

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WHISTON WILLIS COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Prescot, Merseyside

LEA area: Knowsley

Unique reference number: 104433

Headteacher: Mrs Elaine Maloney

Lead inspector: Ms Margot D'Arcy

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> April 2004

Inspection number: 258398

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

© Crown copyright 2004

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

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

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	326
School address:	Milton Avenue Whiston Prescot Merseyside
Postcode:	L35 2XY
Telephone number:	(0151) 477 8270
Fax number:	(0151) 477 8271
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Robbie Mannion
Date of previous inspection:	18 <sup>th</sup> May 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This is a larger than average-sized school, catering for 338 boys and girls between the ages of three and eleven. All except the 35 Nursery children attend full-time. All but five pupils are of white British heritage and speak English as their first language. Those pupils whose first language is not English are of Philipino, Polish and German descent. They are sufficiently fluent in English not to need any additional language support. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (nine per cent) is below average, as is the proportion with severe learning difficulties. The range of needs includes specific and moderate learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and speech and communication difficulties. Thirty-five percent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above the national average. The area in which the school is situated suffers from some social and economic disadvantage. Most children remain at the school for their entire primary education. Children's overall attainment when they begin school is below what is normally expected for their age.

The school has achieved the Investors in People award and a School's Achievement Award from DfES. It is involved in a number of national and local initiatives to improve standards and provision.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23158	Ms Margot D'Arcy	Lead inspector	Art and design
19443	Mrs Nancy Walker	Lay inspector	
23276	Mrs Margaret Mann	Team inspector	English Modern foreign language Music Religious education English as an additional language
10228	Ms Susan Russam	Team inspector	Science Design and technology The Foundation Stage Special educational needs
11528	Mr Michael Wainwright	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI  
Barley House  
Oakfield Grove  
Clifton  
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 637 833) 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 and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>9 - 13</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>13 - 14</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>15 - 26</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>27</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school.** Pupils achieve well in almost all aspects of their education because good teaching and learning experiences are provided. Standards in most subjects are at least in line with what is expected. Leadership from the headteacher gives a firm direction to the school's work and has underpinned significant rises in standards since the last inspection. Both pupils and parents are very happy with the school, which provides good value for money.

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

- The headteacher provides good leadership.
- Nursery and Reception children are given a very good start to their education and achieve well.
- Good teaching and learning experiences in mathematics result in above average standards.
- Standards are above expectations in reading, art and design, music and religious education.
- In some junior classes, there are weaknesses in the provision for writing and science that result in underachievement, especially by higher-attaining pupils.
- Some key management staff are not effective enough in their roles.
- There is a good curriculum that is enriched by many additional opportunities.
- The school provides a good standard of care for pupils and develops their personal qualities very well.
- There are some weaknesses in marking and some junior teachers do not have high enough expectations of how pupils present their work.
- The school has an effective partnership with parents.
- Very good community links enhance learning experiences.
- Attendance is below the national average.

Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been **good**. Provision and standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved, as have standards in a number of other subjects. There are better systems to assess pupils. Punctuality has improved. The presentation of pupils' work remains an issue.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

**Given their starting points, most pupils achieve well.** The table shows the good standards in mathematics but reflects the weaknesses in writing. The broadly average standards shown in science reflect the good progress occurring in Year 6, but mask underachievement in some other junior classes. Throughout the school, pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well in reading, art and design, ICT, religious education (RE) and music. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 also make good progress in writing and mathematics; their progress in science is satisfactory. Throughout the school, there are no significant differences between how well boys and girls achieve in mathematics and science, but junior boys underperform in English. Pupils with special educational needs do as well as others because of the additional help that they receive. The same is true for pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Nursery and Reception children make at least good progress in all areas

and do particularly well in the areas of communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development.

Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are **good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. The school has good procedures to check on and promote attendance but, despite improvements, levels are below national figures. Punctuality is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides pupils with a **good** education. The overall quality of teaching is **good**, with particular strengths in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> and in Year 6. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2, but there are some weaknesses in how writing and science are taught in the juniors. Nursery and Reception children are given very interesting and challenging learning experiences. The curriculum for most other pupils is **good**, with some weaknesses in science. Very good community links help to broaden learning experiences. Whilst pupils with learning difficulties get good help from adults, their individual education plans (IEPs) are not detailed enough to help teachers plan work for them. Pupils learning English as an additional language and those with particular gifts and talents are well provided for and make good progress. This is a caring school where pupils' health and welfare are effectively promoted. Pupils are given a good level of support and their views are taken seriously. The accommodation is good and, overall, so are resources, although there are some shortages in science.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall quality of leadership and management is **satisfactory**. The headteacher provides good leadership which has underpinned good improvements to provision and standards. The school is managed well on a day-to-day basis, but budget restrictions have limited necessary checks on the quality of teaching and learning. Whilst the headteacher gets good support from the management team, the leadership and management roles of the deputy and special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) are underdeveloped. Governors are committed and work hard to support the school. They have a satisfactory understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.

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

Parents have a very high opinion of the school are very happy with what it provides. Pupils like their school very much. They say that that they enjoy lessons and that the teaching staff 'are great'.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve standards of writing, including the way pupils present their work.
- Improve provision for and standards in science.
- Ensure that the deputy head and SENCO are more effective in their roles as leaders and managers.
- Improve marking.
- Improve attendance;

**and, to meet statutory requirements:**

- Ensure that the governors' annual report includes all of the required information.

---

<sup>1</sup> Nursery and Reception

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Most pupils achieve well across the whole curriculum and reach at least average standards by the end of Year 6. There are strengths in mathematics and some aspects of English, but some junior pupils underachieve in writing and science.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Nursery and reception children make at least good progress in all aspects of their work.
- Pupils achieve well in a number of subjects, including mathematics, ICT and RE.
- Standards are above average in reading, mathematics, art and design, music and RE.
- In writing and science, some junior pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

#### Commentary

1. Children generally begin Nursery with standards that are below those expected for their age and well below in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development. By the end of Reception, however, many will have achieved the expected goals in all six areas of learning<sup>2</sup>. This represents good achievement overall and very good achievement in communication, language and literacy, and personal and social development.
2. Year 2 results in national tests in 2003 were in line with the national average in reading and writing and above in mathematics. Compared to similar schools, these results were more favourable, being well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Over the past few years, test results in these subjects have risen at a faster rate than nationally.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (16.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.7 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.3 (18.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. In 2003, teachers assessed Year 2 pupils' standards in science, speaking and listening as broadly average. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in response to good teaching and learning experiences. The result is that by Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In science, pupils make satisfactory progress and attain broadly average standards.

