also rarely identify specifically the next steps the pupil needs to take to improve.
43. Sometimes the guidance issued to parents on helping their child to learn is not worded in reader friendly terms. Without suitable exemplars this educational jargon is relatively meaningless and unhelpful. Occasionally, the school seeks parents' views about its provision but some rightly feel that they are not consulted enough.
44. The school enjoys very effective links with a local beacon school and other primary schools, an aspect that has developed significantly since the last inspection. Headteachers and other staff pool their strengths to mutual benefit and provide a very effective support mechanism. These links help staff to develop professionally through sharing good practice, curriculum development and training courses. By acting together the schools are able to be more prudent. Visitors such as artists, authors, community police, local clergy and sports coaches enrich pupils' learning. Visits to the theatre and places of interest bring further first-hand experiences for them. The school presents harvest gifts to local elderly residents which helps pupils to be mindful about the needs of others.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory overall. Governance is unsatisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is unsatisfactory. Management is unsatisfactory.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good leadership and management in the areas of strength, such as pupils' personal growth, special educational needs, the Foundation Stage and art and design;
- Earlier weaknesses have not been fully addressed and standards have fallen since the previous inspection;
- The school does not have a clear picture of its weaknesses;
- There is a lack of clarity in strategic thinking and systems to support development.

## Commentary

45. In aspects of the school that are strong and successful, there is expertise, a clear view about 'where the school is' and how standards and qualities should be improved. In these areas the leadership and management is good and effective. The reasons for these successes are:
- in special educational needs there is good subject expertise, both from the headteacher and the support staff team leader. The governing body has a good and effective, knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in this area. There has been the creation of a very successful team, with well targeted training and an effective development programme. The area is kept constantly under review through regular meetings. Pupils' progress is closely monitored and assessment is successfully linked to the pupils' individual education plans;
  - the effective policies to provide for pupils' personal development are implemented consistently. These policies are supported by innovative developments, such as the creation of a school council to promote pupils' participation in school affairs and the development of their understanding of how things can be improved. Through vision and leadership there has been a sustained drive throughout the school to have a pleasant and harmonious community. This has included the training of dinnertime supervisors;
  - the clear vision of the leadership of art and design. Appropriate use is made of specialist knowledge and a very effective team has been created between the subject manager and the specialist teacher. The school has adopted the effective strategy of having the class teacher participate alongside the specialist in art lessons. This has resulted in good team building in the subject and the development of teachers' knowledge and understanding. The leadership has high aspirations that drive up standards and the adherence to the school's aims for an 'exciting and stimulating curriculum' have provided rich opportunities for the children. The provision of very high quality resources is matched by the expertise to use them successfully;
  - the effective leadership in the Foundation Stage. There is a clear view of good practice, which is exemplified in the co-ordinator's teaching. The development of teamwork ensures a consistent approach. The curriculum successfully matches the national requirements. The unit puts into practice the school's aims for a rich and exciting curriculum, which results in challenging and purposeful activities.
46. However, these elements for success are missing in those areas where provision is unsatisfactory. In some instances, a lack of clarity in leadership and management has exacerbated the situation. For example, a key issue at the time of the previous inspection was the raising of standards in ICT. Despite the acquisition of a new computer suite, with projection facilities, standards have not improved. The development in this key area has been given to a teacher who does not have the subject expertise and knowledge, does not exemplify the good practice needed in her teaching and has other important professional needs. This lack of success has not been picked up by the governing body, which has not monitored the cost effectiveness of the large sum of money committed to ICT development. This weakness has not been highlighted in the school's self-assessment or the school development plan. Discussions revealed that there is greater expertise among the staff that could be used to advantage and an alternative arrangement was arrived at during the inspection.

