

# INSPECTION REPORT

**SQUIRRELS HEATH INFANT SCHOOL**

ROMFORD

LEA area: LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING

Unique reference number: 102304

Headteacher: Mrs C. Drew

Lead inspector: Mrs S. M. Barnes

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> March 2004

Inspection number: 257538

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	244
School address:	Salisbury Road Romford Essex
Postcode:	RM2 5TP
Telephone number:	01708 446476
Fax number:	01708 457090
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J. Chesterton
Date of previous inspection:	15/04/2002

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Squirrels Heath Infant School is an average sized school, situated in Romford in the London Borough of Havering. The 244 boys and girls who attend the school are aged between four and seven and are organised into nine classes. These pupils come mainly from owner-occupier homes around the school. Just over 13 per cent are eligible for free school meals. This is a higher proportion than at the time of the previous inspection, but is still below the national average. The proportion of pupils whose first language is believed to be other than English is high, at around 8 per cent. However, very few of these pupils are at early stages of learning English. Attainment on entry to the reception classes is average overall. Most of these children have attended pre-school groups. The numbers of pupils who have either joined or left the school other than at the normal start and end of term is above average at around ten per cent. A significant number of these have joined the current Year 2. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well below the national average at just over five per cent. However, there are significantly more pupils with special educational needs in some year groups than in others. The numbers having a statement of their need is broadly in line with the national average at just under 2 per cent. The range of special educational needs is very considerably more complex than at the time of the last inspection. It includes speech and language difficulty, visual impairment, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and physical disability. The head teacher was appointed in November 2002 and the deputy in April 2003. A third of the members of the governing body have been appointed in April 2002. The school has experienced some difficulty in recruiting teaching staff. Although all of the posts are currently filled, some are on a temporary basis. At the time of the previous inspection, in May 2002, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16249	Mrs S. M. Barnes	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Science Educational inclusion
32768	Mrs J. Manfield	Lay inspector	
32226	Mrs T. Quick	Team inspector	Mathematics Creative Aesthetic Practical and physical subjects
16830	Mr J. Plumb	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language English Information and communication technology Personal Social and health education Humanities

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>12</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>33</b>

# PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

## OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an **effective** school and now provides a good quality of education for all its pupils. The school has made a very good level of improvement since its previous inspection due to the high quality of leadership. Standards pupils achieve are good and in many key areas they are now above those attained nationally. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in science, mathematics, music, religious education and reading are above average and pupils' achievements are good.
- The leadership of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher is very good.
- Leadership and assessment systems of core subject areas are good, but some other subjects are yet to be developed to this high standard.
- Provision for pupils' care and welfare is very good.
- Teaching and learning are good overall. As a result, pupils are well behaved and have good attitudes to their work.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they do well as a result.
- Links with parents are very good.
- Accommodation is satisfactory overall, but there is no equipment for reception children to climb and develop upper body strength. Some parts of the buildings are in a poor state of repair.

There has been a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The role of subject co-ordinators has been developed effectively, particularly in core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievements are good and higher attaining pupils now do well. There is a good level of consistency in teaching between classes, so much so that this is now a strength of the school. Pupils in different classes have equality of access to the curriculum. Assessment is good, particularly in English, mathematics and science and the information it provides is used efficiently in planning lessons. In addition, behaviour management is now good. The quality of written reports to parents is good. Standards have also improved significantly in science and religious education.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

### Year 2 results

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

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

Pupils' achievements are **good** overall.

Results in the end of year tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2003 were above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. Teachers' assessments indicated that standards were above those attained nationally in science. Children in the reception classes (the Foundation Stage) start school with standards broadly in line with those expected for their ages. However, while most have had experience of pre-school playgroups or nurseries many still have not learnt to work as part of a group or share the attention of an adult. In reception, they make good progress in their personal and

social education and satisfactory progress in the other five areas of learning for their age. As a consequence, they are likely to attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Their achievements are satisfactory overall. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, science and mathematics and above those expected in religious education, art and design and music. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2. This is overall good achievement for pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language. Higher attaining pupils also achieve good standards in line with their potential, which is a significant improvement since the time of the previous inspection.

Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Their spiritual development is **satisfactory**. Pupils are well behaved and have good attitudes to their work. Attendance and punctuality are both good and these all have a positive impact on pupils' learning and the standards they attain.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **good** quality of education for all its pupils.

The quality of teaching and learning are **good** overall. Assessment is **good**, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

Teaching is particularly good in the core subjects and in religious education. Teachers' management of pupils and expectations of their behaviour are good. As a result, lessons are orderly, boys and girls from all groups apply themselves to their tasks diligently, little time is lost and the quality of their learning is good. The school has worked to develop and use assessment well to raise standards in the core subjects. However, not all other subjects have whole-school systems of rigorous assessment as yet. Teachers plan lessons well. They make sure that lessons appeal to pupils' interests and match their needs well. The rate of pupils' learning is good because the steps their teachers demand of them are suitably small when they are finding learning difficult and suitably challenging at other times. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall and, during inspection, much good teaching was observed. Teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good and they make good gains in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and make good progress towards their learning targets.

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. The school provides good opportunities for enrichment in the form of clubs, trips and visitors, all of which benefit pupils' learning. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, but the school lacks equipment for reception children to climb and develop upper body strength. Some parts of the buildings are in a poor state of repair. Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. School provides all its pupils with good levels of support, advice and guidance. Links with parents are very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good**.

The leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy head, is very good and is the principal reason the school has managed to make the very good level of improvement it has in so short a time. The governance of the school is good. Governors know their school well and provide staff with challenge as well as support. The leadership of key staff is good overall, particularly in the core subjects, which is where the school has placed recent emphasis. Co-ordination of some other areas is acknowledged by the school as under-developed as yet. The management of the school is good. Administration is efficient and friendly.

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

Links with parents are very good and have a positive impact on pupils' learning, and particularly their reading. Links with the community are good and they are satisfactory with other schools and

colleges. A significant minority of parents, in the questionnaire said they felt they would like to be better informed. The information that the school provides is of a good standard.

Pupils have very positive views of their school and demonstrate these by their good levels of punctuality and attendance, and their good attitudes to work.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Continue to work to improve standards in non-core subjects, developing whole school assessment systems and the roles of the co-ordinator in these areas.
- Improve climbing and play equipment for children in reception.
- Refurbish those parts of the building which are in a poor state of repair.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Standards are **good** overall.

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

- Standards pupils attain by the end of Year 2 are above average in reading, science and mathematics and their achievement is good.
- Pupils' achievements are good in religious education.
- Pupils from all groups including those with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language achieve well.
- Higher attaining pupils do well which is a significant improvement since the time of the previous inspection.

#### **Commentary**

##### **Foundation Stage**

1. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in personal and social development and steady, satisfactory gains in their learning in all other areas of the curriculum for their age. Their achievements are satisfactory and they are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of the curriculum for young children. This gives them a sound basis for learning in Year 1.

##### **Key Stage 1**

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.8 (17.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.0 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.7 (18.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 83 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Standards attained in reading by pupils at the end of Year 2 in national tests in 2003 were above average. They were also above average when compared to similar schools on the basis of the proportion eligible for free school meals. Currently standards in reading are above those expected for pupils' ages and their achievements are good. The high standards noted at the time of the previous inspection have been effectively maintained.
3. In writing, results in tests in 2003 were average. They were also average when compared with similar schools. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, which judged that, while standards were broadly average, a significant number of pupils, particularly the more able, were underachieving.
4. Standards in tests in mathematics were average in 2003, both when compared to national results and also when compared with similar schools. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection compared to nationally, although at that time results in tests were well below the results of similar schools. At that time relatively small numbers of pupils attained the higher Level 3 as pupils did not have sufficient opportunities to record their work in their own

way, or to use numeracy skills in other subjects. Currently, pupils from all groups, including higher attaining pupils achieve satisfactorily and standards are broadly average.