---

<sup>2</sup> Personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical, and creative development.



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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.5 (27.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.5 (28.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.2 (29.7)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 47 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. In 2003, Year 6 pupils' national test results were well below average in English, above average in mathematics and broadly average in science. When compared to similar schools, the results were exactly the same. Since 1999, test results have generally risen at a faster rate than nationally, except in English. Although results in this subject did rise sharply in 2001, the rise was not maintained and in each of the two subsequent years, there was a significant fall in results that was generally not reflected in either mathematics or science. The school's analysis of the English results identified that the weaknesses were in writing rather than reading and particularly for higher attainers. Accordingly, writing had already become a priority for improvement before this inspection. Inspection evidence also finds that the weaknesses are in writing and are related to inconsistencies in provision. For example, whilst Year 6 pupils and some Year 3 pupils have good opportunities to write at length and in many varied ways, in too many other junior classes such opportunities are not provided regularly enough. This is having a more adverse affect on pupils who are more able; over time, lower attainers generally make good progress and average attainers satisfactory progress. Progress in reading is good throughout the school and standards by Year 6 are above average.
5. Inspection evidence shows that junior pupils achieve well in mathematics and by Year 6, reach standards that are above average. This is due to a good curriculum and effective teaching. Pupils' good attitudes and enjoyment of the subject also make a significant contribution to their progress. In science, a varied picture of achievement exists. Year 6 pupils make good progress, but in some other junior year groups, pupils underachieve. There are a number of reasons for this, the main ones being: work is often unchallenging; expectations of some teachers are not high enough; and too little time is spent developing essential scientific skills of investigation.
6. Whilst, over time, there are no major differences between boys' and girls' achievement in mathematics and science, differences have occurred in English, particularly in 2003 when boys significantly underperformed against girls at the school and against boys nationally. The school is aware of this and is implementing action to address the issue.
7. In lessons, the achievement and progress of pupils with special educational needs is not significantly different from their classmates. The small number with statements of special need make good progress and achieve well in response to the good quality specialist support that they receive. However, when pupils are withdrawn from lessons to work in small groups, their progress is not as good. This is because the work that they do is not clearly linked to specific IEP targets and is not related well enough to work that they do in class.
8. There are only four pupils for whom English is an additional language. It was obvious from talking to these pupils and hearing them read that they have made good progress and are no longer at the early stages of learning English. The school has made very good provision for these pupils and continues to provide them with effective and relevant support.
9. The school identifies pupils with particular gifts or talents and makes good provision to develop these. Pupils are provided with many additional opportunities and, as a result, make good progress.

10. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in art and design, RE and music. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in these subjects are above those expected for pupils' ages. Achievement is also good in ICT. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its provision for this subject and standards have risen to the expected levels.
11. In other subjects, work was sampled so it was not possible to make secure overall judgements about standards and achievement.
12. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good. Recommendations about standards and achievement in ICT have been successfully addressed. In other subjects, standards have either improved or been maintained at an above-average level. Whilst there are weaknesses in writing and science, these are not prevalent throughout the school. The inspection team judges that the school has good capacity to address these.

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

Pupils have good attitudes to school and behave well. Their personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Attendance is unsatisfactory, being below the national average. Punctuality is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of their behaviour.
- The quality of relationships and attitudes promotes a good, caring ethos.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong.
- Junior pupils' presentation of work is unsatisfactory.
- Procedures to promote attendance are good.

### **Commentary**

13. Pupils like school and take an eager part in all activities. In lessons, they are keen to participate in discussions and clearly enjoy working with a partner or as part of a group. They collaborate well and work quietly and without fuss to complete tasks. These good attitudes are seen throughout the school and by all groups of pupils. They emanate from the effective strategies the school uses to promote pupils' personal qualities and self-esteem. Despite these good attitudes, there are weaknesses in the presentation of work, particularly in the juniors. While the school has done some work on this in response to a recommendation from the last inspection, this is still an aspect that needs improvement. Junior pupils' work showed that too many teachers accept untidy or incomplete work. Expectations at this level are not high enough, including from some senior teaching staff.
14. Relationships are very good. Teachers value pupils' contributions and there is mutual respect and trust between them. This results in good behaviour, both inside the school and on the playground. There is little evidence of bullying. Older pupils look after younger ones and the 'playground pals' scheme ensures that pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils are polite and friendly and show pride in their own and each other's achievements. There have been no exclusions in the past year.
15. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Lessons in RE, music, art and literacy promote this aspect particularly well. Attractive and colourful displays, including thought-provoking captions and poems, heighten pupils' spiritual awareness and support their aesthetic appreciation. Year 1 pupils listen in wonder to the story of The Creation, whilst Year 5 pupils watch with rapt attention as their teacher leads a role-play session, complete with her shawl!
16. The difference between right and wrong and understanding how every individual's behaviour has an impact on others are continuously promoted in lessons, assemblies and at playtime.

School and classroom rules foster moral values such as honesty, fairness and tolerance. The provision is very good. A wide range of clubs, opportunities to participate in dramatic and musical productions, many extra-curricular visits and a residential holiday support pupils' social development. The class and school councils, chaired by pupils, provide opportunities for them to take responsibility to make the school a better place for everyone. For instance, a project linked to the nearby hospital enabled pupils to meet with adults and produce an effective display.

17. From the earliest stages, pupils learn to appreciate each other's similarities and differences and value different ideas and ways of life. Through RE, pupils enjoy celebrating a variety of festivals including Eid, Diwali, Christmas and Ramadan. A wide range of books and the use of the Internet help pupils in their research about cultures other than their own. Standards in this aspect are good.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.7	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

18. Although the majority of pupils attend regularly and on time, a significant few attend haphazardly. This, together with a high proportion of holidays taken in term time, reduces the school's attendance figure to a level that is below the national average. The school monitors attendance rigorously and has good systems to promote this aspect.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching for nursery and reception children is very good.
- Throughout the school, reading and mathematics are taught well.
- The quality of teaching in the juniors is inconsistent.
- Whilst systems for, and use of, assessment are good in English and mathematics, there are weaknesses in science.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always given them guidance on how to improve.

