

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WINSLOW C OF E COMBINED SCHOOL**

Winslow

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110449

Headteacher: Mr R Green

Lead inspector: Mrs J Coop

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> June 2004

Inspection number: 258457

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	536
School address:	Lowndes Way Winslow Nr Buckingham Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	MK18 3EN
Telephone number:	(01296) 712 296
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Meghen
Date of previous inspection:	6 <sup>th</sup> July 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This much larger than average voluntary controlled Church of England primary school, serves the market town of Winslow and surrounding villages. There are 536 pupils on roll between the ages of four and 11. The school has changed its status since the last inspection and no longer educates pupils to the age of 12. There is an unusually high rate of mobility of pupils starting in the school after Year 2. This is due to pupils transferring to the school from local infant and first schools in the surrounding area. Currently, 55 per cent of pupils educated in Year 6 started in the school between Years 3 to 5. This is a very high percentage. Pupils come from homes that are socially and economically advantaged. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Most pupils are of white ethnicity and no pupils are at the early stages of speaking English. Seven per cent of pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties, which is below the national average, and less than one per cent of pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is also below average. Assessment data shows that children start in the Nursery with above average skills. Children attend the class part time for two terms, before transferring to the Reception classes in the term they reach age five. The school received an Investor in People Award and an Achievement Award in 2002.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
31862	Mrs J Coop	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs Personal, social and health education
9420	Mr D Martin	Lay inspector	
32257	Mr R Chalkley	Team inspector	Mathematics Music
18370	Mr K Johnson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Physical education
30244	Mr R Tapley	Team inspector	English French Religious education History
2229	Ms D Hansen	Team inspector	Science Geography

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school with many very good features. Very good leadership by the headteacher and good teaching ensure that pupils achieve well. Very good attitudes to learning are nurtured within a strong Christian community and supportive family atmosphere. The school provides good value for money.

### THE SCHOOL'S MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE:

- The headteacher provides very astute leadership. He is supported very well by governors, the deputy headteacher and hardworking staff. This makes a very effective team.
- Standards in mathematics are very high and well above average in reading, science, geography and art at the end of Year 6, but pupils do not do well enough in writing.
- The monitoring and checking of pupils' progress is not analysed and used carefully enough to raise standards further.
- Very good provision for spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is instrumental in developing mature pupils who respect one another and are a delight to be with.
- There is a very good range of additional activities that pupils greatly enjoy, but the design of the timetable does not sufficiently cater for the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' achievements, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Young children blossom because they get a good start in the Foundation Stage.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and the school values all pupils very highly.
- The school is very caring of all pupils and has very good links with parents and the community which adds much to the quality of education.

The school has made **good** progress since the last inspection. Under the expert guidance of the new headteacher, the school has successfully maintained its very good features. At the same time, it has raised standards in many subjects, particularly in mathematics, because the quality of teaching has improved and the role of subject leaders has developed. Pupils' overall progress is now tracked, but the school recognises that they are not yet monitoring the achievements of different groups of pupils precisely enough in order to meet their specific needs as effectively as possible.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average. \*As 55 per cent of pupils in this year group joined the school during Key Stage 2 and earlier results are not available, the similar school comparison is based on free school meal entitlement.*

Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs achieve **well** overall by the end of Year 6. Pupils' overall achievement in English is hindered, in part, by their lack of enjoyment in the development of writing skills.

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well overall. By the time they start in Year 1, most are likely to exceed the standards expected in all areas of learning and far exceed them in their personal development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Most older children far exceed expected standards in all areas of learning. Younger children make good progress, but are disadvantaged by their limited time in the class. Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Year 2 are well above average in mathematics and reading and above average in science and writing. At the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards that are very high in mathematics and well above average in science, reading, geography and art and design. The school recognises that last year standards in writing were not high enough when compared to similar schools. More pupils are attaining expected standards this year, but standards in writing remain average. Pupils make good progress in lessons, but do not enjoy writing and do not apply the skills learnt well enough. Standards in history are above average and standards in religious education are above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in information and communication technology are average, but improving rapidly because of the much improved range of resources.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **very good** overall. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well, because there is a strong Christian ethos. Pupils really enjoy coming to school, they are very punctual and their attendance is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall, with some very good features. Relationships are very good. Pupils respect their teachers and always try their best. Teaching assistants provide good quality support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. Teaching in ability groups in Years 3 to 6 is successful in raising achievement in mathematics, but this arrangement is not as successful in English. The school has thorough systems for assessing pupils' work, but does not analyse its findings carefully enough. The curriculum is good overall, with a very good curriculum in the Foundation Stage. The timetable design for older pupils does not always help them to enjoy writing. The range of additional activities is very good and is one reason why pupils enjoy coming to school. The care of pupils is very effective and good support and guidance is provided. There are very good links with parents, the community and other schools, these features foster very good attitudes to school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **very good** overall. Governance is very good and the leadership of the headteacher is very good. His quiet but determined approach to school improvement has been instrumental in improving the quality of teaching and learning in many subjects. Since his appointment a year ago, he has successfully maintained the caring ethos of the school. Together with a very supportive staff and governors, he is working hard to make further improvements. Systems to monitor the work of the school have improved, but a comprehensive analysis of assessment data is not yet fully established. All statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents have a very high opinion of the work of the school and express great confidence in it. Pupils share their parents' views. They speak enthusiastically about many subjects and

consider that it is a very friendly school where everyone looks after each other, but older pupils do not seem to like writing activities and the current timetable arrangements.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

### **THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE ARE:**

- Raise standards in writing, particularly ensuring that older pupils enjoy learning and are provided with consistent opportunities to use and apply these skills in other subjects.
- Implement a timetable, which successfully reflects the school's distinct strengths and tackles its areas of development.
- Use monitoring and analysis of pupils' attainment and progress more effectively in order to focus on raising standards further.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

Achievement is **good** overall. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards are well above average in mathematics and above average in science and writing at the end of Year 2. Standards are well above average in reading and science, very high in mathematics and average in writing at the end of Year 6.

#### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and achieve well overall.
- Throughout the school pupils achieve well in reading and science and very well in mathematics, by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in writing at the end of Year 6 are not high enough.
- There is the potential for standards in some subjects to be higher, but they are inhibited by current timetable arrangements.
- Standards in information and communication technology are average, but improving rapidly.

#### **COMMENTARY**

1. Assessment data shows that the attainment of children who start in the Nursery is above average. Overall, children make good progress and achieve well during their time in the Foundation Stage so that they are likely to exceed the expected goals for children of this age in all areas of learning except in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their personal development. They are likely to far exceed expected standards in these areas because of the very high expectations and wealth of interesting practical activities that support learning very well. Older children, who have been in the Reception classes for three terms, are likely to far exceed the expected goals in all areas of learning. Many older and more able children, who started during the autumn and spring terms, are already working well within National Curriculum levels. In particular their reading skills are very well advanced. Younger children, who have just started in the Reception classes, also make good progress, but they are disadvantaged by the limited amount of time they have access to the good quality teaching and very good curriculum. As a result, they have not made as much progress as their older friends, particularly in developing their more formal skills, such as writing.

