

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WOLVERHAM PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Ellesmere Port, Cheshire

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111089

Headteacher: Mrs M Conde

Lead inspector: Mr Brian Holmes

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> April 2004

Inspection number: 258469

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	122
School address:	Milton Road Wolverham Ellesmere Port Cheshire
Postcode:	CH65 5AT
Telephone number:	(0151) 355 2411
Fax number:	(0151) 357 2852
Appropriate authority:	Local education authority
Name of chair of governors:	Dr B Thorley
Date of previous inspection:	18 <sup>th</sup> May 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Wolverham Primary School is a smaller-than-average primary school. It is situated, in a brand new building, close to Ellesmere Port town centre. There are 122 pupils in the school, with most coming from the local area, but with an increasing number living outside the school's immediate locality. Numbers are increasing, with more pupils joining than leaving in the current school year. Most pupils live in council house accommodation. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well above the national average and, overall, the socio-economic status of the pupils is well below what would be expected in most schools across the country. Pupils enter the Nursery and Reception classes with attainment on entry which is very low compared to what is expected for most children at that age.

The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including pupils with statements of special educational need, is well above the national average. There are 33 pupils on the special educational needs register, with 18 either at the school action plus stage or having a statement of special educational need. Ten of these pupils have specific learning needs, three have moderate learning difficulties and three have social, behavioural and emotional difficulties. There has been a unit for emotionally and behaviourally disturbed pupils attached to the school, but this unit is now in the process of closing and most of the attached pupils have gone elsewhere.

The school has a clear ethos, in which everyone is valued and included. Almost all of the pupils are from a white background. There are close links with the community, and the school hosts a number of community activities on its site. It is a part of the Ellesmere Port Education Action Zone and receives funding through the zone for educational improvement.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15215	Brian Holmes	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology (ICT) Science History Geography
13786	Susan Walsh	Lay inspector	
17543	Robert Coupe	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Art and design Design and technology Physical education
10120	Philip Crookall	Team inspector	Mathematics Special educational needs English as an additional language Religious education Citizenship

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# PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

## OVERALL EVALUATION

Wolverham Primary School is a **rapidly improving school** and gives **good value for money**. Pupils **achieve well** in a broad range of aspects of school life through good provision. The school is well regarded both by pupils and their parents. There is a strong emphasis on team work among the staff with a strong focus on the care and personal development of the pupils to raise their self-esteem and confidence. Very good leadership and management, a good quality of teaching and curriculum provision promote learning well and enable pupils to achieve very well at age seven and well by age 11.

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

- Standards are improving in all classes, although still below the average expected, and pupils' achievement by the age of 11 is good.
- Leadership and management of the school, particularly from the headteacher, are very good.
- Pupils' personal development is very good, with very good provision for their care and guidance.
- The quality of teaching and learning are consistently good with strengths in all classes.
- Overall provision for the Foundation Stage is very good.
- There is very good provision for the equality of opportunity of all pupils in all activities.
- The accommodation is excellent with very good resources.
- Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science need further improvement.
- There is a lack of depth in pupils' learning experiences in geography.

Since the previous inspection in 1998, there has been a **satisfactory** improvement in the school's effectiveness overall, although the rate of improvement has increased markedly since September 2003, when a new headteacher and several other key staff arrived. At that time the old school building was replaced by new purpose-built accommodation, which has brought a significant improvement to the learning environment. Since 1998 there has been a satisfactory improvement in pupils' standards of attainment in reading, mathematics, science, religious education and ICT, with standards now improving more rapidly. There have been good improvements in the levels of care and guidance and in opportunities for pupils' personal development, particularly this year. There is a very good capacity to build on achievements and improve further.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E\* - very low in comparison to other schools. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Pupils' achieve well overall.** Attainment on entry to the school is very low. In the Foundation Stage, most children make very good progress, although not all are on target to achieve the goals expected of children at the end of the Reception Year. Inspection findings show that, by the age of seven, most pupils have achieved very well and are attaining standards in line with the levels expected in mathematics and in science, although they are still below average in reading and writing. In the junior classes, pupils continue to achieve well, although the standards they attain by the age of 11 are below the average expected in English, mathematics and science. These findings are different from those pupils achieve in national tests, as shown in the table, and reflect the good

progress made by pupils in the junior classes, because of good teaching, since September 2003. This is particularly true of the Year 6 class where pupils in the past have suffered from disruption to their education. From the evidence seen during the inspection, pupils are achieving well in art and design by the age of 11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.

**Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** The school's ethos promotes moral and social development very well and its general provision promotes the development of the individual child. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and behaviour in class and around the school is good. Pupils' attendance is good, and pupils are keen to attend school, although a small number are regularly late.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided is good, with several strengths.** The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the Foundation Stage and the infant class. It is good in the junior classes, with examples of very good teaching. It is good overall. All teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour and engage pupils extremely well in their learning. Teachers' knowledge of subject areas is good and is applied well through a wide range of very effective teaching and learning approaches. Very good use is made of learning assistants to support pupils' learning. Through initiatives, such as the 'Learn 2 Learn' project, pupils are constantly encouraged to reflect on what, and how, they have learned. Assessment procedures are very good, particularly in core subjects, and are used well to inform the planning of pupils' next steps and to set them targets for improvement. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own work.

The school provides a good, broad and well-balanced curriculum. The curriculum meets requirements, with a strong focus on English and mathematics to raise standards although there is a lack of depth in the coverage of some foundation subjects in the junior classes, notably geography. There is strength in sport and a good range of extra-curricular activities to enrich pupils' learning experiences. Accommodation and resources are very good overall. Pupils are very well cared for and supported in a caring environment. There is a sound partnership with parents and good links with partner institutions and the local community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are very good, with very good leadership from the headteacher.** She has created a very effective team of staff with a clear ethos and sense of common purpose. There is a clear philosophy of increasing pupils' confidence and raising their self-esteem to improve their achievement. Governors fulfil their role and legal responsibilities satisfactorily. Managerial responsibilities have been delegated well with teams of staff working to manage and develop curriculum areas. Team leaders are good in supporting other staff and in developing their subject areas.

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

Parents' views of the school are very positive. They are particularly pleased with the expectations the staff have of hard work and the fair treatment their children receive. They like the procedures for settling in and the fact that they are consulted about their views. Their children like school and they are very happy with the leadership and management, the quality of teaching, the rate of progress made and feel very comfortable with being able to approach the school with questions or problems. Pupils also have positive views about the school. They know that they are expected to work hard, but also feel that their teachers help them make their work better. Most know that there is an adult to go to if they are worried.



## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

**The leadership and management of the school should continue to work on the priorities in the school improvement plan, particularly:**

- To raise standards in English, mathematics and science in line with national averages by the age of 11.
- To improve the depth and breadth of pupils' learning experiences in geography.

# PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

### Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are **below the national average** at the age of 11 in the core subjects, but improving rapidly. Pupils' achievement by 11 is good from a very low base and in the Foundation Stage and the infant class most pupils make very good progress.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in the Foundation Stage and in the infant class.
- Pupils achieve well in the junior classes.
- Pupils with special educational needs, and those who are gifted and talented, achieve well by the age of eleven.
- Standards are improving rapidly at age seven and 11, and at seven are in line with the average in mathematics and science.
- Standards are below the national average, at age 11, in English, mathematics and science.

