

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST JOHN'S C of E (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Darlington

LEA area: Darlington

Unique reference number: 114238

Headteacher: Christine Large

Lead inspector: Tony Painter

Dates of inspection: 21 – 24 June 2004

Inspection number: 257719

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior  
School category: Voluntary aided  
Age range of pupils: 4-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll; 214

School address: Fenby Avenue  
Lascelles Park  
Darlington  
County Durham

Postcode: DL1 4UB

Telephone number: 01325 380725

Fax number: 01325 256001

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Valerie Cadd

Date of previous inspection: 21 June 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a smaller than average Church of England voluntary aided school with 214 pupils. Almost all pupils are from white backgrounds and none have home languages other than English. Most pupils live in the area around the school, which has many elements of severe deprivation. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 30 per cent, is above the national average. Children joining the school have well below average overall attainment for their age. Currently, 45 pupils (21 per cent, around the national average) have identified special educational needs. Five pupils, 23 per cent, have Statements of special educational need, which is above the national average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21512	Tony Painter	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology (ICT) Physical education Music
9333	Keith Schofield	Lay inspector	
24895	Kath Hurt	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology
8070	Joe Haves	Team inspector	Special educational needs English History Geography

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education Limited  
102 Bath Road  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL53 7JX

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet 'Complaining about Ofsted Inspections', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **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 and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>11</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>17</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>30</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This **good** school provides very good value for money. A very good ethos of strong relationships and good quality education are contributing to improving pupils' standards.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good leadership and management give a clear focus for continuing development and improving standards.
- Good teaching ensures pupils achieve well through the school, reaching above average standards in mathematics.
- Pupils' personal development is very good and ensures very good attitudes and eagerness to learn.
- A very good range of effectively planned experiences helps pupils learn well.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well.
- More pupils could reach the higher than expected levels of attainment.

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection and has remedied all the issues raised. Curriculum planning and assessment are improved. Substantial improvements in management structures are accurately identifying further developments.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 6 results

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

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

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Pupils make overall **good** achievement from their well below average attainment on entering the school. Children in the reception class make good progress, particularly in personal and social development. However, few reach the goals children are expected to reach by the time they start Year 1, particularly in language and mathematical development. Although National Curriculum test results in Years 2 and 6 have varied from year to year, the overall trend has been upwards. The most recent 2003 Year 6 results compare very favourably with those in similar schools. Current pupils are now doing even better in both groups of tests. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected levels of attainment remains a little weaker.

Pupils make good progress through the school. Although overall attainment in Year 2 is below that found nationally, pupils reach average standards in mathematics and science. The present group of Year 6 pupils are reaching average standards overall, and standards in mathematics

are now above average. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school.

The school ensures pupils' **very good** spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and has very high expectations of pupils. As a result, pupils' relationships and behaviour are very good. They have very good attitudes and interest in all school activities. Attendance is satisfactory; although there are high rates of absence, these are caused by a few pupils with severe illnesses.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides **good** education with **good** teaching and learning. Throughout the school, teachers set high standards and use their very good relationships to engage and encourage pupils. They make very good use of resources to help all pupils to learn well.

The very good curriculum has been improved to give pupils a very wide range of experiences, enhanced by very good activities outside lessons. Teachers make increasingly effective use of information from the school's improved assessment systems to match tasks to pupils' different abilities and set targets. Very good links with parents and the local community contribute to pupils' learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

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

Leadership is very good. The headteacher has an excellent understanding of the school. Her clarity of vision and high aspirations have led to improvements in subject co-ordinators' roles, including better assessment and monitoring.

Very effective management uses rigorous self-evaluation in very good development planning, which closely links finances, staff's professional growth and raising standards.

Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses very well. They are very closely involved with the school, ensuring statutory requirements and helping to shape its future.

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

Parents are very positive about the school's work, particularly teachers' high expectations. Pupils enjoy the very strong relationships at all levels and the very wide range of activities available to them.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Ensure more challenging activities for the more able pupils to help them to achieve higher levels of attainment.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils' achievement through the school is **good**, from a low start. They reach **average standards** by the time they leave the school. However, standards in mathematics are stronger than those in English and science.

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

- Good teaching ensures pupils achieve well through the school.
- Standards reached in mathematics by the end of Year 6 are above average.
- Very good support for pupils with special educational needs ensures their involvement in lessons and good progress.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children join the reception class with well below average attainment, and many have limited experiences. Children settle quickly and make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. This is a reflection of the rich and well-planned curriculum, well-established routines and very positive relationships. Staff work together well and plan a wide range of interesting and practical experiences in all areas of learning to ensure overall good progress. However, by the time they begin Year 1, few children securely reach the expected standards at this age, especially in their language and mathematical development. Although the class lacks a secure outdoor area, restricting children's physical development, staff make effective use of other school facilities to redress the weakness.
2. In Years 1 and 2, good teaching ensures pupils' good achievement. Variations in the school's results in national tests at the end of Year 2 reflect the different abilities of the relatively small groups of pupils involved. However, the overall trend has kept pace with national improvements. Last year's results were below the national average in writing and mathematics, although these were in line with the results in similar schools. Reading results were weaker. In all subjects, there were weaknesses in the proportions of pupils reaching the higher than normally expected levels of attainment. Although current overall attainment in Year 2 is still below that found nationally, pupils reach average standards in mathematics and science. These signs of rising attainment result from a sharper approach to the curriculum and using assessment. For example, a greater emphasis on investigative approaches and problem solving through the school is helping pupils to apply their skills.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.4 (14.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.2 (13.8)	14.6 (14.4)