#### *Years 1 and 2*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.9 (18.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.6 (15.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.8 (17.8)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. In the 2003 national tests, results were well above average in reading, above average in writing and average in mathematics. Overall standards fell slightly. This was because, just prior to the tests, a group of pupils joined the school with little prior formal education. As a result, the school did not do as well in the tests as similar schools in mathematics. Nevertheless, in the past, the school has done better than similar schools overall, in all the national tests. Taking the past five years the school has kept up with the national rise in standards and taking the past three years together, the overall performance of pupils has been well above the national average. This is because teaching is meaningful and interesting, particularly in the practical activities.
3. Inspection evidence shows that overall standards have picked up again and are well above average in reading and in mathematics and above average in science. Standards in writing are above average, but not as high as in reading or mathematics. This is because in this year group a significant number of pupils had only spent a short time in the Reception class and they had not made as much progress in developing their formal writing skills compared to their older friends. Although nearly all pupils are attaining expected standards in writing, fewer younger pupils are attaining the higher Level 3. Their better achievement in reading owes much to their parental support and the additional opportunities to read individually with an adult.

#### Years 3 to 6

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.9 (29.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.7 (28.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.4 (30.7)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 95 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. Pupils have generally continued to make good progress and build on their achievements in Years 3 to 6, so that in the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 6, results were well above the national average in mathematics and science. Results in English were average, but well below those of similar schools. This is disappointing because pupils' skills in speaking, listening and reading are well above average. Inspection evidence shows that standards in science remain well above average and due to very challenging teaching, standards in mathematics are now very high.
5. Although more pupils are attaining expected standards in writing, overall standards in English remain stubbornly average. This is partly because high numbers of pupils enter the school between Years 3 and 6 with lower writing standards than in other subjects. However, this is not the full story; inspectors found that, although pupils make good progress and achieve well in lessons, they could do better in the national tests. Work seen in their English books shows that they are capable, but it is evident that they do not apply the skills they have learnt both in the tests and when writing in other subjects. The school spends a lot of time teaching additional literacy activities and is trying hard to address the lower standards. However, many older pupils state that they do not enjoy the subject, because there are too many tests and they do not like all the additional activities such as spelling and handwriting lessons. This attitude was summed up by one pupil who stated, "We don't get the opportunity to really let fly with our ideas, all the exercises are

too restrictive". This affects their motivation and impacts on the overall quality of their work.

6. Standards in information and communication technology are average, but improving rapidly due to the recent influx of new resources and improved staff confidence and skills. Standards in art and design and geography are also well above average by the end of Year 6 and overall pupils achieve well. There is the potential for standards to be higher in many subjects, but the current arrangements for short lessons and the over long gaps in some years before the subject is revisited, are hindering pupils' creative and academic achievement. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress overall and achieve well because teachers adapt lessons well. They are supported well in the lower ability groups and additional activities focus on their individual needs.

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

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral and social development are **very good**. Cultural development is **good**. They have **very good** attitudes to the school and their behaviour is **very good**.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Pupils behave very well, have very positive attitudes to work and enjoy being at school.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development leads to pupils making very good relationships around the school and having very good social awareness.

## **COMMENTARY**

7. Strong Christian values are at the heart of the school's philosophy. All pupils are valued and encouraged to do their best. As a result, pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good and they behave very well. They enjoy their work and want to do well. A key factor is the very good quality of relationships that exists between pupils and between pupils and staff. The school's very good ethos stems from this constant reinforcement of care and respect for others. It is evident that all pupils are greatly valued and respected members of the school community. Bullying and racist behaviour is not tolerated in the school. Pupils confirm that bullying is not an issue for them. Although they agree there is the usual 'rough and tumble' in the school playground, because supervision is effective, pupils state this does not get out of hand and they are very happy in school.
8. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is very good. The opportunities for pupils to gain insight into values and beliefs in order to develop their spiritual awareness are very good. Times for reflection help pupils obtain a sense of belonging to a school community. Planned discussions help pupils to appreciate their own worth, raise their self-esteem and accept that others may have a different view or belief from their own. There are very good opportunities for pupils to work together. Residential visits, the many visitors from the community and the wide range of trips that are arranged, form a strong support for social development. The school provides a very clear moral code, which is promoted consistently. Because of this, pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong and the need for care and respect for others. They

are aware of how their behaviour affects others and many are self-disciplined. They are open, polite to adults and to each other and very welcoming to visitors.

9. Provision for cultural development is good. The school provides a good range of opportunities to promote this aspect of pupils' development, through art, visits and visitors for example. The co-ordinator's action plan clearly focuses upon raising the profile of cultural development and is a well thought out document.

## ATTENDANCE

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (95.2%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	School data	0.5
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

10. The latest statistics produced by the school show an improvement in the authorised and unauthorised absences and in the overall attendance rate, which is now very good. This is due to the hard work of the headteacher whose robust actions have been instrumental in the improvement. Keen to enter this vibrant school, pupils arrive very punctually, with almost no-one arriving late.

## EXCLUSIONS

There have been no exclusions.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good** with some very good features. This judgment is based on good teaching overall, a good curriculum overall, with very good opportunities for enrichment, good support and guidance offered to pupils and very effective standards of care. Taken together with very good links with parents, the community and other schools, these features foster very good attitudes to school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching is **good** overall. Assessment procedures are **good**, but their use to raise standards further is satisfactory overall.

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Staff in the Foundation Stage make learning meaningful.
- Relationships are very good, so pupils try hard.
- Teaching in mathematics is very good, but the teaching of writing is not as successful.
- Planning is very thorough, but on occasions the pace of learning is slow.
- Teachers involve pupils well in evaluating their learning, but marking is inconsistent.
- Assessment procedures are good in many subjects, but the analysis of the data is not comprehensive enough and does not always lead to higher standards in the classroom.