### Commentary

1. Since the previous inspection, standards in national tests have varied from year to year for pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 overall. In Year 2, compared to the performance of pupils in all schools, results have been well below average, whilst at the end of Year 6 they have been very low in comparison to the performance of pupils in other schools nationally. Over time, girls have attained more highly than boys in English in the tests at age 11, and very few pupils have attained the higher than expected levels (Level 5). The tables below show the results achieved in the 2003 tests, firstly in Year 2, and then in Year 6. Standards of attainment in Year 2 were very low in comparison to the average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to all schools and well below the average in all three areas when compared to pupils' performance in similar schools. In science, based on teacher assessments, pupils' performance was well below the average compared to other schools. In the Year 6 tests, pupils' performance against all schools was very low compared to the average in English and mathematics, and well below average in science. Compared to their own prior learning, and pupils in similar schools, performance was well below average in all three subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	11.5 (12.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.3 (11.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	12.7 (13.0)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	22.7 (22.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	22.8 (22.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	25.7 (25.3)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. Inspection findings are clear that standards are rising quickly. Pupils in both the infant and junior classes are progressing better and more consistently than in previous years, and the

indications are that the current Year 6 will attain improved results. Their target is for 80 per cent of pupils to achieve the expected level (Level 4) in English and mathematics, with a third of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 5). Indications are that, in both Year 2 and Year 6, a much higher proportion of pupils are on target to attain the higher than expected levels at age seven (Level 3) and age 11 (Level 5) than in recent years. There is a consistently good quality of teaching and learning across the school, particularly in the core subjects. In the Year 1/2 and Year 6 classes, for example, there is a good match of work to pupils' capabilities, including higher-attaining pupils, and differences between boys and girls have been successfully addressed by the strategies introduced to improve pupils' writing and 'boy-friendly' fiction has been developed to improve boys' attitudes to reading. Staff changes, resulting in more stable provision in all classes, have had a positive impact on pupils' progress and achievement. This year, the school has become involved a number of initiatives aimed at improving pupils' learning skills (Learn 2 Learn project), raising their self-esteem, and increasing their motivation to succeed. All of these initiatives have had a very positive impact on pupils' achievement in all classes, and their motivation to succeed.

3. On entry to the school, pupils' skills in language and literacy, numeracy, and personal and social qualities are very low. Through very good provision in the Nursery and Reception classes, most children progress very well although not all children are expected to achieve the goals expected of them by the end of the Reception Year. A minority of children are likely to exceed the goals set for them.
4. Pupils achieve very well in the infant class because of the very good provision made for their development. Most pupils make very good progress by the end of Year 2, particularly in basic skills. Standards of attainment are in line with the average in mathematics and science, but below average in reading and writing. In the junior classes, pupils make good progress through good teaching, particularly in English and mathematics. They achieve well but still attain standards below the national average in English, mathematics and science. In ICT and religious education (RE), there has been good improvement from the previous inspection and pupils now achieve the standards expected for their age in ICT, and in line with the expectations in the locally-agreed syllabus in RE. In art and design, pupils are achieving well by the age of 11.
5. There is effective development of pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT through other subjects. Pupils are given good opportunities to use their speaking and listening skills and extend their vocabulary, for example, in personal, social, health education and citizenship. They apply their writing skills in a range of subjects, for example, science and history. Pupils apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding well, with examples observed in several subjects. In ICT, teachers plan opportunities for pupils in a range of curriculum areas, and this gives pupils good opportunities to apply the skills they have learned.
6. Higher-attaining pupils', and those who are gifted and talented, achieve well. Planning to meet their needs is appropriate and effective, especially in the infant class and Year 6 class. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school, and achieve well, particularly in English and mathematics. The school's assessment procedures, which include encouraging pupils to become involved in setting their own targets, enable teachers to have an accurate view of each individual pupil's strengths and weaknesses. Teachers set targets for pupils, which are challenging, and they monitor pupils' progress towards them closely.

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

Pupils have **good** attitudes to their schoolwork and behave **well** in lessons and around school. Pupils enjoy school and attend well. Other aspects of personal development including spiritual, moral social and cultural development are **very good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes in lessons and this supports good learning and achievement.
- Behaviour, both in lessons and around school, is good.
- Spiritual, moral and social development are very strong.

## Commentary

7. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to attend and most have good attendance records (see table below). The school's record-keeping is good and pupils whose attendance is worrying are quickly identified. Most parents encourage their children to attend regularly and the school has good contact with those parents who need extra support. An active partnership with other local agencies such as the educational welfare service and social services helps to ensure that attendance rates remain above the national average. A small number of pupils are regularly late for school, but punctuality is well monitored and steps are taken to try to encourage pupils to be on time.

Authorised absences		Unauthorised absences	
School data	5.1	School data	0.0
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.*

8. The school works hard to develop pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Many children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with poorly-developed social skills and poorly-controlled behaviours. A significant proportion of children in the Nursery have difficulty concentrating and have to be taught to follow the teachers' instructions and school routines. By the time pupils are in Reception they have developed very well, are able to concentrate for much longer periods and are becoming independent. The attitudes of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are particularly good and their hard work and enthusiasm helps them to bring about rapid improvements in the quality of their schoolwork. Older pupils have suffered some disruption to their education in the past and issues that develop outside school can also affect their capacity to learn. Teachers work very hard to promote good attitudes to learning. Interesting lessons combined with innovative approaches, such as 'brain gym', and a heightened awareness of learning styles, including emotional intelligence, have resulted in rapidly improving attitudes and behaviour. Teachers have high expectations and have developed very good strategies that ensure good standards of behaviour. Behaviour around school is good. It is particularly good during formal occasions such as assemblies.
9. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Pupils' efforts are valued and this gives them the confidence to tackle problems and to try new approaches. There has been much successful work to raise pupils' self esteem. The school has worked hard to improve relationships between pupils, a new behaviour code 'the golden rules' has been introduced and is reinforced in assemblies, and regular personal, social, health education and citizenship lessons take place. At dinnertime, older pupils and younger pupils eat together, and this improves their social skills. The school recognises that bullying is sometimes an issue. Each incident is thoroughly investigated and steps are taken to try and resolve issues. Much hard work has been done to encourage pupils to be kinder to each other and pupils are starting to recognise when their own behaviour is unacceptable. Recent fixed-term exclusions have only involved pupils from the attached unit for children with impaired emotional and behavioural development, which is now closing.
10. The approach to spiritual, moral and social education is very thorough and it has been recognised that school has a very important role to play regarding pupils' personal development. The provision of activities that successfully promote spiritual development has resulted in pupils increasing their self-knowledge and their awareness of the world around them. Assemblies help to encourage pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

well and provide a daily collective act of worship. There is a keen emphasis on rights and responsibilities and the school provides a strong moral code. As a result standards of behaviour and levels of tolerance are rapidly improving. Many new initiatives are in place designed to improve pupil's social development, such as residential visits, the school council, and regular circle time. These initiatives have been very successful, and as a result pupils' personal development is now very good. The school is very aware that many of their pupils have few experiences of local culture outside school and their contact with other cultures is even more limited. The school has celebrated a wide range of cultures and there has been a good range of visits and visitors. Multi-cultural education is strong, in particular the Aboriginal and African artwork and displays are of a high quality. Steps have been taken to try to encourage the pupils to develop racial tolerance. Racial incidents are restricted to the use of inappropriate language between pupils but steps are always taken to ensure that pupils know that this type of behaviour is unacceptable.

#### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White - British
Mixed - any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Black or Black British - Caribbean
Information not obtained

#### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
126	2	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0

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

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** with very good features. Teaching and learning are enhanced by a good, broad and balanced curriculum, with good provision for pupils with special educational needs and very good provision for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship. Very good levels of care, guidance and pupils' personal development strengthen the ethos and climate for learning in which pupils learn and achieve. The school has also developed good links with the local community and other schools.

#### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is good with very good features in all parts of the school. There are very good arrangements for assessment.

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

- There is very good encouragement and engagement of pupils.
- There are high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour.
- Teachers' knowledge of subject areas is good and is applied well through a wide range of effective teaching and learning approaches.
- Very good use is made of learning assistants to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils are constantly encouraged to reflect on what they have learned, and how they have learned.
- Assessment procedures are very good and are used well to inform the planning of pupils' next steps and to set targets for improvement.

