

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **THE KINGSWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Clay Hill Road, Basildon

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115268

Headteacher: Mr D M Barnes

Lead inspector: Chrissie Pittman

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> September - 1<sup>st</sup> October 2003

Inspection number: 258136

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

© Crown copyright 2003

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:	Junior school
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	242
School address:	Clay Hill Road Basildon
Postcode:	SS16 5DE
Telephone number:	(01268) 520850
Fax number:	(01268) 287602
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M G Flanigan
Date of previous inspection:	27 <sup>th</sup> April 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Kingswood Junior is a foundation school situated in the centre of Basildon. It draws most of its pupils from the immediate catchment area, which is a mixture of owner-occupied homes and social housing. A significant number of pupils also come from outside the immediate catchment and because of the school's good reputation it is consistently oversubscribed. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The school is similar in size to other primary schools. There are 242 boys and girls, aged seven - 11 years. The population is mixed but most pupils are white British and the percentage of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is low. Most children when they enter the school are achieving well for their age. The percentage of pupils thought to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils with special educational needs is below average but the number identified as needing extra help and for whom additional money is provided is broadly in line with the national average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18275	C Pittman	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Religious education
9981	S Hussain	Lay inspector	
20063	G Slamon	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography History
25203	R Cooke	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language English Modern foreign languages Music Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI  
Ground Floor  
Barley House  
Oakfield Grove  
Bristol  
BS8 2BN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection 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>4 - 5</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>6 - 9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>9 - 14</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 - 15</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2</b>	<b>16 - 27</b>
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>28</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an **effective** school which continues to improve. All pupils progress well; achievement is good in most subjects and very good in mathematics. Pupils are keen to learn and relate very well to each other, in what parents think is 'a very good family atmosphere'. Most of the teaching is either good or better; nearly half is very good. The school addresses the needs of all its pupils effectively and is highly inclusive. There is a good learning ethos and pupils' personal qualities are developed well. The headteacher's leadership is very strong and managers are quick to identify and tackle any weaknesses. Strong leadership and management have kept the school on an upward track improving its already high standards. The school has a very strong partnership with its parents, is very well regarded in the community and offers **good value** for money.

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

#### Strengths

- Standards in English are well above average and in mathematics are very high.
- Teaching and learning are good overall with a significant proportion of very good teaching particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Leadership and management are very good overall. The headteacher's leadership is excellent. He provides clear and purposeful direction to the school. Governance is strong.
- The curriculum is broad with a variety of extra-curricular activities, French teaching in Year 6 and music as particular strengths.
- Pupils are very well cared for and parents have very good links with the school.

#### Weaknesses

- The provision for religious education is unsatisfactory, resulting in unsatisfactory standards. Statutory requirements are not met.
- The writing standards of more able boys and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) through the curriculum are weak.

### How the effectiveness of the school has changed since the previous inspection.

The school has made very good improvement since the previous inspection in 1998. The teaching and learning and the management and efficiency are significantly improved. Pupils' standards are higher. Achievement is now good in English and science and very good in mathematics. More pupils achieve higher levels in mathematics and science; writing still needs to improve further in all classes particularly for more able boys. The school's response to its key issues from the previous inspection have been very positive. The governing body is now more aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Systems for managing the school are now tighter and there is more of a focus on raising standards by targeting and monitoring teaching and learning. There is improved communication, a new computer suite and better assessment in the foundation subjects, although this still has some way to go.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	A	A	A
mathematics	C	A	A*	A
science	C	A	A	C

*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 achieve well.** Most children when they enter the school are achieving well for their age. Some are achieving very well. When they leave aged 11 pupils' achievement is good in English and

science and very good in mathematics. When pupils' results are compared with those of pupils in similar schools, standards are well above average overall.

The school exceeded its challenging targets last year in English and mathematics. There has been an upward trend in the last three years and this is largely the result of the successful targeting and monitoring of pupils. Overall, there is little difference in the achievement of boys and girls although girls perform better than boys in writing at the higher levels.

**Pupils' personal qualities**, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development **are developed well**. Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour in and out of the classroom are good. Attendance is good and lessons start on time.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The **quality of education is good** overall. **Teaching is predominantly good** throughout the school with many examples of very good and occasionally excellent teaching. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. There is a positive ethos for learning in all classrooms. The best teaching is in Year 6 where it is particularly effective in meeting the needs of all pupils regardless of the subject being taught. Very good planning produced dynamic and inspiring lessons where pupils' learning was very good. Teaching is least effective in subjects such as religious education, music, design and technology and science in Years 3 and 4 where basic skills are sometimes not well taught and work is not well matched to pupils' capabilities, particularly the more able pupils.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with a very good range of learning opportunities which meet the interests, aptitudes and special needs of all pupils. There is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills coupled with enriching first-hand experiences in the arts, music and physical education. However, the time allocated to religious education does not meet statutory requirements. Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is very good. They feel valued and are involved very well in their learning. The school works very effectively in partnership with parents, other schools and the community. It is well regarded in the local community and oversubscribed.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management are very good**. The headteacher's leadership is excellent. He knows what the school does well, where its weaknesses are and how to improve them. Senior managers are well focused on improving standards and supporting all pupils. The governance of the school is very good. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and monitor its performance effectively.

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

Parents are happy with almost all aspects of the school. A few parents felt that they were not adequately informed as to how well their children were progressing. A few pupils thought that other children did not behave well. Inspectors found that the school provides much helpful written information for parents. (Eg regarding school policies, routines and homework guidelines). Parents also receive good quality half term reports about their children's progress. However, there is scope to improve pupils' end of year reports. Pupils' behaviour, in and out of the classroom, was good.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- improve the writing standards of more able boys and the use of ICT through the curriculum;
- improve standards in religious education; and
- the provision of religious education does not meet statutory requirements.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

**Standards**, overall, are generally **above average** in most subjects. Teachers challenge pupils to think for themselves and enable them to reach the levels they are capable of. Pupils' achievement is **good**, overall.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils make good progress.
- Achievement is very good in mathematics and good in English and science for most pupils.
- Pupils' attainment in the national tests when compared to all schools is very high in mathematics (top five per cent) and well above average in English and science.
- Writing is weak, through other subjects of the curriculum, particularly for more able boys.
- The standards attained in religious education are well below average.