mathematics	15.6 (14.6)	16.3 (16.5)
-------------	-------------	-------------

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, where effective teaching builds securely on pupils' earlier good progress. Despite some year-on-year variations, the school's Year 6 national test results have improved in recent years at a much faster pace than the national trend. The most recent (2003) results were around the national average in all three subjects, and compared very favourably with those in similar schools. As seen in the Year 2 results, the school's relative weakness has been in getting pupils to reach the higher levels of attainment. Current work in school is beginning to successfully address this point, and standards continue to rise. Although pupils in the present Year 6 group are reaching average standards overall, standards in mathematics are now above average. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels of attainment remains a little weaker.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (27.7)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.2 (26.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.9 (27.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Throughout the school, pupils reach average standards in ICT. This is an improvement from the last report, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school has taken much recent action to improve the resources available to pupils and staff. Effective training has given staff much greater confidence, and this leads to better teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they have very effective support from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils take a full part in all lessons, and staff make good use of their strong personal knowledge of pupils to help them learn. Class teachers ensure that their lesson planning incorporates accurate targets, so that tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities. As a result, many achieve the national standards.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good because they behave very well and are very keen to learn.
- The school council is very effective in promoting pupils' understanding of their rights and responsibilities.
- The school sets very high expectations of pupils' conduct and, because of this, relationships are very good.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted extremely well; as a result, pupils speak confidently and listen carefully to one another.
- For special reasons, overall attendance levels are well below the national average.

## **Commentary**

6. The good achievement of pupils throughout the school is a result of an effective partnership between staff and pupils, based upon positive and trusting relationships. There are clear guidelines in place to ensure pupils know what is expected of them. The inspection found no evidence of racism or other forms of harassment. Exclusions are rare, just one in the last two years imposed for a pupil who is no longer at the school. Pupils are confident that any concerns they express are dealt with effectively.

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	200	1	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

7. Pupils are keen to learn. This is evident by their willingness to contribute in discussions, take part in assemblies and work hard in class. Their good behaviour contributes effectively to the calm atmosphere in school and the positive ethos that underpins all activity. They form constructive relationships, and this enables them to work well on collaborative tasks.
8. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility, and do so with pride. The school council is an effective body because it is representative of the school population and deals with issues that originate from class discussion. The council promotes self-esteem and responsible citizenship very effectively. Older pupils help younger ones at lunch and break times. They initiate fund-raising activities for charities and take responsibility for organising different challenges.
9. The school’s provision for pupils’ personal development is very good. Children in the reception class make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Through assemblies and in lessons, all pupils are encouraged to be reflective and consider the impact of their actions on others. Many good opportunities enable pupils to consider the nature of their own beliefs. The school promotes a clear moral code that helps pupils distinguish between right and wrong. Pupils have considerable opportunities to participate in community activities and accept responsibility for their actions. The school promotes cultural awareness well, through the arts week, the wider curriculum and links with the community. Visiting speakers and performers provide valuable insights into different cultural traditions, and this is reinforced when pupils have opportunities to visit different centres of worship in the community.
10. The school makes every effort to achieve good attendance results. Mainly due to the special medical conditions of some of the pupils, the overall level is well below the national average but unauthorised absence is better than expected, as shown below. The school authorises reasonable requests for holidays. Most of the parents work closely with the school by following the advice given. The great majority of pupils arrive in good time in the morning and the school day starts promptly.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.0	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.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides **good** quality of education, with good teaching and learning. Recent improvements to the curriculum ensure pupils have a very good range of experiences, enriched by an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities. Very good links with parents and the local community promote pupils' learning. The school provides very good guidance and care.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Teachers make **good** use of their personal knowledge of pupils and improving assessment information.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Enthusiastic teachers use resources well to capture pupils' attention and encourage effective learning.
- Good organisation and well-established routines in lessons ensure good use of time and pace to learning.
- Teachers' high behaviour expectations and very good relationships encourage and support good behaviour and hard work.
- Very good support enables pupils with special educational needs to make good progress.
- Teachers use assessments increasingly well to match questioning and tasks to pupils' abilities, although higher attaining pupils still need more challenge.

### Commentary

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	9 (26%)	17 (50%)	7 (21%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

11. The good overall quality of teaching is a significant improvement from that seen in the last inspection. Very effective action has been taken to improve planning and the curriculum, and this has led to better teaching and learning. Careful analysis has correctly identified important aspects to be improved and these have been supported by good training opportunities for staff. This process continues successfully and is currently particularly evident in science and mathematics. In these subjects, greater attention to developing pupils' problem-solving and investigative skills is helping to raise standards further. Parents and pupils are appreciative of the good standard of teaching.
12. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and ensures children learn well. In particular, personal, social and emotional development is promoted extremely well so children quickly settle into school and fit in with routines. There are extremely good

relationships between children and staff that give children confidence to do their best. Staff work together very well to ensure children have access to a wide range of interesting and practical experiences. Children's learning is supported by good resources and pertinent visits to places of interest to widen their experiences. Staff use thorough systems for checking what children can and cannot do in order to organise their teaching groups, set targets and plan children's next steps.

13. Teachers and other staff throughout the school establish very caring and supportive atmospheres for learning. These are built effectively on the very positive relationships that exist at every level. This very strong ethos is a significant positive influence on pupils' learning and achievement as they enjoy all aspects of their work. Teachers' very good organisation of their classrooms and lessons ensures that time is used well. Their very high behaviour expectations are clear to pupils and are consistently supported by positive strategies to identify what pupils do well. As a result, pupils behave very well, and show confidence and enthusiasm as they engage in all activities. Teachers show their own enthusiasm in their explanations and introductions; capturing pupils' attention very well and making them want to learn more. A significant contribution to this process is the teachers' very good use of resources. In particular, the interactive whiteboards in each room are used with confidence to aid explanations and activities.
14. All teachers make very good use of their strong personal knowledge of pupils to set increasingly secure levels of challenge. This is often very apparent when teachers question pupils, rephrasing and pitching these at appropriate levels to challenge different pupils. They promote plenty of discussion and encourage pupils to think hard about their work, and to apply their earlier learning well. This helps to push on the pace of many lessons, taking pupils' thinking and learning further. Teachers make and record increasingly detailed formal assessments and use these to set targets for individuals and groups. These are often used successfully and many pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve. However, teachers still do not ensure that work is designed to challenge the higher attaining pupils consistently. Often, these pupils are required to work faster or more carefully. Tasks less often challenge their thinking at a higher level of difficulty.
15. Pupils with special educational needs have very good support. Well-trained teaching assistants have good understanding of pupils' needs and of how they can help them to learn. They play an effective part in ensuring that these pupils access all activities in the classroom and in the wider school. Close working with pupils individually and in groups often leads to very effective learning.