## Commentary

11. The table below indicates the quality of teaching seen during the inspection. The teaching and learning observed was mainly **good**, with strengths in all areas of the school – Foundation Stage, the infant class and the junior classes. The good quality of teaching observed in the previous inspection has been maintained. Both parents and pupils are positive about the teaching staff. Pupils know that they are expected to work hard and that their teachers will help them to make their work better.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	4	18	4	0	0	0

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

12. In the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching and learning is very good and consequently children in both the Nursery and Reception Class make very good progress to achieve extremely well. There is a very effective team consisting of a teacher and well-informed support staff. Their collaborative planning, careful preparation, and enthusiastic co-operation significantly contribute to children's success through exciting and challenging lessons. These are often of a wide-ranging thematic approach such as the current one about Africa, which very effectively contributes to pupils' greater understanding of the cultures, traditions and way of life of others. Good assessment arrangements provide for the regular and careful recording of children's achievements and progress. The information gathered is well used to plan for their next stage of development.
13. There are some common strengths of teaching that underpin the good quality of pupils' learning in all classes. The excellent accommodation has a positive impact on pupils' learning through the stimulating learning environment that is created. Teachers engage pupils in learning extremely well and have high expectations, both of behaviour and of their learning. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' ability to learn and to be aware of how they learn, as well what they have learned. Brain gym activities are used well in all classes to prepare pupils for learning and to allow them to refresh themselves during lessons. In most classes, music plays in the background to create a supportive learning environment. A very good range of teaching and learning strategies are used to engage pupils in their learning. For example, in two good English lessons seen in Year 1/2 and in Year 3/4, talk, drama and practical activities were all used extremely well in the first part of the lesson, followed by group work, with pupils undertaking activities appropriate to their level of capability. Teachers plan well to meet the needs of all pupils and challenge all pupils to do their best, particularly in Year 1/2 and the Year 6 classes. All teachers have good subject knowledge, which is used well to plan interesting lessons, for example, in those seen in English, mathematics and science during the inspection. Very good use is made of learning support assistants, especially with targeted groups of pupils. Pupils enjoy their lessons and respond well to the opportunities they are given to work on their own, and with other pupils in paired and small group activities. When working with others, pupils show good levels of responsibility and interest in their learning. They enjoy very good relationships, both with other pupils and the adults around them.
14. All pupils are involved well in all classes, and teachers and non-teaching staff fully promote the equality of opportunity for all pupils. Teachers know their pupils well, and plan effectively to meet the needs of lower-, middle- and higher-attaining pupils, particularly in Year 2 and the Year 6 classes. For higher-attaining pupils, and those who are gifted and talented, provision to meet their needs is good. Work is matched to their capabilities in most subjects, which enables them to achieve well. For pupils with special educational needs, the quality of teaching is good. There are specific targets on education plans, and pupils' needs and personal targets are well known to the class teachers and learning support assistants. Pupil

profiles include samples of work and detailed records of progress are available for reference. As a result they make good progress.

15. Assessment procedures are very good. The system for assessing English, mathematics and science has been redeveloped to focus on using the information gained from assessing pupils' progress to raise standards and improve pupils' achievement. All pupils from Year 1 onwards have a forecast of what level they should achieve by the end of the year, and they have targets to aim for in English, mathematics and science to help them reach their goal. The staff have worked hard to develop a common understanding of National Curriculum level descriptions in English and mathematics by assessing work together. In science and ICT there are clear procedures for assessing pupils' development of knowledge, understanding and skills. Day-to-day assessment is very good and is used well to inform planning of activities and build on pupils' prior learning experiences by giving them 'next steps' targets. In most classes, teachers are giving pupils good opportunities to assess their own work and identify what they need to do to improve themselves.
16. Homework is used well in the junior classes in particular. It is effective in promoting the development of English and mathematics, and is also used in some classes for following-up class work and for other subject areas.

### **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Appropriate emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy.
- Curriculum innovation is very good.
- Overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social, health and emotional education.
- Enrichment activities are good.
- Resources and accommodation are very good.
- Geography needs to be covered in more depth in order to ensure continuity and progression of pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

17. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets all requirements. It is arranged to correspond to areas of learning. Some areas of the curriculum, however, require improvement to ensure progression and continuity, notably, geography. There is appropriate provision for the daily act of collective worship, which meets statutory requirements.
18. The rich curriculum in the Foundation Stage is based on interesting first-hand experiences and provides a good balance of independent and teacher-directed activities which meet the children's needs well. The curriculum offered also enriches children's education with new experiences, for example, in the current theme on Africa, children increase their understanding of the cultures, traditions and way of life of others.
19. Literacy and numeracy are given prominence in order to raise standards. All subjects now have policies and schemes of work, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. The school is also involved in several initiatives, aimed at improving pupils' ability to develop their learning skills. These include a programme entitled 'Learn 2 Learn' and regular brain gym activities to keep pupils mentally agile. There is a strong focus on involving pupils in their own assessment and they know their targets for lessons, and are encouraged to evaluate their learning towards achieving them. Handwriting skills are practised daily to improve the

presentation of work. ICT is promoted effectively in lessons and applying skills in other subjects.

20. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that individual education plans are carefully drawn up and shared with pupils so that they know what their targets are. Learning goals are realistic, enabling pupils to succeed and move on. The teaching assistants are trained in intervention techniques and take part in ongoing training. All pupils are fully included and have access to the full curriculum.
21. The provision for pupils' personal, social, health and emotional development is very good. The school aims to build on a pupil's strengths, promoting self-esteem and confidence. Through the introduction of citizenship into the curriculum, pupils are encouraged to adopt a caring attitude towards others and to have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. It provides pupils with the opportunities to discuss and address real-life issues and see that they, themselves, can have an effect on the school and the community. Each class receives two daily sessions in which they discuss and examine issues which are important and close to them. In addition to these times, opportunities are taken in other parts of the curriculum to reinforce learning. The responsibilities of citizenship are also supported through the school council.
22. Pupils benefit from the many enrichment activities. A good range and quality of extra-curricular activities take place after school in art and sport. There is a wide range of museum, field trips and other educational visits for all ages, including residential visits for all pupils from Year 1 onwards. Visits by professional musicians enhance pupils' first-hand knowledge of instruments. Drama groups visit the school on a regular basis to enrich morning assemblies.
23. There are sufficient teachers to meet the school's needs. They and the teaching assistants are efficiently deployed and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The accommodation is excellent and is spacious and well kept, supporting the teaching very effectively. The quantity and quality of resources are good and facilitate teaching in all subjects.

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

The school provides a **very caring** and **supportive** environment and pays **good** attention to ensuring pupils' health and safety. Pupils are provided with good advice and guidance based on very effective monitoring of their achievements and personal development. The school has very good procedures to ensure that pupils are actively involved in its work.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a very high-quality, safe and secure environment.
- Care and support is generally of a very high quality.
- There is very good care and support for particularly vulnerable children.
- There is very good support for personal development.
- Pupil's views are very well considered.

### **Commentary**

24. Very good procedures are in place for child protection and to ensure that other vulnerable children are well supported. However the school does not at present have a trained co-ordinator for children who are in the care of the local authority. Daily routines are well planned and pupils are well supervised. Younger pupils are very well cared for. The well-designed and well-managed new building has helped to minimise hazards. The school makes good efforts to promote healthy living and is working towards the national healthy schools award. The school



and other agencies often work very well together to support children with academic or personal difficulties.