47. Standards and achievement in English, mathematics, science and ICT are too low and have been so for too long. Attempts have been made to raise standards and staff have worked hard and with commitment, but to little avail. The leadership has not been clear and decisive. Management has not created appropriate strategies for improvement or for adequately monitoring and evaluating the outcomes. For example, in English advice has been sought from various agencies, but this has resulted in curricular and organisational changes being made without due consideration to a consistent approach in line with the school's stated aims. The school's English policy states that opportunities to develop pupils' English will be provided through stimulating contexts arising from cross-curricular opportunities. The school's response to advice has been to increase the number of English lessons, with a separate time being given to the literacy programme, spelling, handwriting, group reading and story time. In some cases, English takes almost half the teaching time. When writing opportunities are provided in other subjects, standards are not monitored or evaluated sufficiently. The fact that the school's good marking policy is rarely used has gone unnoticed. The subject leader's response to continuing low standards is to increase the emphasis on punctuation and spelling. Leadership has not ensured that teachers receive the appropriate support and training for standards to recover.

48. Inspectors recognise that much of this has occurred at a time when:

- the level of special educational needs has increased;
- the school has been without a deputy headteacher;
- there has been a major disruption caused by a calamitous building failure.

However, with well focused leadership and management the key issues identified in this report could have been resolved.

49. The governance of the school is a developing area, with emerging strengths such as:

- governors have provided consistent and strong support to the headteacher and have tried to bring vision and direction to the school;
- they ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties;
- individual governors have volunteered support in their own areas of expertise, for example in special education needs, where strong and effective support has helped the school move forward very well;
- the governors and teachers have the capacity to take the school forward given effective leadership and management.

However, one of the major failings of governors is not knowing well enough the serious weaknesses of the school; for example, in ICT the lack of effective monitoring or evaluating of major spending decisions. With a large budget surplus, the governors can make informed decisions on how best to help the school move forward, yet currently the reception class has insufficient classroom support. For these reasons, governance is unsatisfactory.

50. The role of the subject managers has not been systematically developed to ensure that they have a broad view of how to support the school and the work of colleagues. For example, the English and mathematics managers do not have a clear whole school perspective on standards and achievement because of the key stage leadership arrangements. Consequently, the headteacher and senior management team do not have a clear grasp of the key development points for the school.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	802190
Total expenditure	835476
Expenditure per pupil	2695

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	107358
Balance carried forward to the next	74072

51. Finances are managed very thoroughly by the administration officer and are monitored carefully by the governors. Priorities for spending are identified by the school and funding is made available. Governors encourage investigation to seek alternative costings for proposed developments and seek best value for spending. Funds have been used to improve the provision for ICT. The school has been keen to build up a surplus. However, the school has not used this income effectively to redress children's unsatisfactory achievement and low standards in key subjects. Overall, the school gives unsatisfactory value for money.

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

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

52. Provision in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) is good. The overall quality of the provision has been maintained since the last inspection. Entry into the nursery class is usually in the term following children's third birthday and those who attend in the morning have three or four terms in the class. Those who attend in the afternoon have one or two terms. In both classes, daily routines and curriculum are designed to develop pupils' basic skills and their independence as learners. For example:

- all children self-register;
- the daily programme has a good balance of teacher directed activities for the whole class, small group activities and the children's own choice.

The curriculum is clearly and properly based on the achievement of the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception and the identified stepping-stones. There are good opportunities for children from both classes to work together in both classrooms and in the outdoor area. The accommodation is good, with ample space and resources to develop and extend their skills, knowledge and understanding in all the areas of learning. Early indications show that children enter the nursery with well below average attainment. During their time in the two classes they achieve well. This is due to the good programme of work and the effective teaching. As a result, children are in line to enter Year 1 with standards that are average in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Standards are below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and creative development.

53. Leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator has created a strong cohesive team who understand their roles and work hard together. The particular strengths are:

- the effective role model that the co-ordinator provides;
- the good model of self-evaluation that recognises strengths and areas for development. From this comes the encouragement to staff to continue their professional development, to which they respond well;
- the recognition that detailed and useful ongoing assessment provides an effective focus for teaching and learning and promotes good achievement.