## Commentary

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	7 (16%)	16 (36%)	18 (41%)	3 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

19. The overall quality of teaching is good and has generally improved since the last inspection. There are strengths in teaching and learning for all infant children and in the teaching of mathematics and reading throughout the school. Further strengths were seen in the teaching of RE and music. The overall quality of teaching is better in the infants where over half the lessons were good or better. In most junior classes, teaching is almost always consistently satisfactory. In Year 6, however it is never less than good and often better. There is also some good quality teaching in one of the Year 5 classes.
20. Where teaching was not effective, this was linked to teachers' insecure knowledge of the subject that they were teaching and weaknesses in the ways that they organised the lessons. However, the unsatisfactory lessons did not, overall, represent any significant pattern of teaching weakness. In general, they were isolated cases, with most teachers showing good teaching skills in other subjects. Nevertheless, an analysis of junior pupils' work showed inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning in writing and science. These weaknesses hinged on some pupils being given too few opportunities to write at length or to engage in scientific investigations. In some classes, expectations of pupils in these areas were not high enough.
21. The quality of marking is inconsistent, particularly in the juniors. Most teachers ensure that pupils' efforts are acknowledged and praised. However, whilst some good marking was noted, not all teachers give pupils' sufficient guidance about how they can improve. There are some particularly weak aspects of marking in the juniors, including unjustifiable praise, incorrect spellings and poor grammar. The last two, especially, set a poor example for pupils and do little to promote their literacy skills.
22. Teaching for nursery and reception children is very good, with one-third being good and two-fifths very good. This highly effective teaching is characterised by a good team approach, quality planning, and high expectations and challenge for children. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and of the most effective teaching methods. The pay-off is clearly being seen in children's very good rate of learning.
23. Throughout the school, the most effective teaching was characterised by teachers' high expectations, secure subject knowledge, varied use of methods and a brisk pace. These features ensure pupils' full interest and attention, enable all to be included in question-and-answer sessions and never give them time to become bored or distracted. As a result, learning is effective. In many lessons, the promotion of speaking and listening skills was also a strong feature. Support staff are generally used well and make an effective contribution to teaching and learning.
24. In Years 1 and 2, pupils with special educational needs are taught well. In Years 3 to 6, they are taught satisfactorily overall. When they are given additional adult help, they often make good progress. However, throughout the school, teachers do not make enough use of pupils' IEPs to plan their work. This is because the way that these are constructed is not particularly helpful to teachers in this task. The learning support staff who work with pupils who have a statement are generally very effective in ensuring that these pupils are given tasks that meet their needs, thereby consolidating and extending their learning well.
25. In response to the last inspection's recommendation, some good attention has been paid to improving assessment. There are now very good systems to track and record the attainment and progress of nursery and reception children in all areas of learning. Throughout the rest of the school, procedures are also particularly good in English and mathematics where records clearly show how pupils are progressing. This enables targets to be set and action planned to boost learning where necessary, for example for specific groups. Any weaknesses are highlighted and planning is amended to address these. Progress in English and mathematics is rigorously tracked through the school. However, in science, there are no formal assessments or target-setting; these limitations impede the effectiveness of teaching and learning. In English and mathematics, targets are set for individuals and groups; in some

cases these are found at the front of pupils' books and serve as a good reminder. In too many cases, however, targets are not written down and in discussion, many pupils were unaware of their targets. In Year 6, however, pupils are very sure about the levels at which they are working and of how they can improve.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good and for nursery and reception children it is very good. A wide range of activities outside lessons enhances the curriculum. The standard of accommodation and resources is good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Particularly good learning experiences are provided for Nursery and Reception children and, throughout the school, in mathematics, RE and art and design.
- Aspects of the science curriculum are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in the curriculum and benefit as well as others, but their individual education plans (IEPs) are insufficiently detailed.

## **Commentary**

26. The strengths identified by the last inspection have been maintained and there has been an improvement in provision for ICT. The overall quality of the curriculum is good. It is well planned to ensure that all pupils have similar experiences and that these meet their individual needs.
27. The very good range of learning opportunities for Nursery and Reception children plays a significant part in enabling them to make significant strides in their learning. The provision for the minority of pupils with special educational needs in these year groups is also enabling them to progress as well as other children.
28. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided in art and design, mathematics and RE are particularly good. They cater well for pupils' interests and aptitudes and enrich the curriculum. Pupils are especially enthused by the work that they do in mathematics, resulting in good application and above average standards. In RE, teachers make good use of visits to different places of worship, including a mosque, church and synagogue, to enliven learning. The general art curriculum is enhanced by well-planned art weeks. Visiting artists work with pupils, sharing their skills and demonstrating more unusual craft techniques. However, there are weaknesses in science. Here, teachers do not plan or provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to design and undertake their own investigations and experiments. In many classes, the subject is not taught for an adequate amount of time each week. This, together with insufficient resources especially to pursue scientific enquiry, is limiting learning opportunities. In addition, not all junior teachers ensure that the planned curriculum for science is effectively implemented.
29. Teachers ensure that the curriculum is relevant and sensitive to the needs of pupils from minority ethnic groups. The culture of those pupils who speak English as an additional language is recognised and celebrated in displays. Similar care is taken to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with a statement, have complete equality of opportunity and full access to the curriculum alongside their classmates. However, the IEPs for these pupils are not detailed enough to give teachers the support they need in planning work for them.
30. Pupils' learning is made much more interesting by visits, visitors and the clubs provided for pupils in Years 3 to 6. A good number of pupils participate in these. They have a positive impact on pupils' enthusiasm for school and promote very good social skills and the ability to build relationships. Parents particularly appreciate all the support pupils receive beyond the school day in relation to their participation in sports, art and other activities.

31. Much effort is needed and provided to maintain the good standard of accommodation. Ongoing plans for further improvements are systematically costed and prioritised. Teachers display pupils' work attractively, which raises their self-esteem and confidence. Pupils have access to a good range of resources in their ICT, art, design and technology and English lessons. This includes good use of the two well-stocked libraries.

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

A good level of care is provided for pupils. Guidance to support their personal development is good and their views are sought and taken seriously.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very good and trusting relationships with adults.
- Very good child protection arrangements, including first aid and nourishment.
- Pupils receive good pastoral support.

