

## INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. ANDREW'S CE AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Horsham

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 126030

Headteacher: Mrs Jill Dawson

Lead inspector: Mrs Jean Harding

Dates of inspection: 24th – 26th February 2004

Inspection number: 257571

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary School
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	120
School address:	Nuthurst Horsham West Sussex
Postcode:	RH13 6LH
Telephone number:	01403 891286
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Judy Smith
Date of previous inspection:	1 <sup>st</sup> June 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This small primary school serves a prosperous village community on the outskirts of Horsham. Almost all pupils are white, and none speak English as their second language. Hardly any pupils are eligible for free school meals. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class varies widely with each group joining, but it is at least average and often above. However, very high levels of mobility mean that groups are not the same over their time in school. Over the whole school an average percentage of pupils have special educational needs, but very few have needed a statement of special educational needs over the last few years. There are five classes, four of them mixed-age classes, including the youngest class with reception children in a class with a few pupils in Year 1. The teacher for this class was absent for the period of the inspection.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21378	Mrs Jean Harding	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage curriculum Science Art and design History Music Personal, social and health education Special educational needs
1305	Dr Brian Rance	Lay inspector	
19302	Mr Rod Braithwaite	Team inspector	English Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Design and technology Geography English as an additional language

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education for its pupils and gives **satisfactory** value for money. The achievement of children in the reception class is satisfactory. Attainment is above average by the time pupils leave the school, but only average in Years 1, 2 and 3. Achievement is currently satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2, but it has not been so in the recent past, due to unsatisfactory assessment of their needs and some unsatisfactory teaching. The achievement of pupils by the end of Year 6 is good, with faster progress as they move through the school. The difference in the progress is due to variation in the teaching, which is satisfactory, overall, but very good in the top class. The curriculum is satisfactory, but is innovative in the top class. The current leadership is good and the management is satisfactory, but this has not been the case until recently.

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

- Pupils achieve well in the classes for Years 4,5 and 6. Progress in the top class for Years 5 and 6 is very good.
- The systems for the assessment of attainment on entry to the reception class and as pupils join Year 1 are ineffective, leading to low expectations for some pupils.
- The good leadership of the new headteacher, deputy headteacher and the governors has led to good improvement over the last year.
- Although currently satisfactory, there have been weaknesses in the teaching in Years 1 and 2 since the previous inspection, leading to significant under-achievement by pupils in this class.
- The curriculum for non-core subjects is not planned well enough, especially in classes with split year-groups.
- The high quality of the care, guidance, support and good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development, combined with the strong Christian ethos, has ensured that pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave well.
- Links with the parents and the community are very good.

**There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection**, but this has been patchy and there was a significant decline in pupils' attainment in Years 1 and 2 since the previous inspection, for the reasons given above. This regression has now been halted. In the five years until 2003 the school did not address the deterioration in the teaching and curriculum well enough. There has been a satisfactory response to the key issues raised at the previous inspection and good improvement in other aspects such as pupils' care and attendance. There is still one statutory requirement not met. The library is not as good as was reported in 1998. The planning is still not good enough to ensure pupils' equal opportunities in the curriculum or to give pupils a good multi-cultural perspective, although some satisfactory progress has been made to provision for cultural development. The current satisfactory management ensures improvement.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Children start in reception with at least average skills and understanding, and often above average. The deficits in the school's procedures have led to assumptions that children's attainment, overall, was below average. Children's **achievement is satisfactory** as most **attain the goals they are expected to reach by the time they leave reception, and many exceed these goals**, especially in their language and personal development.

**The overall standards attained by pupils in Years 1 and 2 are currently as expected** with a significant number of pupils working below their capability because there have been incorrect evaluation of their skills on entry to Year 1. The unsatisfactory use of assessment from reception has been a serious weakness that has affected pupils' attainment. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is currently satisfactory and their rate of progress is now faster than over the last two years. Standards are average in English, maths and science, but pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. Standards in other subjects are average. The results in the national tests at the end of Year 2

have been low over the last two years, especially in reading and writing, and very low in comparison with similar schools; results should be better this year. Care is needed when interpreting results as groups are small and an increasing number of pupils with special needs distorts the statistics.

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

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those that have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.*

**Pupils’ attainment is generally above average by the end of Year 6; their achievement is good, overall, but satisfactory in Year 3 and often very good in Year 6.** Standards of speaking and listening are well above those expected. Attainment in information and communication technology is average. Results in the national tests have been steadily rising due to the good teaching and the curriculum provided in the top classes. Last year results for English were among the top five per cent in the country. There is no significant difference between the progress of pupils of different abilities or of racial or social background. There has been some difference in the attainment of boys in national tests but these statistics are distorted by the numbers; many boys attain very well compared with boys nationally.

Pupils’ **personal development is good** as a result of the **good** overall provision for their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and their behaviour is good. Attendance is excellent and punctuality is very good.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education provided is satisfactory**, overall, with significant variations between year-groups. The main variation is caused by the quality of teaching and the curriculum provided; the teaching and curriculum are satisfactory, overall, and best at the top of the school. There is little difference in the teaching of subjects; it is the teachers’ organisation, the quality of the relationships and the liveliness of lessons that makes the most difference to the teaching. Pupils enjoy their learning and make great efforts to please their teachers. There is a good range of opportunities to enrich the curriculum. The planning for non-core subjects is not tight enough to ensure that pupils in all classes have the same opportunities to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding.

The most significant factor determining the effectiveness of teaching is the quality of assessment and its use. Over many years there has been either no assessment, or misinterpretation of statistical evidence and confusion in the use of different systems of assessment, for children in the reception class. This has caused incorrect information to be supplied to staff in Years 1 and 2, who, consequently, possibly made wrong assumptions about pupils’ ability. The result was low expectations and so pupils’ achievement was unsatisfactory. Assessment in Years 1 and 2 is improving now, but the use of assessment in the reception class has still to be addressed. Assessment and target setting in Years 3 to 6 is at least satisfactory and good in Years 5 and 6.

Pupils receive very good care and support. Staff canvass pupils’ views on the running of the school effectively and then address the issues raised well. The school has forged very strong links with parents and the community, especially the local church.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**The leadership and management are good** overall, and this is a significant improvement in the last year. **The leadership of the new headteacher is good**; she is ably supported by the new

deputy head. There are weaknesses in the management of the curriculum, and of the reception class, because of inexperience and lack of staff training, but overall **the management is satisfactory**. The current governors have a **good** influence on the effectiveness of the school and they have been influential in addressing the low test results at the end of Year 2. They have still not ensured that all parents have information about the right to withdraw their child from religious education.

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

Parents think highly of the school. Some have justifiable reservations about the mixed-age classes. Pupils love school and take part enthusiastically in all activities. They feel cared for and valued.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the systems for assessment in the reception class.
- Continue to improve the teaching and assessment in Years 1, 2 and 3 in order to raise pupils' standards in these year-groups.\*
- Improve the planning of the curriculum in non-core subjects, especially in Years 1,2 and 3.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that information about parents' right to withdraw their children from religious education is included in the prospectus\*.

\* The school is aware of these issues and is already addressing them.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

**Standards are above average** by the time the pupils leave the school. Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** overall when the difference in achievement in the three stages of the school is considered. Achievement is satisfactory in reception and Years 1 to 3; it is good and sometimes very good in the top two classes for pupils in Years 4 to 6. The situation would appear to be the same as was reported at the previous inspection, but there has been a very considerable movement in the standards within the last five or six years.