Furthermore, the staff implement an effective induction programme for the children before and during their earliest time in the school. Parents and children appreciate this good quality process and remember its good impact.

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

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

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

- Achievement is very good and children will enter Year 1 having reached the goals expected of them;
- Teaching and learning are good.

## Commentary

54. In nursery (Foundation Stage 1), children's attitudes to work, behaviour and concentration are very good. They are keen to take part in the various activities on offer and form very good relationships with their peers and adults. The more mature children, who attend in the morning, are confident enough to carry out the most challenging activities, for example answering a policeman's questions and repeating language such as 'tunic'. This confidence comes about because of effective teaching and support and the wide range of opportunities on offer.
55. In reception (Foundation Stage 2), children are building well on the attitudes and relationships developed earlier in the school. No children were observed who were not keen to learn or lacked the confidence to undertake the tasks that they were given or chose to do. They confidently make choices and decisions. They organise themselves well, choose to take part in a variety of activities and concentrate for considerable amounts of time. Those more mature children who have recently joined Year 1 pupils are coping well with the changes and confidently take a full part in the lessons.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good;
- Teaching and learning are good.

## Commentary

56. The most mature children are confident speakers who talk well about what they are doing, the equipment they are using and what they plan to do. They have legible handwriting and mostly accurate spelling. They read from left to right and recognise simple words. In the reception class, children recognise their own names and show enjoyment of language when they produce recognisable actions for words. Their writing skills are developing soundly and their writing of 'W', for example, shows that they follow accurately the example of the effective teacher. The more mature children recognise words that begin with the named letter.
57. In the nursery, most children can look at a book and know where to find the name of the author and illustrator. This is due to the high expectations of staff and the way that they know how to excite and motivate these young children. Listening skills are good for most children and they talk briefly about their experiences. Even the least mature children talk and explain in brief terms what they are doing.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good level of practical skills promote good achievement;
- Teaching and learning are good and concentrate on developing effective counting, ordering and recognition skills.

## Commentary

58. In reception, most children can count accurately to ten and the most mature count in a clear and successful manner from different starting numbers. They order numbers according to size, as in the activity where they ordered ties according to the number of stars on them. Most children know about 'one less than' or 'one more than'. The good teaching helps the most mature children:
- count very accurately and do number sums correctly, such as adding to ten from different starting points;
  - recognise several shapes, such as square, rectangle and triangle;
  - recognise the shapes in everyday settings, such as houses.
59. In the nursery, the effective teaching promotes children's learning through a range of practical activities. These young children are aware of mathematics in their lives and, in discussion, mainly use comparisons accurately; for example, bigger/smaller, heavier/lighter, taller/shorter. The staff have good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn mathematics and bring it into a range of activities, such as counting the buttons on a policeman's tunic.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school broadens children's knowledge and understanding through a wide range of classroom activities and through regular visits and visitors.

## Commentary

60. The range and depth of the children's experiences of the world are limited. The staff recognise this and ensure that, through a wide range of activities and good teaching, that disadvantage is minimised. For example, children are taken out on a visit every half term and visitors are brought in to provide information, motivation and interest. The teachers know the children well and how best they can learn, through experiences that relate to everyday life. Visits have included a journey to the woods and farms and to look at the village. During the inspection, the police visited and there was great excitement and anticipation. Children throughout the Foundation Stage are developing a good knowledge and understanding of the way that key workers, such as the police, have an impact on the local community. More importantly, the children recognise that the police are there to help them. There is also a growing appreciation of the everyday use of technology and nursery children are making good use of the mouse when using their ICT equipment. The most mature children are coping well with National Curriculum history and show a sound recognition of the differences between past and present.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are effective;
- Nursery children manipulate small equipment well.

## Commentary

61. Throughout nursery and reception, the children show confidence when working on wheeled toys. In the main, they are aware of space and avoid collisions. There is increasingly skilful control and movement and this is in response to the good planning, resources and challenge that the teachers set out. In music sessions, reception children show good co-ordination when doing action songs. Children are confident in their use of tools and equipment, such as pencils, felt tips and paint brushes. Nursery children show good control of their small motor skills when using a stethoscope in the hospital corner and when 'catching' numbers in a fishing game.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, teaching and learning are effective;
- Art and music activities also support learning in other areas.

