

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST ANNE'S INFANT SCHOOL**

Bristol

LEA area: Bristol

Unique reference number: 108956

Headteacher: Mr Q Thompson

Lead inspector: Mr D J Curtis

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2004

Inspection number: 257575

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Infant and nursery  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 3-7  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 179

School address: Bloomfield Road  
Brislington  
Bristol

Postcode: BS4 3QJ

Telephone number: 0117 9031435  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr M Hodder

Date of previous inspection: July 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in the City of Bristol. There are 134 pupils on roll in reception and Years 1 and 2. In addition, four children attend the nursery full time and 40 attend part time either morning or afternoon. A very small number of pupils come from minority ethnic families, none of whom speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs is below the national average. Two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Thirteen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals which, as a proportion, is below the national average. The school has been subject to proposed local educational authority reorganisation for the last five years.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20893	Mr D J Curtis	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education and personal, social and health education
9052	Mrs H Barter	Lay inspector	
16038	Mrs J Bavin	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage, geography, history, religious education and English as an additional language
32376	Mr G Mussard	Team inspector	English, science and special educational needs

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>10</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>24</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good** school which provides **very good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average and pupils' achievement is very good.
- Teaching is very good and has a positive impact on the standards achieved.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes and their behaviour is very good.
- The school provides a rich and exciting curriculum for its pupils.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.
- There are insufficient hours allocated to learning support assistants.

The school has made **very good** progress since its previous inspection. Very good leadership and management have contributed to an improvement in the proportion of good and very good teaching which, in turn, has led to the significant improvement in standards.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Children start school with standards that are expected for four-year-olds. As the result of very good teaching, the achievement of children in the nursery and reception is **good**. Standards are good. The majority of children are likely to exceed the goals expected nationally by the age of five.

The standards achieved by pupils in Key Stage 1 are **very good** as the result of high quality teaching. In speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics, standards are well above average; in science, they are above average. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) exceed national expectations. In religious education, standards exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In art and design and physical education, standards exceed expectations for seven-year-olds. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good. There is no significant variation in the achievement of boys and girls.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	D	C	A	A
Writing	D	D	A	A
Mathematics	E	C	A	A

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

Results in the national tests in 2003 confirmed the trend of year-on-year improvement and were particularly impressive. Standards were well above average when compared to all and similar schools and inspection findings confirm that the school is sustaining these high standards.

Pupils' personal development is **very good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Pupils show very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good. Attendance is unsatisfactory, primarily because of illness, although a minority of parents do not recognise the importance of regular attendance on their children's learning and progress.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **very good**. Teaching is **very good**, with strengths in the teaching of ICT and its links with other subjects. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and very high expectations of what they can achieve. There are strengths in the teaching of early literacy and numeracy skills in the nursery and reception classes. Teachers make very effective use of learning support assistants in those lessons where they are available. Assessment of pupils' learning is very good.

The quality of the curriculum is very good. The headteacher, staff and governors place great importance on developing children as people and citizens of tomorrow. To this end, the school enriches the curriculum with a very impressive range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. There are insufficient hours allocated to learning support assistants, especially in reception, and this reduces children's access to outdoor play.

Pupils receive very good care and support. The way in which the school seeks and acts on the views of pupils, especially in their learning, is excellent. Links with parents are very good and those with the community and other schools are good.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **very good**. Governance is good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and is totally committed to developing the whole child. His infectious belief in the importance of ICT as a key skill and not just a subject is clearly evident in pupils' use and application of ICT skills in many subjects, especially literacy, numeracy and science. He is ably supported by the senior management team and subject leaders who carry out their roles diligently.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very positive about their relationships with staff and the headteacher, who know all the children and parents by name. They recognise that the school provides a 'friendly environment' where parents are really encouraged to help and to support their children's learning. Parents say that teachers are very approachable and know that they can always talk to them if they have any concerns.