### **Commentary**

32. A significant feature of the school is how kind and sensitive all staff are to each and every pupil. They show a keen interest in them and take time to listen and talk to them. Pupils themselves rank this feature as the main reason that they like their school so much. They clearly feel comfortable in asking for help, either with their work or with any personal worries. There are very good systems to help the youngest children settle into school. These have a positive impact on their attitudes to learning and all-round progress. Here and throughout the rest of the school, routines and high expectations of behaviour result in a calm and welcoming atmosphere.
33. Through regular training, most staff have a very good understanding of child protection procedures. Staff's knowledge of pupils and their vigilance in spotting concerns ensure that pupils and, where appropriate, their families receive the help they need. There is good liaison between the school and outside support agencies to promote pupils' care and welfare. A good quality and choice of meal is on offer at lunchtime. This is cooked on the premises using fresh ingredients daily, including vegetables, salad, fruit, and milk. Toast is available on three mornings each week.
34. A number of initiatives significantly contribute to pupils' all-round personal development. For example, they have opportunities to represent their fellow pupils on the school council become a 'playground pal', helping and befriending others and take on many additional jobs in class and around the school. Pupils receive very good guidance to help them to carry out these roles. There are good systems to identify and support pupils who suffer any trauma in their lives or who display behaviour or other personal difficulties. They are given skilful support, individually or in small groups, with the learning mentor making a particularly effective contribution in this area.

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

The school has established good links with parents and other schools and very good community links.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Community links are very good and broaden pupils' learning experiences.
- Parents and friends of the school provide good support.

- The very good quality of information provided for parents of Nursery and Reception children is not always replicated throughout the rest of the school.

### **Commentary**

35. The school takes full advantage of opportunities to involve pupils in community events. For example, they regularly take part in initiatives and functions at the local hospital and hospice, including creating a mural for the paediatric unit. This public celebration of pupils' talents raises their self-esteem and helps them to appreciate others in society and recognise their own role as citizens. Very many members of the community, including parents, ex-parents, grandparents, friends, and adults with their own special needs, are welcomed and regularly spend time in school as volunteers. They share their expertise in lessons, help with maintenance and routine tasks, and attend a range of courses held in school. Most parents give good support to the school, especially in hearing their children read regularly, taking an interest in attending functions, and in the smart appearance of their children. As a result of these successful partnerships, parents, pupils, and members of the community hold the school in very high regard.
36. The school provides very good information for parents of children in Nursery and Reception classes and involves them very well in their children's learning. Regular suggestions are made as to how parents might help with learning at home and written comments clearly indicate the progress being made. In contrast, the information on pupils' progress in other year groups is often brief and unclear. For example, end-of-year reports often pay too much attention to what has been covered and to pupils' attitudes rather than what has been learnt, particularly in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Comments in homework books and in home/school reading records also do little to inform parents of how their child is doing or how they can help. Nevertheless, for those parents who are able to attend, a range of courses held in school successfully enhance their competence in supporting their children's learning at home.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher provides good leadership; management and governance are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher leads the school well.
- Finances are managed well, but budget restrictions have limited checks on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Some key management staff are not conducting their roles well enough.

### **Commentary**

37. The headteacher has led the school well since the last inspection and continues to do so. Provision in most areas of the school is good and in most subjects, standards have risen. All but one of the recommendations made by the last inspection have been successfully addressed.
38. Although the headteacher has instigated a monitoring programme to check on the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning, budget restrictions and some staffing issues have limited the extent to which this could be implemented. The school's analysis of test data helped them to identify the need to improve standards in writing. However, the aforementioned limitations meant that the specific weaknesses in this aspect of English and some weaknesses in science were not picked up. The situation was compounded by the generally

favourable test results that were being achieved by pupils at the end of the junior key stage<sup>3</sup>, which masked some of the weaknesses within it.

39. Subject and other co-ordinators are enthusiastic and most are good role-models for teaching. Although there have been some opportunities for them to undertake monitoring tasks, these have been insufficient to fully detect the inconsistencies in teaching and learning noted by the inspection team. The management team has a wide range of experience. Collectively, the team provides good support for the headteacher and makes an effective contribution to the way the school is led and managed. Individually, however, some senior members do not contribute as well as would be expected. The deputy head is not a key player, having little more responsibility than that of a general co-ordinator. Whilst he has been instrumental in the improvements that have been made to assessment and ICT, he does not provide an appropriate role-model for colleagues. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) does not undertake the responsibilities associated with the role with sufficient rigour. The quality and use of IEPs are not monitored sufficiently well. Too much reliance is placed upon other staff to undertake associated SEN management tasks, such as maintaining records and information systems.
40. Leadership and management of the foundation stage are very good, especially in terms of the co-ordinator's vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations. There is knowledgeable and innovative leadership of curriculum and teaching, which is paying off in terms of children's good achievement.
41. Governors are a committed and enthusiastic group who are keen to be involved in the school's work. There is a good range of expertise and frequent training is undertaken. A number are regular visitors and some help out in school. Some governors show a particularly good insight of their roles and responsibilities and question the school's management rigorously about proposed decisions and the rate of improvement against previously identified weaknesses. Whilst, overall, governors have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, the focus on standards is not high profile for all. The governors' annual report is informative, but some of the required information is not included and other information, such as that about attendance and test results, is not always as clear as it should be.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	891,867	Balance from previous year	-19,781
Total expenditure	900,741	Balance carried forward to the next	-28,655
Expenditure per pupil	2788		

42. Financial management is good. The school is addressing and managing a long-standing deficit budget well, whilst continuing to provide an overall good standard of education.

<sup>3</sup> There are three key stages: the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception); Key Stage 1 (years 1 and 2); Key Stage 2 (years 3 to 6)



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

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

43. The provision for all children in the Foundation Stage, including those with special educational needs, is very good and has improved since the last inspection. In the Nursery, children make very good progress because they are taught very well. All members of the team set themselves high standards. They constantly evaluate their work, with the aim of improving what they do. The quality of accommodation and range of resources are both good.

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

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

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

- Activities are planned very well and promote children's emotional, spiritual, moral and social development alongside their intellectual development.
- Children achieve very well.

