

INSPECTION REPORT

WILMINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wilmington, Dartford

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118865

Headteacher: Mr D Finlayson

Lead inspector: Mr J Donnelly

Dates of inspection: 10th - 12th May 2004

Inspection number: 258442

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: | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 - 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 206 |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| School address: | Common Lane Wilmington Dartford Kent |
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|-----------|---------|
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
|------------------------|--------------------|

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr Paul James |
|-----------------------------|---------------|

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Date of previous inspection: | 2 nd March 1998 |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Wilmington Primary School caters for pupils aged four to 11. It is situated close to Dartford, Kent. The area is one of mixed social and economic conditions. This is a one form entry school and with 206 pupils on roll, it is about average in size nationally. The school has similar numbers of boys and girls on roll. Attainment on entry to the school is below average. Attainment on entry to Year 1 is below average overall. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. The majority of pupils come from white British backgrounds and there are only a few other backgrounds represented in the school. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. The number of pupils entering and leaving the school other than at the normal times is low. Fifteen per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which is just below the national average. There are a few pupils (two per cent) with statements of special educational needs to support their speech and language difficulties.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------------|---|
| 23637 | J Donnelly | Lead inspector | Mathematics Information and communication technology History Physical education |
| 9092 | R Elam | Lay inspector | |
| 3574 | K Singh | Team inspector | Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology |
| 22059 | C Richardson | Team inspector | English Geography Music Religious education Provision for pupils with special educational needs |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Wilmington Primary is a very effective school. All pupils achieve very well as a result of very good teaching and learning. Standards are above average overall. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The school provides very good value for money.

THE SCHOOL'S MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE:

- Pupils' achievements are very good; pupils of all abilities achieve very well in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Leadership by the headteacher is excellent.
- Pupils' relationships with each other are very good and they demonstrate very good levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- Teaching and learning are very good overall.
- Pupils' social and moral development is very good.
- The relationship between staff and pupils is very good.
- The commitment of staff and very high level of teamwork are strengths of the school.
- The school's promotion of racial harmony and links with other schools and colleges are very good.

Since the previous inspection in 1998, the school has made **very good** progress. Standards are now very high and teaching and learning have improved from satisfactory to good. The headteacher and key staff have successfully addressed the minor weaknesses and issues identified in the previous report and the school is very well placed to continue this positive trend.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF PUPILS DURING THEIR TIME AT SCHOOL IS VERY GOOD.

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

Key: A - very high; 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.*

The overall provision for children in the Reception class is good and has improved since the last inspection. By the end of the Reception Year, children are working close to expectations, yet below expected levels in literacy and personal and social development.

Standards attained at the end of Year 2 in the 2003 national tests were average in mathematics, below average in reading and well below average in writing; in comparison to similar schools, standards were well below average. Inspection evidence indicates that these

test results were specific to a poorer group academically and a blip in the continuing upward trend overall. Standards in the current Year 2 pupils' work in lessons are above average.

Standards attained at the end of Year 6 in the 2003 national tests were well above average in English, mathematics and science and are in the top 25 per cent nationally. In comparison to similar schools standards are above average overall and in the top five per cent in English. Standards in pupils' books are above average but in lessons are well above average. Standards are above average in ICT and religious education and average in all other subjects. All pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.

Pupil's attendance and punctuality are good. The pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to their learning. **Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good overall.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The quality of teaching is very good and as a result pupils learn very well. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils well. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is consistently very good. The best teaching is in the core subjects of English and mathematics. The quality of care and guidance given to pupils is very good and the school's links with parents are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of key staff and governors are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and he is ably supported by key staff. The school development plan gives a very clear steer to the improvements needed

The governance of the school is very good. The governors, senior managers and subject leaders have a very good knowledge of what works well and what needs improving and they are clearly focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning even further. Teamwork and collaboration between staff are at a very high level. The governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents feel the pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning. The pupils have very positive views of the school. They are particularly enthusiastic about their teachers and the quality of relationships between the pupils and staff are very good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

IN ORDER TO RAISE STANDARDS FURTHER:

- Continue to develop staff expertise in information and communication technology as indicated in the school improvement plan.

There are no further major weaknesses in the school. The school improvement plan gives a very clear basis for further improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

Pupils' achievement throughout the school is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils' achievements are very good; pupils of all abilities, gender and ethnicity achieve very well in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics have improved over the last couple of years and in 2003 were well above the national average.
- Current standards of work in Year 6 are above those expected in English, mathematics and science. Challenging targets are set.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics, yet some do not attain the average standard in the national tests except in mathematics, which is a current school focus.
- In the Reception classes all children achieve well, given their low levels of attainment on entry, but overall they are not on track to reach the expected standards by the start of Year 1.
- The provision that the school makes for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

COMMENTARY

Achievement is **very good** overall.

1. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is below the expected level, particularly in language and social development. Children achieve well because of the high quality of leadership and the number of adults who provide a good curriculum that is focused on developing the basic skills of English and mathematics.
2. At the end of Year 6 in the 2003 national tests standards are well above average. There is no consistent difference between the test results of boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve very well in relation to their targets. National test results at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science have improved over the past two years. These results are shown in the table below. The school's results have been improving above the national trend.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 29.8 (30.0) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| mathematics | 28.9 (30.2) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| science | 30.7 (30.2) | 28.6 (28.3) |

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Standards in mathematics were average at the end of Year 2 in 2003, however reading and writing were below. Inspection evidence shows the current Year 2 pupils reaching above average standards in their work. Last year was a poorer year academically and is reflected in lower standards of work by those pupils who are currently in Year 3. Achievement is good in Reception and Years 1 and 2. It is very good in Years 3-6.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 15.4 (17.2) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| writing | 12.5 (15.8) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| mathematics | 16.1 (17.3) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Pupils with special educational needs make at least good and frequently very good, progress towards the steps noted on their individual educational plans. They gain in self-esteem and confidence. Targets set on pupils' plans are manageable and achievable. The school makes very good use of assessment information and observations to identify pupils' needs at an early stage in their learning. Tasks are matched well to pupils' abilities and they have very good additional support in most lessons.
5. The improvements noted between 2000 and 2003 are due largely to the very positive leadership and management of the school. The headteacher has insisted upon very high standards of teaching and used observation time effectively to help raise the quality of teaching. In the 2003 national tests most Year 6 pupils gained well above the expected levels for their age in English, mathematics and science. This demonstrates very good achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties make very good progress in these subjects because of the very good support they receive. Standards in pupils' books are above average but in lessons are well above average. Standards are above average in information and communications technology and religious education and average in all other subjects.
6. At the higher Level 5, the national test 2003 results show a consolidation of last year's improvements. The higher performance of the more able pupils is due to the school's very good assessment procedures, especially in English and mathematics and the many intervention programmes aimed at boosting pupils' learning. This is coupled with teachers' high expectations and detailed planning that identifies the needs of pupils of different abilities.
7. Standards in Years 1 to 2 are not as high as in Years 3 to 6 because the quality of teaching and learning, while not so good in Years 1 and 2 as it is in Years 3 to 6, has focused by necessity on giving pupils the basic skills in literacy, as well as social and emotional issues.
8. Pupils' literacy and mathematical skills by the end of Year 6 are very good. Standards in ICT and religious education are good and satisfactory in all other subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