## **The curriculum**

The breadth of curricular opportunities is **very good**. Opportunities for enrichment are **very good**. **Good** accommodation, staffing and resources support the curriculum well.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Curriculum innovation is very good, as a result, pupils benefit from a wide range of learning experiences.

- Very good special educational needs provision ensures these pupils achieve as well as other groups of pupils.
- The provision for personal, social and health education is very good and this ensures all pupils receive very good guidance in these matters.
- The outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage does not fully meet children's physical development needs.
- There is a strong focus on the arts, which broadens pupils' perspectives.

## **Commentary**

16. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements and its inclusiveness ensures all pupils have good access to a very good range of learning experiences. Its quality is based upon teachers' careful monitoring of existing provision, their flexibility and being receptive to change. Innovations, such as the increased attention to investigations and problem solving, are very effective in improving pupils' learning. As a result, standards are rising, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Good use is made of ICT to support work in other subjects, such as history.
17. The very good curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures these pupils learn well. They have access to a wide range of supportive and additional activities. Many of these are led effectively by teaching assistants, who are able to draw upon the specific targets for improvement identified in each pupil's individual education plan.
18. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good. There is a strong emphasis upon health and so, for example, 'drugs awareness' issues have been imaginatively dealt with through drama. All pupils have good opportunities to explore their emotional development, with 'circle time' being planned for each year group. The school is involved in piloting an initiative to further encourage pupils to explore relationships and to help raise self-esteem.
19. There is a very wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities that enriches the curriculum. In particular, there is very good provision in sports and the arts, and many well-supported clubs promote pupils' interest and enjoyment of these. An annual 'arts week' provides many opportunities to explore different themes, such as other cultures. A wide range of educational visits provides opportunities to extend learning. For example, the Year 6 residential visit supports a range of curricular activities, including literacy, science and geography.
20. The match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum is good. Staff are well qualified and trained, being able to respond competently to new initiatives. The quality of resources is good in most areas of the curriculum. The accommodation is of good quality and is well maintained, although the limited outdoor play area restricts provision in the Foundation Stage. This is too small and has insufficient resources to fully meet children's physical development needs.

## **Care, guidance and support**

All aspects of pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **very good** and the school provides a safe and secure environment for the whole community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very good access to well-informed support, advice and guidance.
- The school ensures that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

### **Commentary**

21. Because of the very good relationships, teaching staff are able to support pupils with advice and guidance that meets their individual needs. Some pupils, who need additional support for their emotional development, have mentors who promote their self-esteem or help them with anger management. Besides the members of staff who undertake this kind of pastoral care, external advisers visit the school on a weekly basis.
22. The care and welfare of pupils have a very high priority and are well co-ordinated, particularly for children in the reception class. Through the quality of its leadership, the school attentively caters for the needs of everyone. This has, for example, resulted in the local education authority giving praise for the high level of health and safety. The school has also gained other commendations, such as the 'Healthy School Award' and the 'Heart Wise Award'.
23. Child protection procedures are well understood and implemented by all members of staff with up-to-date training. Procedures for accidents and emergencies are good, with four members of staff trained in first aid. Caring practices extend to lessons and, as part of the personal, social and health education curriculum, pupils learn about such things as their responsibilities in the wider community.
24. Teachers take note of pupils' self-evaluation and allocate time for them to set their own, written targets for academic development. Parents participate in the process by discussing their children's targets and signing the written statement. Teaching staff then incorporate and implement these objectives into individual learning strategies. The voice of the pupils is heard through the school council. Many pupil-orientated initiatives have been undertaken, such as their involvement in designing playground markings for games.

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

Links with parents and the wider community are **very good** and form a significant strength of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Involvement of parents is very good.
- Links with the community are very good.
- Educational links with other schools and colleges are very good.

## Commentary

25. A measure of the school's success is evident from the large number of parents who come into school to help during the school day. Many attend special award assemblies and, with other helpers, many take on tasks such as managing the exchange of books in the library and ensuring that reading records are carefully maintained. Their warm approach stimulates pupils' interest in books. The parent and friends association has been especially supportive with many fund-raising and social activities. In the last year, for instance, they raised a substantial proportion of the cost for the interactive whiteboards, which are used to enhance classroom teaching and learning. The association also organises the 'Healthy Tuck Shop'.
26. In addition to the monthly school services, the whole school community goes to the parish church on occasions such as harvest and Easter. There are many, very good partnerships with the local community that use the school for organisations, including the Brownies, Rainbows and Guides. In return, the Lascelles community partnership has been especially generous in granting a very substantial amount of money that is being used for development of the 'Jungle Courtyard'. Even the public house, next to the school, recently collected an award winning contribution to school funds.
27. Strong community links with businesses help with funding, such as a well-known ice cream manufacturer that has sponsored the school football shirts. Innovative projects link with industry to provide extended opportunities for pupils, such as the Tees Valley Schools Scheme, which introduces Year 6 pupils to electronics.
28. The school has developed very good partnerships with two universities for teacher-training students, from which the school benefits by having more support in classes. Pupils from local secondary schools have also been allocated work placements in school. Some parents are currently involved with Family Learning courses in school, taught by the local college of further education.



## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are all **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent leadership by the headteacher has improved management and raised aspirations in the school.
- Very good and rigorous self-evaluation ensures very effective professional development of staff, and rapid improvements in the quality of education and pupils' standards.
- Very good planning steers further improvement very well.