## Commentary

62. In the nursery there is a good range of activities to interest the children. They tend to be activities that are enjoyed by the children and most take the opportunity to explore sensibly with materials, texture and paint mixing. Reception children have good and accurate skills and the figures they produce are generally well proportioned. They also provide thoughtful views about others' work and how it might be improved. Children are regularly involved in musical activities and these are enjoyed. Very often, singing is employed to support work in numeracy and literacy and adds to the children's knowledge; for example, they sing their names and counting sequences.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress;
- Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory;
- There are insufficient opportunities to use, apply and develop literacy skills in the other subjects;
- The assessment system is burdensome, not precise enough and is not used effectively to ensure sufficient progress;
- Overall, teaching is unsatisfactory.

## Commentary

63. By the age of 7, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are below average. This judgement is in line with the school's own assessment and shows that pupils are making insufficient progress since leaving the Foundation Stage. The pupils listen carefully and generally respond appropriately to questions. At times, their responses are brief as questioning does not lead to extended answers. The higher attaining pupils read accurately, fluently and show understanding. However, average and lower attaining pupils are not developing a love of literature and see it as an exercise rather than a recreation. Standards in writing are below average and although the pupils have sound basic skills in writing,



spelling and punctuation, these are not used sufficiently through the classes to consolidate their skills. For example, in history reception and Years 1 and 2 pupils compared modern homes with Victorian counterparts but the lesson culminated in pupils simply filling in worksheets.

64. By the age of 11, standards are well below the expected level. The school's assessment shows that many pupils make poor or unsatisfactory progress. In reading, while the above average pupils can read accurately and fluently, all pupils are given too few opportunities to read independently, especially to find out information. The school recognises the importance of speaking and listening for English development, but there are insufficient opportunities provided for children to develop the skills, such as 'hot seating' in history. The pupils listen well and respond politely but often in a restricted fashion to closed questions. Only in one, Year 4 lesson was the teacher heard insisting that pupils answer fully with a sentence and include a reason for their statement. 'I think that... because...'. Standards in writing are poor, because there are low expectations for handwriting, content, grammar and spelling when pupils write, other than in English exercises. For example, a pupil's evaluation of work in a design and technology project said 'It was good. I don't need to change stuff.'
65. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to good. The teachers insist on good behaviour and the pupils are attentive and concentrate well. However, the teaching of English overall is unsatisfactory because, although the skills of literacy are often taught soundly during the literacy lessons, the pupils are given insufficient opportunities to apply, practise and consolidate these skills through extended writing in other subjects throughout the school. For example, pupils in Year 6 are taught how to write a report but this is done as an exercise, rather than for a specific purpose such as recording their findings in science. On those occasions when the children do have opportunities to write, their work is often undertaken at unacceptable standards, in terms of content, grammar, presentation and spelling. Although teachers expect better quality work within the literacy lesson, this work is often not marked or responded to by the teacher, even when specific subject terminology, such as 'circle' in mathematics, has been spelt wrongly by a Year 5 pupil. Although the school has a constructive and useful marking policy, this is seldom adhered to when teachers respond to work from the literacy lesson or when English is used in other subjects. The opportunities for pupils to consolidate their English skills in other subjects is further restricted by the school's timetabling arrangements. In some classes, almost half the lesson time is spent on English exercises, with literacy, handwriting, spelling, group reading and story time having separate sessions.
66. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teaching assistants and make good progress against their targets in their individual education plans. The higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged. For example, when Year 6 pupils examined information text to be presented to younger children, this was undertaken as a whole class activity, rather than the pupils being able to work independently, selecting their own sources of information.