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

- Achievement is particularly good in the top class, especially for those pupils of average and below average prior attainment.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress at the moment, but their achievement has not been as secure during their time in the school.
- Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 have dropped considerably since the previous inspection.
- The national test results at the end of Year 6 are high.
- Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils demonstrate above average speaking skills in many classes, and well above in Years 4,5 and 6.

#### **Commentary**

##### **Foundation stage**

1. Children start in the school with at least average attainment and often above average. This is the same situation as was reported at the previous inspection, but for many reasons the staff state that children's attainment, overall, on entry to the reception classes is below average. Numbers are small and those children with special educational needs will affect the statistics, but currently many children are able and well on the way to achieving the Early Learning Goals for children starting in Year 1 before they join the school. As the teaching is geared to targets that are sometimes below those that might be given to higher attaining children, achievement is only satisfactory, as the more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. From the evidence available the majority of children will attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they join Year 1 and many will be comfortably working at the National Curriculum levels for older pupils. Children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them. Children's personal, social and emotional development is better than is often seen. Standards of speaking and listening, and of mathematical development, are often high, but in reading they are not as high as might be expected, because children are not heard to read often enough.

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

2. Currently **achievements are satisfactory in the mixed class for pupils in Years 1 and 2**. This time last year the situation would have been reported very differently. Pupils did not make sufficient progress through the key stage and the achievement of many pupils was unsatisfactory. National test results showed that in reading, particularly, grades were well below average for the last two years, writing grades were average two years ago and well below average last year, and maths grades were below average in both years. In comparison with results that pupils in similar schools achieved the grades were very low. There had been a

downward trend in the test results for four years. This was a serious situation brought about by unsatisfactory teaching and assessment. The governors were aware of this and set in motion a successful programme to remedy the situation. Current attainment is average in all subjects and pupils' progress, especially in English and maths, is improving. Standards of speaking and listening are good. Pupils are on track to attain their targets in literacy and numeracy, and good support is in place for those who need it. The national test results are not an absolutely reliable indicator of pupils' achievement as the numbers involved are small, there is a significant number of pupils with special educational needs, and the movement in and out of school affects comparisons. However, the current provision is satisfactory and the future looks brighter.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.1 (14.1)	15.9 (15.8)
writing	11.9 (14.6)	14.8 (14.4)
mathematics	15.4 (15.9)	16.4 (16.5)

*There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

**Key Stage 2**

- Pupils' achievements are good through Key Stage 2**, with very good progress during their final year at school. Attainment is above average, overall, by the end of Year 6, but only average, and sometimes below average in Year 3 where pupils have much to catch up after their less than satisfactory experiences in Years 1 and 2. National test results are rising, but account has to be taken of the small year-groups of pupils, where the presence of one very able pupil or one having problems can alter overall grades substantially. There have been generally high test grades over the last four years, especially last year. Grades for science have been consistently high. Targets are appropriate and grades for English, maths and science in the national tests this year are likely to be well above average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.0 (27.3)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	29.0 (27.9)	27.0 (26.7)
science	31.0 (30.5)	28.8 (28.3)

*There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- In nearly all subjects inspected in depth pupils' attainment is above average, by Year 6. In history it is also above average but the school cannot demonstrate this, as their records, based on a shifting curriculum, are not good enough to record pupils' very well developed historical skills. Older pupils are helped in their development of skills, knowledge and understanding in non-core subjects by their very good communication skills, especially in listening, speaking and writing. The reason for this happy picture is clear – the teaching is so much better in the classes for older pupils.
- Much concentrated work has been given on information and communication technology since the previous inspection and the results are plain – standards have risen. Attainment is still only at the level expected for pupils of the same age. Standards are not as good as they could be if more emphasis was given to the subject and more computers were available. Design and technology, geography, art and design and physical education were subjects that received little

attention during this inspection, so no overall judgements can be given about standards, but indications are that they are at least satisfactory.

6. The school has identified several pupils, in most classes, who are more able and a few who are gifted or who have special talents. This identification is valid, although there are almost no formal documents to show how this has been done. This is a weakness. More able and talented pupils do make at least satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1 and good progress through Key Stage 2 but it could be even better with more focus on their relative weaknesses. The progress of pupils who are less able and who have special educational needs is of the same nature as other pupils in their classes – satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3 and good in Years 4, 5 and 6. There is no significant difference between the attainment of pupils of different ethnic origin or of boys and girls.
7. Most pupils are happy that they are learning new things and feel that they are doing well. Most parents also think that their children are doing well, and very few parents remarked on the worrying lack of progress in Years 1 and 2 in the past.

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

The provision overall for personal development is **good**. Pupils have **very good** attitudes to school and to learning. Behaviour is **good**. Provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**, overall. Attendance is **excellent** and punctuality is very good.

### **Main Strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for pupils’ moral and social development is particularly good.
- Pupils like coming to school and enjoy learning, this is one reason why attendance and punctuality are very high.
- Pupils’ behaviour in classes and around the school is good and their attitudes are very good, especially at the top of the school, because they enjoy the work.

### **Commentary**

8. In comparison with national statistics pupils’ attendance in 2002/3 was excellent, as it has been for the past three years. This very high level of attendance was achieved even though a significant number of pupils take holidays with their families in term time. The very good procedures for monitoring attendance ensure that unauthorised absences simply do not occur. Attendance has much improved since the previous inspection. With just one or two exceptions pupils arrive in good time for school.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.5	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.5

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

9. The very high attendance level shows that pupils enjoy school. They talk about how much they love the lessons and other activities. They take a pride in what they accomplish in lessons and join in all the school’s activities with enthusiasm. The majority of pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to one another, work very well in small groups and share resources sensibly. Pupils’ attitudes to work are best at the top of the school because the lessons are so challenging.

10. Under the leadership of the headteacher the school has a strong Christian ethos, which is at the heart of school life. Good opportunities to support pupils' spiritual development are provided, particularly in assemblies, religious education lessons and during 'Circle Time' and pupils respond well. Pupils are regularly given time to reflect on particular themes and are confident when expressing feelings and thoughts. There are whole school rules, which the School Council derived from the rules that each class has established. This means that pupils learn right from wrong and how to live together in a harmonious community. Pupils respond positively to the high expectations that staff have of them. The response of staff to pupils' very occasional inappropriate behaviour, and any instances of bullying, is managed in accordance with school policies and in a consistent way; both pupils and parents recognise that this is handled quickly and efficiently. Older pupils are given a wide range of duties that help the efficient running of the school as well as developing their sense of responsibility. Improvements have been made to the provision for pupils' cultural development since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be unsatisfactory, but more needs to be done. Pupils are taught to appreciate culture, art and music, and this is supported by visits to places of interest, and visitors coming into the school. The school has not fully developed methods to help prepare pupils to appreciate the broad range of multi-cultural experiences that are found in the wider community.
11. The school works hard to promote good behaviour and this is successful. There have been no exclusions. All the adults set a good example to pupils in the way that they treat everyone with respect. Teachers and classroom assistants make their expectations clear, and pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils know and understand the rewards that they can earn in their classes for good work, effort and behaviour. At playtimes, pupils play well together. They share and enjoy using the equipment that is provided. Lunchtimes are well organised. In the dining hall pupils chat happily together and welcome visitors.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

12. The **quality of education provided is satisfactory**. The teaching and curriculum are good at the top of the school, but only satisfactory in the reception class and in Years 1, 2 and 3. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils have their physical, social and emotional needs well catered for. The staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

### **Teaching and learning**

The teaching varies considerably. It has to be judged as satisfactory overall as it is at least good for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 but satisfactory for pupils in the reception class and Years 1, 2 and 3. Pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. Assessment and its use are satisfactory overall with similar variations between year-groups, but the use of assessment is unsatisfactory in the reception class.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching is good, and often very good, for pupils at the top of the school.
- The staff in the reception class and the managers of the school have not got to grips with the assessment of children's abilities over a long period of time.
- Staff insist on high standards of behaviour and this enables pupils to get on with their work
- Pupils learn well in Years 4,5 and 6, as they are able to work on their own as well as collaboratively.
- Warm relationships between staff and pupils ensure that pupils work hard.