### Commentary

29. The headteacher has an excellent understanding of her school, and her clarity of vision and high aspirations have led to significant improvements in the school's effectiveness. These are best seen in the very good ethos, strong sense of teamwork by all those connected with the school and pupils' rising standards. Staff responsible for subjects and other aspects of the school's work are enthusiastic and ambitious in their drive for improvement. Their expanded and more effective roles mean they are good at overseeing and identifying what needs to be done. Better and more rigorous assessment and monitoring systems help considerably, so that there is a sharp awareness of the school's strengths and areas in need of improvement. Governors are very effective in their roles, fully involved and very knowledgeable. The way they help to steer the school forward is very good.
30. The school's success in raising standards is clearly rooted in the very good management and systems for self-evaluation established by the headteacher, staff and governors who work closely with subject co-ordinators. Regular observations of lessons, teachers' planning and evaluations of pupils' work by staff and governors give an accurate view of successes, and clearly highlight areas for improvement. They analyse thoroughly information gained from the checks teachers make on their pupils' attainments, the results of tests and other performance data to see what improvements need to be made. The way all those involved in the school, including parents, work together in identifying and bringing about improvements through successful self-evaluation is a major strength in the school.
31. As a result of this thorough process, the school's improvement planning is very effective. Priorities for development and the action needed are clearly identified and set out in order of priority so that the workload is manageable. Developments are sharply focused on raising standards and improving the quality of education the school provides. Linked firmly to budget planning, priorities are very carefully costed. Funds are used effectively so that the necessary resources are available and teachers have time away from their classes to oversee and so speed developments. There is a strong and very effective emphasis on identifying and supporting the professional development needs of staff. This, and the inclusion of whole school priorities in staff performance management targets, has led to significant improvements in the quality and effectiveness of teaching. Improvements in mathematics standards, pupils' skills and enjoyment in scientific investigations and in the good teaching found during the inspection clearly demonstrate

the impact of the links between very good improvement planning and well-focused staff professional development.

**Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	611,980
Total expenditure	595,547
Expenditure per pupil	2,783

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	69,572
Balance carried forward to the next	86,005

32. Financial management is very good. Budget planning is very thorough and closely monitored. Day-to-day management of finances is very good. The school has carried forward a fairly large surplus in recent years. Some of this funding has been rightly set aside for possible nursery provision in the future. The current year's budget is well balanced, with a reasonable surplus set aside for contingencies. Governors and senior managers are determined in seeking out the best value in their spending decisions, and regularly check out how their school's costs compare with other local schools.

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

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

33. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Although the range of abilities on entry to the reception class is wide, children's attainments on entry are well below average overall. Good teaching means that all children achieve well, including those with special educational needs. They thrive on the rich and well-planned curriculum provided. There is a strong sense of teamwork, and well-established routines give children confidence. Most children reach the goals in their personal, social and emotional development due to very good teaching in this area. However, in other areas of learning, children's low starting points and the relatively short time the youngest children have in the reception class restrict their progress. This means that most are unlikely to securely reach the goals for their age by the time they start in Year 1.
34. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. There are good systems for planning, so that children have access to a wide range of interesting and practical experiences. In doing this, the adults make effective use of good resources and visits to places of interest in connection with class topics. They observe children closely, and use the thorough systems for checking what children can and cannot do to organise their teaching groups, to carefully set targets and to plan children's next steps in their learning. These all help children to do well in their time in the reception class.

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

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

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

- Very good teaching means that children achieve very well.
- Adults establish very good routines, and use praise and encouragement very effectively so that relationships are very good.

#### **Commentary**

35. Teachers place a strong emphasis on developing children's skills in this area, in line with the whole school focus on establishing very good behaviour and attitudes to others, and to their learning. Very good teaching means that children get off to a very good start in the reception classes in developing good social and personal skills. Most reach the goals for their age by the time they start in Year 1. Children are eager to join in with the interesting activities their teachers plan for them and so they quickly respond to signals, such as the bell that tells them to stop work and tidy away. All the adults make sure that children understand the routines, and they confidently move around and explore the different activities set out for them. Adults are good at using praise and encouragement, so that children want to do things well. They make sure that children know how to behave and play fairly with others. In their own examples of teamwork, in class discussions and when taking children aside for a few quiet words when incidents arise, adults stress the

important qualities of caring, sharing and co-operating. As a result, relationships and behaviour are very good, and children play very well together.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well because teaching is good.
- Good interventions by adults when working with small groups of children and a very good partnership with parents mean that children show enthusiasm and enjoyment in reading.
- Writing activities do not consistently challenge children enough and their progress is slower than it could be.

### **Commentary**

36. Good, thorough teaching means that children do well in this area, in view of the low starting points of many on entry. However, in spite of teachers' determined efforts, only the most able children are on course to reach the goals for their age by the time they start in Year 1. Teaching is particularly effective when adults work with small groups of children. They use questions effectively and make sure that children understand and use a wider vocabulary by prompting them to describe and explain what they see in relation to the farm and other class topics. This develops their language well, so that most will confidently talk about the new things they learn.
37. When reading with small groups of children, adults take every opportunity to encourage children to learn and use the sounds of letters when trying to read new words. Children enjoy books and are eager to read. They particularly enjoy the attractive books that teachers choose for them, like those with interesting flaps that lift up to reveal words and pictures, and other features. However, when teachers work with two or three children like this, others make slower progress than they might because adults are not on hand to intervene in their activities to extend their learning and language skills. Very good use of role play generated great excitement and meant that children remembered the story extremely well following the reading of a 'Who's In the Shed' story. Teachers have forged a strong and successful partnership with parents in developing children's interest and enjoyment in reading. They have set up a very good system, using the school library, so that parents organise their own weekly exchange of books that boosts children's skills when reading at home.
38. There are good opportunities for writing in the corners set aside for this in each classroom. Regular practice and activities, like writing their own name labels placed next to the models they build with construction toys, all help, so that most children learn to write their names and some letters independently. The recently introduced handwriting policy is successfully improving the quality of handwriting. Thorough teaching of letter sounds means that some children begin to spell simple words correctly. Sometimes, the pace of

learning is slowed when teachers direct writing activities too closely, so that children are not challenged enough in developing their own independent writing skills.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching with a wide range of practical experiences means that children do well in developing their skills, particularly in counting.
- Children's progress is slowed when adults do not intervene enough to extend their learning and language skills in the activities that children work on independently.