25. Induction procedures for children starting in the Nursery and Reception Class are satisfactory and most children settle in well. Children are very well cared for. Teachers know pupils very well and respect and respond to their personal needs. Each pupil knows and trusts a member of staff who is well known to them. Relationships between teachers and pupils are warm and supportive. Academic monitoring is very well developed and individual programmes are produced for pupils who are not achieving as well as they might. Support for personal development is very good. There is a well developed programme of personal and health education that helps pupils make important decisions about their behaviour.
26. Pupils are consulted about their views, they know that they are valued and listened to. The school council is developing very well and there are representatives from Year 1 to Year 6. The council has already brought about changes and the views of all pupils, including the very youngest, are respected and acted upon, for example, in introducing new playtime equipment.

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

The school has a **satisfactory and improving** partnership with parents. There are **good** links with the local community and other schools.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Many parents find it difficult to support their children academically.
- A more welcoming environment, courses for parents, open days and a re-established parents teachers association are helping to improve parental involvement.
- Information to parents about standards and progress is in need of improvement.
- There are good links with the receiving secondary school.
- The school uses the local community well as a resource to make activities lively and interesting.

### **Commentary**

27. Staff are working hard to change parental attitudes and overcome past difficulties in persuading parents to become involved in their children's education. The new school building, together with very good community facilities, has helped to bring parents into school and make them aware of the changing ethos and approach to their children's education. Very few parents attended the parents' meeting before the inspection and the response to the questionnaire was low, but those who responded were very positive about the school and the changes that have been made. The parent teachers association had stopped functioning but has been restarted and is raising substantial funds through social events. Courses have been offered to parents to encourage them to help with their children's academic and personal development. A small number of concerns have been raised regarding new routines in school. The complaints procedure works effectively.
28. Information for parents is satisfactory. There are regular newsletters and the governors' report and prospectus are of satisfactory quality. Open days have encouraged parents to come into school and see their children at work and there are regular opportunities for parents to meet more formally with teachers and discuss their children's progress. The school is aware that written reports are in need of improvement. Although what pupils know, understand and can do in the areas of English and mathematics are well documented it is not made clear to parents whether their children are achieving well in relation to national averages or whether they are falling behind. Reports about pupil's progress in science and other subjects are often restricted to describing pupil's experiences in lessons rather than their personal achievements. There are very useful targets and strategies for improvements detailed in English and mathematics reports.

29. The school has productive links with the local community and makes good use of resources. Many pupils have limited opportunities to visit the wide range of local amenities. The school addresses this by providing a programme of regular interesting and educational visits to museums, zoos, galleries and the local countryside. The pupils have also made a good contribution to the local community, working with other agencies, tree planting and developing the school grounds.
30. The school has good mechanisms for pupils who transfer to it from other primary schools. A good programme of visits and events at the local secondary schools pave the way to a smooth transfer into Year 7. Sharing ideas with the receiving secondary school and active involvement with other local primary schools has supported the schools' rapid improvement.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the headteacher are **very good**, with good support from key staff, and these are important factors in the good achievement that pupils make. Governors make a **satisfactory** contribution to the life of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher leads the school extremely well and has created very effective teams among staff, governors and pupils.
- The aims of the school are met well so that pupils learn in a friendly, caring atmosphere and achieve well.
- All staff take part in a wide range of training to develop their professional expertise.
- There are very good procedures for evaluating, and improving the performance of the school.
- Financial management is good.
- New governors are not yet clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

### **Commentary**

31. The headteacher has a very clear vision and gives the school a clear sense of direction, focused on improving its performance and raising pupils' standards of attainment and achievement. Her inspiration has created a climate in which everyone involved with the school works as a team to help all pupils achieve as well as they can. Since her arrival in September 2003, she has maintained a clear oversight of the curriculum and has encouraged other staff to put innovation for improvement in place. This has ranged from agreeing the aims of the school to involvement in a wide range of initiatives and projects aimed at improving pupils' confidence and self-esteem as learners. Staff respond well to the support and responsibility given to them, and carry out their duties with confidence and enjoyment. They take part in a wide range of training to develop their professional expertise, both as class teachers and in their subject co-ordinator roles. The reflection of the school's aims, values and policies in its work is good. The commitment to ensuring that pupils feel valued and develop positive self-esteem underpins its life and strongly contributes to standards and the good achievement that they make. There are very good relationships at all levels throughout the school, with all pupils having equal access to the full range of opportunities provided and their achievements being recognised and warmly celebrated.
32. Managerial responsibilities have been delegated extremely well so that successful teams have been developed. This is illustrated by the teams created to manage curriculum areas, most of whom are extremely effective in carrying out their roles. There is an acting deputy headteacher, who has formed a very effective leadership team with the headteacher. They share a common vision for the school, and the acting deputy headteacher provides a very good role model for other staff, both as a class teacher and in her leadership of mathematics and special educational needs. School self-evaluation of its own performance is very good. The headteacher has introduced strong analysis of pupils' performance leading to targets for all pupils from Year 1 onwards and the involvement of pupils in assessing their own work and

identifying their own targets. All core subject areas have been monitored for teaching and learning, and curriculum teams have undertaken analyses of work in all other subjects to inform subject action plans. The governing body is very supportive of the school and fulfils its roles satisfactorily. All statutory duties are met. Some governors are newly appointed and so do not yet have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses to help shape the direction of the school. They are not yet in a position to ask the right questions in holding the school to account for its performance. There is very good use of performance management to determine training needs in line with school improvement planning. There are many opportunities for teachers and support staff to take part in training linked to school and national priorities, to help build up their own professional development.

33. The headteacher plays a key role in financial management and has worked closely with governors in managing the current budget and planning for the future. The school budget is managed well, with efficient systems in place to make sure that the finances are carefully controlled and expenditure regularly reviewed. Prudent management of the budget, particularly in relation to staffing, has resulted in a potential deficit being transformed into a carry forward surplus. Day-to-day administration is good, as are the systems of financial control.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	349,475
Total expenditure	369,432
Expenditure per pupil	2,407

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	24,546
Balance carried forward to the next	7,037

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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The school makes **very good** provision for children in the Foundation Stage of their education, maintaining the standards of provision seen at the time of the previous inspection.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve very well and are very well supported.
- The quality of teaching and learning are very good in all the areas of learning.
- Pupils enjoy an exciting curriculum.
- The leadership and management are very good.
- The good systems for assessing pupils' attainment are well used.
- There are no significant weaknesses.

#### Commentary

34. Children arrive at school and are made to feel welcome, secure and valued in stimulating and excellent accommodation. They are provided with a very good start to their education. The very good quality of teaching and learning contributes to the very good achievement and progress made by the children, whose attainment on entry to the school is very low. Despite this very good provision and the rapid steps made by the children, the standards they achieve by the time they enter Year 1, are still below those achieved by children in most other schools. About 60 per cent of the children attain the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year, in all six areas of the curriculum, with only a small number exceeding them.
35. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and consequently children in both the Nursery and Reception Class make very good progress to achieve extremely well. There is a very effective team consisting of a teacher and well-informed support staff. Their collaborative planning, careful preparation, and enthusiastic co-operation significantly contribute to children's success through exciting and challenging lessons. These are often of a wide-ranging thematic approach such as the current one about Africa, which very effectively contributes to pupils' greater understanding of the cultures, traditions and way of life of others. Good assessment arrangements provide for the regular and careful recording of children's achievements and progress. The information gathered is well used to plan for their next stage of development.
36. There is very good leadership and management by the co-ordinator, which ensures that the education provided gives the same level of provision and opportunity to all children. The professional development offered to teachers is effective and there is a very good range of resources to support learning in excellent accommodation. Children appreciate all that the school has to offer them.