### **Commentary**

13. The teaching in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2 is not of the same good quality as was reported at the previous inspection. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is of similar quality as was reported before, with the same sort of variations – weaker in Year 3 and very strong by

Year 6. However, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during this inspection, which is an improvement since last time. The teaching of literacy and numeracy are good overall, which leads to good learning. The teaching and learning of information and communication technology has improved considerably in all classes and standards are, therefore, rising. Homework is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and often good in Years 3 to 6. Parents are happy with the homework and this is an unusual situation. Pupils think they are learning a lot and most of them work hard because they value the praise of their teachers as well as enjoying the new things they learn.

14. The teaching has been satisfactory in the reception class for some while, with experienced support staff working well with experienced and inexperienced teachers. Most of the teaching is thorough and well planned, ensuring that all children, whatever their abilities, have appropriate work and so learn as well as they could. However, there are too many activities planned during the week for all the children to have as much concentrated work as they should have on basic literacy skills. Time is sometimes wasted. Children are not heard to read enough, especially individually for more able children, and so the standard of reading is not what it could be. This has implications for the work given in Year 1. A major problem is the lack of understanding by all staff of the assessment systems for young children. No member of staff in this school, including the senior staff, is well enough trained in assessment processes for reception children. There has been confusion and assumptions made from misinterpretation of statistical data that has meant that more able children, particularly, have been assessed at levels below their true capabilities and so have been given work that is too easy. Some less able pupils are reading books that are beyond them. Judgements that, overall, children enter the school below average in attainment are inaccurate and are caused by staff's lack of knowledge and understanding of the capabilities of children in other schools. The previous inspection report stated that attainment on entry was above average when the school data stated that it was below average, overall; this discrepancy should have been noticed and acted upon. This unsatisfactory use of assessment is causing a big problem in this class and through into Years 1 and 2. The headteacher accepts that this is the case and has started to address this important weakness.
15. Assessment is good for English, maths and science in Years 1 to 6 and satisfactory for other subjects. Target setting for individuals and groups is satisfactory and improving. The school is assiduous in identifying pupils who might require special teaching because they are more or less able than others. Staff have, however, identified too many pupils as having special educational needs which is not justified; this not only dilutes the provision for others with more marked special educational needs, but also leads to some expectations that are a bit low for pupils who might not be high-flyers. Marking is satisfactory, but could be improved, especially if teachers ensured that all the spelling mistakes were pointed out. Pupils know how they could improve, from their many discussions with teachers, but this could be better in some classes.
16. The teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, overall, but has not been as good as it should be until recently. This has led to a fall in standards, which is only now being remedied. The governors have been aware of the difficulties in these year-groups, especially in the teaching in Year 2, and have put in place an appropriate programme, including coaching and further training, to improve the teaching. This is working and the quality of teaching is better and pupils' progress is improving. However, it is only this year that the management has been strong enough to drive through the necessary improvements. There is now some good practice evident in the Key Stage 1 classes. Staff use an appropriate range of strategies for their teaching and classroom assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, especially in literacy and numeracy. Some good lessons were observed for pupils in Years 1 and 2.
17. The low standards, as pupils enter Year 3, is a problem that is currently faced by the staff who teach in Key Stage 2. The current pupils in Year 3 have not yet absorbed consistently good work habits, and yet some very good responsive learning was seen in this class when their imaginations were fired. The lessons in the classes for pupils in Years 1,2 and 3 are

sometimes a bit lack-lustre and so pupils do not learn as well as they could. The systems in place to provide better teaching are starting to work, but more needs to be done to ensure consistency and to bring all the teaching up to the level of the best. A consistently strong feature of all the teaching is the staff's insistence on high standards of behaviour.

18. Pupils' progress speeds up as they move through the school due to the better quality of teaching. The teaching in the top two classes has life and pace and pupils do not get a chance to slack or be bored; the pupils love the challenge and rise to it. Their achievements are, therefore, very good by the time they leave the school. The teaching in the top class is of consistently high quality and leads to very good learning. There is outstanding practice in this class. Pupils are encouraged to use all their learned skills in all lessons. Lessons are extremely well planned, relevant to pupils' needs and great fun. Because of this the pupils try very hard and are prepared to risk innovative ways of working. This is one reason why standards are so high.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	2	14	10	0	0	0

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

**The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is very broad.
- There is good innovative practice in the top class which links subjects very well together.
- The curriculum is not well enough planned to ensure that pupils of the same age have the same opportunities.
- Too much is included in the curriculum for some year-groups, and this squeezes out work in more important subjects.
- More training is needed in assessment for staff in the reception classes.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The library is unsatisfactory.

**Commentary**

19. The curriculum includes all that it should in terms of National Curriculum subjects, personal, social, health and citizenship education and religious education. It is of the same overall quality as was reported at the previous inspection. Staff have worked effectively to link subjects to make programmes of work that are relevant and interesting for pupils. Very interesting and innovative dramatic productions have been put on annually which enhance pupils' learning and add to the pupils' knowledge and understanding of many aspects of the curriculum. This is an example of very professional cross-curricular planning and promotes creativity very well. The special 'themed weeks', visits and use of visitors are very successful in promoting pupils' creativity. The special teaching given to more able pupils is effective. There is a wide range and good take-up of extra-curricular activities, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Many staff, parents and volunteers offer their time and pupils' personal development is enhanced through this work. Pupils appreciate this extra help.
20. Good emphasis has been given to English and maths. However, the inclusion of subjects that are not required means that insufficient time is given to some non-core subjects for pupils to

be able to achieve their best in them. For instance, swimming is on the timetable for reception pupils; not only is this not required but it takes up time that would be better given to other work. A modern foreign language, currently French at times and German at others, is given to the older pupils for a very short time a week. The weekly time allocated is nothing like enough to ensure pupils' proper learning, but eats into a teaching week that is only just long enough.

21. There is no member of staff with a good enough overview of the curriculum, and this is a weakness in management. The timetable is not that well planned. The timetable for the children in the reception class is not couched in terms of the appropriate early learning goals, although these children do receive a suitable curriculum. Their curriculum is not as good as was reported last time. Better planning of the curriculum for reception children would give more time and lead to higher standards, especially in reading. In Years 1 to 6 the curriculum for some non-core subjects is not planned well enough for staff to be able to ensure that pupils are given all the necessary elements. The curriculum for some subjects such as science, information and communication technology, history, personal, social and health education and design and technology has improved since the previous inspection, leading to improving standards, but for some non-core subjects it still needs improvement. For example, the rolling programme for history is still not well enough defined; pupils in mixed-age classes could fall between two stools, as the planning is sometimes different for different classes with the same age-groups, and this was a criticism last time.
22. The accommodation has its limitations, but is satisfactory, overall. The library is, however, unsatisfactory. It is too small and has too few books, only reference and a significant number that are out-of-date. As a result pupils do not have the full benefits of a library and this constrains their learning as they do not have access to a wide enough range of books, especially fiction books to choose themselves. Governors have improvements to the building in hand. There are sufficient staff and most are well qualified and experienced. However, the staff in the reception class are not well enough trained in assessment procedures and the use of the information acquired. Resources are satisfactory, but the computer suite, situated in the library, is under-used.