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 63 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (5%)	16 (25%)	37(59%)	6 (10%)	1 (1%)	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.*

## COMMENTARY

11. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is consistently good and often better. Teachers use a rich variety of carefully planned activities that encourage children to use all their senses, when they are introduced to a wide range of meaningful experiences, which they enjoy greatly. A particular strength is the way teachers manage to bring learning alive and make links between all activities, so that learning is meaningful and seamless. Staff are warm and sensitive in their approach and as a result, children who have just started are welcomed and soon feel very happy and secure. All these features make a significant contribution to the children's good progress.
12. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Often it is very good and on occasions outstanding. This is an improvement from the last inspection and is in part due to a rigorous monitoring of teaching, initiated by the headteacher and access to very good quality professional advice. Throughout the school relationships are very good. Pupils respect their teachers and try hard as a result. This makes a positive contribution to the good progress they make overall. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very effectively and provide a learning environment where pupils are valued and enabled to learn. Pupils with special educational needs are also well supported and because they are provided with carefully planned work, well matched to their abilities, they are enabled to make the same progress as their friends in lessons.
13. Teaching in mathematics is particularly very effective. It is challenging but also fun, so that pupils are inspired to reach even greater heights and make very good progress. Teaching in literacy is good; basic skills are well taught so that pupils make good progress in lessons. But teachers are not as effective in motivating and inspiring pupils. In general, the arrangements for teaching writing are over complicated and prevent pupils from gaining enjoyment from learning. In addition, teachers appear to be trying too hard to improve standards and can be over directive in their approach. Consequently, pupils tend to be over reliant on their support and because they do not have enough planned opportunities to write at length, both in English and other subjects, this impacts on the progress they make over time.
14. There are some common strengths in teaching that include good subject knowledge that is used to teach basic skills well, very good emphasis on developing subject vocabulary and very careful and detailed planning which ensures that resources, both human and practical, are used to effectively support learning. These features ensure that pupils make good progress overall. Where the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, rather than good or better, it is because the pace of lessons is too slow and teachers spend too much time talking, rather than allowing pupils to get on with the tasks planned.
15. Teachers assess pupils' understanding effectively in lessons through the use of questioning and are adept at altering their planning according to these ongoing evaluations. Recently, marking has been a focus for development. It is evident from examining pupils' books that this has improved recently. Even so, marking is not yet consistent. The misspelling of commonly known words for example, is not corrected in all

subjects and basic errors, such as the misuse of capital letters, are not picked up. When writing standards are a cause for concern, it is vital that there is a consistent approach to the development of writing skills in all subjects, so that learning becomes embedded and pupils become familiar with using and applying these skills.

16. The school has improved its systems for assessing pupils' academic progress since the last inspection and overall they are satisfactory. Assessment procedures are good in mathematics, the Foundation Stage, English and science and used well in these subjects to identify areas of learning that could be improved. The school now has access to a wealth of data from the many assessments that are undertaken and the present assessment co-ordinator has worked very hard to ensure this data is efficiently entered into the tracking system to enable subject leaders to set targets and adjust ability groups. But a comprehensive analysis of assessment data is not yet fully established and this is a weakness. The current system is too complex and not yet used well enough to identify trends and spot those pupils who may not be reaching their potential. For example, the school does not yet use this data to compare pupils' attainment in different core subjects and act when there is a marked difference.

## THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum is **good** overall and enhanced by a **very good** range of additional activities. The accommodation is **good**. Resources are **good**.

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very stimulating.
- The quality and range of learning are good, but the school's timetable arrangements do not always effectively promote learning.
- All pupils have equal access and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- There are very good opportunities for enrichment, which very successfully enhance learning.
- Resources are good, but the ICT suites lack air conditioning and there are few teaching assistants to support teachers and pupils.

## COMMENTARY

17. Overall, the school provides a good curriculum that meets all statutory requirements and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The quality and range of learning are good throughout the school and links within subjects across the curriculum to make learning interesting and relevant are developing. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn French and in Year 6 pupils have 'tasted German'. These subjects add an interesting and challenging dimension to the curriculum. There is a very effective approach to sex, relationships and drug awareness education that is very suitable for pupils of this age. The Foundation Stage curriculum is very good. It is stimulating and lively and very effective links between the areas of learning entice children to learn. However, many summer born children have difficulty in coping with the more formal Year 1 curriculum, particularly where some overlong timetabled lessons result in the younger pupils becoming tired and losing concentration.

18. The government's national strategies are used well to plan work in mathematics, but the timetable for raising achievement in literacy is too disjointed with too much emphasis on learning discreet skills. As a result, pupils are disenchanted and bored with its demands and it is now counter productive. The timetable does not always facilitate learning in the humanities and creative subjects of the curriculum and pupils often express disappointment that they do not have time to really get 'their teeth into a lesson' before they move on. With the exception of French, the carousel of 30-35 minute activities does not successfully develop pupils' skills and enjoyment. In addition, there are long gaps in time in some year groups, when some subjects are not covered. Therefore, although sufficient time is allocated over a year, pupils find it difficult to build on the skills they have learned previously. The school recognises that under the principles of '*Excellence and Enjoyment*' (DfES Circular) the timetable requires further refinement.
19. The school is very inclusive. All pupils are valued and they have full and equal access to all that the school offers. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils' needs are identified early and they are fully included in all aspects of school life, including residential visits. This is due to thorough planning for their needs by class teachers, related to their targets in their Individual Education Plans and the good additional support they receive from learning support assistants.
20. There is a very good range of additional activities that pupils greatly enjoy and which enhances their learning very well. Tuition in instrumental music, choir, a plethora of sports, gardening, crafts, many residential visits and specialist days including science, provide a wealth of learning particularly for older pupils. These also very effectively provide a platform that helps promote pupils' social and cultural development.
21. The good accommodation, together with good resources, facilitates the delivery of the school's curriculum well. Particular features, which add to the quality of the education provided, include the two ICT suites, the swimming pool, the extensive grass and hard landscaped areas, with excellent capacity for environmental activities and the computerised library. The school has successfully removed most of the open-plan teaching areas, which were a feature of the original buildings and teachers make good use of shared spaces. The newly installed ICT suites are valuable assets and since the last inspection have been much improved. Nonetheless, the suites are very uncomfortable on hot days. There is an appropriate number of teaching staff with a good level of skills to meet the needs of the curriculum. However, there are few teaching assistants to provide support, particularly for younger pupils.

## **CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

Procedures for pupils' health and safety are **very good**. Pupils are provided with **good** support and guidance overall. The school involves pupils **very well** in its work and development.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Health and safety are given a high priority.
- There are very trusting relationships between pupils and staff.
- The pastoral support, advice and guidance are very good and academic support good.
- The induction arrangements for pupils who join the school are very good.
- The provision for seeking and acting upon the views of pupils is very good.