### **Commentary**

39. Although good teaching means that children achieve well in their mathematical development, they do not securely reach the goals for their age by the end of the reception year. However, children do particularly well in counting, and come close to reaching the goals in this aspect. The adults take every opportunity to engage children in counting. When completing the class register, children are challenged to calculate the numbers present by deducting the number of absentees. More able children often give accurate answers. Good use of physical activities, such as action games in the playground, engage children's interest and enthusiasm very well, with the result that many become confident and accurate in counting to twenty and sometimes beyond. Parent volunteers who are well deployed in providing extra practice for children, particularly those with special educational needs, make a good contribution to children's mathematical development. When teachers work with children in small groups, they provide good levels of challenge. For example, some children checked the accuracy of their predictions when counting how many scoops of water are needed to fill a container. Other ongoing activities have good potential. Children enjoy them because they are interested in practical activities, such as counting in twos as they peg pairs of socks on a clothes line. However, because adults are not available to challenge and question them enough, they sometimes lose interest and miss opportunities to extend their mathematics skills as well as they might.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Effective use of practical activities, visits and resources means that children show high levels of interest and achieve well.

### **Commentary**

40. Teaching in this area is good. Children enjoy their play because activities, planned through a topic approach, are interesting. Teachers extend children's experiences considerably in well-planned visits. A good range of resources in the classrooms successfully attracts children's interest and concentration. During the inspection, children talked knowledgeably about their visit to a farm, and the animals and equipment to be found there, as they made their own farms using a collection of good quality toys. They create sturdy models of tractors and other vehicles, using construction toys and junk materials. Teachers manage discussions particularly well, persisting with questions that challenge children to think hard and give fuller explanations. They make good use of parent volunteers, so that children benefit from extra discussions and individual attention in activities such as cooking. There were too few opportunities for children to develop their skills in working with computers and other information and communication technology (ICT) during the inspection week. Children achieve well from their sometimes low starting points but, overall, they do not reach the goals for their age in this area of learning.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Effective teaching in sessions in the school hall means that children achieve well in their physical development.
- Opportunities for children to extend their physical development through outdoor play are limited by the lack of a suitable area and planning that is not thorough enough.

### **Commentary**

41. The teaching and children's achievements in physical development are satisfactory. Children achieve well in some sessions in the school hall where very good teaching means that activities have a clear focus and children know what they are to learn. Good use of music in well-managed warm-up sessions, where adults provide good examples for them to follow, prepares children well for the main activities. There are good opportunities for children to discuss ways of improving their performances. The teacher manages them very well and a brisk pace means that children are enthusiastic and behave very well.
42. There is no designated, secure outdoor play area for children in the reception classes, although they have access to a small 'Jungle Courtyard' area with good quality sand pit and other play equipment. However, the area is very limited in space and children have too few opportunities or resources to run, climb and ride wheeled toys as part of their outdoor play activities. Planning for activities in this area is not detailed enough in setting out the particular skills children will develop as they play. This makes it hard for those supervising to intervene at the right level so that children develop their skills well. As a result, children's progress is slowed and they do not securely reach the goals in their physical development. The school has already identified outdoor facilities as an urgent priority for action in the near future as part of its plans for a nursery-building project.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good opportunities for role play successfully stimulate children's interest and enjoyment.
- Children lack imagination and persistence with activities when adults are not present.

### **Commentary**

43. Effective planning and use of good resources are strengths in the good teaching that helps children achieve well in their creative development. There are good opportunities for children to develop their imagination through role play in both classrooms. Teachers pay very good attention to resources that successfully stimulate children's interest and imagination, like the animal masks and shed structure that encourage children to act out the stories they read together. Children thoroughly enjoy their play and are fascinated by others' performances, particularly when adults join in their play. They do best when this happens because adults successfully use prompts, questions and their own examples that spur children on, so that their play is more imaginative. However, children find it hard to maintain their concentration without these good role models and, when adults move away, children's play often dissolves and lacks imagination as they lose interest and concentration. Children are unlikely to securely reach the goals for their age in this area by the time they enter Year 1.



## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good curricular provision ensures pupils have many and varied opportunities to learn effectively.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs and pupils of below average ability is very good, so their progress matches that of all pupils.
- In some lessons, higher attaining pupils are not provided with sufficiently challenging tasks.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good; this contributes significantly to pupils' good achievement and good attitudes towards learning.

#### Commentary

44. Standards of attainment in reading and writing are just below average by the end of Year 2, but meet the national expectations in speaking and listening. By the end of Year 6, standards in English are average. Pupils' overall achievement is good because the quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Standards in reading in Year 2 are higher than a year ago because the school has worked hard to improve work in phonics. However, in both Years 2 and 6, not enough pupils achieve higher levels of attainment in comparison with the national average.
45. In Years 1 and 2, teachers use questions effectively that encourage pupils to listen carefully and speak clearly. Class discussion helps pupils gain confidence and the emphasis on correct terminology broadens their vocabulary. In a poetry lesson, for example, pupils identified rhyming words and used them correctly. They achieved well in performing, reading poems expressively to the class audience. By Year 6, most pupils speak clearly and listen carefully. This is because of good teaching in most lessons, based upon a secure command of the subject. Effective questioning encourages pupils to explore both opinions and emotions. For example, pupils investigate persuasive language and use this effectively to underpin an argument. In an excellent lesson, the class teacher used an exciting story well and pupils analysed text perceptively. There is a wide range of group tasks that promote independent learning extremely well. The needs of all ability groups are fully met and achievement is very good.
46. Standards in reading are improving. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 read accurately and use phonic clues effectively to overcome difficulties. Most pupils can describe plot, and higher attaining pupils comment well upon character. A minority of pupils have difficulty in using non-fiction texts because their alphabetical knowledge is weak. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are encouraged to choose exciting books, and enjoy reading. They are accurate and expressive, although their fluency varies. They offer pertinent comments upon plot and character, and higher attaining pupils make valid comparisons between authors. Pupils know how to use non-fiction texts. However, they are slow in using the index because their alphabetical knowledge is still not always secure.