5. Results of teachers' assessments in science at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were above average overall. Currently, standards are above those expected nationally and pupils from all groups achieve well. This is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be well below the national expectation and a significant number of pupils were underachieving. Very few pupils at that time attained the higher Level 3 and many did not attain the expected level for their age.
6. Standards in ICT, are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. However, in religious education, pupils' achievements are good. This is a good level of improvement since the previous inspection, when they were satisfactory. In music, standards have been maintained and are still above those expected by the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievements are good due to the interesting and exciting lessons provided by the co-ordinator. Standards of work seen in art and design were good. Standards of work seen in history, geography, physical education and personal and social and health education were in line with those expected and this represents satisfactory achievements.
7. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in their acquisition of English. Their achievement is good. Pupils with English as an additional language in the Foundation Stage recognise their colours and carry out instructions. Their concentration on tasks is good as is their behaviour and they are fully included in all activities that go on in the class. Pupils with English as an additional language throughout the school tend to be the higher achievers and attain standards above those expected of pupils of their age.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in reading because of the good learning support they receive from a teaching assistant. The intensive teaching programme that the school runs has made a very valuable contribution in giving pupils the strategies they need to make the sounds of the letters and to tackle new and unfamiliar words. This enables them to learn to read more easily. The two pupils with a Statement of their Special Educational Needs make good progress in relation to their first needs (primary needs).
9. Pupils with complex behavioural difficulties are kept on task and behave well because teachers and teaching assistants are so skilled in meeting their needs. Even those pupils with very challenging behaviours are kept on task and so make good progress. The teaching assistants often exercise immense patience in working with some pupils. Those pupils with a lack of social skills who do not understand the impact of their behaviour on others are particularly well managed and fully included in lessons.
10. Because of the high quality support they receive from their teachers and teaching assistants, pupils with special educational needs make good gains in their confidence and self-esteem and in turn this contributes extremely well to their personal development. Because their teachers know what makes them tick, and because relationships are good, these pupils are prepared to take risks in lessons and often surprise themselves with the improvements they make.

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

Attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Their spiritual development is **satisfactory**. Punctuality and attendance are both **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In all year groups, pupils enjoy being in school and display positive attitudes to work in lessons and the range of activities provided by the school.

- Relationships are good between all members of the school community.
- Behaviour is good overall and the small minority of challenging pupils is well managed.

## Commentary

11. Pupils have good attitudes and behaviour in lessons and around the school. They show interest and enjoyment in school life and the activities provided by the school. They are generally polite and courteous and take their responsibilities seriously. Personal and social development of children in the Foundation Stage is good. In the school council, pupils effectively contribute to decisions about the life of the school. The views of the pupils are expressed and feedback from the meetings given to the classes by their representatives. Discussion takes place on issues ranging from curriculum development to the problems of car parking outside the school. Pupils agree that there is no bullying and they would know who to go to if help is needed. No form of racism or any form of harassment was observed. Teachers create a calm but purposeful working atmosphere.
12. This is an inclusive school where relationships are good and pupils enjoy the feeling that they are valued. The few pupils from minority ethnic groups are fully integrated into the school. Pupils are keen to learn and are confident to ask questions to extend their understanding and take part in class discussion. Most pupils enjoy their lessons and show enthusiasm for their work. Pupils with special educational needs make every effort to succeed and are helped by supportive teaching assistants. Parents confirm that their children enjoy school and want to learn.
13. Pupils with English as an additional language are keen to learn and do well. Their behaviour is good and they are keen to please. They are fully included in all activities due to the skilful and sensitive support they receive from effective teaching assistants and their class teachers who are committed to equality of opportunity for all pupils. They are happy, have a great deal of fun when they join in games as evidenced by their smiles and 'giggles', all of which are proper; indeed learning through play is made fun for them.
14. Pupils willingly take responsibility. They are pleased when they become the helper of the day. The accepted school code of behaviour is taught from the reception classes. The school sets high expectations for pupils' conduct and works to achieve them. Most pupils concentrate well, work hard and want to learn. Throughout the school a positive approach is used.
15. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Assemblies, religious education and personal, social and health education lessons all play an important part in promoting this. Planned opportunities for pupils to think about the wonder of the world around them are limited in lessons. In art lessons pupils were encouraged to look at the beauty of the spring flowers. Time is set-aside for pupils to discuss issues that allow them to explore their own views and feelings and those of others. Pupils work well together in twos and in groups and are beginning to understand the responsibilities of living in community, supporting those less fortunate than themselves both locally and internationally. The school works well to encourage pupils to appreciate their own and others' cultural traditions.

## Attendance

16. Attendance is **good**. Although the overall level of absence is above the national average, the school is taking action to improve attendance and punctuality. Good procedures are in place to monitor attendance. The school works effectively with the Education Welfare Officer where absence persists or is unexplained. Unauthorised absence is low. There have been no exclusions during the school year prior to this inspection.

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

Authorised absence	
School data:	6.3
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.1
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

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching is a strength. The curriculum covers all required aspects and is effectively enriched by a wide range of other activities. Provision for pupils' care and welfare and links with parents are very good.

#### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are **good** overall. They are satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 and 2. The quality of assessment is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the core subjects is good overall and leads to pupils making good progress in their learning.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well.
- Planning is good and leads to lessons that build steadily on what pupils have already learnt.
- Teaching ensures all pupils have equal opportunities to do well.
- Assessment is especially good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and is used well.
- Teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good, and on occasion, excellent.

#### Commentary

##### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	5	10	10	1	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons

17. Lessons are frequently very good, or even excellent. As a result, pupils make good overall gains in their learning and achieve well. They apply themselves well to the tasks they are set and develop a good capacity to work independently.
18. Throughout the school, teachers are good at managing pupils' behaviour. They set consistent high standards and pupils respond well to this. They know what is expected of them and behave well, remaining on task in lessons. As a result, lessons are calm and purposeful and little time is wasted.
19. Teaching in mathematics, reading, science and religious education are strengths and teachers are confident in these subjects and explain things very clearly in lessons so that it is easy for pupils to understand. As a result, lessons are interesting and exciting and boys and

girls from all groups concentrate well and work hard. They make good gains in their learning in these subjects. The quality of teaching in English is good overall, but variable. During inspection, for example, while the teaching of reading was consistently at least good, the teaching of writing ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. Although the unsatisfactory lesson observed was not taught by a member of the permanent staff, this variation leads to pupils making only satisfactory overall progress in developing their writing skills.