## COMMENTARY

22. This is a very caring school where the health, safety and welfare of pupils are a high priority for all staff and governors. The recently appointed caretaker is very vigilant and acts very quickly when health and safety matters arise. There is very good provision for child protection and the school has good procedures and practices for the medical needs of pupils. Some minor deficiencies were noted during the inspection and the school has been made aware of these.
23. Pupils have very good relationships with all adults within the school and are very confident to approach them regarding any matters that may be troubling them. The playground squad of Year 6 pupils is effectively used to support younger pupils at playtimes and pupils' personal development is very well developed through planned times for discussions and the use of 'Grin and Grumble' boxes, for instance. These give very good opportunities for pupils to discuss matters that concern them.
24. The school provides good quality academic support and advice and individual academic targets in literacy and numeracy provide pupils with a useful guide to aid their learning. The end of unit assessment sheets and the recent trialling of brief statements to pupils, which highlight areas for improvement and further study, is a positive strategy which, if adopted, will provide all pupils with more feedback on their progress.
25. There is a very close relationship with outside agencies to support those pupils with special educational needs and the school is very quick to act upon any advice received. In this way, the few pupils with more complex learning or behavioural needs are very well cared for and successfully included into the life of the school.
26. The school has very good induction arrangements for pupils. A large number of pupils start at the school in Years 3 to 5. They are visited in their first school by the headteacher and during a preliminary visit to the school they are given very good advice and guidance. On arrival, they are paired with an existing pupil and they report that this is often the start of a lasting friendship. There are equally very good arrangements for children starting in the Nursery or Reception.
27. The school makes a very good provision for seeking and acting upon the views of pupils. Upon his appointment, the headteacher formally canvassed pupils' views and has acted upon them as appropriate. As a result, the school has re-evaluated how it marks pupils' work, although this is not yet fully embedded in practice. There is an active school council which has been instrumental in bringing about a number of improvements, such as a friendship bench in the playground. The school development plan has been made accessible to pupils in a friendly and innovative three-dimensional format which makes pupils feel valued members of the community in their own right. Although older pupils canvass younger pupils' views and opinions, the school council does not currently include younger pupils.

## PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

Parents' links with the school are **very good**. Its links with the local community are **very good**, as are its links with other schools.



## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The partnership between parents and school is very good.
- The school's efforts to obtain and act upon the views of parents are very good.
- The links with other schools and community make a significant contribution to learning.
- Arrangements for the transfer of pupils into secondary education are very good.

## COMMENTARY

28. Parents are very pleased with the school and are particularly pleased that the new headteacher has maintained the school's successful features. Their very positive views on the quality of education provided and the Christian ethos it promotes, are reflected in the pre-inspection questionnaire and minutes of the pre-inspection parents' meeting. The headteacher has also formally canvassed parents' views. A small minority of responses in both surveys showed that some parents do not feel well informed, particularly about the progress of their child. The school has responded very well. It has introduced an interim report on pupils' progress, in addition to the normal end of year report and a new report format is to be used at the end of the current academic year. The school provides a wealth of very detailed information to parents regarding all aspects of school life. Parent consultation evenings and open evenings are held, which pupils can attend if they wish. These meetings provide parents with very good opportunities to discuss their child's progress, view their work and agree new targets for English and mathematics.
29. Through the very active Parent and Teacher Association and the very strong links with businesses, residents in the locality, vicar and church congregation, the school very successfully places itself at the centre of the local community. Elderly residents, for example, regularly hear pupils read, money raised has helped enhance ICT resources, a number of sporting clubs and a parent provide coaching in a range of different sports and a scheme is under way to rent out samples of pupils' artwork for local display. These links ensure that pupils' achievements are celebrated and valued and also significantly enhance the learning and personal development of pupils.
30. There are also very good links with other schools and organisations, which provide further opportunities for improved teaching and learning. The school has staged a science fair for Year 2 pupils from other schools. There are joint sports events and an arts week and gifted and talented pupils have attended master classes in mathematics and science held at a grammar school, which has very effectively spurred on their learning. The school has very good arrangements for the transfer of pupils into secondary education. Parents are provided with very detailed information. Pupils have very good support through visits, trial lessons and questionnaires to ensure they are very well prepared. As a further measure to support pupils, Year 6 teachers and the headteacher attend tea parties at the secondary schools, once pupils have settled in.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. Management is good. Governance is **very good**.

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The headteacher provides the school with very effective leadership.

- There is a very positive team spirit and all staff are very supportive and keen to improve the school further.
- Day-to-day management is highly efficient.
- The information from monitoring pupils' performance is not always used effectively.
- Governors are very influential and provide very effective support.

## **COMMENTARY**

31. The headteacher leads the school very well. His quiet, inspirational and determined approach to school improvement has been instrumental in improving the quality of teaching and the development of a very strong sense of 'team spirit'. Since his appointment, he has rightly taken his time to evaluate the school before taking action to develop it further. Parents appreciate that he has maintained the school's many distinctive and effective features and avoided making changes for change's sake. They welcome the changes being made in order to raise standards. The deputy head teacher and other members of the senior management team are very committed to helping the headteacher to raise standards and support him very effectively. As a result, they make a very valuable contribution to the strong sense of purpose in the school and are very effective in helping to develop a climate where pupils can thrive.
32. Management is good overall. The headteacher has been very successful in building effective teams of staff who are working together well. Very good use is made of the school's own expertise to develop good practice, so that subject leaders are playing an increasingly successful part in managing and developing their subject areas. Very good structures are in place for the induction and support of new staff and to contribute to teacher training, which add much to the quality of education provided. Day-to-day administration of the school is very good and systems are highly efficient and aid the smooth running of the school. Performance management procedures are very well established and used very well to develop the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. This is a very detailed and relevant document based clearly on the school's strengths and most important areas of development, but it has not been in place long enough to have fully influenced standards and achievement.
33. Systems to monitor the work of the school have improved since the previous inspection. Assessment procedures are well established and provide a clear general overview of the progress and achievement of pupils. However, this data has not been fully or carefully analysed to provide more precise information about the performance of the different groups of pupils from within the school. The information, for example, shows a significant number of pupils in Year 6 who have started in the school after Year 2 and who are attaining high standards in mathematics and science, but not writing. Similarly, in Year 2, most summer born pupils do not attain the higher Level 3, but the school does not examine this information fully in order to improve their performance.
34. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher and highly influential in the development of the school. They gain information about the work of the school from a range of sources that include the headteacher's reports, visits to classes and presentations to them by pupils. As a result, the governors have a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and work closely with the headteacher in identifying areas for future development. Each governor is linked to an area of the school and they visit classrooms regularly in order to become more informed so that they can support and challenge the headteacher and teachers as 'critical friends' as they strive to

raise standards. The governors ensure that the school fulfils all its statutory duties very well by reviewing and revising all policies on a planned and regular basis.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,201,835	Balance from previous year	-19,864
Total expenditure	1,184,335	Balance carried forward to the next year	-2,364
Expenditure per pupil	2,177		

35. The budget is managed very well with the very good support of the bursar. The school budget is set on the basis of "the worst case scenario" which sometimes results in a deficit at the start of the year. This deficit is then made up as the year progresses because finances are carefully reviewed at committee meetings and adjusted throughout the year. Subject co-ordinators are required to justify their bids for finance and are responsible for the administration of their agreed budgets. This helps to ensure that priorities for expenditure are carefully linked to the School Improvement Plan. Governors and staff take very good account of best value principles.