### Care, guidance and support

The way that the school takes care of pupils, guides and supports them is **very good**, and the way it listens to and involves them is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a safe environment to live and work in.
- The knowledge that the adults in school have of the pupils is very good.
- Pupils' views are valued and the involvement of the School Council in the running of the school is good.

### Commentary

23. Very good child protection procedures are in place and all members of staff know their responsibilities in this regard. Good routines for dealing with first aid, medicines and accidents are well established. There are very good practices to ensure health and safety. Procedures to ensure pupils' well-being are much improved since the previous inspection.
24. The ethos set by the governors and senior staff, over a long period of time, has a directly positive effect on the care and attention to pupils' given in the school. Teachers, classroom assistants and all the other staff in school know the pupils and their families very well. Staff always speak to pupils in a calm and caring manner. By sound monitoring of pupils' academic progress, the use of 'Circle Time' (whole class discussion sessions) and private discussions, staff are able to share effectively in the pupils' personal development. This is clearly shown in the perceptive comments that teachers make in the personal sections of the annual reports to

parents. The care can, sometimes, be counter-productive when it leads to over-dependence on adults' help, such as that given by the support staff.

25. The pupil representatives on School Council enjoy their role and take it seriously. This Council has been established for some time and pupils are pleased when their recommendations are acted upon by the staff and governors. During the inspection they met to make some sensible suggestions to be incorporated into the next update of the school's anti-bullying policy. As a group the School Council has also managed a number of charity fund-raising events in the school.

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

The schools partnership with parents and the community is **very good**, and with other schools it is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have a high regard for the school.
- Parents receive detailed information about the school and their children's progress.
- The church and local community are very involved in school activities.
- Links with the wider community, through school visits and visitors coming into the school enrich the education of pupils, are good.

### **Commentary**

26. Parents are generally very happy with the school. In meeting parents at school, informally and at the parents' meeting, and from the questionnaire, few concerns were expressed, and even then parents understood that these matters are now being addressed by the school. They appreciate the Christian ethos of the school, the care that the school takes, the standards of behaviour and the academic standards that their children achieve by the end of Year 6. The school provides parents with relevant information through frequent letters and regular newsletters. Parents feel able to approach the school at any time if they have any concerns about their children. They receive very good annual reports on individual pupils. The reports are appreciated by parents. Links with parents and information given to them have improved since the previous inspection. The formal documents for parents, namely the prospectus and governors' annual report are well presented and generally conform to government guidance.
27. Parents help their children at home and a small number come into school to assist in class. They attend school functions very well and make themselves available to accompany schools trips. Together with the local community they also support the fundraising activities of the Nuthurst School Association, which regularly raises very substantial funds, which have been used to improve the school's facilities and provide additional resources. The major fundraising presently underway for an extension to the school is making good progress. All this parental involvement in the life of the school goes to support pupils' learning and achievements. Good involvement of the church and community enriches the education experience of the pupils.
28. The school works well with other local primary schools. Liaison with secondary schools is close, with, for instance a number of work units being provided by the secondary schools for pupils at the end of their final term, which helps pupils' transition to a different way of working.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The **headteacher provides good leadership**, as does the deputy head. The **management is satisfactory**. The **governance of the school is good**.



- The headteacher is a good leader, with very clear vision and sense of purpose.
  - The deputy headteacher is very good role model for curriculum planning and teaching.
  - The governing body is effective and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
  - The management of the school, whilst satisfactory, has areas for improvement.
  - The training of student teachers, and induction of new staff, is effective.
29. The appointment of the present headteacher has had a significant and very positive effect on the education provided for pupils in the school. Following the previous inspection six years ago, standards at the end of Year 2 gradually fell, and in the last two years especially, had deteriorated considerably. Frequent changes of staff led to a drop in morale in the school. The school struggled to cope with an increase in the numbers of pupils joining and leaving, a decrease in the number of pupils on roll, and with the increased support necessary for pupils with special educational needs. The new headteacher, with good knowledge of the needs of the school through her role as existing deputy, has transformed this sombre picture. Her high aspirations and creative vision for the school, combined with her good leadership skills, have taken pupils, staff, governors and parents into a different world. She is determined that the school will improve standards, most especially in the first three years of the pupils' school life, by encouraging staff to improve their teaching skills and work together as a team. This has led immediately to the creation of a strong ethos for learning, and a true 'family' atmosphere, which often characterises small schools. Some of her good initiatives have yet to show in the improvement in standards but the structures are secure and starting to work.
30. The quality of the leadership is not as good as was reported at the previous inspection but there have been two changes of headteacher since then and the current head has not been in post for a year yet. She has made a very good start in tackling important deficits. The headteacher realises that the many improvements she would like cannot be achieved overnight. Staff and governors have produced a comprehensive new school development plan listing many necessary areas for improvement and are starting to set priorities for this year.
31. The headteacher has been greatly assisted in her new role by the appointment of a new deputy head from within the school, who also has good leadership skills. They are working very effectively as a team and share the same vision and energy needed to develop a successful school. The climate for learning is good. The deputy brings her own special skills to the job, which include her outstanding teaching ability, and her capabilities to provide a challenging and creative curriculum. As a teacher with high skills in a number of areas, she has taken on a large number of responsibilities. With some new and inexperienced staff, who cannot undertake many responsibilities while they develop their skills, the load which is placed upon senior staff, even though they are high quality practitioners, is very heavy.
32. The governing body has been, and continues to be, well led by the previous and newly appointed chair. They have a good knowledge of the school and where its strengths and weaknesses lie. They have identified weaknesses in the past, but have felt frustrated in their desire for change and improvement, through their lack of specific professional advice. The new chair has made a thorough and effective audit of the work of the governing body. Governors of the school bring many professional talents that are proving valuable in driving towards raising cash for the new building and the development of resources. Most importantly, though, they realise the need to raise standards in teaching and learning, and the need to get best value when comparing themselves to other schools. Governors are committed to the inclusion of pupils of all abilities and from all sectors of the community. The governing body is now making a significant contribution to the management of the school. One statutory requirement is still not met.
33. The management of the curriculum is not as good as it should be. Although satisfactory generally, there is evidence that pupils in split-year classes are not always receiving the same curriculum. There is inconsistency in the planning and management of the curriculum in

several subjects, which the school will need to address as the number of mixed-age classes increases. Likewise, the monitoring of some performance data, particularly on entry to the school and at the end of the reception class has been managed ineffectively. This has resulted in the school having an inaccurate picture of the attainment of its youngest pupils. The management of the Foundation Stage has not been as good as it should be in the past, and staff have had insufficient training to be able to make accurate judgements about children's attainment. These are long-term weaknesses in management that have not been addressed until recently.

34. The school provides good opportunities for professional development for all of the staff, which are related to the individual needs of the staff and the school. This is then related to performance management targets, which are realistic and effective. The school has been particularly successful in recent years in training student teachers, one of whom was recently appointed as a permanent member of staff. His subsequent induction to the school has also been very effective.
35. The deployment of support staff through the school is sometimes uneven. At times large classes have no support for the teacher, whilst other much smaller classes at the same time had several adults supporting pupils. The staff and governors feel very strongly that this should be an inclusive school. They deploy extra staff to support pupils with special educational needs, but have not yet considered, in sufficient detail, how efficient this is, and whether support staff might be better deployed working with other groups.
36. The inconsistency in educational standards in recent years, with a wide gulf in achievement between younger and older pupils, prevents financial management being judged as any better than satisfactory. This has been recognised by governors and senior managers, and finance is now being specifically directed towards areas with the greatest need for improvement. The school budget has been used prudently, and although there was a slight overspend in the last financial year, the governors are confident that their strategic financial management will enable spending priorities to be met from provided funding. The school receives significant financial support from the P.T.A. A large sum is being accrued towards the new building fund. The day-to-day financial management of the school is carried out very effectively and professionally by the bursar and administrator.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	348945
Total expenditure	363068
Expenditure per pupil	3248

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	15123
Balance carried forward to the next	279*

\* Governors also have a separate fund with a sizeable sum, raised privately, to go towards the new building, of which they have to pay 10 per cent of the costs.