47. Most Year 2 pupils' handwriting and punctuation is accurately set out in their practice books. However, they do not always transfer these skills securely when writing stories. Higher attaining pupils use accurate and interesting sentences to describe events and write imaginatively. The good range of writing evident reflects the good teaching in Years 1 and 2. Effective planning ensures pupils are introduced to a wide range of varied tasks, supported by good quality resources. In Years 3 to 6, handwriting varies in quality, with secure skills evident amongst most pupils, but weaknesses in joining and forming letters amongst a minority. There are some inconsistencies in spelling and grammar. The strength in writing is the range of work evident, where good teaching promotes ideas and encourages thoughtful vocabulary. There is good work in poetry, biography and adventure stories. The best teaching encourages both collaborative and independent learning.
48. The very good relationships between staff and pupils lead to good achievement. Pupils with special educational needs and those who require additional support benefit significantly from the wide range of curricular provision in place. The very good work of teaching assistants is significant here. In the best lessons, tasks are also planned to challenge higher attaining pupils. However, some lessons do not stretch their abilities sufficiently. For example, writing tasks are not designed carefully enough to ensure that they make full use of pupils' developing language skills.
49. Leadership and management are good. Through thorough monitoring, the co-ordinator has a clear view of where standards need to improve. She supports colleagues well in seeking to achieve these improvements in provision and standards. There are efficient administrative procedures in place. Overall improvement since the previous inspection is good.

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

50. In many lessons, the good use of discussion promotes speaking and listening effectively. Pupils increasingly draw upon a variety of audio and written source materials to support their studies. For example, in history they use the Internet to research information on the Ancient Greeks. Pupils write up experiments in science, describe the environment on educational visits and use language well to present ideas in assembly. Skills developed in literacy lessons are transferred across the curriculum effectively and underpin the good achievement of pupils throughout the school.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- Good teaching ensures pupils achieve very well, reaching above average standards by Year 6.
- Very good relationships encourage pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes.
- Good attention is being paid to developing pupils' problem-solving skills.

#### **Commentary**

51. Pupils achieve well from well below average attainment on entry to the school. They reach above average standards by the end of Year 6, a substantial improvement on the standards described in the last report. These standards also represent further consistent improvement on the school's 2003 National Curriculum test results at this age, already well above those in similar schools.
52. Teachers throughout the school have established very good relationships with pupils. This forms an effective foundation for learning because pupils want to work hard. Teachers are very positive and supportive of pupils, which gives them confidence to do their best. This encourages very good attitudes and behaviour. The strong positive atmosphere and pupils' enthusiastic responses contribute significantly to good pace and learning in all lessons.
53. Teachers structure and organise lessons well to ensure a good pace of learning. In particular, they promote quick responses in mental work. This links well with greater attention to problem-solving and helps pupils to explain their mathematical thinking, leading to stronger learning. Teachers give very clear presentations and explanations, and often make good use of resources, such as the interactive whiteboards, to ensure pupils understand.
54. Very good support ensures pupils with special educational needs play a full part in all lessons. Well-trained and very effective teaching assistants, working with groups or individual pupils, make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. All staff know pupils' strengths and weaknesses very well. Teachers make good use of informal assessment to pitch questions that challenge pupils at the right level to extend their thinking. This helps pupils to think hard and learn very well. Formal assessment systems are giving more useful information to help teachers to set targets and plan work for pupils with different abilities. This is being used to better effect to challenge higher attaining pupils more effectively. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment is improving. However, there is still scope to take these measures further.
55. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has very good knowledge and understanding. Good monitoring of the school's work, including observation of teaching and pupils' work, has given a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses. This accurate and objective picture of the school has shown where new approaches to teaching and the curriculum can be introduced to raise standards further. In particular, action to improve pupils' problem-solving skills is having clear positive impact on overall standards.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

56. Pupils make good use of their developing mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, they collect data in a wide range of lessons, including geography and science, using different forms of graphs to display their findings. Pupils also show confidence when using ICT to carry out mathematical tasks or in following individual practice programs designed to develop their personal skills. In subjects such as design and technology, pupils measure accurately and use different scales.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well in science and standards are rising.
- Good teaching means that pupils enjoy science lessons and work hard because there is a good emphasis on practical activities and investigations.
- Activities planned for more able pupils are not consistently challenging enough to promote higher than normally expected levels of attainment.

### **Commentary**

57. There has been very good improvement in the school's provision for science since the last inspection. Standards in Year 6 have been low in some years since then. They have improved considerably in recent years, and standards last year and in the current Year 6 continue to be average. All the pupils in Year 2 reached the expected levels in recent teacher checks on their attainments. These standards represent good achievement because many pupils come into the school with attainments that are well below average. They do very well compared with pupils in schools with a similar background. However, the school has correctly identified that not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels. It has begun planning for some appropriate actions although these have not yet had their full impact.
58. The teaching is good, with some very good lessons. This is due to very good leadership and management of the subject by senior managers, the energetic and enthusiastic co-ordinator, and a very committed staff. Rigorous systems for checking the effectiveness of teaching and how well pupils are doing clearly identify strengths and areas that need to be developed. Very effective action planning and staff professional development mean that staff are confident and thorough in their teaching. The establishment of very good planning guidance and effective systems for checking on pupils' achievements has successfully raised teachers' expectations of their pupils. All of these strengths mean that pupils' progress is faster than before.
59. Pupils often say that they enjoy science lessons because teachers are good at making lessons exciting, with practical activities that pupils find interesting. Some teachers use ICT very effectively, such as the overhead projector, interactive whiteboards and digital camera, so that pupils are fascinated in experimenting with shadows and examining tiny seeds. There are very good opportunities for investigations, so that pupils develop a secure grasp of what makes a test fair, and good skills in reporting their findings. Teachers are particularly good at managing demonstrations and discussions, where pupils listen and observe very closely. They make sure that pupils learn and use the new scientific language associated with each topic. They provide much needed repetition in their explanations so that those with special educational needs are well supported and achieve as well as others. Very good use of questions challenges pupils to think hard so they make connections with new and previous learning.
60. Enthusiasm, brisk pace and challenging activities are features of the very good lessons seen where pupils, like those in Year 1, sometimes reach higher standards than those

expected for their age. Teachers generally adapt activities well, such as the written work, for the different abilities in their class. However, they often do not pitch the science work itself at a high enough level for more able pupils, and it is not always as challenging as it might be. Because of this, too few pupils reach the higher levels in Years 2 and 6.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- New approaches and equipment give pupils good experiences and are helping to raise standards.
- Teachers ensure that there are strong links with other subjects.