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

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

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

The provision is very well led and managed. As a result, there has been good improvement made since the last inspection. A very good range of rich and varied learning experiences, ensures that children of all abilities really enjoy learning and make good progress overall. The outside learning environment adds a further interesting dimension to learning. Currently the detailed system for assessing and tracking childrens' knowledge and understanding in the six areas of learning is too complicated. It does not easily provide staff with a clear overview of their class and makes it more difficult for them to monitor progress and adapt planning accordingly. This is especially essential when children start at three different times of the year. Currently the different location of the Nursery to the Reception classes does not aid joint planning or sharing of resources.

The children spend two terms part time in the Nursery prior to transferring to the Reception class in the term of their fifth birthday. Younger summer born children thus only benefit from a few weeks full-time education. Data shows that childrens' attainment when they start in the Nursery is above average. Evidence shows that most older children, who have spent three terms in the Reception classes, are far exceeding the expected goals in all areas of learning and are already working well within National Curriculum levels by the time they start in Year 1. This is because the quality of teaching is consistently good and often very good. Whilst all groups and ages of children make good progress and achieve well overall, evidence shows that the overall attainment of children when they start in Year 1, directly equates to the amount of time spent in the Reception classes. At the time of the inspection, over a third of the children in the Foundation Stage had been attending the Nursery and Reception classes for only a few weeks. They are happy, settled and eager to learn, because of the very good relationships that exist. Children with complex learning needs are valued members of the school community and because of sensitive support make good progress and also achieve well.

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

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

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Children are developing their levels of personal independence very well.
- Children's respect for each other and awareness of how they should behave is developed very well.

### **COMMENTARY**

36. High expectations of the childrens' attitudes and behaviour are supported by very good teaching and children's learning and their very good behaviour reflect these high teaching standards. Children start at different times of the year, but because staff are very supportive and routines are very clearly established they quickly settle. Children are taught to value the equipment and respect each other. As a result, those with complex

learning needs are treated with warmth and friendliness by all. There is an ethos of care and respect in all classes and this is developed very effectively in planned sessions that encourage children to discuss their feelings and how they should respect each other. The warm praise and encouragement that the children receive boosts their confidence and ensures they achieve very well. Overall when they start in Year 1, most children are in line to far exceed the expected early learning goals.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Staff are skilled at enriching children's understanding and use of language.
- Reading skills are promoted very well.
- The writing skills of younger reception children are not as fully developed as those of their older friends.

### **COMMENTARY**

37. The quality of teaching and learning is good so that children in both settings make good progress overall. Older children and most of those who started during the spring term, are in line to exceed the expected goals when they start in Year 1. Many interesting opportunities for language development are incorporated into daily routines and this, coupled with skilled teaching, ensures that the children's communication skills are effectively developed throughout their time in the Foundation Stage. In the Reception classes most older children's reading skills are very well advanced already. All children achieve very well in this aspect, because of the commitment of the staff in both settings who take time to hear them read individually. Together with parental support and very good teaching of reading skills, most children are confident early readers and take great pride in their skills. Children's early writing skills are well developed in the Nursery, because many activities are provided for them to write for a purpose in play activities. More formal activities are planned in the Reception classes, which are well supported by staff and linked effectively into the current topic to make learning relevant. However, whilst older children are confident early writers and are already working well within National Curriculum levels, younger summer born children are not as advanced. They are disadvantaged by the limited amount of time available to be involved in more formal writing activities.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Staff make good use of other areas of learning to promote the children's mathematical development.
- Younger summer born children make good progress, but are not as advanced in their formal work.

## COMMENTARY

38. Teachers in both settings make effective use of the many activities they plan to promote childrens' understanding of number, shape and measure. Staff are skilled at linking learning in mathematics to other activities and use a wide range of interesting games and practical experiences to support learning. As a result, children are enthusiastic about mathematics and delight in discovering new facts, such as how many sides there are on a hexagon, or how to record the number of shells they find in the sand tray. By the time children start in Year 1, most are likely to exceed the expected goals and older children are in line to far exceed them. Most older and more able children are already working well within National Curriculum levels, and record their work formally. This represents good achievement overall and is a result of good teaching in all classes, but younger reception children are not as advanced in their formal recording skills, because of the limited time they have spent in the Reception classes, compared to their older friends.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There is a very good emphasis on developing learning through first hand experiences.

## COMMENTARY

39. Children in both settings are introduced to a world of meaningful experiences from which they learn very well. As a result of very good teaching, all groups of children are very interested in everything that is presented to them, make very good progress and achieve very well. Recently, computer resources have improved significantly and because these skills have been very effectively taught, children in both settings are skilled in their use of computers and programmable toys and increasingly use them to support their learning in a range of activities. Older reception children are very well advanced and confidently tell the teacher how to explore the data to change a graph on the screen. All the children delight in learning about the world around them by observing, handling and discussing a variety of objects. Adults use questioning very well to extend children's thoughts and ideas and to encourage children to think about the world and their place in it. As a result of this high quality learning environment, most children are already working within National Curriculum levels and are likely to far exceed the expected goals when they start in Year 1.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Good use is made of the hall, outside and classroom environment to develop children's physical skills.

## COMMENTARY

40. The children are on course to exceed the expected goals in this aspect of their learning by the time they start in Year 1. Older children are already far exceeding the expected goals and are confident and assured when moving around or when manipulating small equipment. Children achieve well, aided by the good teaching they receive. In the nursery children are encouraged to explore the spaces safely and with good control and they delight in manipulating dough to make shapes, making good progress as a result of the good guidance and support they receive. Teachers in both settings have high expectations and make good use of the hall and the outside environment to support learning. Reception children are encouraged to warm up when exercising and know what happens to their heart beat as a result. They delight in rehearsing and performing country-dances for their parents, which they do with aplomb. This is a considerable achievement for the many younger children who have only just started in the Reception class. This is due to the warm, supportive relationships provided by the staff, that develop confident young people who are not afraid to 'have a go'.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teachers make good use of themes to promote children's imaginative play.