Pupils are very happy at school and enjoy both lessons and the other activities provided for them. They appreciate and understand the targets that are set for them. There are particular strengths in the way in which they can tell teachers what they think of the work they are given and how well they feel they are achieving.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- to increase the allocation of hours for learning support assistants;
- to improve attendance.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Standards are **well above average**. Achievement is **very good** for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- In reading, writing, mathematics and ICT, standards are well above average, with those in science above average.
- Standards in religious education exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, with those in art and design and physical education above expectations for seven-year-olds.
- The achievement of children in the nursery and reception classes is good.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.4 (16.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.5 (13.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.7 (16.9)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. The results of the national tests in 2003 confirmed the year-on-year trend of improvement and reflect the school's commitment to high achievement.
2. Children start the nursery with standards expected for three-year-olds. As the result of very good teaching in the nursery and reception classes, they make good progress in their learning and **achievement is good**. By the time they start Year 1 the majority will exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year.
3. **Achievement in Key Stage 1 is very good**. In Year 2, standards are well above average in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and ICT. Standards in science are above average. Pupils show very good skills in using and applying literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Pupils benefit from the very good early teaching of key skills when they are in the nursery and reception and this allows them to build successfully on these skills in Years 1 and 2. Pupils make very good use of ICT skills in most subjects because teachers expect pupils to do so. ICT is clearly seen as a key skill and not just a subject in its own right.
4. As the result of very good teaching, standards in religious education exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils show particularly good use of literacy skills when they re-tell stories. In art and design and physical education, standards and achievement are good. In art and design, pupils show good skills in both two- and three-dimensional work. In physical education, pupils' skills in dance and gymnastics are especially good.
5. As the result of effective teaching and the high quality support given by learning support assistants, pupils with special educational needs make good progress as measured against the targets set in their individual education plans. Their achievement is very good.



## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are **very good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Attendance is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show interest and enthusiasm for activities provided.
- Behaviour is very good throughout the school.
- Excellent relationships are a feature of the school.
- Attendance is not improving despite the school's best efforts.

### Commentary

6. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and eager to learn. They take pride in their work and try to do their best for their teachers and for themselves. Many take part in activities provided during the school day and after school. The impact on their work from their keenness is strong, raising standards and achievement. Parents recognise these very good features of the school and support it strongly themselves. They are positive and happy that their children like school, and know how to behave well.
7. The atmosphere throughout the school is calm and orderly. Pupils are polite and show respect to each other and to adults. The ethos of the school is very good. All staff expect high standards of behaviour and pupils respond well.
8. Inclusion is a strength of the school, and this supports the valuing of each person without exception. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is central to all school activities. All these aspects are emphasised during class lessons as well as in the well-led school assemblies, where pupils are encouraged to participate in activities to promote better understanding of stories. For example, in an assembly about the Chinese New Year 12 children were appointed to represent the 12 animals from the traditional story, to bring it to life.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.2	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

9. Attendance is unsatisfactory despite the school's efforts to act upon this. The percentage of authorised absences remains higher than the national average. However, much of this is due to illness.
10. There have been no exclusions in the past year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **very good**.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **very good** and have a significant impact on the high standards achieved. Assessment is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and relationships are excellent.
- The teaching of ICT is a significant strength.
- The teaching of key skills in literacy and numeracy is of very high quality.
- Teachers and learning support assistants work as effective teams to support pupils' learning.
- Teachers have a thorough and detailed understanding of the progress pupils are making and of the next steps in their learning.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	8	12	4	0	0	0

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

11. In lessons, it is clearly evident that teachers have formed excellent relationships with their pupils. Pupils respect their teachers and value the teaching they receive in lessons, particularly through having a very good understanding of the targets set for them by their teachers. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them and they work hard to achieve their targets. Teachers' high expectations are further reflected in the quality of planning which ensures that work is matched carefully to the different learning needs of pupils. Pupils then work hard in lessons because the work is challenging and they make good progress.
12. The headteacher, supported by his colleagues, has a very clear vision that ICT is a skill that pupils should use to support their learning and that it is not just a subject to be taught by itself. As a result, teachers plan for the use of ICT to support pupils' learning at every opportunity and this contributes significantly to the high standards achieved. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were busy using the Internet and CD-ROMs to research key facts on Scotland, both geographical and historical. They learnt how to send e-mails to a school in Scotland as another source of research. All the time they were totally confident in using their literacy skills for reading and writing through using computers and this reflects the high quality teaching they receive.
13. A significant factor in pupils' very good achievement in literacy and numeracy is the very effective teaching of key skills which starts in the nursery and is built upon successfully in reception and Year 1. The teaching of letter sounds (phonics) is very good and means that by the end of reception, most children use these skills successfully when reading books from the school's reading scheme. Teachers in the nursery and reception promote a love of reading through their own imaginative and entertaining reading and telling of stories. They challenge children to discuss the plot and characters and to predict what might happen next, thereby further extending key reading skills. In numeracy, children are taught how to count successfully

in the nursery and reception classes and they are encouraged to look at and discuss how they find patterns with shapes and numbers.