### **Commentary**

61. Pupils' standards of attainment are average by the end of Year 6, an improvement on those described in the last report. Pupils' ICT skills development has had a significant boost recently, with new computers and the installation of interactive whiteboards in all classrooms. Teachers make good use of the facilities and integrate ICT into work in most subjects. As a result, standards are improving, with all pupils showing good levels of confidence. This confidence and the good achievement through the school suggest that higher standards are achievable over time. Pupils are eager to learn and proud of their achievements. Staff ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have full access to the subject.
62. Pupils' good achievement develops from teachers' effective planning. They give pupils a good blend of systematic skills development and many good opportunities to apply these skills through the school. As a result, pupils are confident when starting computers and loading programs and past work. They use a good range of specialist terms correctly when talking about equipment and the work they are doing. Pupils use a good range of programs through the school and the application of these gives them skills in most aspects of the subject. For example, Year 3 pupils prepared presentations by using a laptop computer to import images from a digital camera, and incorporating text. Pupils' increasing confidence with the subject is improving their work and helping them to apply their skills effectively.
63. Teachers' increasing confidence in their own skills helps them to make effective use of the equipment. This is contributing to good teaching overall, both within specific ICT lessons and in other subjects. Teachers and assistants have very strong relationships with pupils, and their effective organisation ensures that lessons have good pace. Lessons have a very positive atmosphere that encourages pupils to work hard. As a result, they show consistently very good attitudes in their work. For example, Year 2 pupils co-operated well when programming a floor robot to follow specific instructions. Year 6 pupils worked maturely and independently when researching the Internet for their work in history.

64. The school successfully encourages pupils' increasing independence and the development of ICT skills through 'digital excellence'. They carry out a series of activities that give them skills and confidence in aspects of the curriculum. Successful work is rewarded with certificates and badges. Those pupils who have completed the scheme become 'trusted pupils' and proudly wear their badges. They relish the additional responsibility of helping out other pupils who have difficulties.
65. The subject is led well and there is a clear plan for improving resources, with links to important aspects such as training and monitoring standards. The recently appointed co-ordinator is currently working with other subject co-ordinators to further develop links within planning. This is focusing attention effectively on areas to be improved, such as developing teachers' confidence with a much improved range of equipment. Improving assessment of the standards of work is giving teachers and pupils a better idea of how well pupils are doing.

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

66. Teachers ensure that pupils make very good use of their developing ICT skills to aid their learning in other subjects. Teachers' ICT planning often creates good links with other learning, improving pupils' understanding of how to apply ICT skills in their work. For example, Year 1 pupils use their good word processing skills to create reports of their visits. Year 4 pupils make very good choices of fonts when creating tombstones and epitaphs. Many links are created with mathematics, such as the use of angles, position and measures, when pupils confidently program floor robots or use Logo programs on laptops. Pupils use digital images from cameras or from the digital microscope in their work. A strong strand of this work uses and manipulates these images within pupils' artwork. For example, Year 3 pupils link together digital images following their look at the work of David Hockney. Work of this type supports pupils well in their learning, contributing to good achievement and improving standards.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Religious education**

This subject was inspected through a separate inspection, published elsewhere.

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good use of fieldwork enriches pupils' experiences effectively.
- The increasing use of ICT helps develop pupils' skills and knowledge.
- The subject promotes pupils' personal development well.

### **Commentary**

67. Standards of work in Years 2 and 6 are average. Achievement is good throughout the school. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Work is carefully marked so that pupils receive good guidance for improvement. The curriculum is of good quality, being enriched by educational visits and links with other subject areas. Both literacy and numeracy are promoted effectively.
68. By Year 2, pupils have a sense of the environment, know that contrasting locations differ and use basic mapping skills effectively to record the locality. Lessons are carefully planned and good use is made of resources. ICT is used well to present pupils with new challenges. For example, Year 1 pupils confidently create graphs and pictograms to record their journey to school. In Year 2, pupils use maps and compasses well to improve their sense of distance and direction.
69. By Year 6, pupils use correct vocabulary to identify coastal features. On a residential visit to Seahouses, pupils studied coastal erosion and correctly identified the appropriate coastal defences. This work helps improve their understanding of physical geography and promotes self-confidence, playing an important part in their personal development. In Year 3, pupils use ICT effectively to map and develop their understanding of land use. In Year 4, good use is made of the school grounds to raise pupils' awareness of litter pollution.
70. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator is aware of priorities through a good range of monitoring procedures, including regular scrutiny of pupils' work. As a result, improvement since the previous inspection is good.

## **History**

Provision in history is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching in Year 6 raises achievement in lessons.
- The subject promotes pupils' personal development well.
- Good use is made of resources to stimulate interest.

## **Commentary**

71. Pupils' standards of work are average in Years 2 and 6. Achievement is good throughout the school. The quality of teaching and learning is good, with some very good teaching observed during the inspection.
72. Pupils in Year 1 recognise change over time when studying the Victorian seaside. This is because the class teacher makes good use of pictorial evidence, supported by effective questioning. There is a good emphasis on health education; pupils discuss the dangers of too much exposure to the sun. By Year 2, pupils have a secure sense of chronology, gain useful insights into the lives of historical figures, such as James Cook, and use empathy skills well to write accounts of his voyages.