37. Under the leadership of the new headteacher and deputy head, and a reinvigorated governing body, St. Andrew's School is well placed to continue the improvement of the last few months, and provide an innovative and challenging learning environment for its very willing pupils.

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

## AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of purposeful activities is provided for children to learn from direct instruction and from play.
- The management has been unsatisfactory and has not ensured that staff are sufficiently well trained in assessing pupils' achievements.
- Thorough records of children's activities are kept.
- The classroom is too small for the numbers of pupils in the class.
- Provision is good for children's physical development through outdoor play.

### Commentary

38. At the time of the inspection there were 22 children in the reception year, a few of them had only been in school a few weeks. Children are generally taught in a class combined with seven pupils in Year 1, but, at times, they are taught separately. Most have had some appropriate pre-school educational experience and have the advantage of coming from supportive homes. A few of the children in each group have special educational needs but some are quite able. Their attainment on entry to the school spans a wide range. Attainment on entry was said, at the previous inspection, to be above average, overall; this is what might be expected for children from socially advantaged backgrounds. However, the staff believe that children's attainment on entry has fallen and has been below average since before the previous inspection; this is unlikely. The school used the used to use local authority's own entry assessments, and for one year did not undertake any formal baseline assessment. This deficiency in the records, combined with lack of experience, means that staff have not been aware of children's attainment in comparison with national expectations. More formal assessment started last summer, but staff have misunderstood the results of the assessment system as they were not well enough trained. Taking all the available evidence into account, attainment on entry, overall, has to be judged as at least average.
39. In spite of this muddle about attainment on entry the evidence shows that children make satisfactory progress, in all the areas of learning, and most will achieve the Early Learning Goals for children as they start in Year 1, and a significant number will exceed them. Children from all social groups make the same sort of progress, and there is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls, when national tendencies are taken into account. Children with special educational needs have satisfactory support and are managed well by all the staff. Although the interpretation of entry and exit assessments is not secure, the teaching is organised well and detailed records of children's activities and achievement are kept. The teaching is not as good as was reported at the previous inspection. The teaching is satisfactory, overall, as there are many good aspects to the practice, not least the way the staff work together and the warm, supportive relationships that have been set. The planning of lessons is formal and structured, with appropriate work given to children of different abilities. The constraints of the small classroom means that many play activities have to be more supervised, and therefore directed, than is the best practice.
40. The curriculum is satisfactory, which is not as good as was reported six years ago. At times work is covered that is not appropriate for young children as they, for instance, follow the programmes of study for personal, social and health education more appropriate for pupils in Year 2. This is due to weak curriculum planning for this wide age-range. Children go swimming for part of the year. Although many parents like this, there is no requirement for swimming at

this age. Also the swimming lessons and the travel take up much time that would be better used in play or literacy sessions.

41. There have been significant weaknesses in the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage, over many years, as there has been insufficient knowledge and understanding of requirements of this age group. The provision is not as good as it was reported to be at the last inspection because of the lack of firm management of the Foundation Stage, and lack of expertise during a time of change in the assessment of young children's attainment. The current teacher is new to the school and in the early stages of her teaching career; she does not yet have sufficient expertise to take a strong lead to improve the provision. The current headteacher is now aware of this difficult situation and is tackling the issue with sensitivity. The leadership is now satisfactory. The management has ensured that children have access to a stimulating and safe outdoor area for play, but the constraints of the cramped accommodation mean that there is little room for free play, in the classroom, during most of the day.
42. Children's achievement in the area of **personal, social and emotional development** is good due to the firm but sensitive management by staff. Most children display growing independence and try hard. Their attitudes to school are very good. Many opportunities are provided for children to play and staff show good skills in encouraging children in this aspect, although play is rather over-directed at times. The children benefit from working alongside older pupils who set a good example in their behaviour which the young children in reception copy. Behaviour is generally very good, although many children are excitable and rather noisy during physical education sessions. Even those children who have only been in school a short time know the routines and sit without chatting when asked. Children show interest in all that is provided and most stay with one activity well, but younger children tend to flit between different activities. Most children take turns and share fairly, but a few tend to play on their own.
43. Children's achievement in the area of **communication, language and literacy** is satisfactory and they are well on the way to exceeding the expected level by the time they join Year 1, especially in language. Children's speaking and listening skills are well developed and much of this is due to the encouragement of speaking and listening, at an advanced level, by staff. Children listen well to stories and instructions. Many speak well; they actively try new words and are encouraged by the staff. They respond sensibly to questions and take turns in conversation. Most children know the technical vocabulary of books and many can express their feelings in proper sentences. More able children love to chat and are reasonably fluent speakers. A few, younger, children tend to use single words or short phrases, and more could be done to promote a more extensive vocabulary, for these pupils.
44. Children's literacy skills are coming on well as they are taught well in many aspects of reading. Most can re-tell a familiar story with accuracy and know what an author, illustrator, print and 'blurb' is. Reading skills are at an appropriate level but could be better. Many children can match the words to pictures and a significant number know many initial sounds of words and some the short vowel sounds. The literacy sessions on the carpet are well taught. However, a significant number of children are reading books that are at the wrong level of challenge; less able children cannot make a reasonable try at the books in their book-bags, and more able pupils sometimes read books that are too easy. This is the result of too little work being devoted to individual children's reading. The quiet reading session, that is common to all classes in this school, is not appropriate for children who cannot read on their own, and it would be better devoted to hearing children read individually. Children enjoy their attempts at writing and make satisfactory progress. The most able children write their names in an acceptable way, but many children have not yet attained their targets to write letters in the proper fashion, such as starting from the top. Many children need more practice in this respect.
45. Children's achievement in the area of **mathematical development** is satisfactory. Children join the school with a good understanding of number and make satisfactory progress. They will leave reception with well-developed skills. Many children recognise numbers to 20 and some

are accurate when putting them in order. Their use of mathematical vocabulary is accurate. Good teaching methods, including the judicious use of practical resources, are helping children to develop a good understanding of addition to ten and counting beyond 20. Children's knowledge and understanding of shape and the language of comparison is at a level higher than expected. Staff take many opportunities to reinforce children's understanding of maths.