#### **Commentary**

44. Children in all classes show confidence and interest in their environment. They are eager for new experiences, show natural curiosity and are keen to explore their surroundings. The quality of teaching is very good. Children are provided with very good opportunities to take initiative and develop independence. In the Nursery, children enjoy choosing from a range of stimulating and challenging activities and sustain good levels of interest in their work. Relationships are very good and children are keen to share their achievements with adults. Children in the Reception classes enjoy more structured and directed activities that encourage high levels of motivation and keenness to achieve well. Staff give children good opportunities to think for themselves and be self-reliant.
45. Children's behaviour is very good. Detailed records are kept which clearly annotate progress over time. By the time children leave the Reception classes, their attainment is in line with what is expected, representing very good achievement.

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

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

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

- Children achieve very well because learning opportunities are varied and well planned.
- Speaking and listening skills are promoted well.
- Very good teaching of literacy skills in Reception gives a real boost to learning.

#### **Commentary**

46. By the end of Reception, children have made very good progress and most achieve the expected goals. Nursery children are provided with a wide range of experiences that cultivate and promote the development of early literacy skills. They respond particularly enthusiastically when sharing books and listening to stories. When practising mark-making and letter formation, they show good concentration and determination. Emphasis is placed upon the development of speaking and listening skills because many children have very limited

vocabulary and lack confidence when they enter the Nursery. To this end, very good pretend-play opportunities, outdoor play and independently initiated activities are invaluable in ensuring the children achieve well.

47. There is a noticeable acceleration in children's learning in the Reception classes because of the very good teaching of literacy skills. This builds very effectively upon the children's prior learning. Children show growing confidence in talking about books, recognise familiar words in a range of texts and make good attempts to use their knowledge of letter sounds when reading and writing. Speaking and listening skills are reinforced well in many situations.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good quality teaching and learning experiences enable children to achieve well.

### **Commentary**

48. The quality of teaching in all classes is good and frequently very good. This has a significant impact upon the rate of progress children make by the end of the Reception year. Most begin Nursery with lower than expected standards and for some, existing knowledge is very limited. Nursery children recognize some numbers and count to five. Fewer children show the same confidence with numbers between six and ten. They know and use vocabulary such as 'long', 'short', 'tall' and 'small'. They show an interest in shape and space and apply their knowledge and understanding in talking about everyday objects.

49. In Reception, children have a good knowledge and understanding of numbers to ten and some count confidently to 20 and beyond. With help, they attempt to reverse the process and count back to zero. The range of practical learning opportunities is good and the outdoor play area is well utilised to support learning in this area. In all classes, good opportunities to participate in games and play activities are readily available. Access to sand, water and construction materials is good and enhances the quality of both teaching and learning. These activities help children to achieve well.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In response to good teaching and learning experiences, children achieve well and make good progress.
- Children's natural curiosity is promoted and capitalised upon to support learning.
- Good planning for, and use, of ICT promotes effective learning in this aspect.

### **Commentary**

50. Children enter the Nursery with a very limited range of basic general knowledge. They are familiar with aspects of the world around them, but have little experience beyond their immediate environment.

51. Teaching in the Nursery is good. An imaginative range of learning opportunities develops children's natural curiosity, and adults support children well in investigating their surroundings. They are very effective in allowing them to find out things for themselves. This promotes

children's ability to select and use resources and play equipment sensibly and safely. Children's ICT skills develop very well because the class computers are readily available and used in a systematic and planned way to reinforce learning.

52. In Reception, the quality of teaching and range of learning opportunities are also good. The outdoor learning areas are used well. For example, children learn early science and geography skills through observing how the changing weather conditions affect the natural world around them and impact upon the growth of plants and flowers. In discussion, they demonstrate a basic knowledge and understanding of past and present chronology, for example, *"I am older than my baby sister because I am five and she is one"*. Children's ICT skills continue to develop well because access to the computers forms an integral part of teaching and learning throughout the day.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well and attain average standards.
- The quality of teaching is good in all classes.

### **Commentary**

53. Children enter the Nursery with lower than average skills. However, because they are well taught and given a good range of learning experiences, they make good progress. They quickly develop their ability to move with control and co-ordination when using large play equipment or wheeled toys. They handle a range of small tools, such as writing implements, scissors and cutlery, with increasing confidence. Reception children move with confidence and imagination during PE lessons. They manipulate fastenings on coats and shoes and are able to put on their own clothes in a logical sequence. Adults have high expectations of what children can achieve and make challenging demands in order that they attain expected standards.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well in response to good teaching and learning experiences.
- There is a rich learning environment, which encourages children's creativity and imagination.

### **Commentary**

54. Children begin Nursery with lower than average skills. They have limited experiences of using different media and materials but have a better appreciation of listening and responding to music, stories and other similar entertainment. Many are unimaginative with their artwork and lack confidence when playing with others. However, in both Nursery and Reception, staff provide rich and varied learning opportunities that enable children to experiment imaginatively with new and exciting materials such as textured paints, modelling materials and decorative collage components. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and this results in children making good progress and achieving the expected standards by the end of Reception.
55. Throughout the day, good opportunities are provided for children to perform action songs, sing number rhymes, and experiment with making sounds. By the end of Reception, they know the words to many songs and sing quite tunefully. There are also good opportunities for children to

engage in pretend play and sit quietly and listen to stories, both of which stimulate their imaginations. By the end of Reception children achieve average standards because of the rich assortment of learning experiences they have been given and the good quality teaching they have received.

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

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

#### **English**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Writing is taught well in the infants and in Year 6, but in other year groups there are weaknesses that result in unsatisfactory standards and achievement.
- Speaking skills are promoted well.
- Reading is taught well so standards and achievement are good.
- Very good library provision makes an effective contribution to pupils' literacy skills.