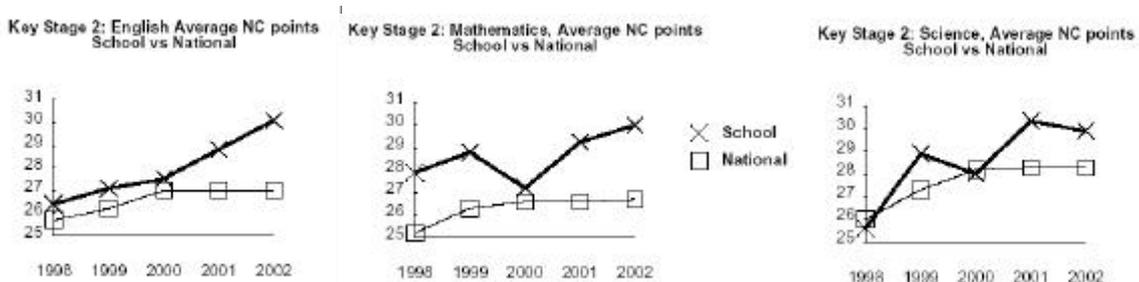
#### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.1 (28.8)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	30.0 (29.2)	26.7 (26.6)
science	29.9 (30.4)	28.3 (28.3)

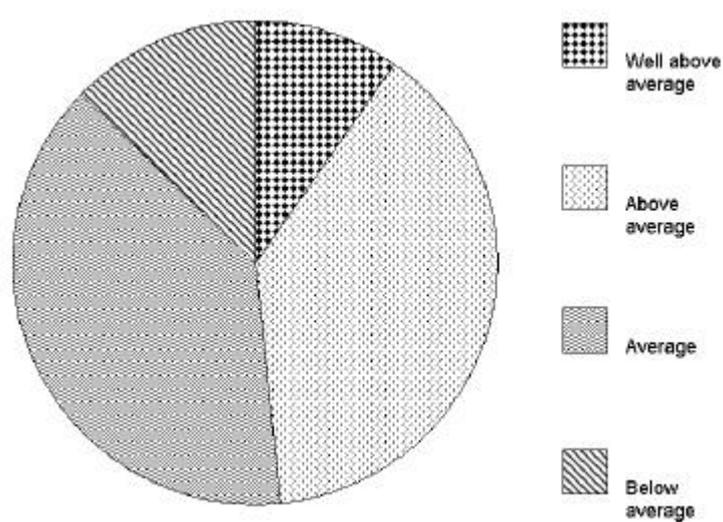
*There were 62 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

#### Commentary

1. Most children when they start school are achieving well for their age. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, pupils are achieving results that are very high in mathematics and well above average in English and science. When results are judged against those in schools in a similar context, pupils' standards are well above average in English and mathematics and average in science. This represents good achievement. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels was very high in English and well above average in mathematics and science. The school exceeded its challenging targets last year in English and mathematics. The school's upward trend is largely the result of the successful targeting and monitoring of pupils. The school analyses attainment by gender well, showing that there is little difference between the overall attainment of boys and girls, although girls perform better in writing at the higher levels.



The chart below shows the percentages of lessons seen in the inspection in which pupils reached standards that were well below average, below average, average and above average from ages seven to 11.



2. In English currently, standards for 11-year-olds in reading and speaking and listening are well above average. In writing they are above average. Standards in mathematics are also well above average by the end of Year 6. In science, standards are above the national average. Pupils' attainment at the higher level is above average in all three-core subjects. Overall achievement is good in English and science and very good in mathematics.
3. The National Literacy Strategy is well implemented in the school and is making a good contribution to pupils' learning. The emphasis the school places on reading and the opportunities provided for it is reflected in the pupils' enthusiasm for books. There are good opportunities for older pupils to develop writing skills in a variety of contexts in such subjects as history, geography and religious education. However, there are inconsistencies in other classes where the opportunity to write in different contexts and for different purposes is often limited. The National Numeracy Strategy supports teachers' planning and many features, such as the mental sessions and the discussions of strategies, are securely embedded. An analysis of pupils' books shows that the programme of work is covered systematically and thoroughly. There is a strong emphasis on mental computation. Pupils benefit from regular practice at the start of lessons and their understanding of mental strategies is very good by the end of Year 6.
4. The provision for information and communication technology has improved considerably since the last inspection. Virtually all pupils reach and most exceed, the standards expected by the end of Year 6. This represents good achievement. The use of the computer suite, the training staff have received and the good teaching, as observed in the lessons seen, all contribute to the good progress pupils are making.
5. Standards are above expectations in all other subjects except geography where they are in line and religious education, where they are below.
6. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well because they are supported very effectively in lessons by both teachers and teaching assistants.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES**

**Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development** including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **good**. Pupils are enthusiastic about their school and keen to learn. Attendance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good procedures are in place to promote attendance and punctuality.

- Pupils show keen interest in school.
- Pupils form good relationships and behave well in lessons.
- Extra-curricular activities are very well attended.
- Teachers are good role models and have high expectations to which pupils aspire.
- There is some inattentiveness by younger pupils when the pace of lessons is slow.
- There are limited opportunities for the study of other cultures.

### Commentary

7. The school provides a stimulating learning environment with a rich range of educational opportunities. Pupils are very happy to come to school and work with interest and enthusiasm. The school provides a very caring environment in which all pupils are valued and listened to. Pupils, including those with SEN, develop confidence and self-esteem and are well supported. Throughout the school they form very good relationships with each other and with the adults who support them. Older pupils in particular work well together in classrooms in pairs and groups. They show a very keen interest in the life of the school. All extra-curricular activities are well attended before and after school and during the lunch hour.
8. The school has made good improvement in pupils' attendance and punctuality since the previous inspection. Attendance is above the national average, unauthorized absence is well below and punctuality is good. These factors make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and achievement. Attendance is promoted well. The school works closely and effectively with parents to maintain high levels of attendance. For example, home telephone calls are made on the first day of absence regarding any unexplained absence. Parents are playing their part by making good efforts to ensure their children's attendance and punctuality.

### Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data	4.6
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

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

### Exclusions

There have been no exclusions.

### Commentary

9. In most lessons pupils behave well and sometimes very well. Behaviour is better among older pupils who are more attentive, concentrate very well and listen well to instructions and to each other. In some Year 3 and 4 classes small groups of boys and one or two individuals of both genders display less mature attitudes and are easily distracted when the pace of a lesson slows down or they are not fully engaged in the activity themselves. Behaviour around the school and in extra-curricular activities is generally good. There is very little evidence of any bullying or harassment. Pupils feel safe and secure in the playground.
10. The school sets high expectations for pupils' work and behaviour. By the end of Year 6 most pupils show that they are developing as mature citizens with a sense of responsibility, respect and concern for others. They are well prepared to move on to secondary school.
11. Teachers are good role models who promote good relationships and racial harmony. Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with quickly and efficiently by teaching staff and lunchtime supervisors.

12. Provision for pupils' spiritual education is good. The whole school meets together daily for assembly and an act of worship. Pupils are given a good range of opportunities in such subjects as art, music and science to reflect on the intangible such as mystery and beauty. In assemblies they are encouraged to be aware of their own beliefs and to respect and appreciate the thoughts, feelings and beliefs of others.
13. Provision for moral education is very good. The school has good behaviour and bullying policies that work well. Teachers and pupils share a common understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The school expects pupils to behave well and the pupils respond accordingly.
14. Provision for social education is very good. There are class councils and a school council with representatives from all classes. Pupils are encouraged to support charity collections and to take part in assemblies and extra-curricular activities. There are good links with the local community. Visitors from the local community such as the police and local citizens are invited to speak in assemblies. The school choir performs at community centres such as the local hospice. In many lessons pupils work together and teachers make a conscious effort to ensure that groups in lessons are of mixed gender.
15. Provision for cultural education is good. There is much attention to the cultural aspects of art and music. Extra-curricular provision provides a range of cultural opportunities such as a drama, choirs and musical instrument instruction. However, pupils have very few opportunities for direct contact with cultures other than their own.
16. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their school and about the wide range of opportunities it provides.
17. Pupils with SEN form very good relationships with their peers and with the adults who support them. They are happy in school because appropriate work is set for them and they achieve success. Most pupils with SEN respond well to this support and work hard.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

**The quality of education is good.** The teaching is effective and the curriculum is broad and stimulating. The pupils are well cared for and well supported in all they do and the school has very good links with parents.