46. Children's achievement in the area of **knowledge and understanding of the world** is satisfactory and they are likely to attain at least the expected levels by the end of their time in reception. Play is programmed towards the scientific and technological experiences, and the quality of the planning of the direct teaching is high. Children cover a wide range of activities such as growing seeds and using the computer. They use construction toys purposefully. They are given religious education at a suitable level for their age and a good range of experiences to introduce history and geography. The problem is that there is so much to cover, and limited time and space to accommodate all that the staff would like, that there are insufficient opportunities for children to find things out for themselves, which would do much to promote children's independence skills even further.
47. Children's achievement in the area of **physical development** is satisfactory. They will attain at least the expected level by the time they join Year 1, as the teaching is satisfactory. Children use the cramped space in the classroom sensibly and there are few bumps and difficulties. However, in the larger space of the hall, during physical education lessons, children often seem to be a bit lost. They show increasing control when dressing themselves and when playing in their special, imaginative outside playground. They use wheeled toys well. Children use tools and pencils at the expected level and handle construction materials with good control.
48. Children's achievement in the area of **creative development** is satisfactory and they will attain the learning goals by the time they leave reception. Children are provided with a good range of opportunities to explore music, art and design; the teaching is satisfactory. Children's art-work is at the expected level. The cramped accommodation sometimes restricts imaginative play as there is too little space to allow children to play together without getting in someone else's way. Children join in well with singing in assembly, but listening to music is not a great feature of the reception class and opportunities are missed in this respect to bring a range of different music to the children.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**

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

- When they leave school at the end of Year 6 pupils attain higher than average standards in English, and are achieving well.
- Standards and achievement in Years 1, 2 and 3 in reading and writing are now satisfactory, having been below and well below expectation in recent years.
- Teaching and learning are good and very good in Years 4, 5 and 6 and satisfactory in the earlier years.
- Pupils' standards of speaking and listening are high.
- The school library is inadequate.
- Pupils' handwriting is usually well presented in English, but is sometimes careless, with inaccurate spelling, in other subjects.

#### **Commentary**

49. By the end of Year 6 pupils are attaining above average standards in English and many are reaching well above average levels. The results of the national tests in 2003 for pupils in Year 6 showed them to be well above the national average and standards in similar schools, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils attain these standards because they receive consistently good and often very good teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6. This enables them to do the best they can and their achievement is good, and in some case very good, whatever their background or ability.
50. At the previous inspection standards at the end of Year 2 were judged to be above average. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are currently average, which shows a considerable improvement on the last two years when standards in reading and writing were below or well below national expectation. The school has small cohorts in most year-groups so results of tests can sometimes vary dramatically. However, taken over a time span of three years, standards have been unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but are now improving. This is also the case in Year 3, where there is evidence of improvement from a low base in both reading and writing. Achievement of pupils in these three years is now satisfactory as teaching and target setting have become more accurate and focussed.
51. Pupils entering school are generally confident and most are at least average in their speaking and listening skills. Teachers generally encourage pupils to talk, explain and describe in most lessons; this is consistent through the school. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above those expected. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have even more opportunities to develop their speaking through numerous discussions on all manner of matters with their teacher, and equally numerous group and paired discussions. They are also encouraged to make individual presentations or even instruct other pupils. This is evident across all areas of the curriculum so pupils have constant opportunities to develop more advanced speaking skills. Pupils' speaking skills are well above those expected by the time they leave the school.
52. Reading has proved to be a particular difficulty in Years 1 to 3 for no obvious reason that has been identified by the school. Pupils heard to read in the inspection were usually reading at a level commensurate with their ability, although a few had books that were too easy for them. They are heard regularly at school and at home, and many go to public libraries. Indications of flaws in teachers' assessment in recent years have led to a review of this area and so pupils' achievement is now improving. Without doubt there are many competent readers in these years, such as the seven year olds who confidently and accurately read extracts from the guide to the Imperial War Museum. Older pupils are continually encouraged to read, and many talk with enthusiasm about their favourite authors and books. These regular opportunities and guidance from teachers enable them to reach good standards by the time they leave the school.
53. Writing in the school generates a similar picture. Steady progress and achievement in the early years is followed by accelerated learning, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Handwriting is carefully taught in Years 1 and 2 and many pupils can write joined and legible sentences by the end of Year 2. They have fewer opportunities, though, than older pupils to write in other areas of the curriculum. Older pupils through a creative and well-linked curriculum are consistently writing about their investigations and information gathering, for example, when using information and communication technology. Pupils have good knowledge of editing and drafting, and there are many examples of writing for different purposes. They have good handwriting skills and present their work well in their English books. Teachers have not yet developed a comprehensive strategy for teaching of effective handwriting skills to the several left-handed pupils seen during the inspection.
54. Whilst resources for English are generally satisfactory, the school library is inadequate. It has a fairly small selection of non-fiction reference books. The library is small and is often used for other purposes, including the teaching of information and communication technology. The

school has recognised this shortcoming and, with the parents, is trying to raise funds rapidly for building redevelopment, which will include a new library.

55. The leadership and management of English are satisfactory. Weaknesses have been recognised and analysed, and pupils' progress is now monitored much more closely, and steps taken to deal with individual problems. The curriculum is broad and relevant. Assessment is satisfactory and is now being used adequately in planning across the school. The high quality provision for English in Years 5 and 6 is having a significant impact on the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils.

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

56. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to develop their language and literacy skills, especially in Years 4, 5 and 6. However, teachers do not always correct careless mistakes or sloppy presentation in other subjects such as science and mathematics. Pupils are familiar with exchanging views with each other and are frequently encouraged to talk to the whole class about their work, as for example in the VE day role play in a history lesson in Year 3.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**

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

- Standards are now satisfactory by the end of Year 2, after several years when they were below average.
- Standards are above average, and for some pupils well above average, by the time they leave school in Year 6.
- Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3 and good in Years 4, 5 and 6.

#### **Commentary**

57. At the time of the previous inspection standards in mathematics were described as above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and progress varied from satisfactory to good. Since 2000, standards at the end of Year 2 have slowly fallen and in the last two years have been below average, and well below the standards found in similar schools. Evidence in the present inspection shows that this deterioration has stopped and that standards in Years 1 and 2 are steadily improving. Currently the standards attained by pupils in Year 6 are above average, and in some cases well above; they are also above standards attained in similar schools. The achievement of most pupils is satisfactory in Year 1 and 2, but a few more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could, as they have not been given consistently challenging work. Their progress remains steady in Year 3, but now, as in the past, progress and achievement accelerate quickly in Years 4, 5 and 6. By the time they leave school, pupils' achievement is good and their progression to higher levels is rapid. Considerable value is added to their learning in these last three years.
58. The reason for this is that there is considerable challenge from teachers in Years 4, 5 and 6. Teachers have high expectations, and capitalise on the increasing maturity and independence of the pupils, ensuring that they have demanding targets and a stimulating learning environment. Teachers have good subject knowledge and work is set for the varied needs and abilities of individual pupils. More able pupils are challenged well. Where progress is slower, teachers are more concerned with consolidation of previous knowledge and most teaching is aimed at middle-attainers. There were signs during the inspection that this element is improving, and that teachers are more prepared to extend pupils, particularly the higher attainers. The learning of pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 is now picking up, and is being enhanced

by the targeting of groups for more intensive support. Pupils with special educational needs are usually well catered for with effective support from classroom assistants, and their achievement rises from satisfactory to good as they move through the school.

59. Pupils enjoy mathematics, listen carefully to teachers and each other, and work co-operatively in pairs and larger groups. Older pupils particularly like setting each other problems, as in Years 5 and 6 when learning about imperial/metric conversion. Behaviour is usually good and sometimes very good. Only a very few boys were seen to lose concentration and disrupt the work of others.
60. The planning and the curriculum are satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3 but are good in the last three years because there is a greater breadth of application of maths to everyday problems, and activities are more appropriate to pupils of different abilities. Tight time targets are set and pupils know that they have a finite time in which to complete their work. Teachers have gathered a considerable bank of assessment data relating to the progress of their pupils. There has been some confusion in its application when pupils enter Year 1, but this is being resolved, and the good data used to track pupils' progress is now fully understood and can be related to specific targets and individual needs. Pupils' work is generally accurately presented, but marking can be inconsistent. Occasionally work is not corrected, or pupils are offered insufficient guidance. Additionally, the pupils' spelling of mathematical terms and words is sometimes wrong and is not corrected.
61. The leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory and these have ensured satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in terms of curriculum. The co-ordinator has rapidly appraised the areas for improvement in this subject and has already taken effective steps, for example, to improve standards in Years 1 and 2. This has been achieved by rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and the provision of additional teaching resources to the years most in need. This is already leading to greater consistency of good practice in the school and a consequent raising of standards.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

62. In nearly all classes mathematics is linked effectively to information and communication technology, as for instance in data analysis. Application of numeracy skills is also evident in design and technology and in science. Overall, the use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' attainment is well above average by the time they leave the school.
- There is good use of investigations and scientific enquiry.
- The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection.