Overall, pupils' attitudes to school and behaviour are **very good**. Attendance is above average. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good overall.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils behave very well, have very positive attitudes to work and enjoy being at school. This shows an improvement since the last inspection.
- The school's provision for social and moral development leads to very good relationships around the school.
- Since the last inspection the school has improved its provision for cultural development.

COMMENTARY

9. The pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good. This includes those of pupils with special educational needs. They are interested in what happens in school and they enjoy their work. Parents confirm what their children told the inspectors and what was seen during the inspection; they really enjoy their lessons. As some Year 2 pupils said, "we don't want to leave school at the end of the day." They listen attentively, follow instructions well and settle quickly to the tasks given. They are eager to answer questions and are prepared to contribute their ideas. These positive attitudes reflect the quality of teaching and the variety of interesting activities built into the lessons.
10. Pupils' moral development is very good. The behaviour of the pupils is very good and they respond well to the moral guidance from the school. They have a very good understanding of right and wrong and they are aware of how their behaviour affects others. They are open, well mannered and welcoming to visitors. They move around the school in an orderly way even when not supervised. The school uses a variety of positive strategies to encourage good behaviour and they are used consistently by all the staff. There are occasional disagreements in the playground but the pupils agree that these are fewer now that the school (via the school council) has introduced playground equipment. Last year there were no exclusions.
11. Pupils' social development is very good. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to interact with classmates in group work and paired discussions and monitor tasks within each class. The pupils in Year 6 have a range of responsibilities around the school. The school council enables pupils of different ages to work together. Their awareness of the wider world is enhanced with a variety of visits, inter-school sports matches and talks by representatives of charities. Pupils' relationships with their peers and with adults contribute to the quality of work in lessons and to the progress they make, especially by giving them the confidence to ask and to answer questions.
12. The provision for cultural development is good. Various subjects provide pupils with a fuller understanding of the world around them with, for example, painting and music developing aesthetic awareness. Pupils are starting to appreciate the western cultural background from work on, for example, the Greeks and Tudors in history and European artists and composers. The study of world faiths in religious education helps them to appreciate others' practices and beliefs. Comparing places in geography helps pupils understand how others live in different parts of the world. The school has created opportunities to extend pupils' awareness of other cultures with, for example, teaching Japanese to Year 2 pupils and inviting parents and visitors from different backgrounds to talk about their life. Nevertheless, an understanding of life in multicultural British society is still underdeveloped.
13. The opportunities for pupils to gain insight into values and beliefs in order to develop their spiritual awareness are good. As well as providing a brief time for reflection, school assemblies help pupils to a sense of belonging to a whole school community and to celebrate the contributions and achievements of others. Whole class discussion helps pupils to start to appreciate their own worth and to raise their self-esteem. In the classroom they discuss varied topics and accept that others may have a different view or belief from their own. The pupils in Year 6 show maturity when undertaking the range of responsibilities around the school.

14. The table below shows the attendance figures for the school. The level of attendance has generally been good since the last inspection but last year fell to being in line with that of schools nationally. However the attendance level has improved in the current year and is now above the national average. Punctuality is good with few pupils late in the mornings and even then usually by only a few minutes. Pupils' keenness to be at school leads to them settling quickly, ensuring a prompt start to the day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data: | 5.1 |
| National data: | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data : | 0.1 |
| National data: | 0.5 |

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

EXCLUSIONS

There have been no exclusions.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL IS **VERY GOOD**. TEACHING AND LEARNING ARE VERY GOOD; THE CURRICULUM IS GOOD. PUPILS' WELFARE IS VERY GOOD AND LINKS WITH PARENTS ARE GOOD.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning are **very good** and have improved since the last inspection. The use of assessment is very good overall.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and as a result pupils learn well.
- Enthusiastic teaching at a good pace, keeps pupils engaged in their tasks.
- Pupils are keen to learn and respond well to the challenges the teachers provide.
- Expectations of what pupils can do are high and so they try very hard to meet this standard.
- Very well prepared materials capture the pupils' interest and stimulate discussion
- The teaching in Years 3-6 is better than it is in Years 1-2 with more very good teaching.
- Teaching and learning is always very good or better in Year 6.
- The best teaching is in the core subjects of English and mathematics.

COMMENTARY

15. Teaching and learning are very good. This is mainly responsible for the standards pupils achieve and their very good progress. The teaching in Year 3-6 is better than it is in Years 1-2 with more very good and excellent teaching. Teaching in the Reception class is good. Because of this children enjoy learning and start to acquire basic skills of literacy, numeracy and personal and social development effectively. Pupils' work illustrates their very good achievement. Teaching seen was of very good quality overall and none was unsatisfactory. Senior staff monitor teaching throughout the school to ensure that

teachers' practice reflects the overall guidance and support given to them. This process has been very effective in developing a common understanding of what makes effective teaching. Most teachers have consistently high expectations, which promote very effective learning and greatly influence the pupils' high levels of performance.