## COMMENTARY

41. Children achieve well and by the time they start in Year 1 most will have exceeded the expected goals and some will have far exceeded them. Teaching is good in both settings and a strength is the way that staff plan activities around themes, such as 'Cinderella'. This acts as a spur to develop children's imagination, both in planned activities and when engaged in independent play. This effective planning is supported well by interesting resources that encourage children to devise pictures and models of which they are very proud. Good scope is given for children to sing songs and create music. In an excellent lesson observed, the Reception class teacher had children 'eating out of her hands' because of the wide and varied opportunities she made available to improve singing skills and develop their performance. As a result of high expectations, children gain confidence, enjoy learning and this makes a positive contribution to the progress they make.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

#### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards in speaking, listening and reading are well above average in Year 6 and Year 2.
- The teaching of reading is well managed.
- Not enough opportunities are given for pupils to write extensively and independently in Years 3 to 6.
- Setting arrangements are limiting the development of pupils' writing skills.
- There is not a consistent expectation about the quality of written work in other subjects.

## COMMENTARY

42. Standards in speaking and listening and reading are well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. This is because pupils have a wide range of opportunities to speak for a purpose and the teaching of reading is taught very well. The pupils are also well supported by the extensive library. By the end of Year 6, standards in English overall are in line with national averages and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. This is because work is planned to cater for their needs as a result of very effective monitoring and assessment.
43. Standards in writing have fallen since the last inspection. By Year 2 standards are above average and not as high as standards in reading and speaking and listening. This is because some of the younger children are disadvantaged by their limited time in the Reception class and they have not had enough time to catch up. The school has worked hard to improve writing standards at the end of Year 6 and evidence shows that this year more pupils are attaining expected standards. However there are several factors impacting on writing standards and pupils' achievements in this aspect:
- A significant number of pupils in Year 6 did not start in the school and have joined during Years 3 to 5 with lower standards in writing than in other subjects. This impacts on overall attainment at the end of Year 6.
  - Too much time in the timetable is devoted to discrete literacy activities, which do not motivate pupils.
  - The teaching of English in ability groups in Years 3 to 6, is limiting the development of pupils' writing skills. Current arrangements do not enable teachers to have a good overview of pupils' attainment so as to target writing activities in other subjects.
44. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and there are some very good features, so that pupils make good progress in lessons. Teachers have developed very good relationships with pupils and have very good class management skills. This ensures that lessons run smoothly so that all pupils can make progress. Teachers use questions well to develop the pupils' reasoning skills. Teachers have good systems for checking the progress pupils make and mark their work carefully, so that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve. In Years 1 and 2, teachers give good attention to teaching letter sound patterns and this helps the pupils tackle unfamiliar words with more confidence. Spelling is taught well in the older classes, but pupils are not given enough opportunities to use and apply these words in writing activities. However, although basic skills are taught well, insufficient opportunities are given for pupils to work independently. As a result, many pupils lack the confidence to plan and organise their work. Consequently, although pupils make good progress in specific literacy lessons, they have



difficulty in applying what they have learnt in a creative manner, particularly in other subjects.

45. Two members of staff are temporarily leading and managing the subject satisfactorily. They have worked hard to ensure that priorities for further development have been addressed and standards are beginning to rise as a result. Consequently they have identified that the National Literacy Strategy is not being used effectively enough to develop the creative aspects of writing.

## **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

46. Overall literacy is used satisfactorily in other subjects. Speaking and listening skills, however, are well developed in a variety of ways. Pupils regularly present their work to the class, or discuss in detail an aspect of their work. Pupils have written in a range of styles in other subjects and produce some good efforts as a result. This is not consistently planned and developed. In addition, pupils' written work in other subjects is often not marked and basic mistakes such as not using capital letters or full stops are uncorrected. Pupils have mixed messages and this does not help standards to rise.

## **FRENCH**

47. French was not inspected in detail and only one lesson was seen. Therefore judgements have not been made on provision or the quality of teaching and learning. During the inspection the subject co-ordinator was interviewed and the scheme of work was scrutinised. In the one lesson seen the quality of teaching and learning was very good. Pupils enjoyed the lesson because of the many different activities set. They sang counting songs in French and took part in short conversations asking each other their name and where they lived. Almost all pupils spoke a few sentences correctly and with confidence. The specialist teacher manages the subject very well. Information from secondary schools the pupils attend after leaving the school indicates that standards are above national expectations. The pupils' good spoken French provides a very effective platform for their more formal work in the secondary stage of their education.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- By the end of Year 6, standards are very high and pupils achieve very well.
- Teaching is very good and motivates pupils to learn.
- Leadership and management are very good.

## **COMMENTARY**

48. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 2 and very high by end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates because they are very well challenged and supported by their teachers and the teaching assistants. Pupils really enjoy mathematics; they enjoy the challenges and this spurs on learning. This results in very good progress and achievement by the time pupils leave Year 6. There is no

evidence to show that pupils joining the school at other times impacts on overall standards attained in this subject, as all pupils who start in Years 3 to 5 make very good progress and are quickly motivated to learn by the enthusiasm of the teachers. Tasks are carefully matched to their ability. There are some gifted mathematicians in the school who are very well challenged in the top ability groups, so that they attain exceedingly high standards.

49. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. Teachers lead lessons at a very good pace and use a range of very good teaching strategies that help to ensure pupils' enthusiasm. The school places very strong emphasis on requiring pupils to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. In this way they are very well challenged and, as a result, achieve very well in relation to their capabilities. Teachers ask very searching questions and set very challenging tasks to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. In a Year 6 class, for example, an excellent introduction by the teacher, who used an extract from a novel to develop discussion about prime numbers, resulted in high attaining pupils using their very high level of knowledge and understanding to solve types of very complicated problems that are rarely seen in primary classrooms. In mathematics, assessment data is used very well to identify the needs of different groups of pupils in the class and to help teachers' planning. Teachers use lesson ends very well to check pupils' learning and reinforce the purpose of lessons. Some teachers use marking very effectively to raise standards by giving pupils specific pointers for improvement, but this is done inconsistently across the school and could be further developed.
50. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and very experienced. As a 'lead teacher' for the local education authority, she provides very good support and guidance to members of the school's staff as well as to teachers from other schools. She monitors teaching and provides very valuable feedback in order to improve its quality. As a result, the quality of the provision has improved well since the last inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

51. This is satisfactory and is an area for development that has already been identified by the co-ordinator. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills are being developed very well in information and communication technology, particularly data handling.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- There is a very good focus on practical investigative science which enhances learning.
- The co-ordinator has made a good start and she has an informed and enthusiastic approach to the subject.
- Good use is made of educational visits and the school environment, but the use of ICT to enhance learning is an area for further development.