14. In those lessons where they are available, teachers make very effective use of learning support assistants to support pupils' learning, especially those with special educational needs. The dedication of learning support assistants who help pupils who are identified with behavioural needs is very impressive. Teachers and learning support assistants work as effective teams. This means that in lessons, pupils receive high quality support and this has a positive impact on the good progress made. However, in those lessons where learning support assistants are not available, learning is restricted. In reception, it means that planning for outdoor play has to be more structured than normally expected. In addition, teachers spend more time meeting the special educational needs of those pupils with identified behavioural needs at the expense of other pupils.
15. An impressive feature of teachers' work is their detailed knowledge of the progress their pupils are making and the standards they achieve. This is the result of very effective assessment both of pupils' day-to-day learning and of the results of tests that pupils take. Teachers know the levels that pupils have reached and the targets they are expected to reach by the end of Year 2. Through high quality planning based on their knowledge of current levels and involving pupils in understanding their own targets, teachers make a significant contribution to the high standards achieved.

## The curriculum

The curriculum is **very good**. Enrichment of the curriculum is **very good**. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The total commitment of the headteacher, teachers and governors to provide a curriculum to encourage pupils' all-round development.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- There are insufficient hours for learning support assistants.

## Commentary

16. The school provides its pupils with a very good curriculum. It ensures that pupils are taught the full requirements of the National Curriculum, but goes far beyond that. There is a very detailed vision, which comes from all adults associated with teaching, that pupils should develop in the school as people and citizens of tomorrow. As a result, the school ensures that it provides a very good programme of personal, social and health education. In addition, there is an impressive range of extra-curricular activities for an infant school, including well-attended French and art clubs. In Year 2, pupils take part in a dance festival at the Bristol Hippodrome and the quality of their performance in rehearsals is impressive. Unusually for an infant school, pupils in Year 2 go on a residential visit which makes a good contribution to their social development.
17. The school fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice<sup>1</sup> for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are of very good quality and contain clear, detailed and achievable targets. Teachers and learning support assistants ensure that in lessons, pupils receive high-quality support and that they are included fully in all parts of the lesson.

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<sup>1</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 2001 Education Act.

18. Planning in the Foundation Stage is of high quality and contributes to the very effective provision in the nursery and reception classes. Planning ensures that children receive their full entitlement to the Early Learning Goals, although in reception the lack of full-time learning support assistants means that children's access to outdoor play is somewhat restricted.

### Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. Pupils are provided with **very good** support, advice and guidance. The way in which the school seeks, values and acts on pupils' views is **excellent**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- All staff in the school care very well for pupils, whatever their needs.
- Pupils are happy and feel well cared for because they have excellent relationships with adults.
- Very good target setting helps pupils to know what they are learning and what they need to do to improve.
- There are innovative ways of seeking pupils' views on what, and how well, they are learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs are not always supported as well as they could be in those lessons where learning support assistants are not available.

### Commentary

19. The school looks after pupils very well because it has very good procedures for their health, safety and welfare and because it is committed to supporting and including every pupil, no matter what their background or needs. Parents are very positive about the care provided for their children and the guidance that is given to those with behaviour problems. They say that their children are looked after 'sympathetically and lovingly'.
20. All adults working in the school have the pupils' interests at heart. Midday staff, for example, come to school early so that they can greet pupils at the end of the morning and supervise their hand-washing before guiding them to the dining hall. Pupils are very positive that any adult in the school will help them if they have any worries. The excellent relationships that pupils have with adults gives them confidence to ask for help both in the classroom and around the school, and they know that they will receive it. This also means that pupils have no difficulties in expressing their views, in the classroom, in circle time and when chatting to staff over lunch.
21. From the time that they start school in the nursery to moving on to junior school, pupils receive very good guidance which helps them to learn and achieve very well. Teachers use assessment of pupils' work very well to set targets for them to work towards. Pupils know what these are and say that talking to teachers about their targets helps them to understand how to improve. Teaching assistants are very proficient in helping pupils with their individual problems and learning needs, although there are not enough of them to support pupils with special educational needs in every lesson.