### Teaching and learning

**The overall quality of teaching is good** and has improved considerably since the last inspection. As a result, most pupils make good progress and achieve well.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

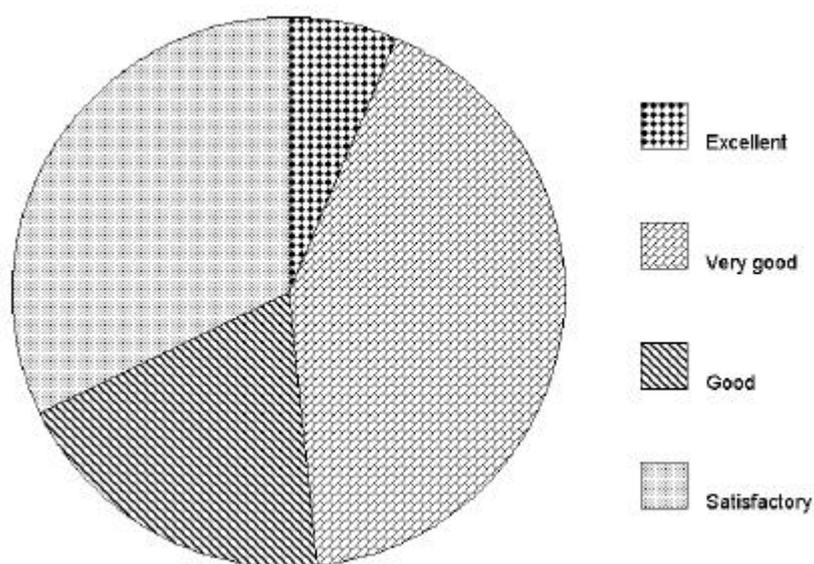
- The consistency of very good teaching in Year 6.
- Teaching of French is very good.
- There is an inconsistent use of assessment to guide teaching and learning.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (6.5%)	13 (41.9%)	6 (19.4%)	10 (32.3%)	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.*



18. All lessons seen during the inspection were at least satisfactory and teaching in seven out of ten was either good or better. Half the lessons were either very good or excellent, both in terms of teaching and of pupils' learning. Improvements in teaching are a direct result of the sense of purpose and high aspirations of the headteacher. Staff performance procedures are very effective in bringing about improvements in teaching. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and, as a result, most inspire pupils to listen and to learn. In a Year 6 French lesson, pupils were inspired to learn through the use of a highly effective range of teaching methods. The strong relationships established gave pupils the courage to test their French on each other with evident enjoyment. As a result of this inspired teaching, based on the visiting teacher's expert knowledge, pupils have achieved much in the short time they have been learning French.
19. Lessons are carefully prepared, most with clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils, who have an opportunity at the end to think about how they have improved and whether they have learned successfully. The school has a clear and comprehensive assessment policy which gives good guidance to staff. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic performance are appropriate. The procedures in place for English and mathematics are particularly effective in helping to raise standards.

#### Example of outstanding practice

**The teacher made the pupils look forward to the activity by building up the excitement beforehand.**

Excellent teaching was seen a Year 5 art lesson where pupils were investigating the process of applying colour and images to fabric to create a visual story. By the time the teacher had finished explaining the task, pupils could hardly contain their excitement about what they were to do and learn. Outstanding expectations achieved through excellent relationships resulted in pupils working at optimum pace and with great attention to detail as the class teacher continued to teach the required skills. The class responded in an instant whenever the teacher recognised the need to make a teaching point to everyone. By the end of the lesson pupils of all abilities were clear about the very good progress they had made.

20. Planning for different ability groups is not a strong feature of all lessons. In some otherwise satisfactory lessons, teachers take too little account of what pupils know, can do and understand and fail to plan work suited to the needs of all pupils. In these lessons teachers tend to plan the same task for all pupils, providing support for those with special educational needs and set extension tasks for the more able pupils to tackle when they have completed the same task as others. Teachers need to ensure that tasks challenge all pupils from the outset. In some lessons, pupils lost interest and became restless as the teacher spoke to and

questioned the class for too long. This left pupils with too few opportunities to discover information for themselves and to write it up in different forms.

21. Some pupils with SEN require support in order to take part in oral parts of lessons. Pupils with SEN are well supported by special needs assistants, teaching assistants or the special needs co-ordinator. They work well individually or in small groups. Teaching and special needs assistants are conscious of the pupils' targets and provide good written records for the class teacher of the progress made during each lesson.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with a very good range of learning opportunities, which meets the interests, aptitudes and special needs of all pupils. However, the time allocated to religious education does not meet statutory requirements.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Provision for music and French is very good.
- The curriculum prepares pupils very well for the next stage of their education.
- Good accommodation enables the curriculum to be taught effectively.
- Provision for religious education is unsatisfactory.
- The development of writing and the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is weak.
- The curriculum is not always adapted to the needs of higher attaining pupils.

### **Commentary**

22. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and is taught by a team of teachers qualified by training and experience for this age group. The quality of teaching assistants is good and they give good support to pupils' learning. They are usually well deployed in lessons. All subjects taught, with the exception of religious education, have an appropriate allocation of time. Statutory requirements are not being met to teach religious education for enough time and in sufficient depth to satisfy the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The school provides pupils with a well-planned daily act of worship which meets statutory requirements. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well embedded and have resulted in improved standards since the last inspection. Teachers identify ways of developing numeracy in other subjects, but opportunities for developing literacy in the same way have not been fully explored. Provision for ICT has improved because of the training teachers have received and the development of the ICT suite. Although the literacy skills taught are increasingly used to support learning in English, for example, the school recognises the need to apply these skills in a broader range of subjects.
23. There is a good understanding of the need to provide for pupils' personal, social and health education as well as their sense of citizenship (PSHCE) through the curriculum and the school day. This provision has recently been formalised within a scheme of work and teachers have begun to teach PSHCE as a discrete subject. There are effective programmes for teaching sex education and an awareness of the misuse of drugs and alcohol. The involvement of police officers and other agencies is well used to ensure that pupils are given accurate facts as part of the preparation for adult life. Parents report that the school encourages pupils to become mature and independent. This is endorsed by the headteacher of the secondary school to which the great majority of pupils transfer.
24. Pupils with SEN have full access to the National Curriculum, to extra-curricular activities and to all other aspects of school life. Most of these pupils are well supported within classrooms. Where it is felt necessary to give specific support outside of the classroom, this is for limited periods only.

25. The school provides a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, involving staff, parents and members of the local community, who give freely of their time. Such activities as chess, choir, football, netball and drama, together with an annual residential trip for pupils in Year 6, enrich the curriculum, give strong support to pupils' social development and add to their enjoyment. The school uses its very good links with the local secondary school to enhance the curriculum through the teaching of French to Year 6 pupils, for example. The inclusion of French in the Year 6 curriculum is a highly effective innovation and is a valuable part of the school's provision. It contributes very well to extending pupils' cultural horizons and further develops their awareness of the structure and potential of language.
26. The school is successful in its policy of educational inclusion. Pupils in Year 6 are grouped according to ability for English and mathematics, providing good equality of opportunity for all. However, in some classes, an inconsistent approach to the planning of work results in higher attaining pupils not being challenged enough.
27. As at the last inspection, accommodation and resources are good. Pupils enjoy the benefits of a pleasant environment and facilities such as the swimming pool and ICT suite. The premises are maintained very well.

