

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WOODFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Woodford, Kettering

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 122005

Headteacher: Mrs Arlette Harvey

Lead inspector: Mrs Stephanie Lacey

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> April 2004

Inspection number: 258479

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	100
School address:	High Street
	Woodford
	Kettering
	Northamptonshire
Postcode:	NN14 4HF
Telephone number:	(01832) 733 221
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Towers
Date of previous inspection:	22 <sup>nd</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is a small primary Church of England school in a village near Kettering. There are four classes. Pupils come from a wide range of social, economic and academic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average and this reflects the advantaged background of many of the pupils. Most pupils come from the village, with a few from further afield. Almost all pupils are white British, with three per cent of mixed race. When children start school their skills, knowledge and understanding are wide-ranging, but broadly average for their age overall. Currently boys outnumber girls by three to two. Twenty-three per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is above average. These pupils have a range of learning difficulties and three have a statement of special educational need. The percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the normal time was above average last year, largely as a consequence of house moves. The school has gained the School Achievement Award for the last three years for improving standards in national tests. It also achieved Investor in People in 2001, the Schools EXTRA Award in 2002 and renewed its Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3764	Mrs Stephanie Lacey	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage English Art and design Geography History Music Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language
14756	Mr John Lovell	Lay inspector	
24019	Mr Ken Parry	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The school provides a sound education for its pupils** and has many good features. There is a friendly yet purposeful atmosphere. Clear leadership and good staff teamwork underpin pupils' good overall achievement. In view of the levels of funding and standards achieved, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards have been above and sometimes well above average in Year 6 national tests for some years.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 because of good teaching.
- Most pupils are positive about school and enjoy learning.
- Individuals are valued within a caring Christian atmosphere.
- Work planned for children in the Reception Year is interesting and stimulating, but the outside accommodation and staffing levels are not good enough.
- Provision for work in information and communication technology (ICT) is good and much improved since the last inspection.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- There are inconsistencies in the way that staff check pupils' progress in order to help them to improve.
- Higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged in science.

The school has made steady progress since its last inspection in June 1998. Standards in Year 6 national tests are higher than they were. Good teaching has been maintained and pupils make good progress between joining and leaving the school. Good progress has been made in developing work in ICT. The school has successfully tackled most of the areas for improvement noted during the last inspection. These included planning work in English, mathematics and ICT, checking on the quality of teaching and learning and improving information given to parents about their children's progress. Not enough progress has been made on developing the outside area for children in the Reception Year.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

**Overall, pupils achieve well.** They make steady progress in the Reception Year and in Years 1 to 2 and move ahead more quickly in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as their peers because of the good support that they are given. In most years, the skills, knowledge and understanding of pupils entering the Reception Year is broadly average. They make sound progress and this year most are on target to reach the goals expected for their age in all areas of learning. They are set to exceed them in their personal, social and emotional development. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to make steady progress and in Year 2 standards are broadly average in most subjects, but below average in mathematics and science. This is because although most pupils reach the expected level, few exceed it. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good overall and

pupils move ahead more quickly. In Year 6, standards are above average in mathematics, below average in science and broadly average in English and other subjects. This represents good progress for this particular group from their Year 2 tests. Some caution needs to be taken in interpreting national test information. In small schools, the proportion of higher and lower attaining pupils in each year group can lead to apparent swings in standards from year-to-year and this accounts for the apparent drop in standards in English and science. The key to a school's success is whether individual pupils make sufficient progress. The table shows that in most years standards are above or well above average in Year 6 national tests. In 2001, standards at Woodford were in the top five per cent of all schools. The school has won three government achievement awards for the good progress made by pupils. In 2002 and 2003, standards in science were not as high as in English and mathematics because the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels was only average. In 2003 pupils had made good progress from their Year 2 tests in English and mathematics.