20. Teaching in the reception classes is always at least satisfactory and often good. On occasion it is very good. Reception teachers plan well together to ensure that all pupils have a broad curriculum, which effectively covers all six areas of learning for their age. Teaching in personal and social education is good and children make good gains in their learning as a result. In the other five areas of learning, boys and girls of all levels of ability make steady satisfactory gains in their learning overall.
21. Teaching and learning in ICT are satisfactory over time. Although individual lessons are frequently good, pupils in Year 2 only have access to the suite alternate weeks and this slows the progress they make in learning new skills. Teaching in music is good and is taken in each class in Year 1 and Year 2 by the co-ordinator. She has a good knowledge of the subject and ensures lessons are interesting and exciting. Pupils make good progress as they apply themselves well to these fun-filled times and produce good work as a result. However, opportunities for incidental music at other times varies class by class as other teachers do not all have great confidence to teach the subject.
22. The quality of teaching for the children with English as an additional language is good. Clear language targets are identified for these children. Because of the well planned and demanding teaching these children make good progress with their spoken English. In all activities they are well included by their class teachers who are sensitive to their needs. Two pupils with special educational needs receives valuable support from a specialist teacher who is bought in from the local education authority.
23. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teaching assistants plan flexibly to meet the needs of these pupils and make good use of the specific targets on their individual education plans when working with these pupils and also to monitor their progress. They ensure that pupils with special educational needs are productive and make good progress in acquiring new skills. Pupils' education plans have specific literacy, numeracy and behavioural targets, which are used well in planning and to monitor their progress. Teachers and teaching assistants operate as an effective team to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lesson activities.
24. Assessment is good. The procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science are good. On entry, children are assessed using a national assessment scheme and this, together with their assessed outcomes at the end of the Foundation Stage, is used to set targets for each pupil. Data from these assessments is put into a very good commercial, computerised assessment program. This successfully determines targets for each pupil and enables the school to monitor the progress of every pupil over time. This enables the school to successfully monitor pupil achievement by ethnic group, gender and by particular groups such as children in public care. During Years 1 and 2 targets are regularly reviewed and modified taking into consideration pupils' achievement in assessed pieces of work. This careful practice has resulted in raised standards in English, mathematics and science.
25. Lesson planning is good throughout the school. Information from assessment is used very effectively to ensure that lessons follow on from each other in a meaningful way. Teachers make sure they repeat and recap information for those who find learning difficult whilst providing challenge for those who are potentially higher attaining. As a result, pupils of all levels of ability have equality of opportunity and access to the full curriculum.

26. In addition, pieces of writing from each pupil are regularly assessed and robust targets for improvement emerge from these assessments. This is good practice and results in improved achievement in writing. The school analyses national test results and this exercise is used well when planning to raise standards. Good strategies to raise standards come out of this exercise. The last analysis of national test results revealed a weakness in boys' achievement in writing and this has resulted in training for teachers and a programme to motivate boys to write better. A new assessment scheme for ICT has only recently been introduced and it is too early to evaluate its impact on raising standards.
27. Assessment in religious education and the foundation subjects is at a much earlier stage of development and much work remains to be done. Most marking is good and informs pupils precisely of what they need to do to improve. However, marking is not consistent across all classes. The assessment of the needs of pupils with special educational needs is good and is used effectively to set targets on individual educational plans. There are very few pupils with English as an additional language and the method of assessment to identify their needs is new; evidence indicates though that their needs are identified well and the information from their assessments is used to set targets to improve their acquisition of the English language.

## The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum. The enrichment of the curriculum is **good**. Resources and accommodation are **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for extra-curricular activities is good and enhances and extends learning.
- The quality of support provided by the teaching assistants is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Some parts of the building are in a poor state of repair and there are no facilities for reception children to climb and develop upper body strength on a daily basis.

## Commentary

28. The curriculum is well planned and provides a satisfactory range of interesting activities for all groups of pupils. Overall, the quality of provision has been improved since the last inspection. The school has invested time and effort to ensure that now all pupils across a year group have the same provision. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including the provision for religious education.
29. All pupils have access to the full curriculum, including activities outside the school day. There is equality of opportunity for both boys and girls. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Provision for pupils with more complex needs is very good. The school has a positive, inclusive ethos. Support is provided for pupils where needed. The school makes a thorough analysis of pupils' performance and use of a range of intervention strategies to raise achievement. The teaching assistants contribute well to making the curriculum inclusive especially in their support of pupils with special educational needs. The curriculum prepares pupils satisfactorily for the next stage of their education. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good and is reflected in their good progress and standards achieved. Sensitive support enables these pupils to participate in all play activities. The cultural development of pupils with English as an additional language is promoted well. The selection of visual aids to support the teaching of these children is culturally relevant and of very good quality. However, there are few bi-lingual story-books available for them in the library
30. The school offers pupils many activities to extend their learning both during and after the school day. A range of visits, visitors, including theatre groups, are organised throughout the curriculum to enhance learning in a number of subjects. Pupils are able to enjoy football,

recorder, games and French clubs after the school day. Some pupils benefit from violin teaching.

31. The school has satisfactory accommodation. Classrooms are of uneven size with some smaller rooms in use. All classrooms allow the full curriculum to be taught. The school has recently refurbished the library to be an inviting child friendly learning area. However externally the building has some rotting panels. The school does not have good disability access to the building. This means it would have difficulty in accommodating partially ambulant or non-ambulant pupils.
32. The ICT suite is shared with the adjoining junior school, and so classes only have access on Thursday and Friday. Computers in the classrooms are used across the curriculum. The large hall accommodates assemblies, lunchtimes and performances comfortably. The playground provides for the basic needs of the Key Stage 1 pupils. The Foundation Stage play area lacks large climbing equipment for young children to learn to climb and develop upper body strength. Resources throughout the school are satisfactory. The resources to support pupils with special educational needs are good. There are reading books in large print for the pupil with visual impairment. Following advice from an occupational therapist a pupil with motor skills difficulties has been provided with an adapted keyboard to facilitate computer access.

### Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. Guidance and support for pupils and their involvement in the school's work and development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Arrangements for health and safety are very good.
- The school works very effectively with parents and other agencies to ensure pupils' welfare.
- Pupils have good relationships with teachers and other staff.
- There are good and improving opportunities for pupils to contribute their views.

### Commentary

33. The caring ethos of the school is a major strength. Great emphasis is placed on pupils' welfare and health and safety. As a result, all children feel nurtured and valued. Daily routines are well planned and staff work very effectively and sensitively to ensure that these include all pupils. Children are very well supervised at all times. School buildings and grounds are clean and well maintained.
34. Staff are very aware of pupils' dietary and medical needs and good procedures ensure that these are met. A good example of the school's commitment to health and safety is that all staff have attended basic first aid training to support the designated and fully trained first-aiders who are always on hand.
35. Pupils feel that teachers and other school staff are friendly and approachable and that they can go to them with any problems or concerns. Good relations with lunchtime assistants are promoted through the school's policy of linking these staff to classes. This is evident in the friendly, caring manner of communication between children and staff during the lunchtime break.
36. Throughout the school there are effective systems to monitor and track pupils' achievements. Pupils know how well they have achieved and know their next targets, which are based on regular assessment of progress. Most parents feel that their children are making good progress and are encouraged to become mature and independent as they move through the school.

37. Children starting school are effectively supported by a good induction programme. Prior to starting in reception, school visits are arranged for parents and children. School staff also visit the main pre-school providers, and children from local playgroups are invited to visit the school. The majority of children leaving at the end of Year 2 move on to the adjoining junior school. During the summer term, visits to the junior school are arranged for Year 2 pupils, and teachers for Year 2 and Year 3 meet and share information.
38. Pupils in all year groups help to devise their own class rules. These are displayed in all classrooms and children are proud of their contribution. Even the youngest pupils feel they play a part in deciding the rules, and older children explain the rules and why they have them very well. Further opportunities for pupils to know that their views matter are developing through the school council, which was formed at the beginning of the year. Pupils feel this is a very good way of allowing them to voice their thoughts and ideas. Older children in particular feel it helps them to contribute to how the school works. A good example of this is the 'no running' rule proposed by pupils for the long main school corridor.
39. The pastoral support of the pupils with English as an additional language is very good. The class teachers and the teaching assistants allocated to these pupils are very aware of their customs and religious beliefs.
40. There are very good links with external agencies such as the school's educational psychologist, the local authorities learning support team and their behavioural support team for pupils with special educational needs. However, the school has difficulty in obtaining speech therapy support in school.