16. The teaching of English and literacy skills is very good being frequently excellent in Years 3-6. The teaching of mathematics, especially numeracy skills, is of a similar very high quality. When teaching other subjects, teachers effectively develop the pupils' literacy skills. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 give particular attention to early reading and writing skills. Teachers show enjoyment in and enthusiasm for their work and are rightly confident in their subject knowledge and ability to offer pupils a range of strategies for learning. The teaching of literacy to pupils with special educational needs is very good and ensures that some achieve nationally expected levels of performance. The school is effective in meeting the needs of all pupils and the provision for educational inclusion is very good because pupils' individual needs are very well addressed
17. Teachers plan their teaching to a common format, which includes very precise lesson objectives and activities well chosen to achieve the lesson's purpose. The teachers' very clear explanations ensure pupils are equally clear about not only what they have to do, but also why they are doing it. For example, the teacher made very effective use of the final ten minutes in a lesson, when pupils explained to each other what they had been doing and what they had learned as a result. Constant repetition and review of learning objectives ensure that effective learning takes place. Through their skilled use of questions, teachers challenge pupils' thinking, never accepting less than a thoughtful and considered response. Teachers regularly refer to work done in other subjects and link pupils' learning experiences in a way that gives extra meaning to what pupils do. Teaching assistants are effective and make a positive contribution to the pupils' good achievements. Homework, particularly for older pupils, is given regularly and makes a good contribution to the high standards attained. Individual targets for learning in literacy and numeracy are made known to the pupils but not the parents and the school recognises this as an area for development.
18. The teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) is good and shows improvement since the school was previously inspected. Of particular value is the teaching of basic ICT skills in the purpose built suite. The school recognises the need to continuously develop staff expertise in this area. Teaching and learning are very good in art and design and good in physical education.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 1 | 13 | 14 | 1 | 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. Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs are very good. Teachers know the pupils' learning needs well and brief the class or specialist support staff effectively so that they give the help the pupils need. They often provide modified versions of the tasks set, which are right for the pupils' needs. They take care to involve the pupils in answering questions and demonstrating in the lessons so that they enjoy playing an important role in their classmates' learning. The school's part-time specialist teacher for

literacy also provides very good, targeted English lessons for Year 6 pupils who need support in developing reading and writing.

20. Teachers assess pupils well in most lessons, in many cases making very detailed notes of how pupils are progressing and noting strengths and weaknesses in their knowledge, skills or understanding. Teachers use this to inform their teaching. In lessons more challenging questions are asked of high- attaining pupils and future work is carefully planned on the basis of these observations, so pupils acquire new skills and deepen their knowledge and understanding.
21. Teachers and learning support assistants plan very carefully for pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. The additional support and programmes they are given promote their learning effectively. Pupils are grouped according to prior attainment in literacy and numeracy and pupils who need it have individual or group support in the classroom and in other areas of the school.

THE CURRICULUM

There is a **good** range of learning opportunities to meet all needs in the school and in the Foundation Stage. There are **very good** opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences through extra-curricular activities and other activities because of participation in an extensive range of projects. The school's **good** accommodation and resources support their learning well.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- A wide range of stimulating and challenging opportunities in extra-curricular clubs and additional projects and visits is matched well to pupils' needs and increases their skills and confidence.
- Planning is very good and pupils are clear about what they have to learn in the lesson.
- Effective links are made between different subjects.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- ICT is not being used as effectively as it might across the whole curriculum.

COMMENTARY

22. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular and additional activities to enhance pupils' learning. These are supported very well by staff, parents and members of the community. The extensive range of sporting clubs is well attended and encourages pupils to develop a good team spirit because of the skilled teaching and pupils' enthusiasm. Musical activities are popular and provide a very good range of opportunities for pupils to perform in school and in public. Pupils visit local places of interest to extend their learning. For example, Year 2 pupils go to Herne Bay to develop their scientific and geographical knowledge and Year 6 pupils visit a local church to learn about church buildings and symbols. There is an exciting opportunity for all pupils in Year 2 to learn Japanese and Year 6 learn French, thereby enriching the curriculum significantly. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 use a visit to a London show as a springboard for creative writing, music, dance and drama.
23. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is planned well to give children experience of all the areas of learning and enable them to achieve well. The use of the outdoor classroom enhances the range of opportunities to plan exciting activities in the fresh air. Teachers use national subject guidance well to provide a good range of work.

Their planning is very good. Pupils always know what they are expected to learn in the lesson and check whether they have achieved their objectives at the end of the lesson. There are good links between subjects such as in art and design, religious education and music in Year 1 and religious education and music in Year 4 and 5. Subject leaders are extending links between subjects for example, including the development of purposeful links between history and geography and design and technology and science. This adds considerably to the quality of pupils' learning. However, ICT although individually taught well, is not being used as effectively as it might to support learning in all curriculum areas. Writing is used consistently well to support other subjects and there is extensive use of ICT to enhance learning, particularly in science. Whole school projects are carefully planned to encourage learning and raise standards. For example, the writing assessments introduced this year provide an opportunity to track pupils' progress as they move through the school because all pupils write on the same topic on the same day. The very good personal, social, health education and citizenship programme has very clear links with every subject and the use of whole class discussion time is well established in the Foundation Stage and infant department.

24. The provision for special educational needs is very good and planned thoughtfully. Pupils are included well in lessons and school activities and have high quality support in lessons. Learning support assistants work well with small groups of pupils on additional support programmes and, as a result, their needs are met very well. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good because of its relevance for their particular needs and the level of inclusion in lessons and the life of the school. The additional support programmes are carried out very well and ensure that pupils have experience of all subjects of the curriculum. The guidance in the code of practice is very well met.

CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

The arrangements for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are **very good** overall and support pupils' learning appropriately. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is very good. The involvement of pupils in the school's work through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There are effective procedures for ensuring a healthy and safe environment.
- The pupils trust the teachers and other staff and know there is always someone to whom they can turn.
- The school effectively monitors and promotes pupils' academic progress and personal development through the school.
- The school provides a variety of opportunities for pupils to express opinions about life in the school.

COMMENTARY

25. The governors are actively involved with the headteacher in touring the school each term to identify any potential hazards and to review any previously identified problems that have been rectified. A safety officer from the local authority visits the school each year to review the school's overall procedures and risk assessments. Teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science and physical education and as a result pupils are taught in a safe environment, where they

can extend their learning in safety. The school follows the local procedures for child protection and staff have received guidance on how to deal with any concerns that may arise. The arrangements for first aid are good with several trained staff and records are kept of treatment and letters for parents if children bump their heads.

26. As at the time of the previous inspection, staff show good concern for the needs of the pupils and provide good role models to encourage development. Parents are pleased with the level of support in the school, seeing it as a caring community where staff are approachable if there are any problems. In particular, parents agreed that their children are very well supported when they first come into the school either into Reception or if they arrive in other years. This is because of the various opportunities for pre-school children and reception staff to meet before they start and the identification of classmates to help new arrivals in other years. Pupils consider that they are supported very well by the staff and know whom they would go to if they needed help. They also consider that the teachers listen to their ideas. The school council has, for example, been instrumental in enhancing games facilities in the playground. The school is considering ways to increase the involvement of the younger pupils.
27. The school has very good arrangements to help pupils to improve their work. The school's assessment procedures in English, mathematics, science and ICT enable it to decide who needs additional support whatever their ability level. It helps the staff to put pupils into groups and helps them to provide work relevant to the needs of those groups. Targets are set related to skills and understanding. The arrangements for the other subjects are less precise and guidance relates mainly on comments from teachers when they mark pupils' work. The recording of pupils' personal qualities is informal, relying on the teachers' own knowledge of the pupils. Nevertheless, staff use a variety of strategies to raise self-esteem such as praise and celebrating successes both inside and outside the school.
28. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and staff know pupils with special educational needs very well. The school has a revised policy for special educational needs and meets the requirements of the Code of Practice in full. There is good liaison with external agencies although the shortage of specialist staff in the area increases the demands upon the school. However, they meet these very well. Assessments are carried out very thoroughly and staff are aware of pupils' individual education programmes and pupils who have additional medical needs.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

Links with parents are **good** overall. Links with other schools are very good and with the local community are satisfactory.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Parents hold the school in high regard.
- The parents' support at home and in school makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement.
- The school provides a wide range of information about what happens in school.
- Links with local schools enhance social and academic development.

