

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WEST CHINNOCK VC CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

West Chinnock, Crewkerne

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123820

Headteacher: Mrs H Townson

Lead inspector: Ms A Coyle

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> January 2004

Inspection number: 258349

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	60
School address:	Scotts Way West Chinnock Crewkerne Somerset
Postcode:	TA18 7PT
Telephone number:	(01935) 881 367
Fax number:	(01935) 881 921
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Wheatley CBE
Date of previous inspection:	6 <sup>th</sup> July 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

West Chinnock Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School is situated in a small village and serves the local rural community. It is much smaller than most other primary schools and there are 60 girls and boys on roll, including three children in the reception class and attainment on entry is average. No pupils are from ethnic minority families and none learn English as an additional language. Twenty-seven per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is more than in most other schools. None have statements for their needs, but a few require support for communication, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school has received a 'Greenfingers' award and has developed a community garden on its site. It also has a new football pitch and is currently improving the playground facilities.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20603	Ms A Coyle	Lead inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology Music Physical education The Foundation Stage
19322	Ms J Bedawi	Lay inspector	
31075	Mrs D Harris	Team inspector	Science Mathematics Geography History Religious education Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI  
Barley House  
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Clifton  
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BS8 2BN

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

West Chinnock Church of England Primary School provides a **sound education** for its pupils. It is led and managed efficiently by the headteacher and gives **satisfactory value for money**. The teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and often good, with the best teaching in the creative subjects. Most groups of pupils achieve suitable standards in relation to their capabilities. Pupils with special educational needs do particularly well.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are good in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education, but they are not high enough in English.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils show good attitudes to learning due to the school's good focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- A very good range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum.
- Strong links with parents and thriving community involvement support pupils' learning.
- The role of the governing body is not strong enough.
- Levels of attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

**The school has improved satisfactorily** since it was last inspected. It has rectified the key issue of a need for better teaching, and it has improved the provision for information and communication technology. The curriculum is now more balanced for design and technology, geography and history. An assessment policy has been written and the procedures are established. However, a few areas remain outstanding; for example, there are still some health and safety issues to rectify and the provision for literacy is not rigorous enough to help push up standards in writing. These remain key issues for the school to focus on. Nevertheless, the leadership and management of the school have been maintained satisfactorily overall and the staff work together as a good team.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001 *	2002 *	2003 *	2003 *
English	C	B	B	D
Mathematics	B	A	B	C
Science	C	A	D	E

*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 6.*

*\*NB: caution is needed when interpreting the above data as only very small numbers of pupils are involved.*

**Achievement is satisfactory overall.** From an average starting point on entry, children in the reception year make sufficient progress so that they reach most of the expected goals <sup>1</sup> by the end of the Foundation Stage. <sup>2</sup> They attain the expected standards in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical

<sup>1</sup> **ON EARLY LEARNING GOALS** - These goals are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the end of the reception year in the following areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development; and personal, social and emotional development.

<sup>2</sup> **FOUNDATION STAGE** - This stage of learning refers to children aged between three and six years. In this school, it refers to children in the Reception class.

and creative development. They also achieve most of the goals in communication, language and literacy, although this area is not as well promoted as it might be through structured play and imaginative role-play activities. Pupils in the infant and junior classes attain standards that match the national expectations in the core subjects of mathematics and science by Year 6 and most achieve satisfactorily.<sup>3</sup> They do particularly well in the creative subjects of art and design, design and technology, music and physical education where standards are good. Pupils also do well in French and those with special educational needs make good progress towards specific targets. However, it is most noticeable that pupils could do better in English throughout the school and are hampered by the lack of opportunities to use literacy skills across the curriculum. To its credit, the school has accurately identified this subject for improvement and already set about improving pupils' standards of achievement in writing.

**Good spiritual, social, moral and cultural development** lead to clear gains in pupils' personal qualities. The majority of pupils show good attitudes to learning and they behave appropriately. However, levels of attendance are below the national figures and too many pupils frequently arrive late for school, which is unsatisfactory.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **satisfactory quality of education** for pupils, and the sound curriculum is extended by a very good range of activities and very strong links with the local community. Teaching and learning are **sound** overall, and notably good in the creative subjects. Pupils with special educational needs are supported particularly well by conscientious and hard working staff.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall, with good features in the strong team spirit amongst staff and the family ethos the school promotes. The headteacher has managed the school efficiently through its recent changes, supported well by the staff. However, the governors have not played a strong enough part in the strategic management of the school or its long-term planning for the future. A new chair of governors was appointed recently, who has vast expertise, is keen to rectify the shortcomings quickly and has already made a good start. This bodes well for the future.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the quality of education the school provides. Pupils also speak well of their teachers and are proud of their school, which has a good reputation within the community.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise the standards in English, especially in writing throughout the school;
- extend the role of the governing body to increase its role in strategic management and long-term planning;
- improve the levels of attendance and pupils' punctuality;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- immediately address the issues of pupils' health, safety and protection and the recording of attendance; and
- include the appropriate information to parents in the prospectus and the governors' annual report.