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

The school has a **very good** partnership with parents, **effective** links with the local community and **satisfactory** overall links with other schools.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Partnership with parents is strong and effective.
- The good links with the community benefit both the school and local organisations.
- Links with the local junior school and other schools and colleges are developing well.

### **Commentary**

41. Parents' views expressed through the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting were very positive. Almost all parents feel that their child settles well, likes school and is making good progress. Parents are very supportive in a number of ways; regular and plentiful class helpers, volunteers for school outings and special projects such as the library computerisation. The contribution made by these helpers is highly valued by the school. The school shares an active and effective parents' association with the junior school. It plays an active role in involving parents and the community in school life and raising funds for much valued resources. This is an improvement on the good standards noted at the time of the previous inspection.
42. The school provides very good information on the curriculum and school activities and events, through both written communication and meetings for parents. The annual report includes information about progress in each subject, and a general comment on personal and social development. Whilst most parents are pleased with this information, a significant minority feels that they could be better informed about their child's progress. School plans for sharing pupil targets with parents could improve this information



43. The majority of parents feel that the school is approachable and that their suggestions and concerns are taken into account. The school promotes an 'open door' policy and the procedure for dealing with parental complaints is clear. At the end of the school day, teachers take pupils into the school playground for collection. This arrangement provides the opportunity for parents to raise any queries or concerns with class teachers. The head and deputy head are regularly on morning 'gate duty' which is also an opportunity for informal discussion with parents. The recently introduced 'Big Conversations' between parents and the head teacher are proving a useful forum for the school to consult with parents and canvass their views. Links with the parents of the pupils with English as an additional language are very good. There are good arrangements to involve parents and carers of pupils in the development of individual education plans for their children in accordance with the Code of Practice. Effective procedures are in place for the involvement of the parents of the pupils with special educational needs in their annual reviews.
44. The school knows the locality well and community involvement is valued and used well. Ministers from local churches frequently come into school and take morning assemblies. School involvement in projects, such as the St Alban's Church stained glass windows and the Millennium Tapestry, are good examples of how pupils, teachers and the community work together. The local Member of Parliament is very supportive, attending school functions and promoting initiatives such as a Gifted and Talented workshop for pupils from several local schools, which was organised and run by the school. Children are encouraged to think about the wider community through participation in local charity events, such as the local newspaper's Christmas Shoebox Appeal. Opportunities for children and parents to work together on family learning courses have been arranged by the school in partnership with outside organisations.
45. The exchange of information on pupils with the local junior school is satisfactory and there are suitable arrangements for transfer. Year 2 teachers for the year group liaise with junior school staff and joint training between the two schools will help to ensure continuity for pupils moving on. Staff work with parents and pre school providers to prepare children for school as they join in reception year, so that children's needs can be identified and planned for before they come to the school. Work with other primary schools helps to share expertise and best practice on curriculum subjects and school management.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management are good. The headteacher in an effective partnership with the deputy headteacher provides very good leadership. Subject leaders provide good leadership. Management is good. Governance is good and all statutory responsibilities are met.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The vision and aims are good.
- The role of the subject co-ordinator, although improved since the last inspection, is in need of further improvement.
- Management systems are good.

### **Commentary**

46. The headteacher and her deputy have formed a very effective partnership to guide the school. They lead by example. They are out in the playground to meet parents and carers first thing in the morning and again last thing at the end of the school day. They have improved staff morale since the last inspection by valuing them and involving them in important decision-making. The headteacher, in post since November 2002, has involved staff, governors and parents in shaping the aims of the school. There is now a shared vision that focuses on building pupils' confidence to learn and on raising standards.

47. Management has improved since the previous inspection. The weaknesses identified in management at that time have been largely addressed. Self-evaluation is good and this is a significant improvement since the time of the last inspection. The headteacher has developed the co-ordinators' role, particularly in the core subject areas, but recognises that further development is required. Monitoring is better than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Subject leaders for literacy, mathematics and science have observed lessons taught in their subjects but they are not yet sufficiently sharp at setting teachers targets for improvement. There remains room for improvement in the development of procedures for monitoring teaching and learning in the non-core subjects. The headteacher recognises this need and has successfully involved all staff in shaping the school improvement plan. The plan is an effective tool to manage change and to raise standards. Its strength lies in its flexibility.
48. The leadership and management of pupils with special educational needs are good because of the expertise and skills of the special needs co-ordinator. Systems for the management of these pupils are good, particularly the procedures in place for assessing their needs and for monitoring their progress. The policy for special educational needs meets the requirements of the new Code of Practice. The designated governor is enthusiastic, knowledgeable and supportive. The governors' procedures for informing parents that their child has special needs are secure and meet the requirements of the Code of Practice. However, the governors' annual report to parents is not sufficiently sharp in outlining the evaluation of the impact of the policy for pupils with special educational needs. The management of the provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. Management of the Foundation Stage is good and has resulted in clear schemes of work and policies for the teaching of young children.
49. Governors have a good level of awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are suitably involved in setting targets for school improvement. They are very supportive of the leadership and provide good levels of challenge.
50. Financial management is good. The budget is carefully managed to ensure that the quality of education provided for the pupils is good. Principles of best value are firmly adhered to in all aspects of school management and finances have been carefully planned to maintain staffing levels despite fluctuations in the birth rate locally in recent years. Falling numbers due to demographic change and the consequential fall in level of funding are major challenges that the school has to face. Governors have already begun to plan strategically to accommodate a falling role and consequent reduced budget. Funds allocated to support pupils with special educational needs are suitably targeted and contribute effectively to the good progress made by these pupils. The school adds to the amount allocated for supporting pupils with special educational needs from its main budget
51. Performance management is good. One of the headteacher's targets for development is to re-write the performance management policy to ensure that the valued teaching assistants are included in performance management from next September. Continuing staff development needs emerge from the performance management meetings and focus on raising achievement for pupils. Teaching assistants are already being developed and have opportunities to be accredited in nationally recognised courses. The significant barrier to achievement faced by the headteacher is the recruitment of quality staff. She has successfully avoided placing a series of supply teachers in front of pupils by recruiting teachers from overseas. However, this has placed an additional strain on the headteacher because considerable time has had to go into the supplementary training of these teachers.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	669,491
Total expenditure	657,667
Expenditure per pupil	2,706

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	59,850
Balance carried forward to the next	71,674

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

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

52. Provision for children in the reception classes in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**. It provides children with a sound basis for their education. Attainment on entry to school is broadly in line with that expected overall. However, while most of the children have attended pre-school play-groups and nurseries, many still have not learnt to work as part of a team, and to take turns and share toys. These are new skills for many and standards in these aspects of learning are below those normally attained for many children on entry. Reception teachers plan well together to ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language have full access to a broad curriculum, which effectively covers all six areas of learning for their age.
53. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good and have resulted in clear schemes of work and good levels of consistency in teaching practise between the three classes. Assessment is good and the information gained is used well to match work to each child's specific needs. Resources are satisfactory overall. Standards are broadly similar to the findings of the previous inspection.

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

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

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

- Children behave well.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for children to take responsibility for decisions and actions.
- Relationships are good.