COMMENTARY

29. In the high response to the Ofsted questionnaire and at the meeting with the inspectors, parents indicated they are pleased with what the school provides. This is similar to the findings at the time of the last inspection. They consider that the staff are approachable and that they are well informed about their children's progress.
30. Class teachers send home their own news letters and other letters about general matters and, each term, outlining what is to be taught in each class and the homework timetable. The annual reports on pupil progress in the summer term generally have a good summary of what the children know and can do in each subject and include targets for improving achievement in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, in some classes the comments on some subjects refer only to the work covered rather than the knowledge and understanding gained. Teachers are readily available to meet parents to discuss pupils' achievements and seek ways of working together to raise standards further. During the inspection several informal conversations took place between parents and teachers and it is obvious that parents feel comfortable approaching the staff.
31. Parents' involvement with the school makes a good contribution to its work and to the achievement of the pupils. Parents have responded to the school's encouragement to help in school and several do so regularly in the classroom with more accompanying trips out. Pupils confirm that their parents usually insist on the homework being completed. The parent governors are involved in formulating school policies and Reception class parents have completed questionnaires about their child's arrival in school.
32. The school's links with other schools enable pupils to take part in an extensive range of inter-school sports matches. The curriculum benefits with Year 6 pupils taking part in a project relating to several subject areas and staff from the local secondary school take classes in science, design and technology and music as well as providing support for the computing equipment. The group of local schools also provides training for staff and enables them to share good practice. Pupils' understanding of society is enhanced by the contact with religious groups, charitable organisations and visitors from public bodies such as the police. The mainstream curriculum is enhanced by the trips out to places in the local area and further afield. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept informed and are involved in discussions of their progress and targets. Pupils benefit from the very good partnership with the community and involvement in musical, sporting and other projects and activities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management is **very good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **excellent** and the leadership of senior staff is **very good**. The effectiveness of the school's management systems is **very good**. The governance of the school is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The headteacher values all staff and the contribution they make and this engenders a very strong team spirit.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and co-ordinators of English, mathematics and science has had a significant impact in improving their quality.
- Co-ordinators have a very good knowledge of what needs to be done in their subjects and are leading with enthusiasm. The Foundation Stage is managed well and there is very good leadership of other subjects, including special needs.
- Finances are managed very well and the school evaluates its spending very thoughtfully.
- The governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and use their own expertise effectively.

COMMENTARY

33. The headteacher provides an exceptionally strong vision for the growth and further development of the school. He has a very clear sense of educational direction that focuses strongly on ways in which pupils learn best and raising achievement. He is fully committed to the school and inspires and motivates staff to share his high aspirations. There is a very strong team spirit that supports all those who work in the school. Senior managers provide very good support to the headteacher and are united in their vision for taking the school forward. The Key Stage 2 manager plays a very important part in the induction of staff new to the school so that they soon feel valued members of staff. The leadership team create a very purposeful ethos that generates a friendly, family atmosphere, a sense of common purpose and a desire to learn. This is the root of pupils' positive experiences of school and of their very good achievement.
34. The headteacher has ensured that the strengths of the last inspection are maintained and set in place systems and procedures to raise standards and the range of curricular experiences for pupils. He has encouraged co-ordinators to take a lead in the direction of their subjects. The co-ordinators are enthusiastic and have responded very well to this. They are aware of what needs to be done because of the monitoring of teaching and learning that has taken place. The monitoring of teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science is effective in raising standards further and it is very good in other subjects. This is one of the strongest aspects of management in the school because of its very effective outcomes. The school evaluation, completed jointly before the inspection, closely matches the judgements in most areas. The challenge to the leadership now is to move beyond the close focus on English and mathematics and continue the development of other subjects. Formal performance management is well in place and is linked very effectively to professional development and school improvement planning.
35. The management of special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable. She has been very effective in monitoring special needs through the weekly formal meetings with teachers to discuss pupils in their class.

As a result pupils with special educational needs receive specific support more quickly and clearly benefit from the very good communication between the co-ordinator and staff. The special needs governor is involved in the life of the school and funding is used very prudently to ensure that there are sufficient resources to meet pupils' needs and opportunities for training for staff. Therefore educational inclusion is very good.

36. The governors provide very good support for the school and fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well. Established systems of communication ensure that they have an appropriately up-to-date overview of the school's work and achievements. This information, together with their developing employment of the principles of best value, enables them to make good informed decisions on the school's behalf. Within the governing body, there is a good breadth of expertise and experience that places governors in a strong position to support the headteacher and staff in improving provision and maintaining standards. Governors respect the headteacher's professional knowledge and integrity, his flair for leadership and strong management ability. They recognise that he and the staff are crucial in raising the school's performance and its achievements.
37. Spending decisions focus on raising standards still further and providing the best equipment and teaching possible for the pupils. The school evaluates its spending decisions very prudently and plans improvements to the curriculum and building with great expertise. They work very closely with other schools in the consortium and the girls' technical school so that they apply best value principles very well. There is certainly challenge and consultations are very effective because of the involvement of the school's bursar and awareness of sources of funding and equipment for particular innovations. The governing body has a clear grasp of the school's financial situation and works closely with the headteacher and bursar with the result that the balance carried forward is close to recommended levels.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 475,152 |
| Total expenditure | 487,325 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,332 |

| Balances (£) | |
|--|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 14,233 |
| Balance carried forward to the next year | 12,173 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall provision is **good**.