**Pupils' personal development is good and supported well by the good provision overall for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** Pupils enjoy school and are positive about learning. Most behave well, but a small minority are not as attentive in lessons as they could be. Levels of attendance are average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provide by the school is sound. This includes good teaching overall.** Sound teaching in the Reception Year and Years 1 to 2 underpins pupils' steady progress. They move ahead more quickly in Years 3 to 6, where the teaching is stronger. ICT is taught well throughout the school. Classroom assistants provide good support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. There is more scope to agree whole school procedures for checking pupils' progress and to improve the marking of pupils' work. The curriculum is broad, but not as balanced as it could be, with pupils engaged in sedentary activities for most of each morning. A good range of out-of-school clubs enriches work in lessons. The provision for children in the Reception class is sound overall, but the outside area is underdeveloped and staffing levels are barely adequate.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are sound overall.** The headteacher provides a clear educational lead to a committed staff team. There are sound systems and procedures in place to support the management of the school. The governance of the school is sound, with a new governing body quickly getting to grips with areas that need attention. All statutory requirements related to running the school are met.

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

Parents are positive about the work of the school and pleased with all that it does for their children. They are particularly impressed by the quality of the teaching and the hard work of the staff. A significant minority feel that the school does not seek their views and they do not find the school approachable. The inspection found that the procedures in place for seeking parents' views are sound, but that it is not so easy to speak to staff informally as it is in many schools. Pupils are positive about all aspects of school life.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Develop the outside accommodation for the Reception Year and improve the staffing levels.
- Implement a whole school approach to checking pupils' progress and improve the marking of pupils' work.
- Challenge higher attaining pupils more effectively in science.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils make good progress overall and for several years standards have been above average in English and mathematics by the time pupils reach Year 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and make steady progress in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2, where standards are broadly average in English and below average in mathematics and science. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and make good progress. Standards in Year 6 are average in English, above average in mathematics, but below average in science.

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

- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and make good progress.
- Most years, standards in Year 6 national tests are above and sometimes well above average.
- Pupils achieve well in ICT as a consequence of consistently good teaching.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are supported effectively.
- Higher attaining pupils do not do as well as they should in science.
- Children in the Foundation Stage (Reception Year) make steady progress, but do not receive sufficient adult support.

#### *Starting school*

1. When children start school in the Reception class, the school's own assessment indicates that in most years their knowledge, skills and understanding are wide ranging, but broadly in line with that expected for their age. There is a variation year on year in the proportion of children who are more advanced than or behind their peers and in some years, such as the current Year 3, the overall entry profile was below average.

#### *Standards in national tests*

2. Overall, standards have risen in Year 6 national tests since the last inspection and for three consecutive years the school has received a government achievement award for the good progress made by older pupils. Improvement has been broadly in line with the national trend.
3. In small schools, standards sometimes fluctuate dramatically year on year. This is because of the small numbers in each year group and the impact that these have on statistical information. Nonetheless, some general points can be drawn. One of the most significant is that pupils in Year 6 achieve well and make good progress from their Year 2 tests in English and mathematics.
4. The table below shows that in 2003 standards fell from the previous year and were well below average in Year 2 tests in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because a large proportion of pupils had special educational needs and struggled with their work. There were few higher attaining pupils in this particular year group.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.0 (17.0)	15.9 (15.8)
writing	12.7 (15.2)	14.9 (14.4)
mathematics	14.3 (16.3)	16.4 (16.5)



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*There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

5. In most years, standards in Year 6 national tests are above and sometimes well above average. This table shows that in 2003 standards in Year 6 tests were above average in English, well above average in mathematics and average in science. This masks the particularly good progress that these pupils made from Year 2 in English and mathematics. Standards in 2003 were not as high in science as in other subjects because higher attainers did not do as well as they should have done. In comparison with similar schools, pupils at Woodford did better than their peers in English, very much better in mathematics and as well as them in science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (28.3)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	29.1 (27.6)	27.0 (26.7)
science	29.1 (28.8)	28.8 (28.3)

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

*Inspection findings*

*The Foundation Stage*

6. Children have settled very well into school. They achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development and are well set to exceed the goals expected for them by the end of the year. In all other areas of learning, their achievement is satisfactory and they make steady progress. Almost all should reach the goals expected for them by the end of term. In spite of the staff's best efforts, children's progress is hampered by insufficient adult support throughout the day and an underdeveloped outside area, which limits both the attention that they receive and the opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.