#### **Commentary**

54. Teaching in this aspect of the curriculum is good. All staff who work in the Foundation Stage share a common set of high expectations of the behaviour of the children in their care. Rules are clear and fair and consistently enforced. As a result, children quickly learn to know exactly what is expected of them and how they should behave. Their achievement is good. They develop good levels of confidence and self esteem and are likely to attain the goals expected of children by the time they move into Year 1. For example, in a lesson using computers, children were observed taking turns good-naturedly and humming and singing quietly as they worked.
55. Teachers plan well to allow children good opportunities to make choices and to consider what others think. For example, they talk about what they like about their classroom and what they would like to change. Taking turns to speak and to listen to each other. As a result, boys and girls from all groups make good progress in learning that their views are important, but that so are the views of others. They learn to cope well with their own personal needs and to take due regard to health issues, such as washing hands after using the toilet, or putting on coats and hats before venturing outside in cold weather. The quality of learning, which is good, reflects the good teaching.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of children can distinguish and say the initial and final sounds of short words.
- Teachers match work well to children's interests.
- Some whole group discussion sessions are too long for the youngest children to sustain concentration.
- Many children lack confidence in speaking out in front of the class.
- Higher attaining children learn to sound simple words out.

### Commentary

56. The quality of teaching and learning in this aspect of the curriculum are satisfactory. Teachers carefully choose books and themes for the work they set that will appeal to boys and girls. For example, work based around stories of castles, where children made up stories of their own playing with a range of different plastic figures representing characters who might live in a castle. Some children delight in making up stories choosing fantasy characters of wizards and princesses, while others choose more mundane characters and animals such as cats and horses. Teachers give pupils regular suitable opportunities to learn about the sounds different letters make and to learn to listen to the individual sounds in words. Most children can distinguish the different sounds in simple three letter words and some higher attaining children make good progress in learning to sound out a few words. However, on occasion the focus on this work in whole-class sessions is too long for younger and less able children, who start to daydream and examine their hands or the carpet, for example. Children's speaking and listening skills are broadly average overall although a large proportion of them are reluctant to speak out in large group situations, such as in front of the class or in assembly, tending to just listen and to whisper or mumble short answers if asked directly. Overall, children are likely to attain the goals expected of their age by the time they transfer into Year 1 and their achievement is satisfactory.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have suitable opportunities to learn to count a range of objects.
- Some children guess rather than count.
- Children learn to sort items into different groups.

### Commentary

57. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, and teachers provide children with suitable opportunities to learn to count and to develop mathematical vocabulary. They learn to apply developing mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, when looking at taste they sort different food into two groups, those they like and those they dislike. They learn some of the different ways they can record their findings, as their teacher directs them to stick their picture of their favourite meal to produce a bar chart. In counting, children learn to correspond the numbers they say with the items they are counting with suitable skill, although some still become easily confused. For example, saying that a pig has three legs, when asked by their teacher. Teachers take suitable opportunities to teach children about time, number, and mathematical vocabulary. For example, giving two minutes warning before the class comes together, so that children learn about different lengths of time, or sorting items into different

colours and shapes. Children are likely to attain the goals expected of them by the time they move into Year 1 and their achievement is satisfactory.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All children have suitable opportunities to learn to use computers.
- Teachers link work well to developing children's vocabulary.
- Good opportunities are given to children to learn to design and make things.

### **Commentary**

58. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and children are likely to attain the goals expected by the time they transfer into Year 1. Achievement is satisfactory. Teachers provide children with a suitable range of different experiences to learn about the world in which they live. When talking about the story of Little Red Riding Hood, children drew a "map" to show the route to Grandma's house. Each week the children get opportunity to use the computer suite situated in the junior school. This ensures they all get a suitable chance to learn some of the things computers can do, such as writing the different letters of the alphabet. On these occasions there is suitable challenge for younger children, who "peck" out letters slowly, but the small number of higher attaining children who are already skilled at finding their way around the keyboard are not always given suitably demanding extra tasks and so learn little new. Teachers pay good attention to developing children's vocabulary in work linked to communication, language and literacy. For example, in a lesson on finding out about tastes, the teacher encourages children to use a range of different words to describe what they think about the crisps, such as *soggy*, *crunchy*, and *cheesy*.
59. Children are given good opportunities to learn to think carefully about making things that will perform different functions. Their teachers make good use of opportunities to act as scribe for the children in these lessons, writing what they will make and how they will make it. As a result, it is possible for the children to take part in good, rigorous evaluation of how well their model houses and figures with moving parts meet the design brief they have been given, which enables them to make good progress in their learning in these lessons. Teachers take suitable opportunities to teach children about different celebrations, such as Easter. However, the choice of story-book used in one lesson to explain why Easter eggs are given contained concepts and vocabulary which was too advanced for some younger or lower attaining children to benefit fully.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children develop satisfactory levels of skill in riding tricycles and other wheeled toys.
- Teachers ensure that good opportunities are given for children to learn to grasp and manipulate small objects.
- There is very little opportunity for children to develop upper body strength and extend lung capacity.

## Commentary

60. Teaching of this area of the curriculum is good and teachers ensure that all children have regular opportunities to practise their developing physical skills in the classroom, hall and in the reception outdoor area. When working outside, children learn to move forward, backwards and sideways with care, avoiding obstacles and other children. They learn to translate these skills effectively to riding tricycles and other wheeled toys and are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals for their age, by the time they move into Year 1. However, there is no opportunity for children to have daily opportunity to climb and swing by their arms, as the school does not have the suitable equipment. As a result, progress and achievement in physical development is only satisfactory overall, as children cannot build upper body strength and agility. Teachers do, however make the most of the opportunities available, for example in the school hall children to learn to balance on low beams and to dance and move freely.
61. In class, teachers provide many good opportunities for children to learn to manipulate small objects and develop hand and eye co-ordination. They colour, write and draw, use scissors and other simple tools and play with small construction toys. All of these activities benefit them and they make steady progress towards attaining the expected goals for their age by the time they transfer into Year 1.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn to use their imagination to conjure stories.
- Teachers provide suitable daily opportunities for children to act out different roles.
- Work is linked well to literacy work.

## Commentary

62. Teaching is satisfactory and children are provided with a good range of suitable opportunities to use their imaginations and to make things. As a result, they make steady, satisfactory progress in their learning, achievement is satisfactory and they are likely to attain the Early Goals for their age by the time they transfer into Year 1. For example, children act out the story of Goldilocks, taking the roles of the three bears, on other occasions they use puppets to retell stories, taping their words to play back later. They play with the toy castle, making up stories with the various characters, sometimes inter-acting with other children to develop a tale. Children have suitable opportunity to dance, sing and play with dough and paint to express themselves using a range of media. For example, making a fabric collage of Red Riding Hood's journey
63. Teachers make the most of opportunities to use imaginative play to develop children's skills in other areas. For example, when some children playing at being the three bears decided that all the porridge had been eaten, they were encouraged to make a "shopping list" to develop their writing skills, awareness that print carries meaning and that it can be useful in daily life.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

### ENGLISH

The provision for English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment in reading is above the national average.
- Teaching and learning are good overall.
- Some inconsistencies remain across the school in the teaching of writing.
- Assessment is good.
- Teachers are not always set sharp enough targets to improve their teaching.
- Leadership is good.