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<sup>3</sup> **ON LEVELS:** By the end of Year 6, pupils are expected to attain Level 4 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected levels. By the end of Year 2, pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected levels.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS \***

*\* NB: The results of the national standardised tests are not included here because only a very small number of pupils took them; fewer than ten took the tests last year in both Years 2 and 6.*

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

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall, except in English and pupils attain the expected standards in lessons by Years 2 and 6. Given the average attainment on entry, the progress made by pupils is mostly steady, although it falters a little in the reception year in communication, language and literacy, but picks up again in the infant stage of learning and accelerates noticeably in Years 5 and 6. Standards are particularly good throughout the school in the creative subjects.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils attain good standards the creative subjects.
- Standards are not high enough in English, especially in writing.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

### **Commentary**

1. Pupils achieve notably well in the creative subjects of art and design, design and technology and music. They also do well in physical education and French. This is because the school makes very good use of staff expertise and it employs additional teachers to take classes for particular subjects. It means that pupils have access to good quality teaching that enables them to learn quickly and thus, they reach good standards in these subjects, which are strengths of the school. The standards attained in information and communication technology are satisfactory and computers are used well to support other subjects of the curriculum.
2. Given the average attainment on entry, the progress made by pupils in English is too variable. Although no secure judgements can be made about the national test results due to the very small numbers of pupils in each year group, none the less, standards have been consistently too low at the end of Year 2 over several years. The school has correctly identified the need to improve pupils' skills in writing and the inspection findings concur. Part of the problem is that achievement falters in the reception year because there are not enough opportunities for the youngest children to increase their communication, language and literacy skills through imaginative play, although they achieve satisfactorily in other areas. Although pupils in Years 1 to 6 make satisfactory progress in reading, their writing is not as well developed as it is in many other schools by the time pupils leave the juniors. This is hampered by the lack of opportunities for them to use literacy skills across the curriculum.
3. Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory overall in lessons and sometimes good. Pupils usually work hard and make good use of mathematical vocabulary to help them. They understand terminology such as 'estimate' and 'units of measurement' which aids their progress well. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in science. The evidence gathered during the inspection shows that standards currently match the expected levels by Year 6 in lessons. Pupils generally make sound progress and interesting practical work is used to help them increase their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts.
4. Achievement amongst pupils with special educational needs is good overall because they are supported closely by teachers and assistants who provide good guidance for them. They do particularly well in creative subjects and are integrated carefully in lessons so that they strive to reach the targets set for them.



## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **good** attitudes. Behaviour is **satisfactory**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance and punctuality are **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attitudes are good.
- A few pupils do not behave as well as they could.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