## COMMENTARY

52. Standards attained at the end of Year 2 are above those expected nationally. Standards are not higher because there are a significant number of summer born pupils who have not yet caught up with their older friends. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. Practical activities support learning well, so that in their studies of mini-beasts, while most pupils identify different habitats, more able and older pupils recognise the factors necessary to ensure survival. Teachers emphasise and explain key terms well, so that pupils confidently use subject specific vocabulary such as 'habitat', 'condensation', 'evaporation', 'circulation of the blood' and 'friction' when talking about their work. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards that are well above the expected levels for their age. This shows the high standards reported at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained. Pupils make good progress during Years 3 to 6 and achieve well overall by the end of Year 6, in relation to their attainment when they started in the school. Across the school, boys and girls attain equally well and pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Pupils have very good factual knowledge, especially of their school environment, living things and the earth and beyond, because of the wide range of practical experiences planned. In Years 3 to 6, there are many opportunities for pupils to develop their own investigations, suggest ways to approach a problem or set up a fair test. This makes learning interesting and relevant and is a reason for the good progress that pupils make.
53. Teaching and learning are good overall. As a result, all pupils make good progress during their time in the school. Lessons are well planned. Teachers enable all pupils to be fully included in the learning, often through the organisation of the ways in which pupils work together, or by adapting the ways that work is recorded by different groups of pupils. There are opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to undertake independent research within a lesson, but these opportunities could be further developed. However, in an excellent lesson, a Year 4 class explored the school environment, to investigate the habitats preferred by a wide range of creatures and insects. They learned from their teacher that their investigations related to time and place which made a big impression on them. They went home enthused to continue their research. Pupils have good factual knowledge of topics. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to improve the quality of their scientific writing. Whilst pupils experience different ways of recording and presenting their work, including making field notes, there is a variation in teachers' expectations for accurate spelling and inconsistency in marking. Without corrective marking the opportunities for reinforcement of writing conventions and helping pupils to understand and correct their spelling errors are limited.
54. The co-ordinator has made a good start and the leadership and management of the subject overall is satisfactory. There is a weakness in the lack of monitoring and evaluation of science lessons in the current year, due to time not being made available. The co-ordinator is conscientious about her responsibilities, has an informed and enthusiastic approach to the subject and good plans to develop the subject further. The school has grounds which provide an excellent resource for pupils to study natural science. Currently discussion is taking place between staff to determine how use of this valuable scientific resource may be extended.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The overall provision for information and communication technology is **satisfactory** and improving.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Resources are good. They have improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- Teachers' skills have improved; this accounts for pupils' good achievement in lessons.
- The management role of the ICT co-ordinator requires further development.
- Assessment procedures are not firmly established.

## **COMMENTARY**

55. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the national average, but are improving rapidly. Overall pupils' level of achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 6. Although the school has made considerable progress since the last inspection, including the relatively recent influx of resources, which includes a bigger than average bank of computers, two ICT suites, interactive whiteboards and a good range of software, these have not been in place long enough to have influenced overall standards attained at the end of Year 6. Older pupils have kept pace with the increased national expectations. However, the new resources have had a positive impact on pupils' enthusiasm and coupled with teachers' improved skills has led to good progress and achievement in lessons.
56. It was not possible to see any teaching of ICT in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection, but a sample of pupils' work indicates that most make steady progress. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is good overall. The recent acquisition of resources necessitated appropriate staff training. Combined with the appointment of new staff already skilled in ICT, teachers' subject knowledge has improved overall and underpins the good teaching and achievement seen in the lessons. Lessons are planned well to ensure the best use of time and resources. Teachers explain the processes clearly and demonstrate well on the interactive whiteboards, so pupils know exactly what is expected of them. As a result, pupils are quickly engaged in work when they go to the computers and make good progress. Although teachers follow the national subject guidance well to teach skills systematically, assessment procedures are not clearly defined, consequently the most able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in lessons. This impacts on overall standards attained.
57. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily overall. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of how the subject is to improve. This is translated into a realistic action plan. Her own subject knowledge and expertise are very good, enabling effective support for colleagues. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is an aspect of the co-ordination role which has yet to be developed. Assessment systems are not yet established and this inhibits strategic use of assessment to plan for higher standards and the potential achievement of pupils as they progress through the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

58. A developing strength of ICT provision is the way it is applied well to support learning in other subjects, especially when in the computer suites. There was some good use of desktop publishing in Year 6 for example when they produced information brochures

about the Snowdonia National Park. This helped pupils improve both their geographical and literacy skills. However, the use of ICT does not feature in all lesson plans. Consequently, there is some under use of computers in classrooms to support learning.

## **HUMANITIES**

59. **History** was not a focus during the inspection, therefore, judgements have not been made on provision, or the quality of teaching and learning. Two lessons were observed, work analysed and discussions held with pupils. The indications are that overall standards are above national expectations by the end of Year 6. In one very good lesson seen pupils made very good progress and achieved very well because of the good quality of resources used. Very good questioning by the teacher enabled pupils to prioritise the most important events in the Victorian era. The subject is being managed closely with geography with a focus upon the development of pupils' skills through both subjects.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

Provision in geography is **good**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Good links are made with other subjects to enhance learning. Pupils are keen to learn and overall their achievement is good.
- Learning about geography makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, social, and cultural development.
- A range of visits and residential experiences supports learning well.

### **COMMENTARY**

60. Standards are above the national expectations by the end of Year 2 and well above national expectations by the end of Year 6. These have improved since the last inspection. Practical activities in Years 1 and 2 excite the pupils to ask questions and make learning interesting and meaningful. This makes a positive contribution to the good progress of all groups and abilities. Good links are made with other subjects in Years 3 to 6. They develop their skills well as a result and use a wide variety of activities and resources to learn about their own environment and locality compared to other areas of the world. The residential visits made in Years 4, 5 and 6 support learning in geography particularly well and make learning more meaningful. As a result, pupils of all abilities achieve well by the end of Year 6, in relation to their attainment when they started in the school.
61. The quality of teaching and learning is good, with some very good and excellent teaching observed. Very good use is made of resources, including interactive whiteboards in lessons, to make learning practical and relevant. Lessons are prepared in detail to ensure that tasks are relevant to pupils' different abilities. Throughout the school, geography contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development as pupils are led to appreciate and reflect upon the wonders and cultures of the wider world and to co-operate with each other. This was evident in the excellent lesson that harnessed resources extremely well. As a result, pupils were enthused and eager to work together in order to discover the answer to ten questions about their own country.
62. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Assessments are made at the end of study units to inform planning for the next steps of pupils' learning and the plans for further development are imaginative and well thought out. As a result, the quality of the provision has improved since the last inspection.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Religious education contributes well to spiritual, cultural and moral development.
- Drama is used well to promote learning, but short lessons impact negatively on learning.
- Leadership and management of the subject are effective.