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

#### Commentary

37. Children's personal and social skills are very low when they start school. Whilst all children make very good progress in the development of these skills, there remain a few children who will not have attained the expected development by the time they enter Year 1. The adults work very hard to encourage children to be independent, to co-operate and to share with others. They offer a very good role model, encouraging good behaviour and relationships. Praise is used well to reward children's efforts. Discipline is well managed rather than

enforced and teachers are very sensitive and responsive to children's individual needs. Because of this good practice children respect their teachers and each other, as they understand how to work and play together. Their ability to concentrate steadily improves as they learn to carry out tasks and look after the equipment provided. Good opportunities to develop social practices are regularly encouraged, such as at snack-time or when children are engaged in learning and playing. Children are taught to appreciate, respect and celebrate the work of others as well as their own. Most dress and undress themselves and with the good encouragement of the teachers they manage their own hygiene and toilet needs.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Commentary**

38. Standards in communication, language and literacy are below the expected level by the time children leave Reception. Achievement and progress, however, are very good in this aspect of learning, as many children enter school with a very limited vocabulary and poorly developed communication skills. Their responses to questions often consist of only one or two words. Because of the very good teaching they receive, children gain new skills quickly and achieve well. Teachers actively engage children in the development of their listening and speaking skills. Well-crafted questions and 'follow-ups' are continuously targeted at individual children to encourage them to listen well and to give responses. Well-planned daily activities enable children to become familiar with letters, sounds and the early recognition of their names. Appropriate tasks are devised to encourage the learning and formation of letter shapes, which they trace and form in sand and other materials. Gradually they progress to pencils and other markers. Higher-attaining children write a short sentence such as, The wolf is going to blow your house down, although spellings and choice of upper case/lower case letters are often incorrect. On occasions there are some missed opportunities for young children in individual play activities to make marks and further encourage and stimulate their need for written communication. Books and stories are clearly enjoyed. Children demonstrate this when they choose to listen to taped stories or select their favourite book to read. Standards of reading are below average, but children enjoy looking at pictures and talking about the characters they remember. However, all Reception children know most initial sounds, some blends of words, and about two thirds attain the goals expected of them in this aspect of learning.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Commentary**

39. Children's counting skills are satisfactory, but standards are below the expected level by the time children leave Reception. They learn to count in well-planned lessons through songs and games. All Reception children are familiar with numbers to five. Several are comfortable when counting to ten and beyond and can add-on one more. Teachers work hard to develop the use of number in different areas of learning. In creative work, for example, they ask, 'How many?' or 'Do you want a longer or shorter piece of material?' This enables children to develop mathematical language and a practical understanding and use of number repeatedly. When using computerised toys such as the roamer, children use their number skills to control its direction and distance. Learning is extended through measuring items, such as pencils, or identifying which bottle has the most sand in it. An elementary understanding of time is gained through discussion of routine school day activities such as snack-time, dinnertime and home time. Children are familiar with money and recognise and order coins up to five pence. Higher attaining children sequence a 'shape' pattern displaying knowledge of circle, triangles and rectangles. Very few children have secure knowledge of three-dimensional shapes. It is because of the very good teaching and well planned lessons that children enjoy learning and subsequently achieve well.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Commentary

40. Children's very good achievement in this area of learning is directly linked to the very good teaching they receive. However, because of their very low starting point, their standards are below those expected for children of this age by the time they enter Year 1. Very good lesson planning, however, provides a wealth of opportunities leading to increased knowledge and understanding of the world. Visits into the local community are extended into good learning activities. For example, as they walk around the area, they look at houses and the materials from which they are made. On returning to school, they build their own houses from Lego and other construction toys and learn how to join bricks by using real mortar. Children are taught about travel and the differences between land, sea and air transport. They also compare modern day travel with that of long ago. The readily-available computer in class enables children to practise their computer skills and operate selected programs that help further develop their language and number skills. In food technology and related activities, pupils learn about the importance of hygiene, diet and healthy foods. Children's understanding of natural sciences is very well extended through encouraging them to grow plants from seeds and to observe the development of mini-beasts. Children's experiences are also widened when invited parents and adults visit the school to talk and work with them.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for children's physical development is **very good**.

### Commentary

41. Teachers have very effectively and continuously developed children's physical skills so that by the end of the Reception Year their achievement is very good and all children attain the goals expected of them in this area of learning. Children acquire good body control skills when playing outside using the large wheeled toys, and when using the large apparatus in the hall. Here, they show good balance and perform star jumps off the gymnastic table. Outside they display confidence and control on tricycles and scooters, which they use safely. Over-boisterous behaviour is occasionally observed, but is quickly controlled by the teachers. In the classroom, children are secure when handling tools such as spreaders, brushes, scissors and other cutters. However, their fine motor control is not very well developed. Nevertheless, teachers have worked hard to ensure the children have made very good progress. They use construction kits well so that their products are well designed and imaginative.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision for creative development is **very good**.

### Commentary

42. Children really enjoy this area of learning and produce some very good work. Teaching is very good, because of very good planning that stimulates the children into very good achievement. Standards at the end of Reception are in line with those expected at this age. Children experiment with paints. They mix them with other colours to make a third colour, or with salt, sand and other materials to create textured finishes to their work. They use bold swathes of colour in painting jungle animals for their African theme. Three-dimensional work is regularly seen in models made from reclaimed materials such as boxes and tubes. In these and similar activities children express their making skills. Teachers encourage them to select their own materials. They choose their own type of fasteners, such as paper clips, tape, staples and glue. Teachers provide some good spiritual learning experiences for children. For example, when doing batik work some children were surprised and fascinated when watching the wax

melting and discovering how easily it poured onto the cloth. Children enjoy singing. They join in favourite songs and are skilful when handling percussion instruments. They have a good understanding of repeated patterns and rhythms and demonstrated this by moving their bodies in time to the music.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

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

- Basic skills are taught well.
- Teachers use a very good variety of teaching and learning approaches to stimulate and motivate pupils.
- 'Elbow partners' are used well to stimulate pupils' speaking and listening.
- Writing initiatives, for example, handwriting practice, spelling and extended writing are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- The co-ordinator is making a positive contribution to raising standards and achievement through specific initiatives.
- Many pupils have limited vocabulary, which restricts their attainment.

#### **Commentary**

43. Standards are below the average expected in speaking and listening, reading and writing for most pupils, both at age seven and age 11. Because their attainment on entry to the school is very low, most pupils in the infant class make very good progress and those in the junior classes make good progress in relation to their capabilities. This represents satisfactory progress since the previous inspection overall, although it is clear that the rate of improvement has increased rapidly since September 2003. There is clear evidence from the inspection that the current groups of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are on course to improve on recent results in national tests, with some pupils working at the higher than expected levels. Initiatives have been put in place to raise pupils' attainment, for example, daily handwriting sessions, spelling initiatives and extended writing in all classes. These developments are having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and achievement in all classes, in addition to the consistently good quality of teaching and learning taking place throughout the school. As a result, there was no noticeable difference between the attainment of boys and girls because of the strategies put in place to improve handwriting and boys' attitudes to reading. Higher-attaining pupils are also now achieving more in line with their capabilities and working towards higher levels of attainment.
44. At the ages of both seven and 11, pupils' speaking and listening skills are below the average. Teachers effectively plan speaking and listening opportunities into lessons and make good use of 'elbow partners' to give pupils regular opportunities for structured talk. Most pupils listen well and respond appropriately, although their vocabulary is limited. This was illustrated in Year 6, when pupils engaged well in discussing writing style and sentence length, listening carefully to their partner and giving appropriate responses, but their limited vocabulary affected the length and depth of their responses.
45. Standards in reading are below the expected levels, both at seven and at 11. Higher-attaining pupils read accurately and fluently and with good understanding. Middle- and lower-attaining pupils do not have sufficient strategies for reading new and longer words, and this affects the fluency of their reading. In Year 2 middle- and higher-attaining pupils lack expression in their reading, but make simple predictions of what will happen. In Year 6, higher-attaining pupils read accurately and refer to the text when explaining their views, but middle-ability pupils are hesitant and lack in-depth understanding of the text.