### Example of outstanding practice

Not only are pupils' views heard on a day-to-day basis, but the school actively finds out what pupils think about the curriculum and uses their comments positively to make learning more exciting, to provide more challenge or support and to help parents help their children at home. Questionnaires for literacy, numeracy and ICT find out what pupils really think is 'boring' and 'exciting' in lessons. Pupils are free to make comments, such as 'It's boring when the work's easy like telling the time', and planning demonstrates that such pupils receive work matched to their needs as a result. Teachers can check that pupils know what to do if they 'get stuck' and how they feel about working in groups, pairs and alone. Pupils' responses are carefully analysed to identify areas of concern in all aspects of teaching and learning. Pupils' comments about parents not helping with mathematics homework, for

example, have resulted in the school providing an exceptionally good guidance leaflet.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **very good**. Links with the community and with other schools and colleges are **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very satisfied with their children's education and the partnership that the school has with them.
- The school provides parents with very good information about their children's progress.
- Good links with the local community are used to make pupils' learning more interesting.
- The school continues to develop good and positive links with other schools.

### Commentary

22. Parents are very pleased with the school and the progress that their children are making. They are very positive about their relationships with staff and the headteacher, who know all the children and parents by name. They say that the school provides a 'friendly environment' where parents are really encouraged to help and to support their children's learning. Parents say that teachers are very approachable and are very certain that they can always talk to them if they have any concerns. Parents' views are valued and listened to carefully. They are encouraged to help in school, and they do. Very good leaflets ensure that parents know how the school is run and how they can help their children at home, for example, when they start in the nursery.
23. Parents are provided with very good information about their children's learning and progress in their end-of-year reports. They say that these are thorough and clearly identify what their child needs to do next to improve their learning. Reports are clearly written, without educational jargon, and are particularly effective in evaluating pupils' abilities as 'learners' as well as their progress in each subject. There are some delightful personal comments written by teachers and the headteacher which demonstrate their very individual knowledge of the pupils.
24. The school has a well-established place in the local community and makes good use of it to broaden pupils' experiences outside the classroom. Visits to the zoo and museums in Bristol, nativity plays in the church and concerts for senior citizens are just a few examples. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the opportunity to dance in competition with other schools and to perform in a large theatre. The school has good links with the junior school and is developing good curriculum links with staff there, as well as continuing established programmes of visits and arrangements for transition. There are good relationships and links with schools in the local 'cluster'. Pupils benefit from the use of the City Learning Centre's ICT suite at the secondary school. Through its links with local colleges and the university, the school makes good provision for student training placements.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **very good**. Governance of the school is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is a quietly dynamic leader and a very good manager.
- The deputy headteacher and subject leaders contribute very well to the overall high quality leadership and management in the school.
- The school is highly self-evaluative.
- The school has an exceptionally high commitment to including all pupils equally in all activities and lessons.
- The governing body is very supportive of the school and has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.

### Commentary

25. The headteacher has a very strong view of what St Anne's Infant School should be doing and how it should be done. He has the skill, energy and determination to ensure that the whole school pulls together to ensure its success. He has a very visible presence around the school and pupils often approach him with ease and confidence. He is equally approachable for parents and staff. He expects the best for pupils and every decision is made with this in mind, regardless of how small or major. His leadership has at its heart that pupils learn best when they are happy and secure. This means that he leads a happy and caring school where standards are high and pupils achieve very well.
26. The deputy headteacher's teaching is of high quality and sets an impressive example within the school. She is very knowledgeable about assessing pupils' work and makes a significant contribution to this crucial aspect of the school's work. Her systematic and highly organised approach to collating information is extremely helpful to the headteacher and teaching colleagues because it means information is easy to use. The school is far from complacent and commendably analyses closely what it is doing and where to improve even when standards are high.
27. The school's excellent focus on evaluating its work rigorously and constantly seeking improvement incorporates seeking the views of each pupil and each family. The school is unusual in the extent to which it does this, for example, with a particular curriculum focus and in a user-friendly style. Importantly, these views are not merely sought, but acted upon. This is one example of many that demonstrate the school's outstanding commitment to treating all pupils fairly and equally with exceptional consideration. Through the effective management of special educational needs, these pupils are included fully in all aspects of school life.
28. Governors support the school effectively. They are justifiably proud of pupils' achievements and recognise the school's considerable strengths, as well as areas of relative weakness. Since the previous inspection, they have developed their role by increasing their involvement with, and understanding of, the school. A similar improvement is the far greater contribution made by subject leaders, especially in their knowledge and understanding of standards and teaching and learning. This is a school where pupils' achievement benefits greatly from all staff 'singing from the same hymn sheet'.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	387,664	Balance from previous year	10,948
Total expenditure	394,215	Balance carried forward to the next	4,397

Expenditure per pupil	2,527
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## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

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

Provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is **very good**.