#### Commentary

64. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2003 standards attained were above the national average in reading and in line with the national average in writing compared with all schools and with similar schools. This is a significant improvement on the test results reported on at the time of the previous inspection. Inspection evidence shows that standards are above average in reading by Year 2. This reflects good achievement. In writing, standards by Year 2 are in line with the national average, but very close to being above. This shows at least satisfactory achievement. A few Year 2 pupils are not consistent with their writing and sit on the boundary of a higher and lower level. They move in and out of a higher level even within the same piece of writing. One was observed in a lesson to write two sentences using interesting words, which were spelt correctly, a capital letter to start the sentences and a full stop to finish the sentences followed by writing another sentence with the same words incorrectly spelt, no capital letter at the beginning and no full stop at the end. The school has not robustly targeted and 'hammered away' at such pupils to ensure that they become secure in the higher level of which they are capable.
65. In speaking and listening standards attained are in line with the national average by Year 2. Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with English as an additional language by Year 2 achieve well and are amongst the best speakers and listeners in their year group because of the focussed support they have received throughout their time in school. The best speaking and listening occurs when teachers put pupils into small groups to share their ideas, for example, about how to start a story, and then gathers their ideas together. By doing this, teachers successfully develop pupils thinking and also their speaking and listening through the use of effective and open questions. However, the practice is not always consistent. In some lessons, questions are too closed and so pupils give one word answers and they are not always encouraged to develop what they say into full sentences. Effective use is made of the end of lessons and assemblies to encourage speaking and listening but many pupils speak very quietly, and a few mumble, often making it very difficult for others to hear them. When this happens, some teachers gently encourage the pupils to speak up but others do not. In an unsatisfactory lesson in Year 1, the teacher simply said 'pardon' when she did not hear what a pupil with a very soft voice said and moved on quickly. On this occasion, the achievement of that pupil in speaking and listening was unsatisfactory.
66. Because of the good strategies in place to support teaching and learning in reading, standards are above the national average by Year 2. Achievement for all pupils is good. As the result of very effective support from a teaching assistant using a specific reading programme, pupils with special educational needs make rapid gains in their reading. They have successfully developed the skill of splitting words up, using their learning of phonics to read unknown words. The school has been particularly successful in working in an effective partnership with parents to get them to support their children in reading and this has contributed effectively to



improved standards. Teachers inspire their pupils with a great enthusiasm for reading and, because pupils have a love for books, they achieve well. High attaining pupils read expressively. They understand the use of speech marks and italics in text and modulate their voices accordingly when reading.

67. Standards of attainment in writing by Year 2 are in line with the national average, but are very close to being above. Overall, girls are above average, but boys are on the cusp of being above average and in line with average. Achievement is satisfactory overall, but could be better. The school has recognised this through its own self-evaluation and the literacy co-ordinator has attended a training course aimed at raising boys' achievement in writing. However, part of the problem lies in inconsistency in the teaching of writing. In a Year 2 lesson, where the teacher gathered wonderful ideas from the pupils and used their ideas to structure a couple of sentences on the flip chart before sending the pupils off to their tables to write the beginning of the story, the pupils produced some lovely pieces of writing with good punctuation and spelling. One wrote: '*... the greedy, hungry lion*'. Another wrote: '*Once upon a time in the scary, deep, pich blacke forest lived 2 cheeky moneys*'. But in another lesson where the teacher did not use the flip chart to demonstrate a sentence and did not give the pupils enough time to complete their writing, a high attaining pupil did not do as well as she was capable of doing, and a few lower attaining pupils did not use capital letters to start their sentences.
68. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning ranges from unsatisfactory to very good, with the great majority being at least good. This inconsistency results in standards in writing being average overall. The best teaching is delivered at a cracking pace, expectations are high, very effective use is made of questions to develop pupils speaking and listening skills and teachers demonstrate good writing to their pupils. In these lessons, pupils' achievement in speaking, listening and writing is good. In an unsatisfactory lesson, taken by a temporary teacher, insufficient use is made of open questions to extend pupils thinking. Speaking and listening were unsatisfactory and because the teacher's writing was 'scruffy, the pupils did not have a good model on which to build their own writing and consequently did not do as well as they were capable of doing.
69. The subject leader has had responsibility for the co-ordination of literacy for less than a year. Leadership is good. The subject leader inspires teachers to take on good ideas. Management is satisfactory. Although the quality of teaching and learning is monitored, teachers are not set sufficiently sharp targets to improve their quality of teaching. Test results are evaluated and strategies emerge from this exercise to raise standards. In the development plan there is a priority which focuses on raising boys' achievement in writing. Assessment has improved considerably since the last inspection and is used well to set individual literacy targets for each pupil to enable them to improve. Better use is made of computers to support pupils with their writing than at the time of the last inspection. Overall, the quality of provision in English is better than at the time of the last inspection, but the co-ordinator recognises that some inconsistencies in practice throughout the school need to be ironed out to raise standards further.

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

70. Language and literacy across the curriculum are good. In science, pupils' recording of their results following experiments is often above average. There is some good evidence of instructional writing in design and technology and, in this aspect of writing, boys do as well as girls. Although there are examples of extended writing in history and religious education, the pieces scrutinised throw up inconsistencies. The same pupils dipped in and out of higher and lower levels and this was not always 'picked up' by the teacher. Reading for information is above average across all subjects and good use is made of non-fiction books, CD ROMS and the Inter-net for this activity. Speaking and listening is more variable across classes and subjects, but it is satisfactory overall.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it well to ensure good learning.
- Pupils make good progress and standards are above those expected nationally.
- Assessment data is carefully analysed to identify areas to improve and set challenging targets.
- Teachers plan together providing equality of access to all pupils.

### Commentary

71. In 2002 national assessment tests for seven year olds, attainment was above average when compared to all schools and also to similar schools. In 2003, attainment dipped to in line with the average when compared with all schools and to similar schools. In Year 2, standards seen during the inspection are above those expected nationally and achievement is good. Pupils are encouraged to use mathematical vocabulary accurately. There has been a focused approach to the teaching and learning in mathematics. Pupils know their number bonds well and understand the value of each digit in two and three digit numbers. ICT skills are used well in mathematics lessons.
72. Teaching overall is good. The good teaching leads to good learning by pupils from all groups. In an excellent lesson observed, the teacher had outstanding classroom organisation for a class with some challenging pupils. Stimulating methods of teaching were used. The teaching caught the pupils' interest, linking learning to everyday things. The learning objective was clear. The lesson moved at a good pace, with a sharp, enjoyable, mental oral start and very good inter-active learning. Work was at a level to meet each pupil's individual needs and ICT was used to good effect. There was very good support for the pupils with special educational needs and very good behavioural strategies used throughout, with positive reinforcement. Pupils' targets are clearly in place. At the end of the lesson, the teacher returned to focus on the learning objective and consolidate learning. The pupils were able to evaluate their own learning. A stimulating learning mathematical environment had been created. The teacher was supported by two well trained, focussed, teaching assistants. On going, assessment was taking place. In classes where a minority of pupils exhibit challenging behaviour, teaching assistants work well with small groups or individuals. As they have good knowledge of the children's needs and understand the focus of the lesson, the learning of these pupils is not hindered, nor is the learning of the other pupils. High achieving pupils are well challenged, especially in Year 2. Homework provided regularly for the pupils is often open ended, giving opportunities for all pupils to be challenged.
73. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Mathematics has a high profile in the school. Teachers planning and evaluation and lessons are monitored. Teachers have been provided with guidance to show a progression of strategies and mathematical language to be used in each year group. The co-ordinator has been involved in analysing data to identify the priorities the school should focus on. She has managed very successfully to ensure that all staff throughout the school implement the strategies to achieve these priorities. Very clear targets, well related to National Curriculum levels, are set for all pupils and these are regularly monitored to ensure pupils are making progress. This monitoring has been effective in identifying the potential of pupils to reach higher levels and in setting more challenging work for these pupils, all of which is contributing to raising standards.
74. The subject is well resourced. There is good work on display emphasising a whole-school approach to problem solving. The school has organised workshops for parents in mathematics and explained the use of mental mathematics. On another occasion, teachers discussed the use of the mathematics apparatus with the parents. This has given parents

greater opportunity to be involved in their children's learning. The school has made good improvement in mathematics since the time of the last inspection. Teaching and learning are now good.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

75. Pupils' numeracy skills are used satisfactorily across the curriculum and make an appropriate contribution to their learning in other subjects. There is a clear document giving written links to each subject. Pupils have taken part in an architectural workshop. There is evidence in the way pupils understanding of shape is used when drawing patterns and measuring accurately when designing and making. Timelines are in evidence in most classrooms linked to the pupils' historical development.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good opportunities to investigate and question how things work.
- Assessment is providing an accurate picture of what each pupil has learnt and can do.
- The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of standards throughout the school.