### Commentary

5. Pupils enjoy their lessons showing good attitudes and interest, particularly in practical work. They usually listen closely, following instructions sensibly. When answering teachers' questions, they respond well, often with carefully considered replies that build effectively on previous discussion. Pupils are good at working together in groups, able to share resources and ideas. When moving to written work, they are sometimes noisy, but settle as they get involved. Many pupils are far less confident and practised at putting their thoughts on paper and are not secure with spelling, so that writing takes much time and effort. The most capable pupils are not always provided with enough challenging work.
6. Pupils' behaviour and relationships are satisfactory. The majority of pupils behave properly, showing appropriate consideration and respect for others. Pupils know that they are expected to work hard in lessons and play sensibly together; most do so. However, a significant minority of pupils, that includes some girls and boys from all classes, do not behave as well as they could. There is silliness and some thoughtless, unkind responses to individual pupils' work or comments. The behaviour policy has a clearly stated satisfactory reward and sanction system, liked by pupils, but not enough mention is made of bullying or guidance given on resolving incidents that happen. In 2002/03, one fixed-term exclusion took place; there are none so far this academic year. Parents and pupils think that behaviour could be better. Inspectors agree with them.
7. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has a positive impact on pupils' personal outlook. Spirituality is well fostered by the vicar and through strong church links, with pupils knowing their beliefs and learning about other major religions. The promotion of spirituality is unplanned, but wonder does occur in some lessons. The short puppet show by infant class staff delighted their pupils who applauded joyfully. Moral development is well promoted by staff, setting clear examples. Circle time debates help pupils to understand moral issues and in Years 5 and 6, the writing of fables helps to reinforce pupils' awareness. Pupils know right from wrong, but not all choose to take responsibility for their actions or behaviour. Social development is important to the school community. Parents and pupils like the strong '*family*' feel. Older pupils help younger children. The lunch and after school clubs develop skills like teamwork, well. Many trips take place, including staff-led residential weekends. This successfully widens pupils' experiences and raises self-esteem. Opportunities for pupils to learn about western culture in arts, music, ecology or sport, are good. Visitors and specialist staff expand pupils' skills and knowledge well. The mono-cultural school works hard to provide a glimpse of multicultural society. Good use is made of local multicultural resource loan systems. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are keen to learn about Indian artefacts; boys and girls enjoy trying on national costumes. They respect heritages and cultures far different from their own. In Years 5 and 6 pupils learn about life in African countries.
8. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory. Unauthorised absence is much too high. Registers do not comply with the statutory requirements because individual marks are sometimes missed and some pencil entries are made. Nevertheless, a scrutiny of the current

registers and the schools' own satisfactory monitoring procedures, show that the levels of attendance are improving. However, there is still a significant amount of unauthorised absence because too many pupils arrive late for registration. This means that lessons are disturbed and learning is lost in subjects such as numeracy.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data	5.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.2
National data	0.4

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

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Asian or Asian British – Indian
No ethnic group recorded

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

No. of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
60	1	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **sound** quality of education for its pupils. Its broad curriculum is extended well by the **good** focus on special educational needs and a **very good** range of extra-curricular activities. Overall, pupils are prepared appropriately for the next stage of their education.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **sound** overall, and notably good in the creative subjects.

### Main strengths and areas for development

- Teaching is occasionally very good or excellent in music and physical education.
- Teaching assistants are deployed carefully to help and guide pupils.
- Staff encourage and praise pupils well.

### Commentary

9. Teaching and learning are good in the creative subjects of art and design, design and technology, music and physical education, especially when skilful teaching points and good use of praise lead to a significant increase in pupils' skills. Good links are made between the creative subjects, such as in music and dance, through activities that revolve around topics such as 'American Indians' and 'India'. Pupils' artwork is displayed well throughout the school and helps to provide a stimulating environment. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the reception year. The kindly, positive and caring ethos provided by adults ensures that children work within a gentle, supportive environment in which they are all valued equally.

10. A particular strength is the good use of specialist teachers for the creative subjects and the good deployment of teaching assistants. All staff work in good partnership with each other as a strong team. Teachers and assistants know pupils with special educational needs well and give good personal and academic support during lessons, assisting them to achieve the targets set out in their individual education plans. Teachers make good use of the skilled support assistants when they are timetabled to be with the classes, which helps pupils with special educational needs to achieve well.
11. The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is satisfactory throughout the school, and basic skills are taught suitably in science and information and communication technology. The table below includes nine lessons in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, of which seven were satisfactory. All teachers have secure knowledge of the core subjects, and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented appropriately since the last inspection. Teachers are skilful at identifying ways to interest and encourage pupils. They treat them with respect and use praise well to enhance their self-esteem and confidence. They evaluate their work daily to assess progress and plan for the next stage of learning. Lessons are made interesting because the staff use learning resources well to help pupils understand new ideas. The use of computers has been improved since the last inspection to support learning across the curriculum and a new library area, complete with new computers and printers, is often used.

### **Summary of teaching observed in 18 lessons during the inspection**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	3	6	8	0	0	0

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

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **satisfactory** and it meets the requirements of the National Curriculum for all subjects. It is enriched by **very good** extra-curricular provision.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The creative, aesthetic, practical and physical areas of the curriculum are good.
- A very good range of extra-curricular opportunities enriches the curriculum.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The skills learnt in English and mathematics are not applied sufficiently in other subjects.
- The school uses its good number of qualified staff well.