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

The school ensures pupils' care, welfare, health and safety very well. It provides good advice and guidance for pupils, based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development. Pupils have many very good chances to be involved with the school and its development. These factors result in pupils feeling confident, secure and happy in their learning. The school has made very good improvement in these areas since the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Outstanding induction arrangements for new pupils.
- Very good procedures are in place to ensure health and safety.
- Very good and trusting relationships exist between pupils and staff.
- Excellent school council enables pupils to raise concerns and make suggestions.
- Very good advice, support and guidance is given to pupils as they progress through the school.

### **Commentary**

28. New pupils are inducted into school particularly well. Consequently, they settle in very quickly to the school routines. The school takes full advantage of being on the same site as the infant school to ease new pupils into the school. Initiatives such as reading partnerships support this very well.
29. The school has an experienced child protection officer. Training is undertaken regularly and these officers are currently looking to update theirs. All staff follow locally agreed procedures and know their obligations regarding child protection. Health and safety risk assessments are carried out regularly and the governing body is actively involved. There are good arrangements to deal with emergencies including fire and first aid. The community makes a very good contribution to promoting health and safety. For instance, Year 6 undertakes a full day of basic training in emergency situations each year within the 'crucial crew' program.
30. Approximately 25 pupils have been identified for support for their special educational needs. There are four pupils with statements. All of these pupils have suitable individual education plans that are regularly reviewed and updated. The plans have specific targets for improvement that are addressed by class teachers and teaching and special needs assistants. Pupils with SEN are identified early by class teachers or on entry from other schools. Teachers keep careful watch on pupils about whom they have concerns and monitor their progress.

31. Very good relationships at all levels reflect the school's family and caring ethos very well. The school council enables pupils to feel valued as young citizens. The school has taken up many of their suggestions including, for example, their recent request for shelving for lunchboxes. The school council provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their self-esteem, personal and social skills. For instance, pupils can chair meetings under the guidance of a senior member of staff.
32. Pupils have very easy access to well-informed support, advice and guidance. Staff give a very high level of day-to-day support to all pupils in their personal development. Individual problems are handled with sensitivity and care, for example, if pupils feel bullied.

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

The school has made good improvement in its partnership with parents and excellent improvement in wider community links, since the last inspection. These partnerships are now very good, including those with other schools and colleges. These links make a very strong contribution to pupils' achievements.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have a very high opinion of the school.
- They have very good chances to express their views and make suggestions.
- The very good partnership with parents contributes very well to pupils' learning at school and at home.
- Pupils' annual reports lack evaluative comments and are not always in plain English.
- Many very good links in the community support pupils' learning very well.
- Very good links with other schools include very effective mechanisms for transfer.

### **Commentary**

33. The school has a very strong relationship with parents demonstrated by the great majority of positive views expressed in the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting.
34. The school provides much helpful written information for parents, for example, regarding school policies, routines and homework guidelines. Parents also receive good quality half termly reports about their children's progress. However, there is scope to improve pupils' end of year reports. The inspection team found that, all too often, there is a tendency to describe the work done, rather than focus on how well pupils perform. Further, a few of the reports the inspection team looked at contained too much educational jargon and used phrases like "she reads with intonation".
35. Parents' suggestions are highly valued by the school. For example, information about curriculum topics will now be provided as a result of requests made.
36. Parents support the school's homework policy very well and help their children as much as they can. The parents and teachers association gives very good support to the school through organizing many social and fundraising events. Their hard work has enabled the school to provide additional learning resources including musical instruments and computer software. Many parent helpers give their time generously in supporting activities in lessons and with after school clubs.
37. Parents are fully informed about the progress made by and support given to pupils with SEN. Parents receive copies of all individual education plans and are invited to meetings in school or after school when new targets are set. The parents contribute to the target setting process.
38. Wider links in the community include members of the clergy from churches, religious groups and many sports skills coaches. Organisations such as the Citizens' Advice Bureau are also involved very well with the school. For example, they provide an insight into money matters for the oldest pupils as part of their personal and social education. Links with secondary schools

ensure that information about individual pupils is passed on and any issues are raised. Year 6 pupils can attend a 'summer school' at Woodlands Comprehensive School, giving them further confidence about the next stage of their education.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. Governors run the school **very well**. The headteacher's leadership is **excellent**. Senior managers are well focused on improving standards and co-ordinators are committed to supporting pupils' learning through a rich and varied curriculum. The school is managed effectively.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses; they challenge and support senior managers very well.
- The headteacher's clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations for the school are excellent.
- Senior managers are committed professionals who by creating effective teams have established a very good learning ethos for both staff and pupils.
- Teaching is very well monitored in English and mathematics.
- Senior managers are totally committed to ensuring that every child is challenged according to their individual capability. Inclusion is very good.
- The school's evaluation of its performance is very good. Data is used very well to monitor the school's performance.
- The school manages its finances very well, ensuring it gets the best value for money when committing resources or spending school funds.
- Monitoring of the curriculum provision and standards in religious education.

### Commentary

39. The governors are knowledgeable, experienced and very committed to the needs of the school and its pupils. With the help of regular reports from the headteacher they monitor the school's strengths and weaknesses very well. This gives them a clear insight into the work being done and the progress that the pupils are making. Governors effectively challenge the senior management team to account for weaknesses and plan for success.
40. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. The feature that stands out in the leadership of the school is the complete absence of complacency in all areas of its work. Parents say that the headteacher is not easily satisfied and is always seeking to improve the school; this is certainly true. He is respected by his staff and trusted by the pupils. He knows what the school does well, where its weaknesses are and how to improve them and has established a good ethos of striving to improve. This is one of the main reasons for the school's increasingly good reputation in the community.
41. The staff work well together. They believe that they are very well supported by senior colleagues in their efforts to raise standards. Monitoring reports show that the school is self-critical and evaluative of its practices. There are many examples of this approach in action. Each year there are 'SATs' reviews where co-ordinators are held accountable for examination results in their subjects. In areas where there have been relatively less successful results, such as standards of writing for more able boys, the school is quick to take action.
42. The SEN department is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who is not class based. Special needs assistants and teaching assistants are suitably trained and deployed. All teaching staff have been trained in the use of the current code of practice and keep careful track of the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Records are regularly updated by the special needs co-ordinator and are readily accessible and used by support staff. The special needs programme is very well supported by good resources, good support from the local authority and the availability of a separate room with good ICT resources.