### **Commentary**

76. Standards are currently above those expected at the end of Year 2 and pupils from all groups achieve well. In the most recent end of key stage assessments in 2003, results were above average overall and the proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 3 was well above average. When compared to similar schools, the results were above average. Pupils are given regular, good opportunities to work out how they will test their theories and to learn to question and find out about the world around them. As a result, pupils of all levels of ability do well. Potentially higher attaining pupils work at levels above those expected nationally, sorting materials by their properties and checking how a range of materials change when they are heated, for example. They select suitable methods to record their findings, using written explanations, tables and pictures and diagrams as appropriate.
77. The quality of teaching and learning are good. As a result, pupils of all levels of ability and from all groups, including those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good steady gains in their knowledge and understanding. Teachers work effectively to maintain pupils' interest and enthusiasm and to make lessons enjoyable. They have suitably high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response. As a result, pupils behave well as they work. They pay attention to what they are told and concentrate well. Planned opportunities for pupils to experience awe and wonder are few, however, and so the subject is not used as well as it might be and its contribution to the development pupils' spiritual development is only satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are given good quality support and make good progress towards their learning targets. Teachers make suitable use of information and communication technology to develop pupils' skills and knowledge, for example in producing graphs to illustrate their findings.
78. The leadership and management of the subject are good. As a result of the audit of standards, there has been a school focus on the subject. The co-ordinator has monitored planning and pupils' work in books and identified the areas of strength and the areas that require improvement. This has had a positive impact on raising standards. The scheme of work has been reviewed giving high profile to practical activities and assessment has been developed and is now good. Assessment is regular and linked effectively to the topics that have just been taught. The co-ordinator uses this information efficiently to evaluate the subject and monitor pupils' progress across the whole school, analysing which parts of the subject pupils find easy

and which parts need more work. A current focus is looking to ensure that lessons meet the needs of all pupils, providing challenge and support where needed.

79. There has been a significant improvement in standards since the time of the previous inspection, which judged that pupils were doing less well than they could be. Standards at that time were well below national expectations and a significant number of pupils were judged to be underachieving.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

The provision for ICT is **satisfactory**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is satisfactory, but could be better if pupils had more frequent access to the computer suite.
- By Year 2 attainment is in line with national expectations.
- Pupils with physical disabilities make very good progress in their development of ICT skills because they have their own equipment.
- The teaching of ICT across subjects is satisfactory and improving as teachers gain in confidence.

### **Commentary**

80. Pupils develop their computer skills across a range of subjects. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection and reflects the fact that teachers are more confident in the use of ICT to support their teaching.
81. By Year 2, pupils successfully enter programs on computers following instructions from their teachers. They are able to select a program, complete their tasks, save their work, send it to the printer and log off independently. Their control, using the mouse to give the computer instructions to change the information on a data-base is satisfactory. Having gathered data about favourite foods they can use a computer program to construct graphs to display their data pictorially. Year 1 pupils can control programmable toys and they understand that instructions have to be entered correctly on the computer to draw shapes on the screen.
82. Good use is made of a computer suite which is shared with the juniors, but it has its limitations. Lessons are well planned, objectives are shared with the pupils and the teacher gives good demonstrations and so pupils make satisfactory progress in their development of ICT skills. However, because pupils in Year 2 only access this suite once a fortnight they forget important skills learnt between one session and the next. This constraint on access impedes their learning, particularly when skills such as clicking on record to find the information required, are not re-enforced back in their classroom. The computer suite has been designed for junior children and so infant pupils have to strain on their stools in order to see the demonstrations made by the teacher and do not have stability as they sit to work as their feet do not touch the floor. The headteacher of the infant school is nervous to share a colour printer in the suite because her budget is very tight and she is worried that work will be printed out unnecessarily and run up a large bill. These unsatisfactory factors mean that pupils' achievement in ICT is satisfactory and not good. Pupils with additional special educational needs (physical disability) make rapid gains in their development of word processing because they have the use of ICT equipment to support them with all of their writing activities.
83. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new in post, but she is supported by a very able teaching assistant. A new commercial scheme has just been

launched and it is too early to judge its impact. Good assessment is integral to this scheme and it involves pupils in self-assessment. As yet, the co-ordinator has not monitored the quality of teaching and learning and this is a weakness because she has not seen the strengths and weaknesses to inform planning to raise achievement. Standards are broadly similar to those noted by the previous inspection.

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

84. The use of computers across subjects is satisfactory and has a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Teachers are more confident to use ICT to support their teaching. In history and art and design pupils access the Internet and CD ROMs to find out information. Year 2 pupils write Emails to Samuel Pepys. One pupil wrote a very interesting question: 'Why did you **bought** the cheese?' Pupils improve their spelling in English lessons as they use a word programme to self-correct their writing. Digital cameras are used to record findings in science. In art and design pupils demonstrate good control as they use computer programs to draw borders around their work. Much of this work is carried out independently by pupils, who have access to two computers in their classrooms. They are confident and competent in using them, but they type using one finger and this does slow them down.

### **HUMANITIES**

85. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make secure judgements about the overall provision in history and geography. Pupils work was scrutinised, photographic evidence seen and discussions held with pupils. One history and one geography lesson were observed.
86. From the evidence of work seen, including analysis of pupils' work, it is likely that standards in **geography** and **history** are in line with expectations. In the lesson seen in history, pupils were gaining an understanding of what is meant by an eyewitness account and gaining knowledge of the Great Fire of London from Samuel Pepys' accounts. They were gaining a suitable sense of the passage of time. In geography, good use is made of the local area. In a Year 1 class, after having completed a traffic survey, pupils express views about making the area safe and a letter was being constructed to the local Member of Parliament. This was a good development of communication skills. Good use is made of simple maps for pupils to study and draw their own. Teachers plan co-operatively to ensure equality of access to all pupils. There is limited development in providing work to suit individual pupils' needs. Assessment is developing in geography with some levelling of pupils' work. Assessment in history has not yet been developed across the whole school. In geography, planning is under review and the role of the co-ordinator developed with training and visits. Around the school is evidence of a breadth of teaching in history and geography, with interesting methods employed. Some good extended writing is in evidence. Good cross-curricular links exist between geography and history and other subjects across the curriculum, in particular literacy, art and design and ICT. In both subjects, learning is enhanced through a range of opportunities such as visits and visitors to the school.

### **Religious education**

The provision for religious education is **good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good. Some is excellent.
- Achievement is good.
- The subject makes a valuable contribution to raising pupils' awareness of cultural diversity.
- There is a good range of artefacts to arouse pupils' curiosity. They are used effectively to develop pupils' awareness of spirituality.