46. Standards in writing are below the average at the ages of both seven and 11. Writing is an area of focus in the school, based on an analysis of pupils' performance in national tests by the headteacher. The school is working hard to raise standards using a number of sustained strategies. Important factors in the improvement in writing standards are:
- Daily handwriting sessions in all classes from Year 1, which reinforce and develop basic skills in handwriting.
  - A consistent approach to the use and application of basic punctuation and spelling.
  - The use of 'elbow partners' to stimulate ideas for writing.
  - Planned opportunities for extended writing in a range of different genres – stories, reports, recounts, poetry, newspaper style.
47. The quality of teaching and learning are very good overall, with the outcome that most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. Pupils show positive attitudes to their learning and concentrate extremely well, showing sustained interest in their work. The main characteristics of the very good teaching are as follows:
- Good teaching of basic skills, which gives pupils a firm foundation for developing writing, reading and speaking and listening capability.
  - A well-balanced provision for different aspects of English within lessons, including opportunities to write in a good range of genres.
  - Thorough planning and challenge, which meets the needs of different capabilities, including lower- and higher-attaining pupils, well in all classes.
  - High expectations of what all pupils should achieve.
  - Good subject knowledge, applied well to challenge pupils to progress.
  - Good demonstrations of tasks and use of questioning to guide and challenge pupils.
  - Good use of ICT, both to demonstrate tasks using the interactive whiteboard and to develop pupils' learning through opportunities to present their work in different formats and to use programs for specific aspects of their learning.
  - Very good assessment of pupils' progress, including setting targets for improvement and giving pupils opportunities to assess their own work.
48. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The headteacher is curriculum co-ordinator and she has a clear view of standards across the school in different aspects of the subject. She is focused on using the outcomes of her regular monitoring to improve pupils' learning and further improve standards. Her analysis of pupils' performance in national tests has resulted in the introduction of daily handwriting sessions in all classes, spelling initiatives, and extended-writing lessons. Assessment procedures are very good and focus on using information gained to further raise pupils' achievement and levels of attainment.

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

49. Provision for language and literacy across the curriculum is **good**, particularly in speaking and listening and writing. Pupils are given good opportunities to use their speaking and listening skills, through their 'elbow partners', in a range of different subjects, for example, in personal, social, health and citizenship education. They develop an appropriate knowledge and use of subject terminology in different subjects, and are given opportunities to apply their literacy skills in different subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils produced 'who am I' reports on animals in science, while Year 6 pupils produced key fact leaflets on micro-organisms.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good planning with clear statement of learning objectives in lessons.



- Very good analysis of pupils' performance to inform planning.
- Good quality of teaching and learning in all classes.
- Good development of numeracy through other subjects.
- Resources and accommodation.
- ICT to support pupils' learning in class is not yet developed sufficiently.
- Oral/mental element of the Numeracy Strategy is not yet developed sufficiently.
- Data-handling techniques not developed fully with older pupils.

## Commentary

- Standards in Year 2 are in line with the average, but in Year 6 they are below average expected. This represents satisfactory improvement overall since the previous inspection. Progress in the infant years is very good and, by Year 6, is good in the juniors. The present cohort in Year 6 has made satisfactory progress during the junior years overall but because of good teaching this year, they are expected to attain improved results on 2003 with a higher proportion of pupils achieving both the expected, and higher, levels. An improvement in the quality of planning and the detailed assessment of previous performance have provided teachers with the opportunity to focus more closely on the needs of individual pupils and prepare more challenging tasks for them. Compared with their prior learning the achievement of pupils in the current Year 6 is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, as do higher-attaining pupils.
- Most pupils enter the school with well below average mathematical understanding, and throughout the infant years achieve highly, and progress at a good rate in relation to their earlier attainment. They are able to recall addition and number facts to at least ten. In Year 2 pupils are introduced to sorting and classifying techniques. They are taught to recognise number patterns and use different strategies to solve number problems. Year 2 pupils enjoy their lessons and experience the full coverage of the National Curriculum. Pocket money problems and multiple magic investigations extend and enhance work in class. Older pupils explore and compare strategies for calculations which they pursue with enthusiasm. In Year 6 more-able pupils confidently apply these techniques using fractions and decimals. Number investigations lead to the discovery of factors and square roots. Spatial concepts are enhanced through problems of calculating areas and volumes of rooms from the size of the bricks. However, the great concentration on improving basic numeracy skills to raise attainment has meant that some aspects of learning, for example, data-handling techniques, have not been fully developed with older juniors this year.
- The standard of teaching and learning are good throughout the school. The lessons have good pace and challenge for all pupils and opportunities for independent learning. The National Numeracy Strategy is well used and provides the basis for planning in the subject. Teachers work well as a team and plan their teaching to ensure progress and continuity is closely matched. Clear statements of learning objectives in all lessons enable the pupils to remain focused and have a positive impact on their learning. The match of work to pupils' different levels of ability is very good throughout the school, ensuring that the needs of all pupils are closely met and monitored. Pupils with special educational needs have their own programmes and receive very good support from the classroom assistants. The quality of teaching in the oral and mental elements is often underdeveloped and at times lacks the pace and energy applied to other techniques.
- Assessment procedures are very effective in helping teachers gain a very clear understanding of what pupils can do and where they need to improve. Analysis of pupils' work has also led to the identification of weaknesses in provision. In service training has been well used to meet these problems. Good use is made of worksheets for problem solving exercises and for continuation work at home.
- The strong focus on numeracy skills has improved pupils' knowledge and capability. Good work in data handling in the early years is underdeveloped in later years due to the order of

priorities determined at the beginning of the year. The co-ordinator recognises this and has plans to remedy the situation. All teachers ensure attention is given to the language of mathematics and the correct use of its vocabulary. There are some good displays in classrooms used to stimulate interest in mathematics, reward good work and encourage interactive participation, but often the displays consist only of commercial posters.

55. The curriculum, assessment systems, checking of pupils' progress and monitoring of teaching and learning are all very efficiently and effectively organised by the curriculum coordinator with the aim of raising standards and ensuring that the targets set are realistic. The accommodation and resources are very good. However, not all classes make use of the computers in the room to enhance and extend learning.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

56. The school provides pupils with a good range of opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding confidently. They recognise the importance of the subject in many aspects of life. Examples of these are seen in design and technology, surveying different sorts of bread; geography, in a traffic survey incorporating bar charts on the computer; art and design, using shapes; stop watches in physical education, as well as graphs and calculations in science.

## **SCIENCE**

The provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well in relation to their own capabilities.
- Teaching and learning are good with good assessment procedures that involve pupils in assessing their own work.
- The curriculum is planned well, with an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' learning through practical investigations.
- There are appropriate links with other subjects, particularly literacy, numeracy and ICT.
- There is effective leadership and management of the subject area.

### **Commentary**

57. Over the last few years, the results of the national tests for 11-year-olds have been well below the national average overall. Most pupils in Year 6 are in line to do better this year although their overall standards are still below the average expected for their age. This means that they have achieved well and made good progress this year. This is a similar picture to that seen at the last inspection and represents satisfactory progress since then. The main reasons for the recent improvement, particularly in Year 6 are:
- The provision of a balanced curriculum across all aspects of the subject with an emphasis on the development of investigative work in all classes.
  - The links with other subjects that let pupils develop their knowledge and understanding and build on their own experiences.
58. In Year 6, there is a balanced approach between increasing knowledge and understanding in a range of topics, for example, food chains, solids, liquids and gases, and developing practical skills through investigation. Most pupils, especially higher-attainers, use terminology accurately and represent their results in a variety of ways. They are not as competent when drawing conclusions from their experiments and these tend to be a description of what they have done rather than an evaluation based on prior scientific knowledge and understanding. Pupils in the infant class achieve very well, building on their learning experiences in the Reception Class, to achieve standards which are broadly in line with the average expected for

seven-year-olds. Year 2 pupils sort and classify materials according to their properties, and understand the basic forces of push and pull. They plan investigations into ice melting, making simple predictions, and describing how they will keep the test fair. Higher-attaining pupils use scientific terms, such as '*friction*' correctly and produce more detailed and accurate diagrams of electrical circuits.

59. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, particularly in Year 6. Lesson observations and analysis of pupils' work show clearly that the curriculum is well balanced and planned effectively to give pupils plenty of opportunities to undertake practical investigations. Work is planned to ensure that pupils' learning experiences are progressive and that they cover topics with the right levels of challenge. Both pupils with special educational needs, and those who are higher-attaining, make good progress. In Year 6, this has resulted in more pupils working towards higher levels of attainment. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they apply effectively through thorough planning and high expectations of what pupils should learn. Where teaching is good it is characterised by a broad range of teaching and learning strategies, which engage pupils in their learning, and good self-assessment by pupils of what they know and need to find out. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning, and work well on their own and in pairs and small groups.
60. Teachers make sound use of links with literacy, numeracy and ICT to enhance learning. In all classes, pupils make appropriate use of scientific terms in their work. In ICT, Year 2 pupils used a program to label a flower and Year 6 pupils researched topics using the internet to increase their knowledge and understanding. Pupils used their numeracy skills when undertaking tally counts and producing line graphs in the investigations of the length of shadows. In literacy, Year 2 pupils wrote 'who am I' reports on their favourite animals and Year 6 pupils produced key fact sheets to illustrate their knowledge.
61. The subject is well led and managed by the staff within the knowledge and understanding team. The co-ordinators have a clear vision of where, and how, the subject needs to develop. Through a good analysis of pupils' work and teachers' plans, they have identified the main strengths and weaknesses to focus on key priorities, which include further developing practical work.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is well organised, with good development of pupils' skills through subject areas.
- Resources are used well, particularly the suite of wireless laptop computers.
- Assessment procedures are effective and show pupils' progress through the National Curriculum level descriptions.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

62. Pupils' standards in ICT are broadly in line with the average expected both at age seven and age 11. Pupils achieve well. This represents a good improvement on the previous inspection, when pupils' attainment at age 11 was judged to be below average. The current approach of integrating the use of ICT through subject areas has given most pupils regular opportunities to practise and develop their skills through subject areas, and this has had a positive impact on their achievement.
63. Pupils in the Year 1/ 2 class develop a sound understanding of a broad range of programs in their learning experiences. Year 2 pupils achieve well. They show sound ability in a number of

aspects of their work, for example, programming a floor robot to move forwards and backwards, using a screen robot to make a 2-D shape, using a word bank and typing simple sentences using the main functions of a word-processing program.

64. In the junior classes, pupils make sound progress in a range of different ICT applications to achieve standards in line with national expectations by the time they are in Year 6. They present their work well for specific purposes using word-processing and desk-top publishing packages. They use presentation software for work in English and undertake research from the Internet for work on Ancient Greece. They also use spreadsheets, entering data and using formulae to make simple calculations.
65. No direct teaching of ICT was observed during the inspection, but from the evidence gained from the analysis of pupils' work and the examples of activities observed in lessons in subject areas, it is clear that the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils receive a balanced curriculum, with all aspects of the programme of study planned through subject areas. No evidence was seen of control and monitoring in the junior classes, although the resources for this element have been recently acquired and it is planned to be taught later in the term. The scheme of work meets requirements. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, which is used appropriately to plan relevant activities for pupils. All classes have an interactive whiteboard, which enables teachers to give effective demonstrations to pupils of what they need to do. In particular, teachers make good use of the portable suite of wireless laptop computers to target groups of pupils and provide varied learning experiences. Pupils show good attitudes to learning with computers. They work well at the computers, either independently or in pairs, and show good responsibility for their own learning to complete their tasks.
66. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The curriculum co-ordinator has planned the development of skills through curriculum areas and assessment sheets have been developed, which effectively show how pupils are developing and progressing in their acquisition of skills and capability. Class teachers have been encouraged to show progress through 'class books' of work. Pupils' work has been analysed and the outcomes have been used to identify priorities for development, for example, acquiring new resources for control and monitoring.

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

67. The use of ICT across the curriculum is **good**, as teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use ICT in a range of curriculum areas. The use of ICT across subject areas is an important part of the school's overall approach to ICT and teachers make a conscious effort to plan ICT opportunities in most subject areas. During the inspection evidence was seen of the use of ICT to support pupils' learning in English, science, history, art and design and several other subjects.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

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

- Good planning with clear statements of learning objectives.
- Strong links with pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship.
- There is a good variety of teaching and learning approaches.

#### **Commentary**

68. Overall standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 meet the expectations of the locally-agreed syllabus. This is an improvement on the standards at the time of the last inspection when they were found to be unsatisfactory. Pupils reflect on beliefs and are able to relate these to their own and other people's lives. They gain a great deal from stimulating and thoughtful discussions. Pupils are building up a store of knowledge about events, festivals and symbols in Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. The main emphasis is on Christianity and Bible stories.
69. Teaching and learning are well focused through the use of clear statements of the learning objectives of each lesson. Good use is made of drama and the enactment of events. A joint lesson for pupils in the lower juniors related the events of the Last Supper and Easter. Role play, poetry and music were well linked in pupil activities describing the origins of the Holy Festival in Year 4. Lessons in Year 6 identified people who were special, ranging from the friend who stops me getting into trouble to Internet research on Mother Teresa.
70. Visits to the local church and visitors to the school enhance the curriculum well. A local group makes frequent visits to enact Bible stories and the miracles of Jesus in assemblies. The strong links with personal, social, health education and citizenship emphasise the moral issues raised and provides opportunities for the pupils to relate what they have learnt to real events in their lives.
71. There is effective leadership and management of the subject. The curriculum co-ordinators have collective responsibility for the development of this aspect of the curriculum. The subject is monitored by the team through the scrutiny of teachers' plans and examples of pupils' work.

#### **Geography**

72. Owing to the timetable and the organisation of topics, it was not possible to observe any lessons in geography or comment on overall provision. Evidence was gained from an analysis of pupils' work and documentation as well as a discussion with the curriculum co-ordinators.
73. Pupils in the infant classes make satisfactory progress in developing their skills and broadening their knowledge and understanding of concepts and places. They identify different ways to travel to the seaside in their topic and also different features of the coastline, for example, cliffs. They use photographs effectively to identify differences between a distant place and their own local area. However, in the junior classes, particularly in Year 6, coverage of geographical topics lacks depth and does not build sufficiently on pupils' prior learning.
72. The curriculum co-ordinators provide effective leadership, having taken up responsibility for the subject in September 2003. They work effectively as a team and have produced an action plan for the subject, based on analysis of pupils' work and teachers' plans. Their identified priorities include developing more depth and breadth to pupils' learning experiences.