#### **Commentary**

56. Whilst, overall, provision is satisfactory, there are weaknesses in provision for writing in the juniors. Although test results improved after the last inspection, this has not been sustained and results have declined quite markedly over the last few years. The school has recognised this and has prioritised writing as a key area for improvement. The recent focus on promoting speaking skills is working well. Teachers encourage good logical discussions and include drama and role-play in lessons. By Year 6, most pupils speak confidently to adults and share ideas politely. Pupils' very good relationships with teachers give them confidence to participate in such activities. Pupils use the correct terminology when describing their work. For example, Year 6 pupils know about 'subordinate clauses'.
57. Junior pupils' writing skills are not as good as they should be. Spelling, in particular, is poor. Spellings are learned and tested regularly, but too often pupils do not successfully transfer what they have learned to their written work. Although pupils have sufficient opportunities to experience different forms of writing, too many are not required to write at length regularly enough. Much of the work completed consists of spelling and grammar exercises. The impact is felt most acutely for higher attainers, who are not achieving as well as they should. Weaknesses are more evident in Years 4 and 5, although some Year 3 pupils also underachieve.
58. The school has recently canvassed pupils' views about the subject, but at the time of the inspection, their responses had not been analysed. In discussion, inspectors found that pupils are not as enthused about writing as they are about work in other subjects. These attitudes and lack of motivation were noted in some English lessons and in junior pupils' work. For example, inspectors noticed numerous instances of incomplete work or work that was poorly presented. The need to improve boys' motivation has resulted in the school increasing the amount of literature that might appeal to them and securing visits from male role-models, such as male authors. These strategies are relevant, but whilst checks have been made on the quality of provision and learning in the past, the limited amount of recent rigorous, monitoring has resulted in weaknesses not being picked up. A different picture is seen in Year 6 where, in response to consistently effective teaching and well-planned learning experiences, pupils make good strides in learning. Many write imaginatively and attempt adventurous vocabulary after being primed effectively in well led class discussions. Whilst achievement in this year group is good, there are too many gaps in pupils' learning to make up earlier lost ground and this is being reflected in test results.

59. In Years 1 and 2, writing is promoted well and pupils make good progress. By Year 2, pupils generally use capital letters, full stops and sometimes question marks accurately. Lower attainers are learning to compose and write complete sentences. Higher and average attainers write at length, both in English lessons and other subjects. For instance, linked to work in geography, pupils write postcards that include good detail; in history, they write diary entries from the perspective of Florence Nightingale and use ICT to word-process accounts of the Great Fire of London.
60. Provision for reading is well planned and managed. This is having a positive impact on standards, which show good improvement. In Years 1 and 2, all pupils read with enjoyment. Higher and middle attainers reach above average standards and achieve well. Whilst standards for lower attainers are not at the expected level, they too make good progress. Standards by Year 6 are above average. Reading experiences are wide and pupils clearly explain their likes and dislikes of books and authors. Since the last inspection, there have been very good improvements to reading resources. There are now two very well stocked libraries, which are attractive and inviting. In addition, classrooms contain a good range of fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils enjoy their library periods. A conscientious full-time volunteer librarian manages the junior library efficiently and adds to the quality of provision.
61. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Reading is taught well throughout the school. Other strengths are seen in Years 1 and 2 and in some junior year groups. However, in addition to the aforementioned weaknesses in writing provision for juniors, the quality of marking varies too much, ranging from good to poor. Some marking sets a particularly bad example for pupils in terms of spelling and grammar.

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

62. Overall, literacy is promoted satisfactorily across the curriculum. In Years 1 and 2, teachers make good use of opportunities to develop reading, writing, speaking and listening skills across the curriculum. Whilst some good examples were seen in the juniors, for example, in history and RE, overall, the potential of these subjects to promote writing, in particular, is not exploited enough.

### **French**

63. French was not being taught during the inspection so no judgements about provision, standards or progress are made. However, discussions with the Year 5 pupils who receive this provision show their good enjoyment of the subject. They read and pronounce simple phrases competently and answer basic questions confidently. Pupils count accurately to 20 and recite the days of the week. Pupils have made a good start in their learning of French and are eager to further their knowledge. They record their work in notebooks, which they are keen to show to visitors. To enrich their learning, pupils are visiting France for three days later in the term.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Strengths in teaching and the curriculum result in above average standards and good achievement.
- The subject is well led, but weaknesses in marking and the presentation of work have not been acted upon.

## Commentary

64. Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards by the ends of Years 2 and 6. This shows a marked improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are quick to grasp new ideas and apply skills very well. In particular, the number of pupils attaining the higher levels is notable, their achievement reflecting their enthusiasm for the subject. In discussion, most pupils' eyes lit up at the mention of mathematics; views included such quotes as *"it involves thinking"* and *"it's fun"*.
65. The subject is planned in line with national recommendations but is amended where necessary to be relevant to pupils' needs. All strands of the subject are well planned for, so that pupils have good opportunities to investigate and apply their skills to problems. The school analyses pupils' test results to identify areas that require additional focus; planning is amended accordingly and emphasis given to those areas. For instance, recent assessments showed that division of number was a weak aspect. During the inspection some lessons were aimed successfully at addressing this area.
66. The good teaching originates from teachers being very clear about what they want pupils to learn and planning well for them to achieve the lesson objectives. These are presented clearly to pupils at the start and work tasks focus on them well. Planning is good and subject to change in the light of teachers' evaluations of how pupils coped with previous work. For instance, in one Year 4 lesson, the planned mental work was changed to provide a more challenging activity, resulting in pupils mentally calculating, multiples of 30 and 45. Good use is made of appropriate resources. This was effective when Year 1 pupils were learning the different values of numerals in two-digit numbers. In the mixed-age infant class, different tasks were selected so that both Year 1 and 2 pupils were well challenged. Year 4 pupils worked at an advanced level, which suited their ability, showing an understanding of co-ordinates and angles that was well above the level expected for their age. When they recorded their work, they took care, having been warned, nicely, *"Woe betide anyone who does not use a ruler"*. However, these high expectations of how work is presented are not reflected in many other classes and many books show very untidy work.
67. Some good examples of productive marking were seen; for instance, a teacher tells a pupil: 'each example will require a general statement', and in the next lesson, the pupil writes statements. However, not all teachers provide such guidance; sometimes, when they do, it is ignored by pupils and not followed up by teachers. Insufficient attention is given to promoting literacy skills through the subject, for example, in expecting key vocabulary to be correctly spelt. Pupils' books showed many misspellings that were not picked up. The situation is compounded when a teacher also spells key words incorrectly. Consequently, whilst the subject co-ordinator leads well and is a good role model for teaching, monitoring is not effective enough in identifying these weaknesses.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

68. Overall, mathematics is promoted satisfactorily across the curriculum. Year 6 pupils collect, record and interpret data about science investigations. One pupil demonstrated very assuredly how to produce a spreadsheet and transfer the information onto graphs. In a Year 4 art lesson, pupils used their mathematical knowledge and vocabulary such as 'reflection' and 'translation' when producing tessellating patterns.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Whilst standards have improved steadily, there are teaching weaknesses in some junior classes.
- Pupils' progress in Year 6 is very good.
- There are not enough resources to support experimental and investigative work.