#### **Commentary**

29. There have been significant improvements to the accommodation since the previous inspection with a recently-opened new purpose-built nursery. In addition, improvements to the main building allow the two reception classes to work side by side. Children start the nursery with standards expected for three-year-olds and the induction process for children and their parents is good. Teaching in all areas of learning is very good in the nursery and reception classes and this contributes to the good achievement made by the children. As a result, children exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good and have a positive impact on children's good achievement. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

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

Provision is **very good**.

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

- Children are happy, secure and confident learners.
- Teachers promote successfully children's abilities to work independently, in groups and as part of the whole class.

#### **Commentary**

30. Within a very short time of starting school, children become confident with the day-to-day routines of the nursery and/or reception classes. They arrive happily, with big smiles and settle immediately to activities, such as looking at books. As the result of high expectations from teachers and learning support assistants, children learn to plan their own activities and show good levels of concentration when they work and play. Children learn to manage the day-to-day routines, including the importance of helping to tidy up at the end of sessions and in learning to undress and dress without adult help for physical education lessons and when going home. Relationships are good, especially when children work in groups. Teachers ensure the children learn to take turns and share and understand the importance of listening to each other and their teachers, especially in whole-class sessions.

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

Provision is **very good**.

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

- The teaching of key skills is very good.
- Children show good skills in speaking and listening.

#### **Commentary**

31. Teachers are highly skilled in developing the important key skills of reading and writing. As a result, children make very good progress in reading. They are taught successfully letter



sounds and initial blends, for example 'sh' and 'bl'. By the end of reception, most children are established on the school's reading scheme. Teachers' own imaginative reading and telling of stories promotes a love of reading. They use effective questions to encourage children to talk about the characters and plot, as well as to predict what will happen next. In the nursery, children learn that marks convey meaning and develop these skills into writing individual letters of the alphabet, leading to writing their own names without adult help. Children write shopping lists and make covers for their favourite books. In reception, children build successfully on these key skills and many write simple sentences with correct use of capital letters and full stops, without the support of an adult.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching of key skills is very good.
- Children enjoy looking for patterns in number and shapes.

### **Commentary**

32. Children make very good progress in this area of learning because of the high-quality teaching of key skills. In the nursery, children learn to read, write and order numbers to 10 through the imaginative use of number games and familiar number songs and rhymes. They are taught to recognise and name three-dimensional shapes and children show great delight in making patterns, for example, with squares and circles. They enjoy the challenge of finding a missing number on a number line between '0 and 10'. Teachers build on these skills most successfully in reception, with children recognising and naming common three-dimensional shapes. They develop good skills in comparing measures, such as 'longer than' and 'shorter than'. Many are confident in counting to 20 and beyond and understand 'one more than' and 'one less than'.

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

Provision is **very good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's ICT skills are very good.

### **Commentary**

33. Children make very good progress in using computers to support their learning and this reflects the determination of the school to develop these key skills as soon as possible. In the nursery, children enjoy using the computers and develop confidence in using the keyboard and the mouse to 'click and drag'. In reception, children show independence and imagination when, with no adult help, they 'paint' and print out pictures which they title and name. They enjoy using the interactive whiteboard, although this is dependent on their classes swapping with Year 2 as neither class has its own. Children use successfully a range of large and small construction kits and they are accurate in sorting materials that are 'magnetic' and 'non-magnetic'.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good range of equipment for children in the nursery.
- The lack of learning support hours restricts the amount of time that can be given to outdoor play in the reception classes.

### **Commentary**

34. In the nursery, children are confident in outdoor play, especially in riding large toys, such as tricycles. In cutting, gluing and sticking, they show good skills. In reception, children show good skills in using small and large balls in lessons in the hall. However, the lack of full-time learning support assistants in the reception classes restricts the times when children have access to outdoor play.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make very good progress in singing and performing.

### **Commentary**

35. In the nursery, children enjoy singing familiar number songs and rhymes and this makes a valuable contribution to their mathematical development. Teachers use role play effectively. For example, they encourage the children to work together in the 'supermarket'. Making shopping lists develops early writing skills in an imaginative way. In reception, children are very confident in singing and playing instruments to accompany songs. During the inspection, reception children did a class assembly on the Chinese New Year. Singing, playing and speaking were all good and reflect the strong emphasis the school places on children learning to perform from an early age.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

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

- Standards are well above average at the end of Year 2.
- Pupils enjoy writing.
- Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy.
- Subject leadership and management make significant contributions to planning and the high standards achieved.