43. The school's self-evaluation and its use in improving standards is very good. The headteacher, senior staff and governors have undertaken a school-wide evaluation, with a focus on improvement. This has given clear educational direction to the work of the school. Curriculum co-ordinators effectively evaluate their subjects and areas for development are included in the school's improvement and management plan, so that priorities can be established over the long and short term. Effective monitoring is clearly defined by the headteacher and governors. It is aimed at helping the school to be clear about how well the teachers teach and how well the pupils are learning. However, although co-ordinators monitor teaching very well in English and mathematics, this has only just started to be extended to science and the non-core subjects and has not picked up the lack of provision and subsequent underachievement in religious education. There is a good balance of expertise amongst the staff and their good subject knowledge enables them to review the impact each subject is having on pupils' achievements and progress. The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is very good. The headteacher and governors staff the school well, including a good supply of well-trained teacher assistants in order to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils also benefit from the excellent training given to the mid-day assistants.
44. Financial planning is very good and the budget is used very well. The strategic use of resources is very good. The targeting of funds to areas where there is the most need of improvement has been very effective.
45. The impact of the leadership and management is such that in this school, the highest standards are sought for all pupils according to their capability. Most achieve well and make very good progress. The leadership and management have been very successful in establishing a productive climate for learning and promoting inclusion throughout the school. This is an effective school and provides good value for money.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	717,757
Total expenditure	718,773
Expenditure per pupil	2,970

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	44,747
Balance carried forward to the next	43,731

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

## **ENGLISH INCLUDING MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils achieve well.
- Most lessons are well planned and have good pace.
- Teachers display high expectations of work and behaviour.
- Good support for SEN pupils.
- There is excellent French teaching in Year 6.
- There are good, effective setting arrangements in Year 6.
- There are good examples of the use of ICT to enhance pupils' learning.
- There is a lack of planning of work for different attainment levels in some classes.
- Writing continues to be an area for concern particularly for more able boys.
- There is insufficient use of opportunities to develop writing skills across the curriculum in some classes.

### **Commentary**

46. By the end of Year 6 standards are well above average in reading, speaking and listening and above average in writing. Despite considerable efforts to improve boys' writing standards, no boys attained the higher level in the national tests in 2003. There has been good improvement since the time of the last inspection. Standards have risen from above average to well above average overall. The progress pupils make was satisfactory then and is now good and the number of pupils attaining the upper levels overall has risen from below average to very high.
47. Most pupils read widely and are enthusiastic readers. They make good use of the school library for information and many make regular use of the local library. Pupils' progress in reading is effectively monitored through daily guided reading sessions. Class teachers monitor reading effectively by hearing all pupils read at least once a week. Older pupils show a good understanding of how to find books using a library index system and they are familiar with the use of a book index.
48. Older pupils listen very well in class and in assemblies. They follow instructions well. Pupils are given many opportunities to speak in class and in weekly assemblies. Many older pupils are confident and articulate speakers. There is enthusiastic support for the school drama club. This gives further opportunities for speaking through its annual productions. In some lessons with younger pupils learning opportunities are lost because of inappropriate talking while explanations are being given by teachers.
49. Standards of written work are generally good. In one Year 4 class almost half the class produced good, joined writing in ink with good use of vocabulary, full stops and capital letters. However, in a Year 5 class one third of the pupils were not joining their writing and standards of presentation were variable. There are inconsistencies in the presentation of work and in the standards of grammar, punctuation and vocabulary. In Year 6 where there are very high expectations of work and behaviour, very high standards are achieved.
50. Teaching is good overall. In all lessons learning objectives are shared with the pupils and adhered to throughout the lesson. The pupils are secure in knowing what is expected of them and generally work hard. However, insufficient attention is paid to assessing the capabilities of pupils of different attainment levels and planning sometimes does not sufficiently address all the pupils' needs. Effective grouping arrangements in Year 6 overcome this problem and pupils are appropriately challenged at different levels. In an excellent French lesson in Year 6 a teacher with very good subject knowledge used a variety of short activities to engage the

pupils' interest throughout. The lesson involved frequent interaction with the teacher and between the pupils. The lesson proceeded with excellent pace. Pupils were encouraged, but not obliged, to give demonstrations to the rest of the class and worked individually, in pairs and in groups. As a result very good learning took place. After only a few weeks the pupils can speak confidently and correctly in reciting numbers to 20, in introducing themselves and their friends to others and in exchanging greetings.

51. Teachers make good use of technology such as overhead projectors, DVD's and ICT in some lessons and word processing is used by pupils throughout the school to enhance their work. Older pupils have good opportunities to develop writing skills in such subjects as history and geography and write for a variety of purposes. However, insufficient time is given to developing writing skills across the curriculum.
52. There is generally good planning and support for pupils with SEN.

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

There are good opportunities for older pupils to develop writing skills in a variety of contexts in such subjects as history and geography. However, there are inconsistencies in other classes where the opportunity to write in different contexts and for different purposes is often limited and where work is closely teacher directed.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- Standards are high and achievement is very good.
- The quality of teaching and setting arrangements in Year 6 is very good.
- Good improvement since the last inspection.
- Pupils enjoy the subject and are keen to do well.
- There is inconsistent use of knowledge of what pupils know, can do and understand to plan work for different groups of pupils.
- The use of information and communication technology needs to be further developed to support pupils' learning.

#### **Commentary**

53. The good standards identified at the time of the last inspection have been improved upon and pupils now attain standards that are well above average by the end of Year 6. There was no evidence during the inspection of a difference in the attainment of boys and girls. In the good lessons, teachers challenge all pupils to answer questions, with boys and girls working together at all levels of attainment.
54. The school's data shows that in last year's national tests for 11-year olds, pupils attained standards that were high compared to those found nationally. This represents very good progress as a significant number of pupils in this particular group had attained standards that were below average at the end of Year 2.
55. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was good overall and was consistently very good in Year 6. Of the six lessons observed, the quality of teaching and learning was very good in three and satisfactory in three. Although very good teaching was also seen in other year groups, it is not consistent because the work is not always well matched to pupils needs and some teachers do not expect enough from the higher attaining pupils in their classes. Common features of all lessons are the good management of behaviour through positive relationships. As a result behaviour is good, although some pupils do not work at a good pace because not all teachers have high expectations of this. The pace of teaching and learning

sometimes slows after a stimulating mental session, when the teacher gives lengthy explanations to the whole class rather than teaching and challenging pupils at different levels as they work on group or individual tasks.

56. The National Numeracy Strategy supports teachers' planning and many features, such as the mental sessions and the discussions of strategies, are securely embedded. An analysis of pupils' books shows that the programme of work is covered systematically and thoroughly. There is a strong emphasis on mental computation. Pupils benefit from regular practice at the start of lessons and their understanding of mental strategies is very good by the end of Year 6.
57. In the most successful lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils are fully involved in the mental sessions and questions are well used to target particular groups of pupils. The very good relationships that exist between all members of the school community, gives pupils of differing attainment the confidence to offer answers, knowing that they will be appreciated. Teachers use a good range of resources such as whiteboards and individual cards, to allow all pupils to answer, checking each answer quickly. In the most successful lessons, questions are carefully targeted to challenge all pupils. Good examples of pupils applying their numeracy skills in problem solving situations, such as determining how their holiday budgets could be used most effectively, are seen in displays and pupils' books. This allows pupils to use and apply their learning in meaningful ways. By the end of Year 6, most pupils develop their own strategies for problem solving while higher attaining pupils are efficient in arriving at and providing reasons for their conclusions. In a very good Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils of all abilities were highly motivated to apply all four operations when solving challenging problems. At the end of the lesson, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, could clearly explain the strategies they had used to solve these problems.
58. The overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. As a result of this provision and class teachers' understanding of their needs, these pupils have full and equal access in lessons.