### Commentary

69. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards by the end of Year 2. Standards by the end of Year 6 are also average. However, the work of pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 shows that, overall, progress in these year groups is unsatisfactory; in one class, it is poor. When pupils reach Year 6, they have significant gaps in their learning. Consequently, a great deal of effort has to be expended by both pupils and teachers to redress the balance.
70. During Years 1 and 2, pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop scientific knowledge. Teachers' planning is effective in ensuring that all are given the same range of learning opportunities. However, class timetables indicate that not all are taught the subject for sufficient time each week. As a result, some pupils have fewer opportunities to record work. This is limiting the progress of those who could achieve higher than average standards. Whilst pupils have been taught a satisfactory range of science work, including materials, electricity, forces and aspects of life processes and living things, opportunities to devise and record their own investigations or experiments are not as well represented. In lessons, practical work is often over-directed by adults because there are insufficient resources for all pupils to use at the same time. Pupils in Year 2 have a clear understanding of how to make tests fair and can use suitable vocabulary to explain the process.
71. In Years 3, 4 and 5, the quality of teaching and learning over time is unsatisfactory, and in one class it is poor. During the inspection, the quality of teaching seen in these classes ranged from good to unsatisfactory. Teachers plan a suitable range of work but tasks lack sufficient challenge to interest and motivate pupils. In the unsatisfactory lesson, pupils were badly behaved so the teacher spent more time attempting to establish and maintain control than in teaching. Where teaching is good, pupils are made to work hard and are challenged to find solutions to questions and tasks set by the teacher. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and make learning exciting by engaging pupils in practical demonstrations. These help to clarify obscure concepts such as those related to the Earth and beyond. Over time, pupils are not made to record sufficient work. That which they do record is not presented neatly, or well marked and assessed. As a result, pupils have no targets to strive for. The variability in provision for junior pupils means that pupils do not have equal opportunities to learn and make progress. Timetables indicate that in some classes, the subject is not taught for sufficient time each week.
72. Pupils begin Year 6 with vast gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Consequently, more time than usual is devoted to making up for their lack of learning. Year 6 pupils are taught well, with a brisk pace and challenging level of work being provided. The teacher has high expectations and gives pupils good guidance about how to improve. However, because of the need to radically extend their knowledge base and factual understanding there is limited time for pupils to devise and construct investigations. Nevertheless, this good standard of provision results in marked acceleration of progress and those who are capable of attaining higher than average standards thrive. Overall, in Year 6, pupils' achievement is good.

73. Budget issues and the long-term absence of the previous subject co-ordinator have limited the rigour with which standards, progress, and teaching have been monitored. Responsibility for the subject has recently been reallocated and indications are that the two new co-ordinators have already formed a prioritised plan to address weaknesses. Resources have been audited. Shortages of materials and equipment are such that the overall level is presently unsatisfactory, especially for practical and investigative work.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good curriculum has recently been established.
- Resources are good.
- Whilst there are some good aspects to leadership, monitoring is not rigorous enough.

### **Commentary**

74. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are achieving well and reaching the expected standards by the ends of Years 2 and 6. They show great confidence working on the computers and have sufficient competence to carry out the tasks that are set. Pupils in Year 6 are very keen to demonstrate their proficiency in using text and graphics to compile presentations. One of them quickly showed how to use the computer for recording and presenting data. Overall, whilst there was insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching, pupils' standards and achievement along with better resources and an improved curriculum shows that there has been good improvement since the last inspection.
75. Resources are good and much improved since the last inspection. Most classrooms have sufficient computers, mostly networked, and there are a number of interactive screens. These facilities enable teachers to integrate the use of technology into any lessons where it is helpful and appropriate. The teacher in Year 6 made particularly good use of the screen when the class reviewed different types of angles and triangles in a mathematics lesson. In addition to the school's resources, some pupils also visit a local learning centre where they have access to individual computers to develop and practise skills.
76. The subject co-ordinator has been effective in improving and increasing resources and revising planning so that it is very relevant to the school's needs. This gives teachers good guidance and ideas for providing ICT tasks within different subjects. A portfolio of examples of work at various levels has also been compiled to enable teachers to make some assessments of pupils' competence, but assessment is mostly at the early stages of development. Whilst it is the school's policy to use ICT as an integral part of the curriculum, classroom computers were not widely used during the inspection. Moreover, there is no dedicated time for the teaching of skills. The monitoring currently taking place is not rigorous enough to ensure that all pupils receive sufficient and equitable teaching.

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

77. The use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory overall. Some good examples were noted. These included pupils in Year 3 pupils using digital cameras to record mini beasts' habitats and the Internet being used to research information, for example in RE to find out about Sikhism. There are also many examples of pupils using computers to support literacy and numeracy tasks although, during the inspection, ideal opportunities were missed.



## HUMANITIES

78. Work was sampled in geography and history so there was insufficient evidence on which to judge provision, standards and progress.
79. Some good teaching of **geography** was seen when Year 5 pupils studied sources of evidence about Keswick and the Lake District. The teacher was well prepared and knowledgeable so that she was able to add to the information gleaned from the video and photographs. Few maps are seen around the school and small globes only in Years 1 and 2. Year 6 pupils make sensible comparisons between what they have learned about India and their own environment. A specific 'geography week', focused on Australia. This had a positive impact on pupils' interest, with good links made across the curriculum.
80. **History** work displayed in Years 1 and 2 show studies of famous people and events. No history was displayed in Years 3 to 6. The only lesson seen was taught satisfactorily, but there was a lack of stimulating resources. In discussion with pupils, it was clear that the subject has not made any significant impact on them. Moreover, discussion with some Year 6 pupils showed that, apart from good recall of work in Year 3 about Ancient Egypt, their knowledge of history is rather sketchy. They are aware of what artefacts are but do not recall seeing and handling many.