#### **Commentary**

36. Results of the Year 2003 national tests were well above average in reading and writing. Standards in reading and writing have improved consistently over the past three years and are well above average for pupils at the end of Year 2. Inspection findings from work analysis and lessons show that this improvement has been maintained. Standards are above average in speaking and listening. Pupils speak with confidence in lessons because teachers provide time for them to answer questions and to explain their ideas. This makes a significant contribution to the very good achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils speak readily and confidently on a range of subjects with visitors, for example during lunch times. Very good listening to each others' contributions in lessons was a feature in both Year 2 classes.
37. Teaching is very good and has a positive impact on the high standards achieved. Pupils enjoy reading because teachers promote this enthusiasm through the quality of their reading to and with pupils. Key skills are taught very successfully throughout the Foundation Stage and infant years so that by Year 2 fluency is very good. In a group of Year 2 pupils, 83 per cent read with very good fluency and all the pupils read with expression and enjoyment. Pupils showed good comprehension of stories, even when books were unfamiliar.
38. Pupils show great interest and enthusiasm for writing and a small number of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils write during their own time at lunch breaks, sometimes using quills and ink. Standards of handwriting are very good for most pupils. Pupils' work shows their ability to sustain a style of writing in other areas of the curriculum. They enjoy writing for a range of purposes and audiences.
39. Lesson planning for the National Literacy Strategy is thorough and is well adapted to the needs of classes and pupils, including those with special educational needs, as indicated in their individual education plans. Very effective use is made of homework to support pupils' learning. Parental support for this is very good.
40. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic; she has responsibility for the continuing reappraisal of planning and review of the literacy policy and scheme of work. She monitors teachers' plans and discusses pupils' work following classroom observations. She arranges 'Book Weeks' and storytellers to maintain and enhance interest. Effective leadership has contributed to the very good improvement since the previous inspection.

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

41. Teachers plan carefully for pupils to make very good use of their language and literacy skills in other subjects. Pupils apply successfully their writing skills in a variety of styles according to

purpose, for example note-taking, writing recipes and instructions for food technology, and through high quality story-writing. Work in Year 2 during the inspection was related to Scotland and other geographical topics, and there was clear evidence of English work supported by ICT. Teacher and pupil use of the inter-active whiteboard was very effective in a Year 2 lesson.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **very good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have high expectations and plan very carefully to meet the needs of different groups of pupils.
  - Pupils have very good skills in number.
  - The headteacher leads the subject very well, ensuring that pupils have masses of opportunities to use their mathematical skills.
  - The school provides parents with exceptionally useful guidance about the subject.
42. Inspection findings show that standards in Year 2 are well above average and this reflects the results of the national tests in 2003. This means that the school is maintaining the very good improvement it has made since the previous inspection. These standards are a direct result of consistent and highly skilled teaching that ensures all pupils achieve very well. Teaching is very good. Meticulous planning throughout the school means that different groups of pupils are very well catered for. Teachers unfailingly adjust their questions and the level of challenge even when they are working with the whole class. This ensures that pupils of all abilities work at the highest level they are capable of. One of many positive outcomes is that most pupils have far more mental agility with numbers than is expected for their age. Additionally, it has a direct bearing on the less confident pupils who learn from their peers.
43. Under the headteacher's very good subject leadership, staff place a strong emphasis upon mathematics and ensure that it has a high profile in the school. This is evident in the attractive and inviting displays of pupils' numeracy work around the school. For example, pupils in Year 2 are invited to use cards to make two- and three-digit numbers and write them in words on a clip-board. The teacher writes comments back and so an ongoing dialogue about numbers is established. This successfully generates a high level of interest and enthusiasm. The school provides an exceptionally helpful and practical leaflet for parents to help their children at home. Inspectors agree with the headteacher that this involvement of parents is a contributory factor to the high standards and positive attitudes enjoyed by pupils.
44. All staff share the headteacher's high aspirations so the school is far from complacent and continues to seek ways of improving the subject even when standards are high. These approaches have made a significant contribution to the school successfully meeting the challenge of raising good standards further since the last inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

45. This is very good. Numeracy is used frequently and imaginatively across the curriculum. Very effective links with other subjects mean that pupils value mathematical skills as a useful tool, whether recording how many cars they have seen in a traffic survey or completing charts recording the number of syllables in a list of words.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 2.
- The quality of pupils' written and diagrammatic work is good.
- The analysis of pupils' work showed good coverage and wide use of correct scientific vocabulary.
- The portfolio of work to help teachers match pupils' work to the levels required by the National Curriculum is very good.
- The new subject leader is enthusiastic but is not totally familiar with the full range of her responsibility.