67. The subject leader is very committed and hard working, and does what the school expects of her. The leadership and management of the subject is unsatisfactory because:
- standards in English are not rising enough;
  - current practice is proving to be unsuccessful, yet the solution appears to be 'more of the same';
  - there are some good policies in place but these are not monitored in practice;
  - the current timetable arrangements are unsuitable;
  - the subject is not being monitored soundly enough. The school does not know that the spelling policy is not being adhered to.

In addition, the school's assessment system is unwieldy and is not used with precision to match the work appropriately to the children's needs. This lack of suitable monitoring with appropriate targets has resulted in many pupils making unsatisfactory progress, and some poor progress, through Years 3 to 6.

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

68. The use of English across the curriculum is not monitored or evaluated. There is not an agreed or systematic framework for short-term planning. As a result, although the school's policy for English says that the school 'aims to provide a stimulating and an enriched environment which offers all children opportunities to achieve a high literacy standards', this rarely happens.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

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

- Standards reached at the age of 7 are below average and standards at the age of 11 are well below average. Achievement is unsatisfactory for most pupils;
- Teaching and learning overall are unsatisfactory;
- Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well;
- Special mathematics sessions for pupils who are finding it difficult to learn, and a small class in Year 6 for more able pupils, are successful in raising standards for those pupils;
- The curriculum for mathematics is narrow and pupils get too few opportunities to investigate and make choices;
- Pupils generally behave well and try hard. However, they do get restless in response to unstimulating teaching;
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

#### **Commentary**

69. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection and standards have fallen. Many pupils in Year 6 have difficulty in changing the twelve hour clock to twenty four hours and completing simple, one step word problems such as 'Fireworks display 8.30pm to 9.15pm. How long does it last?' Work is often careless and untidy and specialist mathematics vocabulary, such as circle, hexagon and semicircle, are spelt incorrectly.

70. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy to plan their work each term. However, their weekly planning is unsatisfactory. There is no consistent format and there is great variation between classes. Classes are large, most have pupils of more than one age and all have a wide range of abilities. Most planning is not detailed enough to provide suitably challenging work for pupils of all abilities, especially the more able. Consequently these pupils often say that work is too easy and they do not achieve as well as they could. In whole class sessions, the pace is slow, some pupils lose interest and older, more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently because of the need to cater for so many diverse needs.
71. Although teachers work hard at assessing what pupils can do, this information is not used enough to provide work at the correct level of difficulty for all pupils. Pupils' work is not always marked or is not marked carefully enough to help pupils understand what progress they are making, what they have done wrong or how to improve.
72. One exception is the small group of higher attaining pupils in Year 6, who are taught separately. Here, assessment is well used to plan future work thus building up pupils' skills. They are given many opportunities to explain the strategies they use and to try to find other ways of working. This helps them to gain confidence, as well as improving achievement. The good teaching in this class is improving standards for these pupils.
73. Pupils with special educational needs receive good quality support from teaching assistants. Sometimes they complete work that is based on their individual targets. Sometimes they are able to complete the same work as the rest of the class, because the teaching assistants discuss work with them and help them through it. Special sessions taken by the teaching assistants to help pupils who find mathematics difficult are also successful in improving achievement, because pupils work in small groups with work carefully planned in small steps.
74. Throughout the school, lessons are very teacher directed and opportunities are missed to ask pupils to explain how they worked out their answers, to encourage them to find different ways of working out answers and to investigate. Too much work is on worksheets. These are not valued; work is often completed untidily, not dated and not filed in order. Pupils are not able to refer back to previous work or to see any progress made. Pupils tend to fill in worksheets individually, while the teacher walks round helping individual pupils. Pupils are missing the opportunities to work together as a group, sometimes independently, sometimes with the teacher. This is limiting their achievement. Pupils generally listen well to the teacher, behave well and try hard. However, when the pace becomes too slow or work is too unchallenging pupils become restless and lose concentration. They often do not take enough pride in presenting work well and some work is careless.
75. The co-ordinator has no overview of what is happening throughout the school. The inconsistency in quality of teaching and learning, planning and assessment has not been addressed. Although the unsatisfactory standards have been identified and some measures have been put in place to address these, they are too recent to have had any impact.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

76. Numeracy skills are not consolidated satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum and ICT is not used effectively to support mathematics.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has not been enough development in the subject since the last inspection;
- Provision and standards improve by the age of 11;
- Overall, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory.