*Years 1 and 2*

7. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and make sound progress. By Year 2, standards are broadly average in reading and writing and in line with expectations in most other subjects. Standards are below average in mathematics and science. Most pupils reach the expected level in these subjects, but few do any better. The challenge for higher attaining pupils, in science particularly, is not high enough.

*Years 3 to 6*

8. Overall, pupils achieve well and make good progress in Years 3 to 6 because the teaching is stronger. By Year 6, standards are above average in mathematics, below average in science and broadly average in English and other subjects. This marks good progress for these pupils because when they took their Year 2 tests, standards were well below average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged in science.

*Whole school issues*

9. The school is focusing on raising standards in ICT. This has been successful and although standards are currently average, pupils achieve well across all areas of ICT. Writing is also a focus for school improvement and although standards are now also broadly average, generally the presentation of pupils' work is not good enough in most classes.

*Pupils with special educational needs*

10. Almost a quarter of the pupils have been identified with special educational needs and three of these pupils have a statement of special educational need. This is slightly above the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties; a few have behavioural and emotional problems. The pupils with a statement have more complex problems. These pupils are not spread evenly through the school and in both Years 3 and 5 there are more pupils with difficulties than in other classes. Overall, these pupils achieve as well as their peers because of the extra support they are given and make good progress towards their personal targets.

#### *Higher attaining pupils*

11. Higher attaining pupils are challenged effectively in English, mathematics and ICT. In other subjects, including science, they work on the same tasks as their peers and, although more work is expected of them, this does not always ensure sufficient challenge.

#### *Boys and girls*

12. In lessons, there was no significant difference in the achievement and boys and girls. On average, over the last three years, boys have done better than girls in Year 2 national tests and girls have done better than boys in Year 6 national tests. However, the large imbalance between boys and girls makes these comparisons inappropriate.

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

Pupils are positive about school and enjoy their work. Most behave well, but a few pupils are not as attentive in lessons as they could be. Pupils have made good strides in their personal development, which is supported by the good provision made for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is broadly average. This positive picture has been maintained since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils enjoy school and like learning.
- Children in the Reception Year have settled into school life very well.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons and at playtimes.
- Most pupils have formed good relationships with their peers and the staff.
- A few pupils in Years 2 and 3 find it hard to behave well in lessons.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are not always as attentive as they should be when their class teacher does not teach them.
- Pupils have few opportunities to take on responsibilities around the school.

### **Commentary**

#### *Attitudes*

13. Pupils are very positive about school. They clearly enjoy coming and are interested in learning. They particularly like meeting their friends, but also talked to inspectors enthusiastically about their work in a range of subjects. These positive attitudes are fostered by the good relationships between all members of the school community and by the teachers' own enthusiasm. 'Owlbert', the school mascot, who lives in the school hall, also captures pupils' imagination and interest. The good procedures for helping children to settle into school provide a firm foundation for their personal development.

#### *Behaviour*

14. Overall, behaviour is satisfactory. Most pupils behave well in lessons and at playtimes because staff are clear about what they expect. They listen carefully to their teachers and each other and act sensibly in classrooms and around the school. Pupils are involved at the beginning of the year in drawing up rules for their class and this helps to reinforce good behaviour. Teachers use various sanctions and rewards to encourage pupils and these are largely successful. However, a small minority of pupils in Years 2 and 3 do not behave as well as they should. Their difficulties have been identified and appropriate strategies are being used to help them to improve. In Years 5 and 6, pupils do not always respond as well as they should when they are not taught by their class teacher. Incidents of bullying are not commonplace, but are dealt with appropriately. There is no evidence of any racist remarks or incidents. The table below shows that there were no exclusions for inappropriate behaviour last year.