### **Commentary**

63. The previous inspection judged that standards of attainment were above average at the end of both key stages. Current standards are average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 has been consistently better than in other core subjects because there is less writing involved in the assessments. Grades in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have been well above average for at least three years. Pupils in the current Year 6 have a very good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and processes, and can make logical predictions using appropriate scientific vocabulary.



Achievement is satisfactory through Years 1 and 2 and good through Years 3 to 6. Most of pupils' work in science is well presented but there are some inaccuracies in spelling and some work that has not been corrected, but, across the school, marking is satisfactory and some is very constructive,

64. The curriculum is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 but it is not planned well enough to cover all the programmes of study in a coherent way. There is much emphasis on the study of living things, but not so much on other aspects of science; too long is spent on one topic for all the required elements to be reinforced so that pupils develop secure skills. This lack of planning is the result of management that, although satisfactory, could be better. The curriculum is very good for pupils in Years 3 to 6; it is wide and well linked to other subjects, such as geography. Good use is made of special 'theme weeks'. More able pupils are given interesting work to challenge them and raise their attainment. There are productive links with the secondary school using 'bridging units' of work to ease pupils into the more advanced concepts in the next key stage. Over the whole school there is good emphasis on scientific enquiry and this ensures pupils' proper understanding of scientific concepts. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection.
65. The teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good at the top of the school. There is good use of practical work through the school and sound management of pupils ensures that experimentation does not get out of hand. Open questions are used well to make pupils think in a scientific way. The good teaching observed was the result of very good planning of the lesson and well thought-out differentiation for pupils of different ages and abilities. Pupils' learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good through Years 3 to 6. Pupils are given many opportunities to use their numeracy and information and communication technology skills well in science and homework is used well to reinforce learning. The management of the subject is satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards and achievement in information and communication technology have improved since the previous inspection.
- Resources have improved but are still not what they should be.
- Information and communication technology is used effectively across the curriculum.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

### **Commentary**

66. Standards are now as expected for pupils by the end of Year 2 and 6. The achievement of pupils of all abilities and backgrounds is also satisfactory and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school has made the subject a top priority for improvement in the last few years, and has done well to catch up in a subject with such rapid development and change. However, any further improvement is unlikely until the use of the accommodation is rationalised. At present, the notional information and communication technology suite is actually a multi-purpose room, part library and part a group-teaching room. This reduces its effectiveness. The most effective use of the room for information and communication technology was seen at the after-school club run by a parent, when it was not being used for any other reason. Senior managers and the governors have identified the provision of a new suite as an urgent priority. In the meantime the school is pursuing a 'holding' operation through considerable efforts to provide regular classroom opportunities.
67. Teachers consistently plan to give pupils time to use information and communication technology to help their learning in other subjects such as history, mathematics, literacy,

design and technology and art and design. As a result, from the earliest years, pupils develop their creative and investigative skills. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school, although there are still insufficient opportunities or hardware to deliver discrete whole-class lessons in information and communication technology. This lack of equipment is compromising pupils' achievement. Learning is satisfactory and improves as pupils go up the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 can use art programmes and relate their writing to pictures of the Christmas story. Data handling skills are developed throughout the school from building graphs of favourite colours in the younger classes, to using spreadsheets and making traffic surveys in the older classes. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have good skills in using the internet and have prepared and presented to their peers their information and communication technology studies on Brighton, Autumn and the Romans *'although occasionally some animations don't work'* remarked one pupil. One pupil in Year 6 was observed training others in his class in how to use a scanner, and information and communication technology 'prefects' regularly take photographs with the school digital camera, won by a pupil in a schools' competition. Many pupils, especially in the top two years, are very confident, responsible, enquiring and independent when working on computers.

68. The leadership and management of the subject are good and this has ensured good improvement in the delivery of the subject. The co-ordinator has produced an effective scheme of work and exemplary portfolios of evidence of pupils' learning. She has been able to monitor teaching and learning across the school, and help to train staff in order to help improve their skills and confidence, and provides a very effective role model through the examples of her own teaching and expectations. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, and give clear indications of pupils' progress.

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

69. Information and communication technology is used well across the curriculum. This is the principle reason for the improvement in standards, as information and communication technology is being regularly used in all classrooms to enrich learning, knowledge, investigation and skills in other subjects. This also makes a good contribution to pupils' social development.

## **HUMANITIES**

70. **Religious education** was inspected separately by a special Church inspector. **Geography** was not a focus for this inspection and so no definite judgement on provision, teaching or standards can be made. Discussion with older pupils showed that their learning over time enabled them to be effective map readers, compare life in Nuthurst with villages in other countries, and link their studies to other curricular areas such as history. They also have skills in finding information through computers, and are given opportunities to visit places of geographical interest such as Brighton. The scheme of work, planning and resources are satisfactory.

### **History**

Provision in history is **satisfactory**

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

- There is an exciting and innovative curriculum provided for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Staff use the subject well to cover studies in other subjects.
- Due to deficiencies in the management of history, pupils in mixed-age classes are not ensured a coherent programme to cover all the knowledge and skills required.
- There has been good improvement in provision since the previous inspection.

## Commentary

71. No judgement was made about standards by the end of Year 6 at the previous inspection, as there was insufficient information available. Standards at the end of Year 2 were satisfactory, but pupils' progress through Years 1, 2 and 3 was judged to be unsatisfactory, considering their attainment on entry to the school. Pupils' response to history lessons was unsatisfactory. The situation has improved and there is a picture of continuing improvement and pupils' achievement is satisfactory, overall. Standards at the end of Year 2 are still satisfactory, but at the end of Year 6 they are above those expected, and, in some respects well above average. By Year 6 pupils of all abilities have produced good work and know the facts of the times they have studied. They have a very good understanding of source material and use information and communication technology well to research the subject. They have a very good knowledge of the facts of the history of Britain. Their understanding of the periods of history, and the influences that people have made on modern life is spot-on. Pupils are logical when suggesting reasons for change and the causes of events.
72. The evidence available suggests that teaching in all classes has improved since the previous inspection and has led to at least satisfactory learning. Teaching was judged as unsatisfactory last time in Years 1, 2 and 3. No definite judgement can be given about the current teaching in Years 1 and 2, but the teaching in Years 3 to 6 is now good, with many good features and some excellent practice. Assessment has improved. The work on the Second World War in Year 3 is well matched to the ability levels of different pupils. The teaching of history observed during the inspection was at least good and that seen in the top class was outstanding. From their knowledge and understanding it is clear that pupils have enjoyed this quality of teaching, at the top of the school, for some time.
73. The leadership of history is satisfactory. Some improvements have been made to the curriculum, but it is still not planned well enough to ensure that there is a progressive development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The management of the curriculum is not good enough to ensure that pupils in the different classes have equal opportunities to the curriculum. This was a similar situation to that reported in 1998. Parents have pointed this out this year and have justifiable concerns. The school has not taken sufficient action to address the issue. The rolling programme, designed to cover split-age classes, is still not good enough. The subject has not been well enough planned in the long-term. The co-ordinator does not have detailed enough knowledge of the provision in Years 1 and 2. The school uses government-approved guidelines when selecting which periods of history to teach. When selecting these units, staff have not sufficiently considered the requirements of the National Curriculum, and so two units of work are planned when the requirement is for one or the other. Too many different periods are studied to allow staff to build up good enough understanding and resources. However, the subject is used very well to links topics in other subjects, and this makes the work relevant for pupils.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