## History

73. Only one lesson was observed in history during the inspection, so no overall judgement on provision, standards, or the quality of teaching and learning can be made. Pupils' work was analysed and there was a discussion with the curriculum co-ordinators, which show that in the infant class, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their historical knowledge and understanding through their study of the past. There is satisfactory coverage of a broad range of topics and events and pupils develop an appropriate understanding of the features of past life both by age seven. In the junior classes, most pupils show a sound understanding of change over time in their work on the Romans in Year 3 and 4. In Year 6, the coverage of the Ancient Greeks topic is less thorough and lacks depth.
74. In the Year 1/2 history lesson observed, effective use of the interactive whiteboard enabled pupils to visualise how the Great Fire of London spread. The teacher then showed them how to construct a diary of the main events. Teaching assistants were used well to support pupils' learning, especially for middle- and lower-ability pupils. All of these factors enabled pupils to achieve well and increase their knowledge of the fire. In the plenary, pupils showed a very good understanding of what they had learned and how. Effective use is made of ICT to enhance pupils' learning, for example, Year 6 pupils undertook research on the Internet for their work on Ancient Greece. The curriculum co-ordinators are effective in their role, working together as a part of the knowledge and understanding team. They have analysed pupils' work and teacher's plans to identify priorities for development. These are appropriate and include improvements to pupils' enquiry and investigative skills.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

The overall provision for the creative, aesthetic, practical and physical aspects of the pupils' education is **satisfactory**.

### Art and design

The provision the school makes for the pupils' provision for art and design is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good quality of display outside classrooms.
- Good records of pupils' work in their books.
- The curriculum is effectively supported through the use of ICT.
- There is limited opportunity to celebrate work in the classrooms.

### Commentary

75. By the ages of both seven and 11, standards are above the national expectations and all pupils make good progress. The curriculum co-ordinator has been effective in improving provision, by supporting staff and ensuring that resources are very good. As a result, the school has been very successful in raising standards since the last inspection. At that time they were judged to be in line with expectations at the age of seven, and below expectations at the age of 11.
76. No teaching was observed during the inspection and therefore no overall judgements can be made. However, it is clear from the good quality of display in corridors and the hall and from the standards of work seen in pupils' 'sketchbooks' that teachers' set pupils' challenging tasks. Teachers also make very supportive comments in pupils' books and suggest where they may improve their work. Assessment is not yet linked to the National Curriculum level descriptions. The pupils will further benefit from a dedicated sketchbook in which they may record their ideas, revisit and refine them before possibly using them in future work. A wide curriculum is studied and learning is enhanced by use of the Internet to explore and reproduce the art of

other cultures, such as China and that of the Australian Aborigine. Similarly, pupils' work in the styles of European artists, such as Monet and Turner have benefited through this medium. The good quality of pupils' displayed work seen around school includes fine pencil work, poster and watercolours, collage and three-dimensional work.

## **Design and technology**

The provision the school makes for design and technology is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths or weaknesses**

- Teaching is generally good.
- There has been a good improvement in the junior classes since the last inspection.

## **Commentary**

77. Standards are in line with expectations at the ages of both seven and 11. Standards in the infant class are similar to those at the last inspection, but there has been a good improvement in the junior classes, where standards were judged to be below national expectations in the previous inspection. Taking into account the two lessons observed, the evidence gathered from pupils' workbooks and the analysis of displayed work, teaching overall is good and pupils make good progress as a result. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. They prepare their work well and this is reflected in the good quality workbooks presented by the pupils. These contain the plans and designs for the products and models they intend to make. They are very detailed and good evaluations are written on completion of their projects. The good teaching and interesting choice of topics enable all pupils to achieve well. Models are made from a wide range of materials including card, fabrics and plastics. They are well finished and sometimes they are used in lessons for practical purposes. For example, pupils were seen using instruments they had made when performing music in class. However, there is little evidence to suggest that pupils make regular use of non-malleable materials such as wood. The curriculum on offer has improved since the last inspection and is well supported by appropriate policies and well-planned schemes of work. The curriculum co-ordinator manages the subject effectively and resources are very good.

## **Music**

78. Pupils were observed in two assemblies but work and planning were scrutinised. No lessons were observed. Pupils listen and appraise music and create and perform their own compositions. Year 2 pupils learn to distinguish between long and short sounds and begin to identify sounds of different pitch. Pupils are able to express their ideas in early attempts at composition. These are graphically recorded using the pupils' own symbols. Older pupils apply accompaniments to songs and rounds, identifying fellow participants in their scores to ensure successful presentation. In Years 4 and above pupils develop appraisal skills by listening to and reviewing recorded music. They compare classical and pop examples identifying instruments and evaluating the results. They develop a good understanding of the contribution each instrument makes.
79. The curriculum is enriched by the visits of professional musicians from the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra who demonstrate their instruments and allow the pupils to examine them. The school participates in local musical events at the high school and in the civic hall. A recorder group is planned for the future but no music groups exist currently. The school has no choir and the quality of singing in assembly is below average. There is no indication of tuition in this area.
80. The curriculum co-ordinator is part of the creative arts team which meets monthly to monitor and support the arts across the curriculum. The leadership in music is satisfactory overall.

Opportunities to improve the provision of the subject have been identified by the school and a new scheme of work is being developed to provide them.

81. Music pervades the school as a means of calming the environment and plays a part in assemblies as pupils enter and leave. However, the opportunity to identify and reflect on the music is overlooked.

## **Physical education**

The provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good range and quality of curricular enhancement and pupils' participation in sport.
- The excellent accommodation and very good resources.

## **Commentary**

82. Standards are in line with national expectations at the age of 11, and this is similar to the findings of the last inspection. No lessons were seen in the infant class and therefore no judgement is possible on pupils' standards of attainment at the age of seven.
83. Teachers' planning shows that all strands of the curriculum are covered, including swimming. Consequently, most pupils manage to swim the expected 25 metres by the time they leave school. The limited teaching observed was satisfactory and enabled all pupils to achieve and progress at a steady rate. Pupils clearly showed that they enjoyed the physical challenges offered to them, although their level of participation and work rate could have been improved. Nevertheless, they showed good collaboration when recording each other's times and performances in running, jumping and agility activities.
84. The school is very well provided for through excellent accommodation and very good resources. Both are well used, enabling a wide range of activities to be carried out across all aspects of the subject, resulting in improving standards. The effective curriculum co-ordinator supports the staff and has introduced a number of initiatives to raise standards and opportunities for pupils. Among these are the many after-school clubs and activities designed to involve as many pupils as possible. They include, basketball, netball, football, tennis, basketball and dance. Pupil participation is encouraged by recording and rewarding attendance. So successful has the response been, that the school having already received the Sport England Active Mark, is now preparing evidence in application for the gold award. The school is very successful in providing opportunities for all its pupils to attend residential visits with the opportunity to engage in outdoor activities.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PHSEC)**

85. During the inspection provision for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship (PSHEC) was seen through two classroom observations, scrutiny of work in Year 6 and discussion with the curriculum co-ordinator. PHSEC is implicit in everything that the school does and is supported by the recently introduced, very good quality policy and scheme of work. There are two daily periods of time in which pupils sit together and discuss issues such as the '*golden rules*,' friendship and responsibility towards others and themselves. Teachers make good use of a variety of activities including drama and discussion groups where pupils are encouraged to express their feelings and concerns. Pupils in the lower junior class discussed ideas such as 'be gentle don't hurt'. They responded well and freely shared with their partners the times when they might have hurt someone or been hurt. The lesson achieved its purpose very effectively in promoting concern and respect for each other as well as giving opportunities for developing listening and speaking skills. In Year 6 pupils visited



Whitby Park to plant daffodil bulbs and made Lent promises such as 'I will do my best in school'.

86. There is a school council and pupils discuss issues sensibly as they identify objectives to promote good citizenship. A recent concern was the lunchtime friendship groups in which older and younger pupils meet together because parents were concerned about how well the pupils were mixing together. The results of the discussion and were passed to the headteacher for action, with the result that parental concerns were addressed and the lunchtime friendship groups have continued as before. The curriculum co-ordinator is the headteacher who has introduced and developed the scheme of work during the current school year. It is well supported with guidance, teaching ideas and resources. The course has become well established and is having a considerable impact on learning, improving discipline and promoting ideas of success and high expectation. In-service courses for the teaching staff and parents have been supported by grants from the European Community.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

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

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	2
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	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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