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background

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

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
98	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

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

#### ***Personal development***

15. Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and most pupils are making good progress in their personal development. The Christian, caring ethos of the school permeates its work and provides a firm basis for pupils' spiritual development. This is fostered soundly through lessons and assemblies, which include a daily act of collective worship. There is scope for highlighting opportunities for pupils' spiritual development in teachers' planning. Pupils' moral and social development is promoted effectively through clear guidance on behaviour and moral issues and a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills. Consequently most pupils behave well. These include a number of clubs after school, opportunities to work together in lessons and several occasions during the year when pupils fund raise for charities. However there are few regular opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, organising games at playtime or helping with assemblies, for example, although older pupils help the reception children at lunchtimes when they start school. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, with work planned for increased links with a school with a broad ethnic mix.

#### **Attendance**

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.4	School data	0.3
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.*

16. Attendance in the last year dropped, but this is largely explained by the attendance record of one pupil who joined the school last year with a medical condition requiring long periods of hospitalisation and treatment. The significant majority of parents ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive punctually. Registration practice and routines are well established and provide a good start to the day. Procedures to monitor and promote good attendance are satisfactory but lack rigour in following up all absences on the first day. Attendance data is appropriately monitored and unexplained absences are followed up

although this may be several weeks later. The majority of absences arise through sickness or medical visits, although a number of parents formally seek the headteacher's approval to withdraw their children from school to participate in annual family holidays during term time.

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

The school provides a sound quality of education. Teaching and learning are good overall. The curriculum is sound, with a good range of interesting clubs after school. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, with improvements needed for reception children.

### **Teaching and learning**

Overall, the quality of teaching is good and ensures that pupils' achieve well. Teaching is sound in the Reception Year and in Years 1 and 2 and this underpins pupils' steady progress. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good and consequently pupils make good gains in their learning. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall, but marking is not as helpful as it should be.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good relationships between staff and pupils provide a firm foundation for pupils' learning.
- Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 and so pupils move forward more quickly.
- ICT is taught well and this enables pupils to achieve well.
- Marking does not always help pupils to understand whether they have grasped new learning, or what they need to do to improve.
- Learning support assistants provide good support, especially for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils are encouraged to discuss their work with their friends and this helps them to develop their understanding.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of the way pupils should present their work.
- Children in the Reception class are not always sufficiently challenged because there is not enough adult support.
- Planning for higher attaining pupils in science is not challenging enough.
- Good use is made of teachers' subject expertise.
- There is not a whole school approach to recording pupils' progress.
- There is a good emphasis on helping pupils to work independently in the Reception Year.

### **Commentary**

17. The overall good quality of the teaching has been maintained since the last inspection and ensures that pupils make good progress overall between joining and leaving the school. Teaching is satisfactory in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2 and good on Years 3 to 6. The table below shows the quality of teaching in lessons seen during the inspection.

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	2	10	13	0	0	0

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

18. There are some common strengths that underpin work in all classrooms. These have been fostered by the clear leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher.

### **Good relationships**

19. It is evident that in all classes teachers and pupils have formed good relationships. Pupils trust and respect their teachers. Teachers quite clearly enjoy their pupils' company. This mutual respect provides a very positive atmosphere for learning.

#### *Contribution of learning support assistants*

20. Learning support assistants work closely with teachers to support individuals and groups. They provide particularly effective help for pupils with special educational needs.

#### *Use of teachers' subject expertise*

21. Good use is made of teachers' subject expertise. In the two classes where there is more than one teacher, staff teach to their strengths. There is also some 'swapping' of teachers for science, music and physical education (PE) in order to capitalise on staff expertise.

#### *A good emphasis on speaking and listening*

22. Throughout the school, teachers encourage pupils to discuss and evaluate their work, either in pairs or small groups. This helps them to develop their understanding of what is being taught.

#### *The teaching of ICT*

23. Throughout the school, ICT is taught well. This area has been a particular focus for school improvement and has developed as a result.