### **Commentary**

12. The curriculum is reviewed regularly and planning covers a two-year rolling programme to take account of current pupil numbers in Years 1 to 6. It is devised to be broad, balanced and inclusive and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The planning of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage covers the areas of learning and the needs of the children. Effective use is made of the strategies for literacy and numeracy. The curriculum for the creative, aesthetic, practical and physical activities are a particular strength of the school and these are also enhanced by the use of visitors, such as artists and the multicultural organisation from Yeovil.
13. A very wide range of extra-curricular activities enhances the overall provision both at lunch-time and after school. A full range of activities rotates throughout the year and during this term includes choir, sewing, drama, recorders, art, 'Owari' (an African counting game), as well as sporting activities, such as netball, skipping, cross-country and football.

14. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well planned and their individual education plans have clear targets. These pupils are mainly taught with their peers but are occasionally withdrawn to receive some specific teaching. The good management of the co-ordinator ensures that the records are efficiently kept and parents are fully informed and involved. The support staff are trained and effectively deployed so that they make a good contribution to the pupils' achievements. All pupils identified with special educational needs make good progress.
15. Whilst the cross-curricular links between the creative subjects are good, the links across other subjects of the curriculum are not as well developed. For example, there is no consistent approach to enable pupils to apply and use English and mathematics in other areas such as science, information and communication technology, geography and history. The planning for the core subjects does not support the knowledge, understanding and skills learnt in one area of the curriculum being applied and consolidated in another.
16. There is a good number of well qualified teachers and, with the exception of the headteacher, all work part-time. The school uses this to benefit pupils' learning by using the expertise of the staff across the school. For example, a teacher with linguistic skills teaches French to all pupils in Years 2 to 6 and teachers who have particular talents for music and physical education teach the subjects across the school. The resources are adequate and the accommodation meets the requirements although pupils only have access to gymnastics and dance activities in the village hall, which is situated up the road. The outside areas for games are good with a level football pitch, a garden and an environmental area. A new playground with a range of static equipment is being built at the present time.

### Care, guidance and support

Pupils' care, welfare and guidance are **satisfactory** overall but there are weaknesses in the health and safety procedures, which are **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The attention given by governors to the health, safety and protection of pupils is unsatisfactory.
- Pastoral support is enhanced by the good quality adult and pupil relationships.

### Commentary

17. Health and safety was a key issue in the last report and remains so because the governors have not addressed all of the issues. The supervision and the safety of pupils walking to and from the village hall and staff first-aid training are also still concerns. There has been no risk assessment since 2001, when the local authority did a fire assessment, thus the governors are currently not meeting the requirements stated in their own satisfactory health and safety policy. In addition, the policy and procedures for child protection, another governing body responsibility, are unsatisfactory. This is because the policy is still in draft form, not yet agreed or ratified by governors and there is insufficient guidance for staff about the procedures for informing the designated officer; plus, aspects like informing parents, the needs of *'looked after'* pupils and training, are not mentioned. The designated officer, who is also the headteacher, is aware of the main principles regarding child protection, but has had no recent updated training and the school staff are untrained. An informal log is kept of any initial concerns but advice cannot be sought from external agencies without formal referrals.
18. All staff work effectively together, knowing their pupils well. This knowledge is used well to provide good pastoral care and advice to support pupils' personal development and is often informal, with a quiet word of explanation. The good, mutual trust between adults and pupils helps to raise self-esteem. If pupils need help they know that staff are ready to listen and will find time for them. The school pays satisfactory attention to pupils' views and opinions through monthly meetings of the school council, involving pupils from Years 3 to 6. The procedures for

monitoring academic progress and attainment are satisfactory, but assessment information is not used well enough to ensure that pupils with different capabilities are sufficiently challenged in English. Learning targets are used soundly to help most pupils do even better. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in developing their skills, because they receive focused, good quality attention from their teaching assistants.

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

The school has a **good** partnership with its parents and its community links are **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Community links are a significant strength of the school.
- Parents offer positive support to the school, but are dissatisfied with the homework provision.
- The prospectus and the governors' annual report do not contain all required information.