## COMMENTARY

63. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards above those expected for their age in the agreed syllabus. This is an improvement since the last inspection. From the time that they start in the school, pupils develop a good knowledge of different spiritual and religious ideas from the major religions of the world. This is because teachers place a strong focus on evaluating what pupils can learn from religion and they are adept at helping them make links between the different religious ideas and practices. As a result, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress and achieve well in relation to their attainment when they started in the school.
64. Religious education contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural education. Comparisons are carefully made with other faiths and lessons help pupils to value and care for each other. As a result, they show great respect for people's beliefs and values.
65. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with some very good lessons seen. Teachers are adept at posing challenging questions and well judged use of interesting resources promotes good discussion and gives pupils a good understanding of different religions. Drama is used effectively to create an atmosphere that promotes awe and wonder, for example in a lesson seen in a Year 1 class where pupils acted out the building of Solomon's temple. However, current timetabling arrangements lead to some lessons being too short, particularly in Years 3 to 6. This limits the time available for pupils to explore their own inner feelings and beliefs and impacts on overall standards of achievement which have the potential to be higher. Pupils themselves express disappointment and would like longer lessons so they can develop their thoughts and ideas.
66. Leadership and management are good. The quality of pupils' work is assessed well. As a result, teachers have a clear understanding of pupils' strengths and weaknesses and ensure that pupils' learning is built effectively on what they are taught in earlier lessons. Appropriate plans are in place to develop the subject further.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

67. No lessons were observed in **design and technology**, so there is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching and the provision. An analysis of work and discussions with pupils indicate that standards are above average at the end of Year 6 and have improved since the last inspection. It is apparent that pupils enjoy design and technology and take pride in their work. Good links are made with the local secondary school to support the teaching and learning of pneumatics. Currently teachers have a broad overview of pupils' attainment and progress, but do not link assessments to National Curriculum levels, to ensure that pupils' skills are consistently or progressively developed. The subject leader has informally monitored work and recognises that this aspect requires further development.
68. Only a limited amount of teaching could be seen in **physical education**. Although standards seen in games were in line with expectations, no overall judgement about provision or standards could be made. The small amount of teaching seen was good. Lessons were well planned and teachers' subject knowledge is secure. Accommodation and resources for PE are good. The school has recently adapted a published scheme to support planning and improve the structure of the curriculum. There is a very good

range of sports opportunities outside of school time. The newly appointed co-ordinator has already taken positive action to develop PE but there have been no opportunities for the subject leader to monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on learning. This aspect of management requires some development.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

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

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Pupils work creatively with a wide variety of materials.
- Older pupils use sketchbooks well, but these are not used in Years 1 and 2 as a tool to aid learning.
- Pupils' work is of a high standard, but the timetabling arrangements hinder progress for older pupils.
- Information and communication technology is used well to support learning.
- Subject leadership is purposeful and well focused on improving the provision.

### **COMMENTARY**

69. Pupils attain standards that are well above average by the time they leave Year 6. These standards are higher than those found at the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities achieve well in relation to their capabilities and make good progress during their time in the school. Work is creative and individual. A particular strength is the way that the school uses famous artists as a focus for work. As a result, older pupils are adept at researching, practising and refining their skills using their sketchbooks, before completing a piece of work developed around a particular style. However, younger pupils do not have sketchbooks and this is a missed opportunity to encourage the research, design and evaluation element of the subject. The use of ICT has made a significant contribution to pupils' understanding of different genres and has enabled them to produce some highly innovative digital art which shows a very high standard of originality and flair. The current timetabling arrangements are preventing overall standards from being even higher, as older pupils in Year 6 have not had the opportunity to participate in art lessons for some time. Pupils state that they really enjoy the subject and this is evident in the way that they concentrate in lessons and strive hard to improve. However, pupils were disappointed that it had been some time since they had studied art. Their designs of Art Deco teapots were of a high standard, but when working on their final pieces, it was evident that some basic painting techniques had been forgotten.
70. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All lessons are carefully planned and resources are used well to motivate pupils. Basic skills are modelled well and pupils of all abilities understand the importance of planning and looking carefully, in order to capture the essence of the style they are trying to emulate. The very good standard of their work reflects the way that teachers are adept in encouraging pupils' own creative style. The subject adds much to pupils' spiritual and cultural development and is a very effective vehicle for developing the self-esteem of less able pupils and developing confident pupils who take obvious pride in their efforts.
71. The subject is well led and managed by a co-ordinator who has taken the time to develop her own skills and expertise for the benefit of the school. Consequently, there has been



good improvement made since the last inspection. The hard work and efforts of the co-ordinator who has organised a number of special projects, have successfully enhanced the provision and also helped raise the profile of the school in the local community.

## **MUSIC**

Provision for music is **good**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Standards are above average, but timetabling arrangements impact on pupils' level of achievement.
- Teaching is good and motivates pupils to learn.
- Leadership and management are good.

### **COMMENTARY**

72. Pupils attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection. Most pupils, especially those who have remained in the school since Year 1, have made good progress and achieve well by the end of Year 6. They sing well in tune and have a good sense of rhythm. By the end of Year 6, pupils' grasp of technical language is impressive, which they use effectively to explain their answers and describe their compositions. Teachers are not over directive, so that pupils of all ages are encouraged to listen carefully to each other and make suggestions about the ways they can improve. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported so that they achieve as well as others in the class. Their contributions are valued because the school ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to shine.
73. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Lessons are well planned and provide good opportunities for musical creativity. Teachers have good subject knowledge which is reflected in the good quality of pupils' learning. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations and encourage pupils to experiment and listen carefully to each other. In the best lessons, teachers run them at a very good pace so that pupils are very well challenged and remain very attentive and enthusiastically complete the tasks. However, the current arrangements, where some older classes are taught music as part of a 'carousel' with other lessons, is inhibiting learning. Too much time is wasted moving between rooms and this impacts negatively on the time available in lessons and pupils' enjoyment and hinders creative and musical achievement.
74. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable. She organises the teaching of a wide range of orchestral instruments which enhances the curriculum well. She has developed good links with the local secondary school so that teachers can prepare pupils well for transfer into Year 7. She is already aware of the timetabling constraints that limit the amount of time allocated to the subject in the older pupils' classes.

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

75. Only two very brief lessons were observed so it is not possible to make an overall judgment about the quality of teaching and learning, or provision. In addition to meeting all the statutory requirements, the subject is a very positive force in the school. All pupils are

greatly valued and respected and the school places a very good deal of emphasis on the importance of creating an environment where pupils can develop in confidence and self-esteem. There are regular opportunities planned for pupils to meet and discuss their innermost feelings and air their views. These views are valued. Opportunities for the school council to meet their MP in Parliament gave them a valuable insight into how democracy works. Much work is planned to help pupils understand the benefits of living a healthy and safe life and great emphasis is placed on developing respect for others and forgiving relationships through the teachings of the Church. Coupled with the very many opportunities that are provided for them to help those that are less fortunate, this helps pupils in the school to become responsible young citizens and very caring young Christians.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	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>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
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	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	3

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