## Commentary

87. Attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2. This demonstrates good achievement because when pupils enter school, their knowledge of Bible stories and their understanding of why a church is a special place for Christians are weak.
88. By Year 2, pupils have a good grasp of Christianity and Judaism at a level appropriate to their age. They have also grasped that Christians believe that people can help Jesus be a friend to other people in the world today. They recall some of the stories Jesus told and miracles he performed at considerable depth. Because their programme is supported by a visit to the church they can accurately name some of the main features found in a church. They describe the role of the priest and recognise the priest as a person who does a special job. Because of a very good sensory approach to teaching based on smell, taste and touch, Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of how Jews celebrate important festivals and why they are so important to them. Given the commitment to raising pupils' awareness of cultural diversity the meaning behind the festival of Diwali is taught well. Through role-play, the pupils experience excitement in learning and this makes a valuable contribution to deepening their understanding, for example, of the Rama and Sita story.
89. Teaching ranges from excellent to satisfactory. The best teaching makes very effective use of questions to deepen pupils' thinking, for example, about the meaning of Easter. Delivered at a cracking pace and based on stunningly good subject knowledge excellent teaching uses visual cues to arouse pupils' interest and curiosity. In these lessons, pupils' knowledge and understanding is deepened, for example, as to why the Easter story is so important to Christians, but in addition, pupils are challenged to reflect on how Jesus' friends must have felt when he was put to death on the cross. The introduction of artefacts to surprise the pupils arouses their spiritual awareness. Expressions on their faces and their sounds of 'Wow' revealed the delight they experienced at finding a cotton wool fluffy baby chick inside the eggs handed out to them by their teacher. Where otherwise satisfactory teaching has shortcomings, such as in a lesson observed in a reception class, the story used was too difficult for all pupils to understand its meaning.
90. Because of the sensory approach to teaching pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all lessons and so their achievement in terms of experience of awe and wonder and their personal development is good. They have just as good an understanding of what it means to be special as do their peers as a result of the skilful use of artefacts by the teacher. Teaching makes a valuable contribution to pupils' literacy skills. In an excellent Year 2 lesson, the teacher, having skilfully gathered ideas from the pupils, used their ideas to model a short piece of writing on the flip chart before sending them away to write about Easter. As a result, pupils in the class produced some very good pieces of writing, using powerful descriptive words and well-punctuated sentences.
91. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has developed teachers' confidence in teaching the subject. Having produced a good scheme of work based on the locally agreed syllabus, she has ensured that it has been imaginatively resourced. An assessment scheme to assess those more precious moments in the subject is being piloted and it is planned for this to be reviewed shortly. However, the role of the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and so share good practice does not happen, and this is an area for improvement identified by the school. Standards have improved since the previous inspection, when they were judged to be broadly in line with national expectations.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

92. It was not possible to gather enough evidence for art and design, design technology and physical education to make secure judgements about the provision in these subjects.

93. The standard of work seen in **art and design** was above the nationally expected level. The teaching and learning in both art lessons seen were very good. Pupils enjoy art-work and use a wide range of different media. There is no established system for recording what pupils achieve in relation to the National Curriculum levels. Pupils are encouraged to look at their own work to see how it could be improved and appreciate the efforts of others. Planning indicates that the requirements of the National Curriculum are being followed. The work seen around the school and that kept as a folio of evidence showed a suitable range of art-work, a focus on work of a good range of different artists and some good links with other subjects, for example in making the mosaic for the front entrance to school.
94. In **physical education**, teaching was satisfactory and standards were in line with expectations in the two lessons seen. Year 1 pupils are developing control to support their ball skills. Year 2 pupils show enthusiasm and satisfactory skills in gymnastics. In both lessons, pupils were given suitable opportunity to evaluate their own performance and that of others. Clear safety procedures are in place for which the pupils have a good understanding and follow the safety rules carefully. A new scheme of work has been introduced into the school, which provides thorough detailed guidance for teachers. It has yet to become embedded. There is a varied curriculum with equality of access for both boys and girls. Teachers plan co-operatively to make sure pupils in the same year group learn the same things. However there are no assessment procedures in place. Pupils have good opportunity to attend a weekly football club.
95. No **design and technology** lessons were seen during the inspection, but examples of pupils' work in books and on walls show that they learn to plan their designs carefully from an early age. The standard of work seen was above that expected by the end of Year 2, and pupils' achievements are good. Pupils select the materials they want to use, join them efficiently using a range of different methods, including split pins and evaluate their finished product suggesting possible improvements. Their skills are effectively built upon through a carefully thought out curriculum. Pupils make puppets, using a range of skills including sewing and sticking fabric. They experience food technology when making fruit salads and sandwiches, taking care to note hygiene rules. Very good links are made with other subjects, particularly literacy and science, when pupils write about what they have made.

## Music

The provision for music is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The music co-ordinator plans interesting and exciting lessons for all classes in Years 1 and 2.
- Not all teachers are confident in teaching the subject.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument.
- Music makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

### Commentary

96. Boys and girls from all groups and of all levels of ability attain standards above those expected by the end of Year 2 and their achievements are good. They have a good knowledge of musical terminology and symbols and recognise that "P" stands for *piano* and is Italian for quietly. Older higher attaining pupils understand terms such as *crescendo* and *forte*. Pupils explore different ways to make sounds with their voices and successfully alter them so that they are short or long. They listen to tapes of music and are able to recognise whether the sounds in these compositions are short or long. Singing is tuneful and clear. For example, in assemblies pupils sing to a high standard with obvious enjoyment.

97. The quality of teaching and learning are good. The co-ordinator, who teaches Years 1 and 2 for music, is a skilled and enthusiastic musician with good levels of knowledge of the subject and of the pupils she teaches. As a consequence, lessons are well-planned and organised. They pay good attention to the different aspects of composing, performing and appraisal of different forms of music. The co-ordinator uses her skills very effectively, for example, to teach pupils musical terminology and notation. A direct effect of this good teaching is in the enjoyment pupils have in their music lessons and the good progress they make in their learning as a result. They enjoy playing instruments together to represent, for example, a river, jungle or stormy mountain-top, and they enjoy performing their compositions for the rest of the class. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' developing self esteem and cultural development, as well as to their musical skills. However, other teachers do not all have the same levels of confidence and knowledge in teaching the subject, and so rely totally on the co-ordinator's skills.
98. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of her subject and also of the standards the different classes achieve. However, there is no formal method of assessing individual pupils' progress. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument, and many boys and girls learn the recorder or the violin. There is a good range and amount of high quality instruments and this enables every pupil to select and play an instrument during lessons. The co-ordinator supplements these with other less usual instruments, such as sea-shells in a bag or bottles of water, which the pupils use enthusiastically in their compositions. The high standards noted by the previous inspection have been effectively maintained.

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

99. Personal, social and health education and citizenship were sampled. Two lessons were seen. Pupils' work was considered and a discussion was held with the subject leader. Insufficient evidence could be gathered during the inspection to make a secure provision judgement.
100. The subject is at an early stage of development. There is a draft policy. A recent audit of citizenship across subjects and school activities has revealed that there is considerable good practice but there is not yet a whole school scheme of work. The programme lacks coherence as yet. Governors have decided not to deliver a programme of sex education. Currently the subject leader is considering the government's recent guidance on drugs education.
101. The subject is delivered as discrete lessons in Year 1, and Year 2 has a regular *circle time*, when pupils take turns to express their views on a range of topics. In the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their pets and consider how they can improve their local environment. The school council made the decision that it would be a good idea to have more toys to play with outside during the lunch hour. This has been acted upon by the deputy headteacher and has led to improved behaviour during the lunchtime. Pupils are involved in fun charity events and greatly enjoyed participating in a sponsored bounce to raise funds for the school library. They have supported the planning and co-ordination of shoe-boxes filled with toys and important necessities such as good quality soap for children in Romania. These activities make a valuable contribution to their awareness of citizenship. The further development of this area of learning is a priority on the school improvement plan.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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