## Religious education (RE)

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and curriculum ensure that pupils achieve well.
- Good range of books to support learning.
- Subject contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### Commentary

81. A good curriculum, covering six major religions, plus effective teaching, ensure that by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards exceed the expectations of the locally-agreed syllabus. The planning is good, with a rolling programme to ensure that pupils in mixed-age classes do not repeat the same units of work. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
82. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are gaining a good understanding of the stories, festivals and places of worship of Christians, Jews and Muslims. They show enjoyment in their work. They recount and record what they have learned effectively through drawings, worksheets and in individual or class books. During Years 3 to 6, the curriculum widens to include Sikhism, Hinduism and Buddhism. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 express their feelings sensitively when discussing going on a journey or pilgrimage and discovering the reasons why people of many different faiths do so. By Year 6, pupils have a good and growing appreciation of the similarities and differences in the religions studied.
83. Teachers encourage good discussion of how different people worship, specific rituals and linked moral themes. For example, following a good discussion about 'The Lord's Prayer', pupils used the Internet very well to research information about similar Sikh and Hindu prayers and Islamic prayer mats. Lessons and assemblies, together with visits to places of worship and visitors from different faiths, help pupils to respect and understand people's differing beliefs and promote the happy caring ethos in the school.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

84. Work in **design and technology** was sampled so no judgements are made about provision, standards and achievement. Work on display suggests that standards are broadly average. However, the range of work was limited and discussions with pupils indicate that the subject is not taught regularly enough. Nevertheless, the school's planning for specific theme weeks that give an in-depth focus on various subjects includes design technology. At these times, good use is made of sharing with pupils the skills of different craftspeople to enhance their learning.

### Art and design

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and reach standards that are above those expected for their ages.
- The subject has a high profile in the school.

### Commentary

85. A good curriculum, encompassing all elements of art and design, ensures that pupils have interesting and worthwhile learning experiences and achieve well. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are generally above those expected for pupils' ages. These good standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
86. Pupils use a good range of media and are taught a wide range of techniques. Examples of painting in Years 1 to 6, range from finger-painting for the youngest pupils to delicate paintings of Willow Pattern plates and Picasso-style portraits. Three-dimensional work in clay, papier-mâché and mod-rock is very evident as is work with textiles, such as weaving and tie-dying using natural and commercial dyes. Pupils are really enthusiastic about their work. They enjoy experimenting with new techniques and learning about the work of a range of artists, craftspeople and designers. In particular, the subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' cultural development. Displays depict artwork from a number of countries, including Africa, India, China and Australia.
87. Teaching is good overall. During the inspection, some very good teaching was seen but one lesson was unsatisfactory. However, this was not indicative of the usual quality of provision and emanated from the teacher planning a lesson that was somewhat over-ambitious in terms of organisation. Year 1 pupils responded very well to the teacher's high expectations. They appreciated the lively and interesting explanations and demonstrations, which made them eager to begin work. This lesson was also highly successful in promoting literacy skills, with pupils being asked to think about how pictures tell a story and, after studying a sports-related drawing, draw a picture to communicate 'what happened next'. In response, they produced some good quality work that also incorporated evidence of their developing skills in depicting movement. Another successful lesson in Year 4, based on pattern, made very good links with mathematics and incorporated the use of ICT.
88. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has provided training for staff, which has improved their confidence. The wide range of resources and good accommodation, including a specific room for practical work, heightens pupils' learning experiences.

## Music

Provision in music is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards are above expectations by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils enjoy the subject and participate enthusiastically.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to learn an instrument and perform for others.

### Commentary

89. In the one Year 6 lesson seen, teaching was very effective. The teacher's subject knowledge was strong and there were high expectations of what pupils could achieve. All pupils participated keenly in singing a range of songs. They produced a tuneful sound and sang a two-part song competently. Pupils understood clearly the difference between the pulse and pattern when playing instruments and produced, within the lesson, an effective composition. The standard was good.
90. Further examples of music-making were seen in assemblies and especially in the specific 'singing assembly'. Here, all pupils from Years 1 to 6 participated enthusiastically. A commercial work programme has recently been adopted to support non-musicians in their teaching. This has been welcomed by staff and is working well. All pupils have the opportunity to have a term's 'taster' course playing stringed, woodwind or brass instruments. Pupils who show promise and wish to continue playing are given regular lessons. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to perform for their parents and friends at assemblies, concerts and within the community, for example, in the local church at Christmas or on Mothering Sunday. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.

## Physical education (PE)

Provision in PE is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links with the high school enhance provision.
- A good range of out-of-school activities enrich the curriculum.

### Commentary

91. The school has a positive attitude to the subject, which is being led by an inexperienced but highly enthusiastic and active co-ordinator. She is supported well through a link established with the high school co-ordinator. The link co-ordinator spends time in school, supporting and leading activities. Her high-quality teaching provides a good role-model for those teachers who work alongside her.
92. Pupils are expected to wear a PE uniform and almost all do so, looking very smart and ready for work. Most teachers set the standard in their own dress and attitude, although the wearing of a tie and ordinary footwear is not acceptable. In the Year 1 lesson taken by the visiting specialist, all adults took an active part so that pupils were well supported, worked enthusiastically and achieved well. Occasionally, although satisfactory, lessons are not particularly stimulating and generally 'go through the motions' without having clear objectives. For instance, in Year 5, pupils practised simple skills and were given some guidance but were not challenged to really stretch themselves and apply the skills. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 practised simple bat-and-ball skills but were given no points about how to improve or extend them.

93. Some good teaching of swimming was seen, based on good subject knowledge and good guidance for pupils on how to improve. Whilst around 80 per cent of pupils attain the standard expected by the end of Year 6, 40 per cent achieve at a much higher level; a small number cannot yet swim the required 25 metres.
94. A good range of additional opportunities that enhance learning is available to pupils in Years 3 to 6. Some are taken to the Liverpool FC Academy; football, rugby and dance are also available after school and there are competitive opportunities in netball and cross-country running. The new sports hall being built on the school's site is being enthusiastically anticipated and should provide excellent facilities for a variety of additional activities.

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

### **Personal, social and health education**

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

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

- Many opportunities for pupils to develop personal and social skills and awareness.
- The learning mentor makes a particularly effective contribution to work in this area.

#### **Commentary**

95. There are many good opportunities, incidental and planned, for pupils to gain an understanding of how to behave in various circumstances, both at school and in the wider community. These help pupils to develop very good relationships and to respect people's differences. The learning mentor plays a very significant role in promoting and monitoring the quality of opportunities pupils are given, and makes a very good contribution alongside class teachers and other adults within the school. Sex, drug and health education are well provided for.

## 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	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

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

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).*