### **Commentary**

19. Links with the community are thriving. The school has a growing local reputation and a very strong commitment to small community development. The oriental style community garden has a gentle tranquillity, even in mid-winter. The school has won a coveted 'Greenfingers' award from the Royal Horticultural Society, for its environmental work. The much delayed all weather surface sports area, still only partly completed, will include facilities for football and tennis. It will be used by the community outside school hours and has the support of the parish councils. The local playgroup leases the school hall on three mornings each week. Pupils go to the village hall for their physical education lessons. There are close links with the church; pupils are regularly involved in services and a collection is held for the Yeovil night shelter at Christmas. Fundraising for national and worldwide charities is a regular feature in the school community. Pupils give musical performances that are much enjoyed in the local area.
20. The school enjoys a good partnership with its parents, who support their friendly small village school well. They readily offer help, in classes, with the clubs or by fundraising through the hardworking well-established parents' and friends' group. The school values and greatly appreciates this involvement. Parents like the extra attention their children get because there are fewer pupils in classes and they like the approachability of the headteacher and the staff. However, they are unhappy with the amount of homework given, particularly for pupils preparing for their secondary education. The homework policy states *'that homework is set when appropriate'*. In practice this leads to considerable inconsistency in setting homework, across the school. Parents say that younger pupils often have more work than older ones. Some homework was set verbally during the inspection, but was not written down by pupils. There is little incentive for pupils to do homework and older pupils have too little opportunity to develop study skills through independent research. For these reasons, the provision for homework is unsatisfactory.
21. The information that parents receive is unsatisfactory. This is because the governors are not ensuring that parents get all the information to which they are entitled. For example, the prospectus and the last governors' annual report have a considerable number of required items missing. These include a lack of detail about the governors, no figures for the absence rates and inaccurate information about the access for disabled pupils, plus there are insufficient references to the provision for special educational needs and religious education. Nevertheless, pupils' reports, including a brief interim autumn term report, are liked by parents and provide them with an appropriate overview of progress. There is also good formal and informal access to staff for parents to discuss concerns. Newsletters are regular and parents get a full diary of school dates and events, as well as reminders about meetings, attendance and other school matters.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall, but the governors do not rigorously monitor the provision or take an active part in the strategic development of the school, which is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring leadership of the headteacher is supporting and motivating teachers well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed effectively.
- The role of the governing body is not strong enough.

### Commentary

22. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, who was appointed after the last inspection, has worked hard with staff to rectify the weaknesses identified in monitoring and now gives clear direction to the school. She also promotes a caring, supportive and orderly environment in which all pupils are valued and encouraged to contribute to the life of the school. Daily administrative routines are well established by the office assistant, which provides stability within the school. The headteacher and teaching staff satisfactorily oversee and manage all the subjects of the curriculum conscientiously. They link up well as a strong team and make sure that all aspects are covered. The subject leaders are positive and hard working and the appropriate systems for monitoring pupils' performance and teachers' planning have helped them to keep a check on standards.
23. The headteacher is also the co-ordinator for special educational needs and has worked successfully with colleagues to develop the provision and the quality of individual education plans. These have good targets and there are clear procedures for maintaining assessment and daily records to show how pupils are progressing. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well within the school's good, inclusive environment.
24. The governance of the school has not improved enough since the last inspection, when there were weaknesses, and this is unsatisfactory. Although individual governors are supportive they have not worked together closely enough to monitor the school's provision or hold it accountable. As a result, several statutory requirements are not met; for example, in the provision for the health, safety and protection of pupils, the attendance procedures, and the governors' annual report to parents and prospectus. Management planning is poor and the governors have only just begun to become more involved in the strategic development of the school. They made a good start last March by holding a useful meeting to decide on the priorities for improvement. However, although the school has a brief improvement plan that contains some suitable priorities for 2003-4, it is not linked clearly enough to the long-term financial planning and is not a helpful working document. None the less, the recent appointment of a new chair of governors bodes well for the future. For example, since September 2003, meetings have been much better organised and an efficient clerk minutes them carefully. Under the careful guidance of the chair, with his vast expertise, the governors are beginning to grasp some of the school's strengths and weaknesses and they are beginning to focus better on maintaining the quality of provision.
25. The day-to-day financial arrangements are satisfactory. Governors have managed grants effectively to provide new computers and extend the outdoor play provision. Budgets are set in accordance with statutory requirements and suitable procedures are in place to check the finances and make sure that the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	218,394
Total expenditure	224,784
Expenditure per pupil	2,919

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	37,640
Balance carried forward to the next	31,250

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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