24. There are also some common areas for development. The most significant are:

- *The quality of marking of pupils' work* - The school has a clear marking policy. This is not followed consistently in all classes. Teachers do not routinely let pupils know whether they have grasped the point of the lesson or give them pointers for improvement. Sometimes work is not marked at all.
- *The use of information about pupils' progress to help them to improve* - All teachers keep records and evaluations of pupils' work, but there is not a common expectation of what information should be recorded. There is a clear policy outlining the principles of assessment, but not the detail. Written records are not commonly passed from one teacher to another, but staff discuss pupils' progress at length. There are some good procedures in place, such as the class sheets showing pupils' progress through the school used in the Years 5 and 6 class. Records of older pupils' progress in ICT, design and technology (DT), history and geography are also models of good practice. Generally teachers are not using the information that they have about pupils' progress as effectively as they might in order to help them to improve. Most pupils do not know what they have to do in order to move forward.
- *Expectations of the presentation of pupils' work* - Generally, teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils in relation to the presentation of their work. The exception is in Years 3 and 4, where pupils have clear guidance about what is expected of them. As a result, their work is well presented.
- *Challenge for higher attaining pupils in science* - Higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently in science and not enough is expected of them.
- *Homework arrangements* - The school has a clear policy for homework, but staff do not use the reading and homework diaries as effectively as they could. In some classes, teachers do not monitor what pupils are recording and opportunities to develop a link with parents are subsequently lost. This was an area identified for improvement by the last inspection.

#### *Teaching in the Foundation Stage (Reception Year)*

25. Teaching in the Reception Year is sound overall and has some good features. The two teachers working with this age group manage them very well. They encourage children to work independently and consequently, children approach learning tasks confidently and maintain concentration for long periods. Work is well planned and includes more scope for expecting children to plan what they are going to do during the activity part of the session and encouraging them to evaluate how well they have done. Teachers keep records of children's progress in their literacy development, in particular, but do not track the independent activities that children select each day. The overall quality of the teaching has been affected by the lack of an early years assistant who has been trained to work with individuals and small groups.

#### *Teaching in Years 1 and 2*

26. Teaching is sound overall in Years 1 and 2. These pupils are in mixed-age classes and teachers have the challenge of planning work from two different planning frameworks. They manage this well. The small group of Year 1 pupils work well together and are effectively challenged by their teachers. In Year 2, sound teaching ensures that pupils make steady progress.

#### *Teaching in Years 3 to 6*

27. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6, where pupils achieve well. Particular strengths in the very good lessons included very effective questioning to challenge and extend pupils' thinking and very clear explanations. Some younger pupils, who share a class with Year 2 pupils, find it hard to concentrate. Staff usually manage them effectively but these younger pupils are not always as positive as they might be. Some older pupils find it hard to adjust to different teachers, but they are managed well.

#### *Teaching of different groups*

28. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. Work is carefully planned for them and classroom assistants provide good individual help under the guidance of the class teachers. Higher attaining pupils are challenged effectively in English, mathematics and ICT, but not always in science and other subjects. Teachers manage the imbalance of boys and girls in some classes well.

### **The curriculum**

Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad but not always as balanced as it might be. It is enhanced by a good range of after-school clubs and activities. Planning for different subjects has improved since the last inspection. There is no enclosed outside area for children in the Foundation Stage and this is unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The lack of an enclosed outdoor area and full-time support assistant in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and this enables them to make good progress.
- Provision for ICT is good and pupils achieve well.
- There is a good range of clubs and activities outside lesson times.
- The curriculum is not always as balanced as it might be.
- Opportunity for pupils, especially the older ones, to take part in sport are limited.

### **Commentary**

#### *Planning for work in the Foundation Stage*

29. Planning for children in the Reception Year is good. Work is securely based on the six areas of learning for children of this age. There is a good emphasis on learning through play and children are encouraged to be independent.