#### **Example of outstanding practice**

##### **How detailed and planned differentiation can affect results.**

The teacher uses assessment to consolidate previous learning on data handling by grouping pupils appropriately and challenging them with various short mental activities to get them to compete to improve their understanding. The tactics are very successful. At the end of the stimulating Year 6 lesson, a pupil with a statement of special educational needs, could give a clear explanation of how to construct a frequency table to compare degrees centigrade to degrees Fahrenheit and successfully interpreted the information represented. This was because of the very high quality teaching and support she had received in the lesson.

59. Most lessons end with a good plenary session, which gives pupils' an understanding of what they have learnt. Although teachers regularly mark pupils' work, written comments do not always indicate to pupils how they might improve. The quality of marking is too dependent on individual teachers.
60. All aspects of mathematics are given due consideration. Pupils gain a good understanding of shape and measure and of data handling. Recent improvements in ICT have provided pupils with opportunities to develop their data handling skills in meaningful ways across the curriculum and the school has identified the need to increase this provision. Most pupils, by the end of Year 6, collect separate data and use a frequency table to represent them, with higher attaining pupils going on to explain the conclusions they reached from using graphs and diagrams, including pie charts. Analysis of pupils' work shows that by the time they are 11, they know the angle sum of a triangle and can measure and draw angles to the nearest degree using a protractor.
61. The subject is conscientiously led and managed by the well-informed deputy headteacher. She has successfully ensured improved teaching since the last inspection. National and

optional tests are very closely analysed to identify any weaknesses in provision or to identify any groups of pupils who might be underachieving. There are good procedures in place for monitoring pupils' progress and for setting realistic but challenging targets for individual pupils. Homework is well used to consolidate pupils' learning and to provide opportunities for independent learning.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

Some good examples in design and technology, geography and science were seen of pupils applying their very good numeracy skills across the curriculum.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

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

- Pupils achieve well by Year 6.
- Standards are well above average.
- Investigation is taught very well in Year 5.
- Teaching assistants are effective.
- Pupils' work is not well matched to their capabilities in certain classes.
- Leadership and management of the co-ordinator are unsatisfactory.
- There are too many worksheets; difficult to track progress.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent. The presentation of work is poor in several lessons.
- There is little use of ICT to record findings.

#### **Commentary**

62. Standards in tests by Year 6 are well above average when compared to all schools and have improved since the last inspection. The number of pupils achieving at a higher level is well above average. When the 2002 test results are compared to those of similar schools pupils are attaining average standards. All pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress and achieve well because of the good quality of support they receive. There is no apparent difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
63. By the end of Year 3 pupils are becoming familiar with the experimental and investigative approach to science. They are starting to develop the skills of scientific enquiry, observing carefully, making predictions, testing and recording their results. For example, they have investigated why some things float and others sink and why some materials are magnetic and others are not. Pupils' work is not well presented in the books they use in the science/ICT room. Work done in the classroom is of better quality.
64. In Year 4, the work covered by the class teacher, is particularly well presented. ICT is effectively used in this class. Pupils have looked at the solar system and light and they know how the Earth turns around the sun. They know the difference between materials made of metal, wood, plastic and fabric and the right and wrong materials for certain articles. They have looked at materials that dissolve and those that do not, and have conducted good research into how to make crystals.
65. Year 5 pupils know how many teeth they have and they have looked at parts of the teeth, what the tooth is made of and have conducted an experiment on the effect of sugar on teeth. They have looked at forces, friction and gravity. They know how to construct an electric circuit, make electromagnets and what happens when you change one component in the circuit.
66. Year 6 pupils have worked with the teeth, skeletons and the joints. They know that bones are made up of a living material. They have looked at diagrams of the heart, how the blood flows round the body and how the lungs bring in oxygen and give out carbon dioxide. They have done

work on sound and how it travels in waves and have looked at insulators. Much of the work done is above average but presentation is poor. A scrutiny of pupils' work in all year groups shows that although a considerable amount of material has been covered in investigative science much of it is untidily presented and lacks cohesion. There is little difference between much of the work given to pupils with above average or below average capabilities.

67. The quality of teaching and learning, including that for pupils with SEN or English as an additional language (EAL), is satisfactory overall. Teaching is divided between the class teachers and the science co-ordinator. Teachers' planning is generally good. Resources are always well prepared in advance so that the pupils proceed with the work unhindered. Most teachers have a secure and confident subject knowledge, which is used well to extend pupils' thinking. They provide clear instructions so that pupils know what they are supposed to learn, which enables them to achieve well. An investigative approach in lessons adds to interest and excitement in finding out. Questions are used effectively and carefully targeted to check and extend pupils' learning and to make them think for themselves. However, marking is often cursory reducing the positive effects of the learning experience. Pupils are well managed and as a result they behave well and show positive attitudes to learning. They work well together in groups, helping one another and showing real enjoyment in their lessons. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to maintaining pupils' good achievement. ICT is insufficiently used to support pupils' learning.
68. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory. For example the co-ordinator does not monitor teaching sufficiently to share good practice and there is insufficient monitoring of pupils' learning to improve standards to be in line with English and mathematics. Higher attaining pupils are still not challenged enough to achieve the results they are capable of.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils achieve well and standards have improved since the last inspection.
- The well-attended computer club gives effective support to pupils' learning outside of the school day.
- Using the classroom computers and ICT generally to support learning in other subjects is an area that has scope for further development.

### **Commentary**

69. Virtually all pupils achieve and some exceed, the standards expected by the end of Year 6. This represents good achievement. The good progress that pupils make is also supported by their enthusiasm for the subject as reflected in the number who join the after-school computer club. The use of the ICT room, the training staff have received and the good teaching, as observed in the two whole class lessons seen, contribute to the good progress pupils are making. The curriculum is well planned and enables the pupils' skills to be developed and to be refined as they move through the school. The computer suite is a valuable resource but is also used as a science teaching area. This limits opportunities for teachers to use ICT for whole class lessons in a range of subjects.
70. Teaching was very good in one of the lessons seen during the inspection and good in the other two. Lessons are well structured and teachers use the projector effectively to present information clearly. The good relationships established by teachers with their pupils result in boys and girls working hard so that they make similar progress. Teachers and the well-informed technician continue to rigorously teach as pupils work on computers. This ensures a very good balance between direct teaching and independent learning and gives support quickly when pupils need it. This is particularly successful in promoting the learning of pupils with

special educational needs. A good example of this balance between teaching and learning was seen in a Year 6 lesson where pupils successfully learnt to use complex searches to locate information and to present it in a journalistic style which could be understood and used by Year 4 pupils. There is a good emphasis on teaching basic skills. An example of this was seen in a Year 3 lesson, where the teaching, through clear explanation and helpful advice, resulted in almost all pupils successfully learning to load, save and retrieve when using text boxes and clip art.

71. The co-ordinator provides good quality leadership and has clear plans for future development. Her expertise in the subject allows her to give good support to staff. The co-ordinator has monitored all teaching in the computer suite so as to ensure that pupils are being taught at the right level and to offer teachers advice when required. The computer club enhances the curriculum and allows pupils to apply the skills they have been taught in lessons. The technician is effective in keeping computers in running order so that no teaching or learning time is lost.