26. Although only a few lessons were observed specifically with children in the reception age group, it is clear that the school provides suitably for the youngest children in the school within a mixed-age reception and Years 1-2 class and the teaching is satisfactory. Children enter the reception year at the beginning of the year in which they reach their fifth birthday and there are good induction processes that help them to settle happily and feel secure in their new environment. Parents feel welcome and the teachers and support staff work well together. However, there are some deficiencies in the provision for outdoor play as there is no large climbing equipment readily available and there are not enough indoor opportunities for children to engage in imaginative role-play activities on a daily basis. Nevertheless, the curriculum is planned appropriately to take into account the recommendations for the Foundation Stage and regular assessments are made of children's learning.
27. In **personal, social and emotional development**, children attain the expected standards in the reception year in this area of learning and often beyond. Children are helped to work and play together and encouraged to share and take turns by adults who work together well and provide good role models. Children often concentrate well during activities and they frequently spend sustained periods on the tasks they are given. Adults treat them with great courtesy and respect and this leads to good attitudes from the children.
28. The provision for **communication, language and literacy** is satisfactory overall and adults organise activities well for the children. They provide a cheery environment, which is colourful and stimulating. However, although writing skills are developing, the lack of daily access to structured role-play activities and imaginative play to help children use written words in social contexts is limiting their development. Although most attain the expected goals in listening and reading, they do not achieve as well as they might in speaking and writing.
29. In **mathematical development**, the teaching and support staff work well together as a team, which has a positive effect on children's learning. Children extend their knowledge of numbers and achieve suitably when counting to ten and back. The adults working with them liaise together well and are kindly towards the children, resulting in good relationships and a positive ethos for learning. Thus, standards are as expected by the time children reach the end of the reception year.
30. No specific sessions were seen in **knowledge and understanding of the world** and the observations of activities related to this area were of brief duration. As a result, a secure judgement on teaching is not possible. Likewise, the activities for **physical and creative development** were integrated within the school day and not a major focus of the inspection. Nevertheless, children have a wide range of opportunities to develop their skills of using pencils, crayons and paints and the teaching of creative aspects is notably good. Many children have good pencil control when drawing and most move freely with confidence when playing outside. There are good opportunities for them to paint and use collage materials and they regularly enjoy these activities.

### SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

#### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

##### FRENCH

French is taught regularly to all pupils in Years 2 to 6 and the provision is **good**. Although only one lesson was sampled during the inspection it is clear that pupils do well in the subject and the



teaching is good. Pupils have very good opportunities to learn conversational French and they are inspired by the specialist teacher's strong rapport with them and the lively quality of the lessons.

## **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are generally too low in writing.
- Conscientious support staff are deployed well to help improve standards amongst pupils with special educational needs.
- Homework is not used sufficiently to help raise standards.
- Pupils' literacy skills are developing but there are too few opportunities to use them across the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

31. Pupils attain sound standards in reading by the time they reach Year 6 and most achieve satisfactorily. However, standards are not high enough in writing throughout the school. The teaching of reading is well organised and managed. In the infant classes, teachers give suitable attention to teaching the letter sounds in a stimulating way. By doing this, pupils learn the correct pronunciation. Those with special educational needs achieve well because they are supported closely by good-quality teaching assistants. By Year 6, most pupils can locate simple information in non-fiction books using their knowledge of the alphabet and the most capable use dictionaries effectively. However, their writing is inconsistent and unsatisfactory. Not enough focus is given from Year 1 to help build up pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to attempt tasks in small steps; for example, by looking at how to write the beginning, middle and end of a story. By the time they get to the end of Year 2, many know how to place a capital letter and full stop accurately but spelling is weak and letter formation is too variable. Although learning continues at a steady pace in the junior classes pupils do not reach the expected standards in writing by Year 6 because their work is not consistently well structured or neatly written in pen, using a cursive script. Spelling is inconsistent in Years 3 to 6 and this hinders progress.
32. The satisfactory teaching has meant that there has been some suitable development of writing skills in both the infant and the junior classes since the staff identified this as an area upon which to focus. As a result, standards are beginning to rise and teaching assistants are well deployed during lessons to work in close harmony with the teachers. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs achieve well, as seen in Years 3 and 4 when they worked hard on characters and plots when sequencing dialogue for playscripts based on the story of 'Grandpa Chattergee'. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent across the school because pupils are not always given advice on how to improve their work and homework is not used enough to help raise standards.
33. Management is sound. The subject leader is knowledgeable, works hard and has a clear view of the strengths and needs of the school. Assessment procedures are used satisfactorily to help assist planning but this is not as rigorous as it might be to help raise standards in writing. The school has identified the subject for development and has already made a good start.