38. The provision for children in the Reception class is good and the school has maintained its good provision from the previous inspection. Teaching and learning are good and children continue to achieve well. When children join the Reception class their attainment is lower in all areas of learning than is usually expected nationally. They achieve well and make good progress and as a result their attainment in all the areas of learning is in line with the national expectations by the time they join Year 1 except in personal and social development and for a small number of children, literacy. Teacher and teacher assistant work effectively as a team and contribute well to good provision and quality of learning. Children's positive attitudes and behaviour also contribute to their achievements. All children achieve well regardless of their prior attainment, ethnicity and gender. There are no children who speak English as an additional language.
39. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Assessment procedures are good and are well used for planning lessons and tracking children's progress. Children who have special educational needs are identified early and receive good support and progress well. The induction procedures are very good and children make a very good start to their education. Parents are well informed about their children's progress and attainment. Parents also participate well in their children's learning through parent teacher conferences and home and school reading books. Resources are good and accommodation is satisfactory. The plans to develop the outdoor area to extend the curriculum are appropriate. Children are well prepared for transfer to Year 1.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Children achieve well yet standards are just below the expected levels by the time they join Year 1.
- Children behave well and develop good attitudes to learning.
- Staff have high expectations and provide good role models for children.
- The routines and the encouragement children receive help them feel secure and confident.

COMMENTARY

40. Children enter school with immature social and personal skills but quickly settle into school life because of the good arrangements. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well. There are clear routines that help children feel secure and learn to be independent, for example they are given opportunities to choose

activities and to tidy up after themselves. Children learn to share equipment and wait to take their turn as was seen when they used the large apparatus.

41. Relationships between children are good and staff provide positive examples of how to behave. Adults help children to form good relationships with others through many good opportunities to work in pairs or as part of a group. There are appropriate expectations for children to be active sometimes and at other times to be still. Consequently they develop a good understanding of how to behave in different circumstances. However, on occasions they were expected to sit for a longer than desired time and they became passive listeners. They work co-operatively with others and can work independently. Some children are on track to meet expected standards in this area by the time they join Year 1, but most do not.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Children achieve well.
- Standards are in line with the expected levels for most children when they join Year 1.
- Good opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills.
- Teaching of key skills is good and consequently children's writing and reading skills develop well.

COMMENTARY

42. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well. There is good emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills. Staff give good attention to explaining vocabulary and ensured that children understood for example when reading the Australian Aboriginal creation story. This also supports children's concentration and listening skills. The adults provide good role models in the way they talk to each other and to children. They question and listen carefully to their answers in class lessons. Most children are confident to speak to each other and adults and show good development in speaking and listening skills.
43. Most children know letter names and their sounds. More able children can link these sounds to create whole words and can read simple text. Children's vocabulary and speaking skills are satisfactory and they use the role-play area in their classroom to practise basic skills in writing and communicating. The pets' corner is used well to discuss the needs of their pets and write prescriptions as vets. Children have reading sessions with Year 5 pupils, who read with the children once a fortnight. This effectively supports reception children's development of reading and speaking and listening skills. Children take books home to share with their parents and this effectively enhances children's love for books and develops their early reading skills.
44. Most children can write their names unaided and form letters correctly. Many are beginning to link sounds with letters and attempt to write simple two and three letter words correctly. However, the lower ability group still use early emergent writing. Most children are likely to attain standards that are expected for their age by the time they join Year 1, but a small number will not.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well.
- Standards are in line with those expected.
- Practical activities support children's mathematical development well.

COMMENTARY

45. Most children make good progress from the below average level on entry. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well. Most children can count to 20 and higher ability children can count beyond 50. Most children can recognise numbers to ten as was seen in a lesson when they used digit cards to show the correct number of fingers put up by the teacher. They are learning to write numbers to ten. However, their skills in simple calculations are underdeveloped.
46. Lessons in cooking allow children to learn through practical activities; they apply concepts of measuring and weight and volume well when they cook biscuits and make fruit salad. Children are learning to recognise simple two and three-dimensional shapes. They use computers to draw shapes and consolidate learning. Most children can describe objects by shape, size, colour or quantity when working with construction equipment.
47. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they plan their lessons well with clear learning objectives that they address in lessons. Children who have special education needs are well supported by a teaching assistant. Staff assess children's progress well and use this when planning the next steps in learning. Most children are likely to attain expected standards by the time they join Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Planning provides practical opportunities to learn and use of resources supports this.
- Children receive sufficient opportunities to select tools and use techniques and resources to develop designing and making.
- Teaching of information and communication technology is given a priority and as a result children achieve well.

COMMENTARY

48. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children's achievement is good. They learn about a variety of materials when using construction toys, sand, water, clay and play-dough. Children sow sunflower seeds and are able to explain that these need water and light to grow and they watch their growth. The analysis of the teacher's planning and work on display indicates that children have worked on topics such as 'cave' and 'gardens' and were seen to be working on the topic of pets. Children are able to select tools, techniques and resources and adapt models to fit their pets when they make 'pet's carriers' with Lego to take them to the vets when they are ill. They understand the needs

of animals through looking after and observing the class guinea pig. They are aware of health and safety issues when they clean the cage.

49. ICT supports learning well. Children are learning to manipulate the mouse to operate the program on the screen. They have regular sessions in the computer suite and use the class computer well to write and draw. Children are encouraged to talk about their work and ask and answer questions to find out how things work. Children are likely to attain standards as expected for their age by the time they join Year 1.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching is good and children achieve well
- Children learn to move with control and confidence in the hall and outdoor playground.

COMMENTARY

50. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and children's achievement is good. The staff allow children to be adventurous in climbing and balancing on and jumping off equipment without jeopardising safety or reducing challenge. In one lesson, children were walking on stilts confidently and safely. They learn to use the wheeled toys with confidence negotiating space safely and using the traffic lights appropriately. They are taught well how to use the space appropriately in their stretching and limbering activities. Consequently they are confident in controlling their movements. However, in these lessons children did not talk about the positive benefits of warming up and the effect of exercise on their heart rate.
51. Most children demonstrate reasonable hand and eye co-ordination. They hold a pencil correctly, and learn to use a good range of tools, for example paintbrushes, scissors and felt tips for writing, drawing and painting. Children's attainment is likely to be in line with expectations when they join Year 1.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There is good teaching about the ways in which a range of materials can be used.
- Good attention is generally given to developing children's vocabulary through creative activities.

COMMENTARY

52. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and children achieve well, from a low starting point. Children learn to sing simple songs and play musical instruments and develop their appreciation of different sounds these can make. Children draw, paint and

make collages. They experiment with paint and use their observations to create pleasing results. They are given opportunities to observe pictures such as Australian Aboriginal paintings to explore colour and texture and draw their own pictures in that style. Children play in the role-play area and act as vets and builders to build pet's carriers. By the time children join Year 1 their standards are likely to be as expected for their age.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching is very good and, as a result, achievement of all pupils is very good; standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6.
- The subject is led very well and support from the local education authority has enabled the school to develop a successful approach to the development of writing skills from entry in Reception to Year 6.
- Teachers develop pupils' speaking and listening skills effectively through the use of challenging questions.
- The school encourages reading and the enjoyment of books in a variety of ways; this enjoyment results in good reading fluency and well developed reading skills.
- Literacy skills are developed well in other subjects.
- Effective monitoring of teaching and learning.