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

Teachers are becoming more adept at linking the activities that pupils undertake in the suite with work in other subjects. Many examples of pupils using their word processing skills to enhance their written work were seen on display and in the analysis of pupils' work. Some good examples were seen of pupils using computers to research work in history and geography. However, the school recognises that the use of computers, both in the suite and the classroom, has scope for further development.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

#### **Main weaknesses**

- Standards are well below average and achievement is unsatisfactory.
- There is little evidence of work in books and pupils' understanding of the subject is poor.
- There is no assessment policy and consequently assessment does not inform curriculum planning.
- There is no monitoring of the teaching and learning.
- Provision for the subject does not meet statutory requirements because the subject is not being taught for long enough and in enough depth. Planning is unsatisfactory.
- There has been too little training for teachers in how to teach religious education. Some teachers have insufficient knowledge of the subject.

#### **Commentary**

72. From the evidence available in books, discussions with pupils and the one lesson seen, standards in religious education are well below average and the pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils' attainment in religious education has declined since the last inspection.
73. Pupils in Year 3 are beginning to explore and consider their own activities and compare them with simple moral codes. Most pupils understand moral concepts, for example, of friendship and can talk generally about caring for others but very few pupils throughout the school can express their ideas in any religious sense. By Year 6 pupils are attaining standards that are well below the expectations of the county agreed syllabus for this age. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the subject is not covered consistently between classes and there is little or no written work. The poor quality and inadequate amount of written work produced is reflected in all year groups. Although a few teachers make an effort to produce work in books, written work is minimal throughout the school. The quality of the small amount of written work seen is well below average. Pupils with SEN and EAL are not achieving satisfactorily in relation to their capability and are making unsatisfactory progress.

74. Teaching and learning was satisfactory in the one lesson seen in Year 5. It is not possible from this limited evidence to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
75. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory. There is no assessment policy for staff to use when assessing pupils' attainments or to ensure that lesson planning is systematic and makes progressive demands on pupils. Some teachers have insufficient knowledge of the subject to enable them to use the agreed syllabus to the pupils' best advantage and there is little in the way of monitoring of the teaching and learning. Although there is some formal provision for the subject, the limited amount of time given to the teaching of religious education does not allow for it to be taught in enough depth to meet the requirements of the county agreed syllabus. Statutory requirements to teach religious education are consequently not being met.

## **History and geography**

Provision for history and geography is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching of history is good. Teachers and pupils have a high interest in the subject.
- Trips and visits are well used to enhance the curriculum.
- The contribution geography makes to pupils' sense of citizenship encourages them to care for the environment.
- The contribution history makes to writing in some classes is good but has not yet been fully explored in all classes.
- Assessment information is not well used to provide appropriate work for higher attaining pupils, particularly in geography.
- Pupils tend to forget important dates in history because timelines in all classes are not used effectively enough.

### **Commentary**

76. Both history and geography are regularly taught using national guidance. Pupils make good progress in history and standards are above average by the end of Year 6. Standards in geography are average. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
77. Three history lessons and one geography lesson were seen during the inspection. Two of the history lessons seen were very good and the other was good. These lessons, discussions with staff and pupils and an analysis of pupils' work indicate that teaching of history is good and that pupils achieve well in the subject. The geography lesson seen was very good. However, pupils' work and discussions show that there is an inconsistent approach to challenging pupils to choose information and evidence sources for themselves, to put forward credible conclusions and to present them both in writing and graphically. This limits the progress of higher attaining pupils, in particular. The school has identified the need to update and increase resources to support pupils' independent learning skills. Good use is made of a range of trips and class visits to support learning and pupils report that they enjoy these opportunities and learn a lot from them. Visits to the local environment, to Colchester Castle, Walton-On-the-Naze, the Year 6 residential trip to Belgium and 'Roman' visitors, do much to enrich pupils' experiences. In this way also, the subjects make a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural awareness. Pupils in Year 4, for example, study Rainforests and give their opinions on how people can damage the environment and understand how decisions affect people's and animals' future quality of life.
78. By the end of Year 6, most pupils describe characteristics of past periods and societies and recognise changes within them. Good examples of writing for a range of purposes were seen

in work produced by pupils in Year 6 in their study of Britain since 1930. They were provided with interesting tasks such as describing life as an evacuated child in letters home, describing the welfare state in a letter to America, writing the diary of a poor person in Tudor times and presenting a newspaper on Victorian family life. Other good examples of writing were seen across the school, but it is evident that in some classes, pupils are given too little time to write in lessons. Pupils show an increasing factual knowledge and understanding of features of the history of Britain.

79. There is an increasing use of ICT to support learning in both history and geography as, for example, pupils research fashion, music, films and news from the 1970's using the Internet. Some good examples were also seen of pupils sorting, querying and presenting information in various ways in their work on rivers and mountains. In a very good Year 3 lesson, the teacher made very effective use of an informative video to stimulate pupils' interest in ancient Egypt and went on to consider questions such as 'what made life hard/easy for ancient Egyptians?' As a result of very good teaching most pupils, by the end of the lesson, had a good depth of understanding of aspects of the way of life in ancient Egypt. A special feature of history teaching is the way teachers hold pupils' attention by *telling* stories rather than *reading* from a book. A good example of this was seen in a good Year 4 lesson when the quality of the class teacher's storytelling led to a high level of interest in the story of Boudica. Very enjoyable drama productions on themes such as 'The Greeks' give strong support to pupils' learning. The co-ordinators are knowledgeable about their subjects and have clear action plans for future improvements.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### Art and design

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

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned lessons help pupils make good progress.
- There are varied learning activities.
- There is good management of subject which supports the teaching.
- Pupils do not evaluate their own and the work of others in some classes.
- ICT could be used more.

#### Commentary

80. Pupils' attainment is above average at the age of 11 and they achieve well. Standards have been improved since the last inspection. Only two lessons were seen. From the time pupils start school they are encouraged to experiment with paint and colour, to explore pattern, to work from observation and imagination and to respond to examples of art in the world around them. Some Year 3 pupils have created textiles of 'Incy wincy spider' and printed shapes with polystyrene. Others have enjoyed experimenting with complimentary colours in their topic on colour mixing and matching. Year 4 has looked at the work of Picasso and painted some very colourful and interesting depictions of the 'Weeping Woman'. They have also produced some effective 'space' pictures in chalk and pastels which show an eye for detail. Year 5 pupils show an aptitude for three-dimensional work in their 'pots with lids' and Year 6 have produced 'creature' masks from papier-mâché and mud rock which they used to perform to music. The masks were lively and showed their enthusiasm for the project.
81. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment, especially in drawing and sketching, is above average. This competence in using dry media, pencils, charcoal etc stands them in good stead when they leave for the secondary school. There is good development of practical skills in some classes, although this depends largely on the subject expertise of the teacher. Pupils with SEN achieve well overall and transfer the skills they acquire to other subjects.

82. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Most teachers have a good understanding of the subject, although some lack confidence in certain areas of learning and need more training in how to teach art skills. Teachers' planning is good and usually gives details of learning objectives and careful attention to the development of skills and techniques. In an excellent lesson in Year 5, the teacher's very good organisation and excellent use of time and resources enthused pupils of all ability to stay with the task of drawing cartoon characters that they were going to put together to make fabric books for the neighbouring infant school. It also encouraged some to challenge their original ideas and come up with new ways to present their drawings. In a less effective, but nevertheless good lesson the teacher missed the opportunity of letting the pupils evaluate their own and others' work to improve their own contributions.
83. Examples of good learning and progress include a clear development in pupils' observational skills throughout the school. Pupils enjoy their art work and are enthusiastic about the practical nature of the tasks. Attitudes are very good. Most pupils demonstrate concentration, collaboration and respect for the work of others. The use of information and communication technology for graphic work is underdeveloped throughout the school.
84. The subject co-ordinator is committed to reviewing the scheme of work and plans the art curriculum well. There is a whole-school overview to monitor pupils' progress, although assessment is still informal and does not adequately inform curriculum planning. Although good learning is monitored well, teaching is monitored too infrequently for the co-ordinator to improve how art skills are taught through the school.

## **Design and technology**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have good knowledge of the subject.
- There is good use of control technology.
- Use of national guidance ensures that skills are progressively developed.
- Assessment is not rigorous enough and planning rarely provides advanced work for higher attaining pupils.

### **Commentary**

85. The good standards reported in the last inspection have been well maintained. Design and technology is taught as a discrete subject and also enhances other areas of the curriculum.
86. Attainment is above average, based on two lessons seen, an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils. All evidence indicates that pupils achieve well because skills of designing, making and evaluating are progressively developed. One of the lessons seen was very good and the other satisfactory. The very good lesson was so well structured and expectations of work and behaviour were so high that pupils worked hard at all stages of the session and the pace of their learning was very good. Challenges such as 'now make the light brighter' challenged pupils' understanding of circuits before using this when designing and making torches. The teacher ensured that all pupils were challenged at an appropriate level and the teaching assistant was very effective in supporting the work of pupils with special educational needs. In the satisfactory lesson the teacher did not make enough use of assessment to challenge higher attaining pupils who need more opportunities for independent decision making in their work. When these pupils are not challenged they lose interest and waste precious time in idle chatter.
87. Pupils are given good opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to measure, mark, cut out and shape a variety of materials and when combining components precisely. An example of this is when pupils in Year 6 make precise measurements when making slippers which they have carefully designed. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils in Year 6 are taught how

mechanisms, using a range of equipment, information and communication technology control included, can be utilised to make things move in various ways. As seen in lessons during the week, younger pupils are taught the way electrical circuits can be utilised to provide working results. Good links are also made with history when, for example, pupils in Year 3 design and make 'Shadufs' in their work on ancient Egypt.

88. The co-ordinator offers good advice to teachers and has recently begun to monitor teaching and to work alongside teachers in lessons. National guidance is well used to guide teachers' planning but greater use needs to be made of assessment so that tasks are appropriate to all pupils. Links with the secondary school are well used to support pupils' learning in the subject.

## Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Music is a strength of the school.
- There is considerable musical talent among staff.
- Teachers are good role models.
- Teachers have clear learning objectives and adhere to them.
- All pupils have opportunities for composition.
- Good opportunities for pupils to perform in public.
- Wide range of extra-curricular and in-school opportunities.
- Good resources.
- Only limited opportunities for monitoring and support of teaching and learning.
- No procedures for tracking pupils' progress.
- Multicultural aspects of music are limited.

### Commentary

89. Standards in music are above those normally expected of pupils of this age and a considerable number of pupils attain standards that are well above average. Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Older pupils play a leading role in singing and playing in assembly where a large group of recorder players accompanies the singing of the first and last verses of the songs.
90. In lessons the teachers are good role models and lead the singing well without any accompaniment. Lessons are well planned and there are clear learning objectives. As a result most pupils listen and concentrate well on their tasks and make good progress.

### Example of outstanding practice

#### **An illustration of how to develop pupils' personal autonomy in their learning:**

In a very good lesson in Year 6 pupils were given the challenging task of composing a verse for a popular song in mixed gender groups, then providing a musical accompaniment while they sang it to the rest of the class. They were required to provide a graphic score to which they would perform. The teacher gave very clear instructions and had very high expectations. The lesson had very good pace. As a result the pupils stayed completely engrossed throughout the task. They worked very well together and performed their compositions with confidence.

91. Singing throughout the school is good, tuneful and robust. There is a wide range of musical opportunities with two choirs for older and younger pupils respectively. A substantial number of pupils play musical instruments and appropriately attend lessons on a rota basis so as not to miss other aspects of the curriculum. There are recorder groups for all age groups.
92. The subject is well led and managed. There is a wealth of musical talent among staff and responsibilities are shared. Some teachers provide very good role models in leading singing in classrooms, in assemblies and in extra-curricular activities.

93. The co-ordinator has a limited amount of release time to support other staff and monitor teaching and learning. This is inadequate in order to carry out her responsibilities effectively. There are no arrangements for the tracking of pupils' progress.
94. All pupils have access to all the musical opportunities offered to their age group including pupils with SEN.

### **Physical education**

Provision for physical education is **good**.

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

- Very good extra-curricular activities.
- Good pace and good use of demonstration in lessons.
- Pupils work, listen and respond well.
- Very good facilities and resources.
- Monitoring is insufficiently developed.
- There is no systematic assessment of pupils' work.

#### **Commentary**

95. In the lessons seen standards were at least in line with expectations for pupils of this age. However, because of a wide range of extra-curricular activities that are held before and after school that are very well attended, standards overall are above average and pupils achieve well. Many pupils, particularly older pupils, take part in competitive sports and the school is frequently successful in local tournaments. The school is particularly successful in swimming and athletics and has the advantage of an outdoor pool that is shared with the adjacent infant school during the summer months. All pupils are able to swim by the time they leave. Some use is made of professional coaches during school time and parents are very supportive of sporting events.
96. Lessons are well planned and proceed at a good pace. The teachers are good role models by joining in and demonstrating themselves what they want the pupils to achieve. Instructions are generally clear and teachers show high expectations of work and behaviour. Appropriate examples of good practice by pupils are used for demonstration purposes and this helps others to learn. Pupils listen well, are well behaved and respond with concentration and enthusiasm. Teachers show a good understanding of pupils' levels of attainment and set appropriate challenging tasks to take the learning forward. Good progress is made and pupils consequently achieve well. In some lessons there are good opportunities for pupils to answer questions, but insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect and comment on their own performance and that of others in order to improve standards.
97. The recently appointed co-ordinator has reviewed the scheme of work for all aspects of physical education and this is appropriately being implemented. At the present time there are no arrangements for assessing pupils' progress other than on an informal basis during lessons. However, the co-ordinator has been given some release time in order to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school and plans are in hand for this to take place. Present priorities are appropriate and include giving support to staff who lack expertise and confidence in some areas of the curriculum and seeing that the new scheme is implemented.

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

Provision is **satisfactory**.

#### **Commentary**

98. All pupils have access to citizenship as part of the teaching in religious education, history, geography, science and personal, social and health education. However schemes of work do

not make clear how pupils' skills of participation and responsible action can be developed in some of these subjects. Much of this takes place through personal, social and health education and citizenship, which is taught as a discrete subject. This is also supplemented by work in class based assemblies. The school has only recently begun to develop the subject and has not had time yet to develop effective assessment. No PSHCE lessons were seen to enable a judgement to be made about the impact of this new provision.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</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	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
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	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
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	3

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