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

34. Throughout the school, staff work hard to ensure that pupils have many opportunities to develop their reading and listening skills. However, pupils are not given enough time to develop their speaking skills and written work across the different academic subject areas of the curriculum, such as geography and history.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good support provided for pupils particularly those with special educational needs.
- Mathematical challenges are in place for pupils in the upper school.
- Organising, using and handling data are not given enough attention.
- Numeracy skills are not developed in other subjects as well as they could be.

### **Commentary**

35. Achievement is satisfactory and pupils attain the expected standards by the end of Years 2 and 6, which is a similar picture to the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported by the classroom assistants who are well briefed on the work and how they are to be involved in the learning. A few of the most capable pupils are given suitable opportunities to work with the older pupils in the year above them but the effectiveness of this strategy has not been evaluated yet to ensure that pupils are achieving well enough. The school has the capacity to improve further as it develops the mathematical challenges within the classroom, particularly for the most capable across the school.
36. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching. Where it is good, it is reflected in the progress being made by the pupils. Teachers have sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and this is instrumental in beginning to challenge pupils, particularly in the upper year groups. For example, in a good lesson some pupils developed their thinking on lines of symmetry in regular polygons whilst others were challenged to work on using co-ordinates in all four quadrants. Pupils can explain their mathematical thinking effectively and the good matching of challenge to the ability of the pupils ensures all are engaged and learn well, including those with special educational needs. However, in another lesson where the most capable were not challenged sufficiently, some pupils who finished their work early were given unrelated activities to keep them busy, but this was not an appropriate use of their time.
37. Management is satisfactory but it is limited because the subject leader only works on a part-time basis. However, the staff receive guidance to improve teaching and learning and communication between them is good. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented and the school has adapted it to suit its needs particularly for working across the two-year groups. It is supporting effective learning but, whilst the range covered is generally satisfactory, there is not enough attention given to handling data. However, across the school there is evidence that problem solving is developing well. The setting of targets for individual pupils is well established. Pupils are able to self-evaluate in an informal way but they are not provided with formal opportunities to monitor their own improvement. At present not enough attention is given to the analysis of previous tests to diagnose weaknesses or support the planning. Assessment therefore is not sufficiently informing the planning.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

38. Only minimal use is made of mathematics in other curriculum areas such as geography, science and design and technology. The use and application of mathematics for problem solving across the curriculum is not systematically planned. Pupils are however, using information and communication technology as a regular and effective tool for reinforcing learning within their mathematics lessons.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The amount of practical work achieved by pupils provides a sound basis for their learning.
- Not enough emphasis is placed on literacy skills or increasing pupils' independence.

### Commentary

39. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and this is a similar picture to the one seen at the time of the previous inspection. The teaching is sound and pupils attain the expected levels generally, although the most capable could do better. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and pupils concentrated well as they experimented with pulling a brick on different surfaces in order to learn about friction and measure force. Effective questioning supported their learning and the information provided by the staff reminded them about fair testing. Pupils in Year 2 are keen to recount their recent visit to a science museum but have difficulty in making logical sense of their learning. Pupils in Year 6 can describe their environmental area and garden with enthusiasm and recall what is suitable for composting and what is not biodegradable. They recount experiments on dissolving various substances but have some difficulty in recalling conclusions or linking cause and effect. Most enjoy their lessons because they carry out a significant amount of practical work, which they find interesting. They are provided with useful writing frames in their workbooks that support their conclusions and they record the experiments in a prescribed format. However, the lack of attention to literacy skills limits them. Teachers direct too much of the investigative work and do not give pupils enough opportunities for them to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to questions they have raised for themselves, which restricts the achievement of the most capable.
40. The subject leader is able to oversee planning and looks at pupils' work but has limited time to monitor the teaching due to her own class responsibility. Nevertheless, the good teamwork is a strength and the planning follows a useful two-year cycle. Analysis of results and frameworks for assessment are not sufficiently secure to raise achievement further.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are confident and enjoy information and communication technology.

### Commentary

41. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards and girls and boys are progressing at similar rates. They are confident, show interest when talking about computers and understand the skills needed for word processing, graphics and the use of the Internet. Since the last inspection the school has used the national funding well for staff training and to purchase new computers, which have been set up in the recently refurbished library area. Although a few difficulties have arisen with the machines, the school makes good use of technical support when it is available.
42. Teaching is satisfactory and staff make sound use of the national guidelines to help them plan the curriculum. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and are being developed further, through sound subject leadership, to improve the ways in which pupils' progress is recorded. Learning is supported by other activities, such as the use of programs on various themes that

link up with other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs say that they particularly enjoy computer activities and they try hard to succeed, with plenty of good adult guidance.