COMMENTARY

53. There are several reasons why standards are so high and have improved steadily since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has been tracking standards with great care and taken steps to narrow the gap between reading and writing. For example, handwriting is taught very well from Reception onwards. This enables most pupils to develop a legible and fluent style of writing by the end of Year 3. As a result pupils are able to write confidently and quickly in a broadening range of activities. The school has also received very good support from the local education authority advisor and has introduced termly assessments of a sample of writing from every class. These demonstrate pupils' progress very well and improve teachers' understanding of the skills pupils still need to learn. Another positive feature is the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning by a very good team of teachers and learning support assistants who know their pupils well.
54. A very good feature of lessons is the way teachers plan interesting activities that are fun and match the abilities of all pupils very well. They share and discuss the learning intention at the start of the lesson. Consequently pupils know what they are expected to learn and are able to say at the end of lesson how successful they have been. Staff are well aware of the links between speaking, reading and writing and ask pupils challenging questions to improve their listening and speaking skills. They ask questions skilfully and give pupils clues to respond correctly if they need a little support. As a result pupils become more reflective and develop confidence in speaking. For example, Year 5 pupils responded sensitively to questions about the characters' reasons and difficulties when discussing 'Getting Granny's Glasses' because of the teacher's thoughtful questioning.

Similarly, in Year 6 the teacher prompts and questions pupils very purposefully to enhance their recall of what they have seen in a video of 'El Calamante'.

55. Pupils regularly read individually to adults, both at home and at school. Pupils in Year 5 act as reading partners for children in Reception and feel that they play a valuable part (and Inspectors agree) in helping the younger children to develop an interest in reading. Pupils write reading reviews as part of their homework and these give parents an opportunity to share their child's enjoyment of reading. The reviews link reading and writing well and help pupils to develop preferences for certain authors and types of books. Early reading skills are taught well so that pupils are confident that they know how to cope with unknown words. The school is very successful in ensuring special arrangements are made to the curriculum for those pupils who need it.
56. Leadership and management are very good overall. The co-ordinator and teachers use assessment well to check pupils' reading, writing and spelling skills. This is another factor leading to good achievement by the end of Year 2 and, as pupils mature and increase their pace of learning, they achieve very well by the end of Year 6. Assessments are recorded carefully and used to set targets that pupils are expected to achieve by the end of each year. Marking is helpful and pupils sometimes respond to the comments teachers make. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

57. Provision is very good. Literacy has been developed well through pupils using their writing skills to support work in other subjects. In science pupils' written work makes an important contribution to their investigations and in geography they make notes from a video to use in their writing about the desert. In religious education they retell stories and write long reports on the events of Easter time. Word processing skills are well developed in ICT and pupils enjoy displaying their poems and stories in different colours and fonts.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils' standards at the end of Year 6 are in the top 25 per cent nationally.
- Pupils meet and surpass their targets in mathematics.
- Teaching is very good for older pupils and, as a result, achievement is very good.
- Teaching and learning are never less than good throughout the school.
- The National Numeracy Strategy is well embedded.
- Assessment is very helpful to pupils; they understand exactly what they have to do to improve and their performance is carefully tracked.

COMMENTARY

58. Overall, pupils' achievement is very good. Their standards in mathematics are high and National Curriculum test results have remained very high over time. At the last inspection they were high, but the cohort is more challenging now. The number of pupils in Year 6 gaining Levels 4 and 5 was above the national average in 2003 in comparison with all schools nationally, reflecting very good teaching and appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils. In lessons attainment was well above average with that generally expected from those of a similar age. Achievement is very good throughout Years 3 to 6. Pupils who have attended school since the outset make rapid progress based on the solid mathematics and language foundations established in Years 1 and 2. From a lower starting point, pupils in Year 2 achieve well.
59. Pupils' learning and achievement, including those with special educational needs, are very good throughout the school. Pupils make significant progress towards targets in their individual education plans because of structured support and careful planning to meet individual needs. There are no significant differences in learning between girls and boys.
60. The school has worked hard to boost Year 6 pupils' achievement and improve standards. The careful analysis of mathematical data in 2002-2003 has enabled teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding and develop strategies to work with them. Average and higher attaining pupils have a good grasp of place value and of the four number operations. The very good teaching ensured pupils used both 12 hour and 24 hour clocks and the teacher's very secure subject knowledge and skilled differentiation enabled all pupils, including those with special educational needs to make very good progress. A very good mental starter demonstrated pupils' understanding and ability to order mixed decimals. Pupils' skills in mental calculations are a strong aspect of their attainment because of the emphasis on oral language work in each lesson and the skilled questioning techniques of the teachers. Through careful analysis of pupils' results and work in lessons, teachers recognise that a weaker aspect of pupils' learning is in problem solving, particularly word problems and have made this a main priority in the current planning.
61. Pupils make good progress in mental arithmetic in Year 2, as well as in developing a clear understanding of number. This is good achievement.
62. Teaching is never less than good and is very good overall. In one lesson seen in Year 6 the teaching seen was very good, expectations were very high and pupils' learning and achievement was highly successful. Teachers' planning is thorough and well thought out. They explain tasks and new concepts well and keep a good overview of pupils' learning throughout the lesson, often by using skilled questioning. The mental mathematics sessions are a strong aspect of the overall teaching. Work is very well organised to meet pupils' needs and is based on rigorous assessment of the appropriateness of the work to pupils' prior attainment and capabilities. Learning objectives are clearly outlined and pupils record these in their books. All pupils have learning targets, they know what they are and how to reach them. The National Numeracy Strategy is well embedded in the curriculum and, together with the school planning, provides consistency in the context of pupil mobility. Teachers' planning is informed by the content of the scheme of work together with the assessment of pupils' previous work and any difficulties they may have experienced. This ensures that during lessons teachers' attention is focused on adapting their teaching in the light of pupils' difficulties or emerging strengths in their prior knowledge.