#### *Planning for work in Years 1 to 6*

30. In Years 1 to 6, the school provides a broad curriculum that meets statutory requirements. It is firmly based on the National Curriculum and the local agreed syllabus for religious education. There is a suitable emphasis on literacy and numeracy and the national strategies are used well as the basis for planning in these areas. Teachers make good use of opportunities that occur to employ these skills in other subjects. However, there is no overview of possible links to ensure a consistent approach.
31. In other subjects, teachers use a combination of national and local guidelines and commercial schemes as the basis for planning for the different age groups. Overall, teachers successfully address the challenge of planning for mixed-age classes by employing a two-year cycle to cover the curriculum. However, the school needs to give further thought to these arrangements to ensure that pupils do not repeat work unnecessarily or miss out on important areas of the curriculum. At the moment, this is especially relevant for pupils in the Reception/Year 1 and Year 2/3 classes.
32. The curriculum is not as balanced as it might be. Lengthy sessions of English throughout the school and mathematics in Years 5 and 6 do not always help pupils to maintain concentration or sustain their pace of learning. In addition, it squeezes the time that is available for other subjects. The school recognises the need to review the amount of time set aside for PE for older pupils. Satisfactory provision is made for personal, social and health education.

#### *Planning for pupils with special educational needs*

33. Work is carefully planned for pupils with special educational needs. They usually work on the same tasks as their peers, with extra support. Class teachers, in consultation with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), draw up pupils' individual education plans. These are clear and detailed.

#### *Curriculum development*

34. The school has successfully addressed the weaknesses in planning for English, mathematics and ICT that were identified at the time of the last inspection. In mathematics and ICT, in particular, this has made a significant contribution to the improvements in the school's provision and pupils' standards. Subject leaders are responsible for keeping their areas under regular review and this feeds into the school development plan satisfactorily.

#### *An inclusive approach*

35. The school is committed to including all pupils in the full range of learning activities. In most subjects, this is achieved through the grouping of pupils and the good support provided by teachers and teaching assistants. This works well for pupils with learning difficulties or special educational needs. Extra support is also provided through targeted programmes such as the 'Springboard' numeracy scheme to help older pupils catch up. However, in some lessons, and more generally in science, higher attaining pupils are not given sufficiently challenging work and therefore are not achieving as well as they should be. This is partly because teachers rely too heavily on the published schemes for their age groups and do not check carefully enough to see precisely what pupils need to do in order to improve and to move on to the next level.

#### *Clubs and other activities*

36. The school provides a good range of after-school activities that are popular and well attended by boys and girls. They include opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to take part in sport, music, dance and art. All pupils have an opportunity to learn a musical instrument and links with local schools include participation in a music festival. The curriculum is considerably enriched through these activities, which contribute strongly to pupils' personal development. Within this sound provision there is scope to broaden the range of educational visits and visitors to the school.

#### *Staffing, accommodation and resources*

37. The accommodation for Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. There are plans to add an extension to provide additional office space and an entrance foyer. Staffing levels are satisfactory, with a good blend of experience and expertise. Both staffing and the accommodation are unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage. In several lessons, especially in practical situations and in outdoor activities, the lack of full-time support affects adversely the quality of pupils' learning. The school has not addressed the issue arising from the last inspection regarding the provision of a secure outdoor area.
38. Overall, resources for learning are adequate. In ICT, they are good. They are much improved since the last inspection and this enables pupils to achieve well.

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

The overall provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is satisfactory and pupils feel confident in turning to adults working in the school for support and advice. The procedures for using information about pupils' progress to help them to move forward are sound. There are informal but satisfactory procedures for seeking and acting on pupils' views.

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

- Pupils trust the staff, who know them very well and give them good support.
- There are good arrangements for helping children to settle into school.
- Health and safety is promoted well on a day-to-day basis in lessons.
- Pupils are given effective support to help them to improve, but few are clear about how well they are doing or the next step in their learning.

#### **Commentary**

##### *Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety*

39. The good level of care for pupils has been maintained well since the last inspection. Pupils are looked after well in lessons and at playtimes. Teachers take particular care to make sure that pupils work safely and draw their attention to any potential hazards in lessons. First aid provision is satisfactory and there is an adequate number of qualified first aiders. Child protection procedures meet requirements and there is good support from external agencies. Staff and parent helpers know to whom to turn if they have any concerns. However, the headteacher, who is the person designated with responsibility, has not undergone any recent training. Parent helpers are police checked. Provision for health and safety is satisfactory overall.