## HUMANITIES

### Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject plays an important part in pupils' understanding of other cultures.
- Learning is not reinforced enough through written work.

#### Commentary

43. Although only one lesson was observed during the inspection, work seen and discussions with pupils show that standards are satisfactory overall and the teaching is sound. Pupils achieve appropriately in relation to their capabilities, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection and pupils have good opportunities to study cultures other than their own.
44. The curriculum is based appropriately on the locally agreed syllabus '*Awareness, Mystery and Value*'. When studying India, the pupils learn about the Hindu faith and good links across the curriculum are made. However, there is little evidence of the development of writing in the subject in the junior year groups to reinforce their learning. Nevertheless, in the lesson seen pupils were challenged through effective and open questions, which supported their reflection on moral issues. These were handled sensitively and with respect by the teacher and pupils developed their thinking on the links between rights and responsibilities. Pupils are preparing photographs of the five most important things in their lives, which will soon be taken to a school in Ghana by their teacher when she visits the country.

### Geography and History

Provision in geography and history is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attractive displays enhance learning and teachers' subject knowledge is good.
- Not enough activities are provided for pupils to develop their writing from different perspectives.

#### Commentary

45. The standards attained by Year 6 in both subjects meet expectations for pupils of similar age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils recognise that their own lives are very different from those in the past and they enjoy visits to historical places of interest, such as Hook Court, where they learn about life in Victorian times as they scrub washing or find out about school life. Older pupils are beginning to reason and discuss issues about civilisations such as the Aztecs and, by Year 6, they can order a series of events on a time line, from pre-historic to the present day. Pupils enjoy both subjects and they retain information readily. In Year 2, they can talk about their village and know the names of the capitals of England and Scotland. In Years 3 and 4 pupils learn about India; the classroom currently has a distinctively Asian feel through the attractive displays and artefacts borrowed from a multicultural resource centre known locally as 'The Glade'. By Year 6 pupils can name cities within the United Kingdom and some in Europe. They have a secure knowledge of various aspects of life in Ghana and are able to explain enthusiastically the differences between their lives and those of

Ghanaians. Their teacher will be visiting the country shortly and closer links are planned to enhance learning further.

46. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good elements. Teachers have good subject knowledge that they share enthusiastically with pupils and the range of opportunities provided is good. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and planning is satisfactory, covering a two-year cycle. However, there are insufficient opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills through a range of writing or by using computers and applying mathematical knowledge. The presentation of work is sometimes untidy and pupils do not always write using a neat and legible hand. For example, in one class pupils misspell simple words and are printing when they do know how to write using joined script.

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

47. From the few lessons sampled in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education it is evident that the provision is **good** overall. The quality of teaching is notably good generally in these areas of the curriculum because the school makes very good use of staff expertise and deploys visiting teachers skilfully. As a result, teaching is occasionally very good or excellent in music and physical education. Planning shows that all elements of the curriculum are covered well and pupils have plenty of opportunities to increase their creative skills through artistic, physical and musical activities. Links across the creative subjects are strong and this helps pupils to achieve well.
48. In **art and design** pupils' learning is notably good because the teaching is skilful. It is securely based on developing pupils' skills and the use of sketchbooks to collect and explore ideas. Pupils develop themes well for collage, line, shape and form. They like to make models in **design and technology** lessons, assembling, joining and combining materials to link with their work on topics such as India.
49. Pupils enjoy **music** and contribute well in lessons. They sing sweetly in tune during lessons and develop their skills enthusiastically, using untuned percussion instruments with delight. In **physical education**, pupils experience a broad curriculum. The headteacher manages the subject well and has drawn upon the national guidelines and made good use of local facilities. The newly-levelled field has had a good effect on the provision as pupils can now take part in energetic sports activities on a frequent basis. Pupils particularly like the opportunities for dance and drama with a visiting specialist teacher and join in with vigour. The all-purpose outdoor area is yet to be finished but the school is vigorously pursuing its completion.

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

50. This area was not a major focus of the inspection and it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Nevertheless, it is clear that pupils achieve appropriately overall because their attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. The school's personal, social and health education provision is satisfactory and it has an agreed policy for sex education. The school is developing pupils' sense of responsibility and awareness of the views of others.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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