### Commentary

46. Inspection findings confirm that the standard of pupils' work is above average and achievement is good. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils showed good understanding of the differences between changeable and unchangeable solids, and used a wide vocabulary in observations and explanations. Pupils used prior learning well to support their hypotheses. In discussion, pupils were able to describe investigations enthusiastically and showed considerable scientific knowledge. For example, in explaining their understanding of simple electrical circuits, their ability to complete a circuit diagram was accurate and secure. They were fully aware of safety issues.
47. Teaching is good and has a positive impact on the standards achieved. Teachers have high expectations that pupils work independently. Pupils construct and complete tables of results without adult help and demonstrated this in a Year 2 lesson. The clarity of the learning objective and the teacher's precise instructions supported learning effectively. Pupils give full attention for substantial periods because of the teacher's enthusiasm and subject knowledge. Work is matched carefully to the different needs of pupils and contributes to the good progress made in lessons.
48. The new subject leader has made a good start in the school. She has written new and good quality plans for the year, each term and each week. Her immediate intentions include an audit of resources, and continuing encouragement towards a practical approach to science for all pupils. Teachers have a good understanding of the levels that pupils are expected to reach in the National Curriculum through a very good portfolio of pupils' work. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT plays a significant role in pupils' learning because the school passionately believes it is a vital skill and not a subject just in its own right.
- Teachers' planning is of high quality and ensures pupils use ICT skills at every opportunity.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of their own progress in the subject.

### Commentary

49. Standards are well above expectations for pupils in Year 2 and their achievement is very good. Standards have improved since the previous inspection as the result of the school's

outstanding commitment to and understanding of how ICT skills can be used to support pupils' learning in all subjects. Pupils are confident with the keyboard and the use of the mouse to 'click and drag'. They know how to load, save and print their work and do so with great independence. Their enthusiasm and confidence in using the interactive whiteboards is impressive. In word processing, pupils know the importance of the 'arrow', 'backspace' and 'return' keys when editing work. They are confident in using CD-ROMs and the Internet to carry out research, for example into the life of Robbie Burns as part of the current study of Scotland in Year 2. Pupils know how to send and receive e-mails.

50. Teaching is very good and has a major impact on pupils' very good achievement and the high standards achieved. Teachers show very good subject knowledge, confidence and expertise, with particularly impressive skills in the use of the interactive whiteboards. A significant strength is the high expectation that pupils can use the whiteboards and teachers' use of individual pupils to demonstrate and reinforce key skills, such as the use of the 'arrow' keys to edit text. Teachers think about ICT whenever they plan pupils' work. The use of computers and the interactive whiteboards is a natural part of teaching and learning in the school. Currently, pupils in Year 2 are expected to use computers, e-mail and the Internet as a key part of their study of Scotland.
51. Leadership and management are very good. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable subject leader, supported by the headteacher's total commitment to ICT as a key skill, makes a significant contribution to the high standards achieved. The 'ICT Passport', which she designed, is used effectively by pupils to record the progress they make in learning the key knowledge, skills and understanding required by the National Curriculum. A further significant strength is that pupils' learning is assessed against the levels required through an impressive portfolio of pupils' work. As a result, the subject leader knows that the majority of pupils will be working at the expectations for pupils in Year 3 by the time they leave the school. Resources are very good and support teaching and learning effectively.

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

52. This is very good because of the emphasis the school places on pupils using ICT as a tool for learning. Pupils use their ICT skills successfully to support their learning in literacy and numeracy. In literacy, pupils use word-processing skills successfully. Pupils make very good use of the Internet to carry out research to support their work in history and geography.

### **HUMANITIES**

53. The inspection concentrated on **religious education**. However, evidence from the inspection demonstrates that the school provides the full National Curriculum for **geography and history**. Strengths in writing throughout the school are equally apparent in these subjects, as is the pupils' lively interest in their learning. For example, during the inspection, Year 2 was living and breathing its topic on Scotland and a visitor's tartan kilt generated much interest and comment. In conversation with inspectors, pupils volunteered that they would prefer to be in a hospital 'today' than in one from the past and referred to Florence Nightingale as the 'Lady of the Lamp'. Pupils shared, with great delight, that Samuel Pepys had buried his cheese to keep it safe from the 'Great Fire'. These subjects are included in the school's highly effective programme for evaluation and development.