##### *Support, advice and guidance for pupils*

40. Pupils are given sound support, advice and guidance. Most children already know the staff and are familiar with the building before they start school, because they have attended 'Little Owls', which is the pre-school playgroup that meets twice a week in the school. This helps them to settle in quickly. Staff know pupils well and provide good individual advice. Pupils are confident that they can seek and will receive support from adults working within the school.



Formal structures for evaluating how well pupils are doing are satisfactory, but pupils are not always clear about whether they are doing as well as they should or what they need to do to improve. Support and advice for pupils with special educational needs are good. Records for these pupils are kept centrally, although there is no checklist in individual files to summarise contact with other professionals and parents and the allocation of support.

#### *Involving pupils in the school's work and development*

41. The school's arrangements for seeking and valuing the views of pupils are informal and satisfactory. They make their views known through their class teachers, often in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. A school council is planned for September but pupils have not been consulted about this yet. Pupils have limited roles of responsibility. They are expected to keep their classrooms tidy but older pupils particularly do not undertake regular tasks, such as preparing the hall for assembly.

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

The partnership between school and home is sound. Very good progress has been made in addressing the key issue, identified in the previous report, to improve the quality of information provided to parents. Links with local schools and the community are satisfactory.

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

- Parents have positive views of the school and the way in which it helps their children to learn and develop as individuals.
- The Friends' Association (FOWS) provides good support for the work of the school.
- A significant minority of parents do not feel happy approaching the school.
- Most parents make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- There are good links with the pre-school playgroup.
- Reports to parents about their children's progress are very good.
- There is a good partnership with the local Anglican Church and Baptist Chapel.

#### **Commentary**

##### *The school's links with parents*

42. Parents have positive views of the school and the way in which it helps their children to learn and develop as individuals. They are particularly pleased with the quality of the teaching. However, a significant minority do not feel that the school consults them sufficiently and some do not find the school very welcoming. The inspection found that the school does consult parents, through questionnaires, for example, but does not provide parents with any feedback. It is not so easy to speak informally to staff as it is in many schools. There is no bell at the front door, which is locked during the school day. Parents are encouraged to drop off their children in the playground and collect them at the school gate at the end of the day. They do not enter the building if they do not have a specific reason to do so.
43. Reports to parents about their children's progress are very good. Subject information is generally very helpful and includes information on progress and clear targets to help parents understand what to do to support their children in moving to the next stage of their learning. (These are not used by teachers as effectively as they might be). Other school documentation is clear. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are effectively involved in discussions about their child's progress and parents of pupils with statements are involved in annual reviews.
44. Most parents make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Many share books with their children at home. A few parents help regularly in classrooms. The Friends of Woodford

School (FOWS) provide good support for the pupils through their fundraising activities and benefit the learning opportunities available to pupils. They have a small but hardworking committee and raise about £2,000 to support the work of the school.

#### *Links with the community*

45. Community links are satisfactory with some areas of particular strength, most notably the contact with the local Anglican Church and Baptist Chapel. These enhance pupils' spiritual development. The school is involved in local events like the village May Festival and Church flower festival. The local shop supports the 'fashion show' and pubs collect supermarket vouchers for the school. The village is used as a basis for field study work in history and geography.

#### *Links with other schools and early years providers*

46. Overall, these links are satisfactory. The pre-school playgroup uses the school hall, without charge, twice per week. This fosters the good links between the pre-school and the school. Links with local secondary schools provide appropriate support for the transfer of pupils to the secondary school at age 11.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

#### **How well is the school led and managed?**

Leadership and management by the headteacher and other staff are satisfactory overall, with a balance of strengths and areas for development. Governance of the school is also satisfactory, with key governors making important contributions. This sound picture has been maintained since the last inspection.