73. By Year 6, pupils are able to interrogate evidence competently and use ICT effectively to research topics. In Year 5, good teaching promotes subject knowledge and vocabulary effectively. Pupils use such terms as 'pillage' when describing the Viking raids. Where very good teaching occurs, such as in Year 6, information is presented clearly using varied resources, a wide range of tasks are planned, and the class teacher's subject knowledge is very secure. Because of this, pupils know what to do, and the trusting relationships create very good opportunities for pupils to work independently. As a result, achievement in this lesson was very good and pupils' social development was promoted extremely well. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have a good range of skills and use these to improve their knowledge and understanding of history.
74. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has a clear view of strengths and weaknesses and seeks to address them, for example by ensuring guided reading books are purchased that promote the subject and literacy skills. There are established monitoring procedures in place, so that all pupils' progress is tracked on a regular basis. This is supported by regular assessments of work. The good quality curriculum is enriched through educational visits and visitors to school. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported through graduated tasks. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

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

75. Because no lessons were seen in design and technology or physical education, provision in these subjects was sampled during the inspection. This included an examination of school records, curriculum planning and pupils' work, where available. It is not possible to make secure judgements on provision, standards or teaching in these subjects.
76. In **design and technology** it is clear from the good quality products on display and evidence of pupils' designs and plans in their notebooks that considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection. Planning for design and technology has improved so that all aspects are now taught systematically and thoroughly. There are good systems that regularly check how well pupils are doing. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management of the subject, and has a clear view of its strengths and where further improvements are needed.
77. There were no direct **physical education** lesson observations. However, planning and records demonstrate that pupils enjoy a wide range of activities through the school that cover the full curriculum. Much specialist teaching by the subject co-ordinator aids consistency of teaching. A very good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in team games, enriches provision. Pupils take part in these activities with enthusiasm and increasing skills. They talk with pride about their achievements. There are effective arrangements to ensure that most pupils reach the national expectation for swimming.
78. Leadership of these subjects is good, with co-ordinators taking more effective roles and greater responsibilities. They have made thorough reviews of their subjects to gain clearer understanding of the standards pupils achieve. They have identified appropriate areas for development and made links with necessary training. These measures are contributing to better teaching, and rising standards.



## Music

Provision in music is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning is aided by very good additional activities, including instrumental tuition.

### Commentary

79. Pupils through the school achieve well and reach average standards by Year 6. This represents an improvement on the progress identified in the last inspection. There is a good range of music-making activities for pupils that include many opportunities to perform and to learn to play musical instruments. Pupils listen to music from different times and places, and talk about their thoughts and feelings with increasing clarity. Pupils take opportunities with enthusiasm and this contributes further to their good learning.
80. Good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well. This is supported by good use of specialist teachers to contribute skills and expertise. Teachers plan carefully to develop pupils' musical awareness in different forms of music. For example, all pupils listened to a visiting group of classical musicians but Year 5 also began to look at the structure of rap music. Teachers generally organise their lessons carefully, making sure that necessary resources are at hand. As a result, lessons have sufficient pace of learning. Their very positive relationships give pupils the confidence to try their best, and lead to many successes. Pupils sing enthusiastically and accurately in assemblies. Those pupils learning instruments show increasing confidence and control in a wide range of music.
81. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There is increasing attention to analysing and evaluating the curriculum, and ways of ensuring pupils' good progress.

## Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching means that pupils achieve well.
- A very good range of extra opportunities, beyond the normal lessons, successfully enriches pupils' experiences and extends their skills.

### Commentary

82. Standards in art and design in Year 6 are average, with evidence of higher attainment in some aspects, such as observational drawing. Very good improvements have been made since the last inspection, when unsatisfactory teaching and a number of weaknesses were found, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The leadership and management of the subject are now good. Substantial improvements in planning mean that all aspects of art and design are now taught thoroughly. Whilst arrangements for checking how well pupils are doing are satisfactory, these are set to further improve in line with plans to establish a more effective system in the near future.

83. No teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection, but the quality of pupils' work on display indicates that standards and teaching are at least satisfactory. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. Teachers have good expertise and confidence in teaching art. They manage classes well, and provide very good explanations and demonstrations that give pupils confidence in trying out new skills and techniques for themselves. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to practise and refine their skills in such techniques as shading, in preparation for producing their final piece of art work. Some teachers use pupils' sketchbooks particularly effectively in this process so that, after experimenting with different styles, pupils create imaginative effects with pencil shading and two- and three-dimensional paint effects in their art work. Good attention to encouraging pupils to observe very carefully when drawing still-life objects, such as a crumpled drinks can, means they sometimes show great accuracy in representing hollows and shadows in their own high-quality observational drawings. Very good use of a digital camera in Year 3 considerably develops pupils' appreciation of photography in art as they study the work of David Hockney.
84. The school provides a wealth of very good opportunities to enable pupils to explore a wide variety of work with visiting artists. These make a significant contribution to the rich and vibrant art and design curriculum that pupils thoroughly enjoy. There are regular additional experiences, such as Art Week, art clubs for older pupils and those in Year 1, and visiting artists who demonstrate and engage pupils in brass rubbing, sculptures, glass painting and other techniques. These all widen considerably pupils' awareness of different art forms, giving valuable opportunities for experimentation and creativity. The quality of this provision can be seen in art work around the school and has rightly been recognised in the Arts Mark Award achieved this year.

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

85. No lessons could be observed in this area of the school's work, although inspectors saw some elements in other lessons. For example, the good use of discussion helps pupils gain confidence in discussing their beliefs. All classes have regular opportunities for discussion, sometimes through 'circle time'. In a literacy lesson, pupils expressed differing opinions on pocket money and the lesson helped them consider the advantages and disadvantages of this. The school places great emphasis upon personal development. The democratically elected school council plays an important part in determining how elements of the school budget should be spent. Pupils are placed in positions of trust, whether it be working independently in the computer suite or taking a lead in fund-raising activities. As a result, most pupils recognise the importance of taking responsibility, and they do so sensibly.
86. Personal, social and health education is promoted effectively in the reception class and this emphasis is maintained through the school. The school is currently piloting a 'social, emotional and behavioural' programme of activities, based on specific themes. There is a clear emphasis on healthy living, and all staff have been trained to promote this. The good links with the local community help provide pupils with a wide perspective on responsible citizenship. Guest speakers have an important role in maintaining these links and are often invited to present pupil awards during assemblies. All statutory requirements are met.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	4
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>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
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	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	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).*