### **Religious education**

Provision for religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils gain a good understanding of Christianity and other religions.

- Teaching is good because teachers have high expectations of pupils.
  - Pupils make very good use of their writing skills in religious education.
54. By the end of Year 2, pupils demonstrate a good breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding that exceeds expectations for their age. Achievement is good. Standards have improved since the previous inspection as a result of consistently good teaching. Throughout the school, teachers have good expectations of pupils and consequently, pupils cover a lot of information and produce a good amount of their own written work. This starts rapidly early in Year 1, building well on earlier strengths in the nursery and reception classes. At this stage, pupils begin to re-tell important stories, such as the Christmas story, either by placing pictures in the correct sequence or writing. Because of high expectations, pupils begin to learn important religious meanings, such as the idea that candles, as well as being everyday objects, are symbols for Christianity and other faiths.
55. After this strong start, pupils in Year 2 write at exceptional length and make very good use of their considerable literacy skills when they re-tell stories, such as 'The Good Samaritan' or 'Rama and Sita'. Their writing indicates a good breadth of information. In conversation, pupils summarise the most important features of stories learned in the subject with a maturity that betrays a depth of understanding exceeding their age. This indicates that teachers are teaching the subject with good levels of knowledge themselves.
56. The subject is led effectively by the headteacher who has a good understanding of the subject's strengths and relative weaknesses. The subject is included in the school's rigorous timetable for evaluating and improving subjects and the headteacher has clear ideas for further development.

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

The inspection team concentrated on art and design and physical education. Work in design and technology and music was sampled.

### **Art and design**

Provision is **good**.

- Pupils show good skills in a wide range of two- and three-dimensional work.
  - Teachers have good subject knowledge and lessons interest and motivate pupils.
57. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above expectations for seven-year-olds and achievement is good. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils' skills in a range of two-dimensional work are impressive. In painting, they show good colour-mixing skills and observational drawings are detailed and realistic. Pupils enjoy working with a range of natural and made materials when weaving and this links successfully to the study of tartans in current geography work on Scotland. Work where pupils look through a view-finder and enlarge on paper what they see is of a very high standard.
58. Teaching is good and has a positive impact on the standards achieved. Through their own enthusiasm and expertise, teachers make lessons interesting and challenging for pupils. In Year 2, pupils show very good levels of concentration and application when weaving patterns either individually or in groups. Lessons are planned carefully and there is a very good range of materials and equipment available which contributes significantly to pupils' impressive work.
59. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has a detailed understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject, for example, in recognising that observational drawing was previously under-represented in pupils' work. There is a strong commitment to developing pupils' skills through the use of visiting artists and the annual 'Arts Week'. The

importance of valuing pupils' work through displays based on 'exhibitions' is a major focus for the school.

### **Physical education**

Provision is physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in gymnastics are particularly good.
- Teachers place strong emphasis on the health and safety aspects of the subject.
- Resources are good and used effectively to support learning.

### **Commentary**

60. Achievement is good and standards are above expectations for seven-year-olds. Standards have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to 'meet national expectations'. In gymnastics, pupils show a good awareness of space and changing direction when moving around the hall in lesson warm-ups. They show good skills in planning, performing and refining sequences in which they have to take their weight on different parts of the body. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of regular exercise in keeping fit and healthy and know the effects of exercise on their heart rate.
61. Teaching is good and makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved. In lessons, teachers ensure that pupils are dressed correctly. Good attention is paid to reminding pupils of the importance of health and safety. Lessons begin with a good warm-up with teachers stressing the importance of this to pupils. During the lesson, teachers move round the hall encouraging and praising pupils and emphasising the improvement of individual skills and techniques. At the end of lessons, cool-downs are not always long enough or are missed altogether mainly because of the pressure of the timetable with the next class due to start.
62. The subject is led and managed effectively. The subject leader has recently returned from maternity leave but prior to that ensured that the policy telling how the subject should be taught was up to date. In addition, the scheme of work detailing what is to be taught and when was revised and updated. Resources are good and make a positive contribution to teaching and learning.

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

Provision is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very strong commitment to this aspect as a key factor in developing pupils as future citizens.
- The policy is of a high quality.

### **Commentary**

63. Pupils make very good progress and show very good achievement in personal, social and health education because of the belief of staff and governors that this is an essential part of pupils' development. Teaching is good because teachers understand the policy which details most clearly how the subject is to be taught. In lessons, including 'Circle Time', pupils have the chance to discuss feelings and important issues relating to their personal development.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