### Commentary

77. Improvement is unsatisfactory since the previous inspection. The main reasons for this are:
- overall deterioration in standards, even though the level of special educational needs has grown;
  - insufficient progress of shortcomings recognised in the last report, such as development of pupils' investigation skills and the weak use of ICT;
  - deterioration in the quality of teaching and the failure to improve the quality of marking.
78. By the age of 7, standards are well below average and achievement is unsatisfactory. The reasons for these low standards are:
- the curriculum is heavily weighted towards work on forces and physical phenomena and there are lots of repetitious worksheets that do not build on prior learning;
  - there is very little evidence of using ICT, literacy and numeracy skills to enhance understanding and develop recording techniques;
  - the quality of marking is weak and there are too few indications of quality of work and ways to improve;
  - there is too little emphasis on pupils' learning about how to set up investigations.
- Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because they receive a sound level of support. They have difficulty concentrating for long periods.
79. By the age of 11, standards are below average and achievement is broadly satisfactory. Standards are better than those for the younger pupils because there is greater balance in the curriculum and experimentation is going on throughout the topics studied. Pupils understand that fair testing is important and the reasons for it. For example:
- testing materials to find out which ones are best at keeping heat in;
  - experimenting with the setting up of electrical circuits.
- There is also some adequate use of numeracy skills to collect, record and display findings of work on temperature. However, there is little evidence of ICT being used and many pupils show weak literacy skills when writing about science. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and sometimes good gains in their knowledge and understanding. This is brought about by the effective, unobtrusive support they receive that enables them to play a full part in practical activities.

80. In the lessons observed, the teaching was satisfactory. In relation to the work seen in pupils' books, the most useful work is done in Year 6 because the teacher puts a greater emphasis on the use of experimentation. There are examples of sound practical work in all the topics that are covered. However, the overall picture is weak because there are too few examples of:
- experimental work, particularly in Years 1 and 2;
  - the use and development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in science work.
- There are fewer examples in the other classes, particularly in Years 1 and 2. In the lessons observed, planning was usually detailed and useful and this ensured that pupils gained a sound insight into the knowledge being covered. In most lessons, the teachers tried very hard to introduce and consolidate the appropriate technical language. For example, in the Year 4/5 lesson words such as 'camouflage', 'mammal' and 'insect' were introduced. Pupils in Year 2 were invited to observe and predict the changes to materials that would be brought about by heating. They did this well and showed enjoyment in the task.
81. Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. Although lesson observations have been completed diligently, there has not been the opportunity to analyse pupils' work. As a consequence, there are inconsistencies in marking, quality of pupils' work and in the use of assessment. Whilst there is no doubt that a large amount of assessment and recording is taking place, there is little indication of how this impacts on pupils' learning. However, science makes a good contribution to PSHCE, particularly through the work on the human body, caring for the environment and for animals.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory and standards are below average by the age of 11;
- Teaching and learning is unsatisfactory;
- The curriculum is narrow and ICT is not developed enough in other subjects;
- Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

82. There has been too little improvement since the last inspection, especially in addressing the key issues of standards achieved and the use of ICT across the curriculum, which remain unsatisfactory.
83. Although pupils in Year 6 have experienced all areas of the curriculum, often this is not in sufficient depth to allow them to remember what they did or to be competent in its use. For example, pupils in Year 6 have answered questions about a database they were given but do not know how to produce their own databases. They do not know how to use email and, although they use the Internet occasionally for research, most cannot access it unaided. They do not word process work often enough to become fluent.
84. Teachers provide step-by-step instructions for pupils to follow and do not allow them sufficient time or opportunity to practice the skills. As work is teacher directed, pupils all complete the same task and there is a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils, who do not achieve as well as they could. Teachers use the talents and expertise of the teaching assistants well to support pupils who have special educational needs. This enables these pupils to be fully included in the lessons and to successfully complete the same work as everybody else. However, not all classes have a teaching assistant during ICT lessons and, in these cases pupils who have special educational needs often wait for too long for the teacher to give them any necessary help and do not make sufficient progress.