74. Only music was inspected in depth at this inspection, and some judgements can be made about design and technology. No judgement on provision in **physical education** is made as no lessons were observed during the inspection. However, the provision looks at least satisfactory with many strong elements. Resources generally are satisfactory, and the outside environment is well above the standard usually seen in primary schools. The evidence indicates that all aspects of the physical education curriculum are being covered, including the provision of swimming across the whole school. Good use is made of the outside areas, especially for games and clubs. The school football team is undefeated for two years, and pupils also have good opportunities in netball and cricket. A new, well-qualified member of the present staff has been appointed as co-ordinator from next September and already has numerous good ideas and plans for the enhancement of physical education provision in the school.

75. No definite judgement can be given for the provision for **art and design** across the school as little was observed. The one lesson seen led to good learning by pupils. Some excellent teaching was observed at the previous inspection. Currently, there is an appropriate scheme of work and all the required elements of the National Curriculum for art and design are covered. There are some elegant displays of pupils' work in public areas, but little in the way of displayed work by prominent artists to stimulate pupils. Very little of pupils' work is displayed in their classrooms and so opportunities are missed to celebrate their achievement. There is insufficient use of art and design from a wide enough range of cultures, especially non-Western cultures, which would promote pupils' multi-cultural understanding. A new, interesting school portfolio of work shows a wide range of pupils' creations in this subject, including art-work linked to topics based on other subjects, and this is good, but much of this is not levelled or dated, which would be the best practice and helpful for assessment purposes.
76. Provision in **design and technology** is satisfactory. There has been good improvement in the provision since the previous inspection as the leadership of the subject is good. The present co-ordinator has devised a coherent and well-planned scheme of work that has benefited the learning and skills of the pupils. This was clearly demonstrated in a very good lesson by the co-ordinator with older pupils where they investigated and evaluated mechanisms in toys. Older pupils in discussion indicated their experience in recent years in designing Anderson shelters, Greek theatres and 'wivvy sculptures' showing a full understanding of 'plan-make-evaluate' strategies. No judgements about teaching and standards can be made only one lesson was seen. Good quality displays and portfolios of work indicate steady progression over pupils' time in the school. Resources are satisfactory. Currently the co-ordinator has few opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning across the school; this weakness is now being addressed in the school development plan.

## Music

Provision in music is **good**

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 6.
- Music has a high profile in the school.
- Pupils are provided with many opportunities to improve their musical skills.
- There are deficiencies in pupils' recording of their own work.
- The subject is well managed.

### Commentary

77. Music has maintained its high profile since the previous inspection and attainment is of the same high standard. Provision in the subject reflects the ethos of the school, with a good emphasis on the performing arts and opportunities for pupils of all abilities to succeed and to work together. There is a sizeable orchestra who perform well. A significant number of pupils play instruments and all have an opportunity to learn the recorder. There is plenty of evidence of magical productions, linking many subjects and performed well by older pupils. The big productions are an excellent example of how schools can use the arts to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
78. The subject is led by a skilled practitioner, who leads by example and has taught all classes in the school, so giving other staff further training. Many staff have good skills in music but the lessons in Years 1 and 2 lack the vibrancy of those in Years 5 and 6. No overall judgement can be given about teaching as too little was observed; evidence of pupils' attainment suggests that it varies between classes, dependent on staff's skills, and is good overall, but is definitely very good in the top class. Achievement is at least satisfactory and improves as pupils progress through the school. The curriculum is broad and is very well linked to other subjects, especially religious education and history. However, opportunities are missed to use the subject more to

promote pupils' multi-cultural development. Opportunities are also missed, in Years 1 and 2, to use music to set a scene and for pupils to listen to during other activities; it is used very well for these purposes in Year 5/6.

79. Pupils in all year-groups sing sweetly and all join in. They have been taught how to reach the high notes, but care needs to be taken to protect young voices by a few staff. Pupils enjoy singing to parents and in the choir. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are familiar with the work of classical and modern composers. Most can read music at an appropriate level and sometimes at an advanced level, but little of the work done in class has been recorded for assessment purposes, and this is a weakness. Pupils have very good skills in composition, especially writing lyrics to pieces of set music. Talented pupils are nurtured well. Pupils have fun with their music and learn well; this is a result of the prominence in the school and the talents of the subject co-ordinator.

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

Provision in personal, social, health and citizenship education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good range of opportunities to ensure that pupils' knowledge and understanding are promoted well.
- The subject is central to the school's ethos.
- Personal, social, health education and citizenship make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Assessment is satisfactory but needs to be more formal.

### **Commentary**

80. Personal, social and health education is a key part of the provision to promote the school's ethos, especially those parts relating to learning for life, keeping healthy and promoting independence. The openness of the pupils and the way they can discuss at a mature level is evidence of the way the curriculum is working. This is part of the school's core curriculum and it appropriately includes lessons in sex and relationships education and education against drugs misuse in a wide programme suitable for pupils of all ages. The management of the subject is good and ensures that pupils are learning to play an active role as citizens. The subject does much to develop pupils' personal skills, but these are not measured in a way that all weaknesses can be identified. At times there is insufficient difference in the presentation of the work in the reception class and in the class for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and this means that at least one group may be working at an inappropriate level.
81. No judgements can be given about the teaching as little was seen, and none at the top of the school. However, given that pupils have learned basic facts and have a good understanding of the issues of health, safety and relationships this is evidence of at least satisfactory learning. Circle times do much to develop pupils' thinking skills as well as their speaking and listening skills.

## EXAMPLES OF OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

### Example of outstanding practice

**These consecutive lessons are an example of how the superb quality of the planning and the high quality teaching in the mixed Year 5/6 class enable pupils of all abilities to achieve very well.**

A history lesson was on the topic of the social changes in Britain since the 1930's, with an emphasis on the 1960's, using the example of the life of John Lennon. The detailed planning of the work included entirely relevant elements of seven subjects including literacy and maths. The teaching was very challenging and guaranteed pupils' interest and enquiry. Pupils wanted to know why things happened and what were the outcomes and later ramifications. All sorts of high-level ideas were thrown into the pot. The teacher expected the pupils to do the talking and the work; there was no spoon-feeding, and this promoted pupils' independence skills very well. The pupils were lit up and engrossed in the work. They used many learned skills of communication and information and communication technology, and were constantly questioned about how to make improvements to their work. The discussion of the political and moral implications of the social changes was of high quality and pupils used mature language. The lesson made pupils think and ensured that they thought in a philosophical way. Totally relevant links were made to religious education and personal and social education. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and this ensured that issues concerning the changing role of women and the impact of television could be explored with sensitivity. The history lesson was followed by a high quality music session, taken by a student with the class teacher as support, which set pupils the task of writing new lyrics, about the current political situation, to John Lennon's music. The teaching of composition skills was excellent and many opportunities were taken to use the musical talents of pupils and to reinforce musical skills. The lesson made great demands on pupils but was tremendous fun. It is rare that all the elements of very good teaching and planning come together. The inspector had to drag herself away from these inspiring sessions.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	1
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	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	2
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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