63. The subject is managed very effectively and there has been good improvement in all areas of the subject since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of mathematics and has put in place good strategic planning. The careful evaluation of planning and pupils' work is evident in the greater emphasis and attention to problem solving in lessons. Effective systematic monitoring has improved the quality and consistency of teaching and learning and is raising standards. Very good assessment procedures that monitor pupils' progress throughout the school are used to set end of year targets. They are used well to identify groups of differing levels of attainment and ethnicity within years and classes and enable ability grouping. Further support is provided through initiatives such as Springboard and booster groups and targets in individual education plans. The co-ordinator carefully analyses the results of national testing for strengths and weaknesses and this informs her development planning.

MATHEMATICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

64. Pupils have good opportunities to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum. For example they use them in science when handling data, in design and technology to measure and design, in their work in geography to search for information on the Internet and in art and design to aid composition and develop design.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils' achievement is very good.
- The headteacher provides very effective leadership and manages the subject very well.
- Teachers place very good emphasis on teaching investigative work.
- Years 2 and 6 pupils' standards are above average.
- The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is very good.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 use their literacy and numeracy skills well.

COMMENTARY

65. Results in the 2003 national tests for Year 6 pupils were well above the national average and those of similar schools. Teacher assessments for Year 2 were above the expected levels. Standards of pupils in the current Year 6 are lower than the previous year, but are above the national average. This is because in the current cohort a high proportion of pupils have special educational needs. The standards of more able pupils are well above and average ability pupils are as expected but a large number of pupils with special educational needs bring the overall standards from well above to only above the expected levels. Standards of work for the current Year 2 cohort are similar to the previous year.
66. Year 2 pupils make good progress and achieve well. Year 1 pupils understand that a force is required to move an object and Year 2 understand that materials change when cooled or heated and some of these changes are irreversible. Pupils' progress and achievement in Years 3 to 6 is very good and they have a very good knowledge and understanding of the topics covered. No lessons in Year 6 were observed as they were having their National Curriculum tests. Scrutiny of their work indicates that they are able to

hypothesise very well, adopt a rigorous scientific approach in their work and record their work accurately.

67. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Teachers and their assistants support pupils with special educational needs very well and as a result their achievement is very good. Achievement of a small number of pupils from ethnic minorities is similar to their peers. There are no pupils who are on the early stages of learning English.
68. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is very good. In Years 1 and 2 it is good and very good in Years 3 to 6. In very good lessons, planning is very effective and teachers set clear learning objectives and pupils are aware of what is expected of them. They understand how the present lesson links to previous work. Pupils are managed very well across the school. Teachers use praise and encouragement very successfully to motivate pupils. Pupils' interest is maintained by careful questioning. Pupils receive appropriately challenging work in different ability groups. Teacher assistants are used very well to support pupils' learning.
69. Teachers plan the use of scientific vocabulary very well and ensure that pupils understand it and use it when they explain or write their investigations. This further enhances learning. Pupils are introduced effectively to the process of scientific investigation and they know how to predict and find out and record results and conclusions. This very good emphasis on investigative science was seen in all lessons. Year 1 pupils were making kites, boats and parachutes to experiment push and pull forces. Year 4 pupils were presented a challenge to make a switch using the given objects that conduct and insulate electricity. Year 6 pupils have conducted a wide range of experiments in relation to the topics covered.
70. There are some good examples of the use of numeracy to support pupils' learning. For example, in Year 6, results collected as part of an investigation on pulse rates were presented in graphical and tabular form. Pupils use ICT to find information from the Internet and record findings in graphical and tabular forms.
71. The headteacher provides very good leadership and manages the subject very well. He has a good view of the working of the subject across the school through effective levels of monitoring teaching and learning. The assessment systems are very good. The school in conjunction with other local schools have developed tests in science. This innovative approach helps teachers to monitor pupils' progress. The analysis of data is very rigorous and tracking of pupils' progress is excellent. The information gained from all assessment data is used very well to further improve teachers' planning and therefore pupils' achievement and thereby standards.
72. Since the previous inspection, the school has made very good improvement. Year 2 pupils' standards have improved from in line to above the national average. The leadership and management of the subject have improved from satisfactory to very good and as a result the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has improved from sound to very good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards have been improved and are above national expectations throughout the school.
- Improved development in planning and organisation has enabled teachers to develop the full breadth of pupils' ICT skills and understanding.
- Achievement is good overall.
- Good teaching, new equipment and improved facilities have enhanced the overall development of ICT.
- The use of ICT in subject areas is developing well but there remains some inconsistency.

COMMENTARY

73. Standards of attainment of pupils throughout the school are above national averages and this is an improvement since the last inspection. There has also been a very good improvement in the provision of an ICT suite since the last inspection. The good management and organisation of the subject has improved the provision and ensured support and guidance have been given to colleagues to enable them to gain confidence and improve their skills.
74. A good policy and scheme of work address the National Curriculum requirements and provide a good framework for teachers to work from. The new computer suite has been extended and is now used very well and as a result standards are rising quickly. Interactive whiteboards are ordered and extra staff training has been planned. In addition, each classroom is equipped with a relatively new PC and a range of relevant software.
75. Pupils' learning and achievements are good throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress towards targets in their individual education plans because of structured support and careful planning to meet individual needs.
76. Only one lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2 but from pupils' work, teachers' planning, reports of pupils' work and discussion with pupils and teachers it is clear that younger pupils learn effectively and build up their skills well in ICT and make good progress.
77. Pupils in Year 2 use a paint program to support their work in literacy. Their mouse skills are good and higher attaining pupils use the keyboard to write sentences about their work. Teaching encourages discussion and pair work so that pupils are able to explain clearly the functions of different parts of the program and their advantages. Pupils' work shows they can use simple editing techniques in word processing programs, for example cut and paste and they use the mouse skilfully to put words in the right order and to assemble sentences. Higher attaining pupils produce simple, beautifully presented stories, making very good use of different fonts, sizes and colour.
78. At the end of Year 6, pupils have developed and extended their learning and achievement is good overall. They have a good understanding about which everyday items incorporate a microchip and about how ICT can be used to improve our everyday lives. Year 5 pupils interrogate databases using search and sort facilities and they recognise the powerful advantages of using ICT to find, select and organise information quickly and accurately. All pupils enjoy ICT and older pupils are enthusiastic users of the Internet and web sites to support their work.

79. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned. They build securely on what pupils already know and the learning objectives are shared with pupils. As a result, pupils are well motivated and keen to learn and their behaviour is good. Lessons in the computer suite are generally well organised and managed and, consequently, resources are well used. There is a well-planned curriculum and, therefore, pupils are being progressively taught skills.
80. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively and is aware of the areas of strength and weakness in the subject. The development plan for ICT is clear and highly appropriate. The computer suite is attractive, well organised with interesting displays of pupils' work and informative and useful posters. It is well resourced. The co-ordinator leads training sessions for all members of staff. The quality and number of computers in the school is now good. The range of software available to support work across the curriculum is satisfactory and developing. Monitoring of teachers' plans and pupils' work in ICT in lessons is thorough. The school is aware that more training is needed in ICT for staff particularly as new resources become available, for example the interactive whiteboards and broadband.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

81. The use of ICT in subject areas is developing well and teachers use ICT to support their learning in mathematics, for example in databases and producing graphs, in art and design in the exploration of art packages, in design and technology in simple modelling and designing sandwiches and in English in the presentation of work. The school recognises that more needs to be done in mapping ICT across the curriculum, developing cross-curricular links and in developing teachers' web site knowledge. The new interactive whiteboards, once training has been completed, will be a very useful resource to the development of ICT across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

Parts of two lessons in **geography** were seen although no **history** lessons were observed. A full analysis of pupils' work was studied. This indicates that standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with expectations and have been maintained since the last inspection.

82. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have improved their drawing of maps and have followed the travels of Barnaby Bear around the world. They have a good understanding of the use of aerial maps and an understanding of how different toys were a long time ago. Pupils in Year 3 make notes from videos and use this information to write about the rainforest, polar regions and the desert. Higher attaining pupils use books to search for further information and other groups use charts that require less reading to increase their knowledge. Lower attaining pupils match statements to the places, reading these with care and some support. All work with interest and enthusiasm. Pupils in Year 4 learn about India and their interest is stimulated by the visit of a parent who has lived in India. Their cultural awareness is raised significantly by the very good discussion and close observation of many artefacts. Older pupils talk with confidence of famous people in the past and learn to understand the experience of children of World War II. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well and plans to develop some aspects further by combining studies of history and geography to make learning about the local area more effective. Use of literacy is good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Achievement is good because pupils build effectively on previous learning.
- Teaching is good so pupils enjoy lessons.
- Visits to local places of worship and visitors to the school enable pupils to explore artefacts and improve their understanding of world religions.
- Work is presented well with effective use of literacy skills.

COMMENTARY

83. Standards are above the expectations of the locally agreed guidelines and achievement is good by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In assemblies the school places an emphasis on caring for others and helping pupils recognise the importance of their own family and friends. This has a positive impact on their learning in religious education. Teaching is good and teachers' skilful planning reflects an understanding of pupils' learning needs and the needs of the subject. This enables pupils to investigate beliefs from a factual as well as a spiritual perspective. Lessons are linked creatively with other subjects to deepen pupils' understanding. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 1 the teacher uses Islamic letters written by the brother of a Muslim pupil to teach pupils about Allah and to make Islamic patterns with the letters. Pupils listen to Muslim prayer music while they work on their patterns with great concentration.
84. Pupils develop a secure understanding of the purpose of symbols and festivals associated with different faiths. Pupils in Year 5 gain a clear understanding of the importance of the Gurdwara for Sikhs. A visit to a church gives pupils in Year 6 a good opportunity to compare that place of worship with another one in the area and write about the importance of the symbolic artefacts and church furniture. Their books show a growing knowledge of some of the important elements of religious tradition and belief.
85. Teachers encourage pupils to make good use of their literacy skills in religious education when reading and recording work. Year 4 pupils use these skills particularly well. Their work on the story of Easter is presented well and is informative. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject very well. This contributes effectively to the improvement in standards since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Work in **art and design**, **design and technology**, **music** and **physical education** was sampled and it is not possible to give overall judgements on provision.

86. Only one lesson was seen in **music** and **art and design**. This was a very good music lesson in Year 2 where pupils work sensibly in their groups to compose a tune to reflect an emotion. Pupils select instruments very thoughtfully so that their sounds are appropriate for their composition. They listen well to each other and guess the title of each piece correctly. The teacher and learning support assistant manage the groups very well in this enjoyable and challenging lesson. Music has a high profile in the school and singing is of a very high standard. Pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 come enthusiastically to

lunchtime choir club and sing tunefully, with clear diction and awareness of rhythms. Pupils sing joyfully in assemblies, French or Japanese lessons and when accompanied by the school orchestra in a Celebration Assembly. Pupils who learn to play recorders, flutes, cello and guitars play very well in an ensemble enhanced by the playing of several members of staff. Pupils learning piano and flute give confident solos.

87. Standards in music are above expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because of the involvement of so many pupils in a wide range of musical activities and the use of music in other subjects. Muslim prayer music is used very well to create a respectful background when pupils in Year 1 make Islamic patterns in art and design and Sikh music helps pupils in Year 5 to recall work done on India in religious education. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject very well. She encourages members of staff to participate in activities and has made a positive contribution to the improvements in the subject since the last inspection.
88. Only one full and a part of a lesson in art and design were observed in Years 3 and 5 classes. It was therefore not possible to make judgements on the quality of provision. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching and learning was good. In Year 3 pupils had designed and made their stencils and were using stippling techniques to print on fabric with good results. Year 5 pupils sketched portraits of people of the Tudor times and were making collage pictures. Their standards are in line with the national expectations. Sketchbooks, portfolios of pupils' work and displays indicate that the curriculum is covered and pupils' standards are in line with national expectations and their achievement is satisfactory.
89. Only one lesson in **design and technology** was observed, therefore it is not possible to make judgements about the quality of provision. The school document indicates that National Curriculum requirements are met. In the lessons observed teaching and learning were satisfactory and standards were as expected. The process of designing and making a product and understanding its purpose was implemented satisfactorily. Pupils examined a range of finger and hand puppets before they decided their own designs.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Very good leadership by key staff.
- Very high levels of confidence and self-esteem displayed by pupils.

COMMENTARY

90. Drugs awareness and sex and relationships education are being addressed effectively through a well thought out personal and social development programme. The school regards the personal, social and health education programme as a vital element in nurturing the pupils' social and personal development and their self-esteem. The provision for citizenship, personal, social and health education within the curriculum is

good. The school council meets half-termly and enables pupils to have a real voice in their school and elected members from each class to take on responsibility. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have grown in confidence and maturity.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

| | |
|--|----------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 2 |
| How inclusive the school is | 2 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 2 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 2 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Overall standards achieved | 2 |
| Pupils' achievement | 2 |

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

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of education provided by the school | 2 |
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| How well pupils learn | 2 |
| The quality of assessment | 2 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs | 3 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 2 |
| Accommodation and resources | 3 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 2 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 2 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |

| | |
|--|----------|
| The leadership and management of the school | 2 |
| The governance of the school | 2 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 1 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 2 |
| The effectiveness of management | 2 |

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