85. The school has a computer suite of fifteen computers but this is not used effectively. Classes are timetabled for its use. However, the room is small and because the classes are large, most computers are shared between two or three pupils. The pupils are cramped and usually only one is able to use the computer at a time. This results in too many pupils waiting for their turn.
86. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Although resources have improved and there is now a computer suite this is not used effectively. Teachers have all completed training but some are still unsure about how best to teach ICT skills. Assessment procedures have been introduced but these are very recent and have, as yet, had no impact on standards.

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

87. The use of ICT in other subjects is unsatisfactory. During the inspection computers were rarely used in other lessons. A scrutiny of pupils' work showed very limited use of ICT to support other subjects.

### **HUMANITIES**

88. Inspectors saw one lesson in **history** and none in **geography**. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make secure judgements about provision, standards, achievement and leadership and management.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**. There is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of leadership and management, because the co-ordinator is on long-term leave.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The use of a range of artefacts and sources in Year 6 helps pupils reach average standards and achieve well;
- The development of knowledge and understanding of several faiths by the end of Year 6 makes a sound contribution to pupils' cultural development;
- Inconsistencies in the teaching of Year 2 pupils lead to unsatisfactory achievement overall.

### **Commentary**

89. Since the last inspection, standards, teaching and provision have been maintained. However, this means that the weaknesses identified have not been improved. This is particularly so in the quality of teaching in the Year 1/2 class, where difficult behaviour and lack of control has an adverse effect on pupils' standards and achievement.
90. By the age of 7, pupils have an adequate knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, for instance:
- Old Testament stories of creation and Noah;
  - festivals, such as Christmas and Easter.
- In addition, pupils produce some useful extended writing, for example in the style of a parable. Good links with a local church have led to useful study and information being sought and found about it from the Internet. Work is beginning on Sikhism and useful cultural understanding has come about from the knowledge that Christians and Sikhs live in modern Britain.

91. By the age of 11, there is evidence of a growing sensitivity to the feelings and beliefs of others. Pupils build on their knowledge and understanding of work done previously and there is greater use of literacy skills, such as little playlets about Judas and Mary. Multifaith work, in Hinduism and Judaism, is well supported by a good range of religious artefacts. Pupils show adequate information finding skills in using a range of resources, from books to the Internet.
92. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is patchy, but not less than satisfactory. The best support was provided for the Year 6 pupils and, as a result, they were busy and working effectively.
93. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. It is best in Year 6 where the strengths are;
- good use of a range of resources, such as artefacts, books, the Internet and photographs. As a result, pupils find information for themselves and this is developing their literacy and independent learning skills;
  - the good use of pupils' noted art skills to illustrate a range of Jewish artefacts;
  - the opportunities to learn about customs and beliefs in other cultures;
  - the development of a 'web' that illustrates the important figures, symbols and buildings of Judaism. Pupils learn to provide evidence they have found.

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

94. In **music**, insufficient work was seen to form overall judgements about standards. The pupils are provided with an appropriate range of activities. They sing tunefully in assemblies and with obvious enjoyment. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of well chosen music to listen to as they enter and leave the hall for assembly. However, the teacher does not always draw their attention to the composer or the piece being played, and some pupils in Year 6 do not know what a writer of music is called. The school's provision for music is supplemented by opportunities for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument through peripatetic tuition and to participate in the school choir. There are good opportunities for children to perform in school and locally.
95. In **design and technology**, no lessons were seen and there was insufficient evidence to comment upon provision. Two teachers commented upon the effectiveness of a recent whole school training course, and how it had triggered enthusiasm for design and technology. The impact of this course was apparent throughout the school, in terms of pupils making models and artefacts. In some classes, the pupils have been provided with opportunities to use their imagination and this opportunity to be creative and independent has resulted in some wonderfully individualistic creations. For example, one child in a Year 4 class has designed and made a table lamp representing a monster, with its jaws being the lampshade. Another child was so enthusiastic about this project that she persuaded her mother to cut off the tassels from their cushions at home to provide decoration for her lampshade. This looked most attractive! In some classes, the pupil's individuality and creativity has been inhibited by over direction by the class teacher, with the result that pupils produce almost identical work. Designing is less well developed in both key stages. This is because there is a lack of structure and consistency in the teaching of this aspect and teachers' subject knowledge is less secure. Where pupils are provided with a clear structure to investigate, design and evaluate their work, pupils make better progress. This structure is not provided often enough to contribute to sustained progress being made throughout the school. In many instances, the older children produce sketches of their intention rather than detailed plans. Insufficient use is made of ICT and mathematics in the subject. The school has adopted the recommended national scheme for teaching design and technology since the last inspection, and when applied consistently this will contribute to raising the standards of design.

96. In **physical education**, it is not possible to judge the quality of provision as only one lesson was observed. Coaching from professional football and rugby trainers enriches the physical education curriculum and there are other after school activities such as 'cheerleaders'. The school hall is too small for the large classes to move around freely and its use is limited because it is also used for assemblies and lunches. However, recently the school has acquired a large field to use for games and other sports.

## **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is **good**, and in some aspects very good, throughout the school.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- The contribution of the specialist teacher is strong;
- A broad, exhilarating and challenging curriculum;
- Team teaching, which brings about staff development;
- The very high quality of resources used, allied to very high teacher expectations.

### **Commentary**

97. Throughout the school, pupils love their art and design lessons and make very good progress, including those with special educational needs. Standards are above average at the ages of 7 and 11. Pupils are provided with very stimulating challenges and they respond well to them. In Year 6, pupils painted in the Aboriginal style their vision of a journey, on a 1 metre square canvas. In Years 4 and 5, pupils created Modroc statuettes of owls that were then enhanced by metallic paint.
98. Teaching is extended and enhanced by the use of a specialist teacher who works alongside the class teacher. Not only does she bring outstanding subject knowledge to bear, she is training and developing class teachers' subject knowledge in the process. During a Year 1 and 2 lesson on printing patterns, the class teacher said 'This is really showing me how I can widen the opportunities for my children beyond the basic scheme.' The teaching programme is being enhanced by the use of very high quality resources and novel applications, such as painting upon the textured side of hardboard. The pupils find these opportunities exhilarating and respond very well. Their ideas are built upon well, exemplified by some very interesting ideas and sketches. For example, Year 4 pupils described surrealistic dreams which were translated into media and digitally photographed.
99. Although some good activities include ICT, more use should be made of this to obtain information and explore creative opportunities in both art and design.
100. The leadership of art and design is very good and effective, combining the skills of the specialist teacher with the organisational ones of the subject manager. There is vision and high aspiration, which is resulting in raised standards and achievement and extended curriculum provision well beyond the average. The forthcoming departure of the specialist teacher is challenging the school to take steps that will ensure that the provision created by her input is sustained, and that the training that the teachers have received is consolidated.



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

101. There is a detailed, planned programme in place to teach pupils personal and social skills, to keep them healthy and to help them develop into mature young citizens. This helps pupils know how to behave, to take responsibilities when given opportunities, to show respect and to help each other. The school is working towards the 'healthy school' award for its work on providing and encouraging healthy eating and physical activity. The school involves visitors to help them. The school nurse and a local policeman help with a drugs awareness programme; football and rugby coaches help pupils enjoy more physical activity as well as developing skills.
  
102. All pupils contribute to the class councils, which bring issues for consideration to the school's council. This has some influence on school life, giving pupils opportunities to experience responsibility and decision making, although this is, as yet, limited.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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