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

- The headteacher, supported effectively by the deputy, provides clear leadership.
- Governors use their skills and expertise well to support the headteacher and staff and help shape the school's future.
- The school provides well for the professional development of all staff.
- The school development plan does not clearly identify the main priorities or the arrangements for checking on progress.
- Arrangements for evaluating the work of the school need clarifying and strengthening for both staff and governors.

#### *Leadership*

47. The headteacher provides clear leadership for staff as well as an enthusiastic lead in the classroom. She is supported effectively by the deputy, whose thoughtful approach complements her well. In addition to her teaching commitment, the headteacher co-ordinates several subjects and has a significant impact on the school's good provision for ICT. She has successfully created a united and supportive team of staff who work well together. Clear lines of responsibility have been established and staff share a common purpose and a sound understanding of their roles.
48. Teachers with subject responsibilities are continuing to develop their roles, but are not yet fully influencing standards in all subjects. Because the school is small, some teachers have multiple responsibilities, so their concentration on the areas of greatest need within the core subjects is understandable.
49. There is clear leadership for the work with pupils who have special educational needs. The school's commitment to inclusion means that these pupils are valued and supported

effectively. The special educational needs co-ordinator has allocated time each week to undertake her responsibilities in this area.

50. Formal strategic development planning is an area for improvement. All staff are consulted during the early stages of preparing the school development plan. This is based largely on subject leaders' curriculum action plans. It provides a clear and helpful agenda for work during the current year but it does not reflect either the headteacher's or governors' long-term strategic views. In addition, it lacks information about the ways in which staff and governors can monitor and, in particular, evaluate the success of new initiatives. It is not easy to see which are the key priorities.

### *Management*

51. Overall, the management of the school is satisfactory and procedures to help the school run smoothly on a day-to-day basis are understood by all.
52. All staff, including teaching assistants and non-teaching staff, benefit from good arrangements for professional development. These are complemented by regular performance reviews. The school has built effectively on earlier arrangements and there is a good balance between the professional and career needs of staff and the needs of the school. Individual targets are often linked to whole school priorities, such as the use of ICT across the curriculum.
53. Some aspects of the school's monitoring and self-evaluation work well. In addition to responding to national and other initiatives, the school has identified areas that need to be improved and these are built into the school development plan. Other areas are not so well developed. For example, insufficient use is made of test results and teachers' assessments to measure the progress made by individual pupils as they move through the school. Procedures for evaluating other aspects of the school's work are at a very early stage of development, such as the impact of the revised timetable or the imbalance in numbers of boys and girls in some classes. Information of this sort is not yet pulled together well enough to make best use of it to measure success and plan for further improvement.

### *Financial management*

54. Management of the school's finances is satisfactory. Day-to-day financial controls and procedures are good and the bursar provides efficient support for the headteacher and governors. Although expenditure per pupil is high, this reflects the small size of the school. Procedures to ensure that principles of best value are applied are sound.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	276,234.24	Balance from previous year	60,575.61
Total expenditure	283,779.85	Balance carried forward to the next	53,030.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,809.07		

55. The current balances are well above recommended levels. They have arisen over a period of time as a result of governors' intention to maintain staffing levels during the uncertainties caused by fluctuating numbers on roll. Now, as a result of governors' clearer understanding of the school's financial position and a more stable roll, significant amounts are being earmarked to support much-needed extensions to the building. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

### *Governance*

56. Governance of the school is satisfactory and has some good features. All statutory requirements in relation to running the school are met. Individual governors bring a range of different skills and experience to their roles. The chair, for example, is closely involved with finance and through his weekly visits has developed a close and supportive working relationship with the headteacher.
57. In discussion with governors, it is clear that through their regular visits they have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are involved in planning for improvement and are aware of the initiatives in which the school is involved. There is general agreement that they are now adopting a more proactive approach as they begin to develop a more strategic function. They recognise that their role in challenging what the school does could be strengthened. Their evaluation of spending decisions is an area for further development.

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

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

58. Children start school in the September after their fourth birthday. They are taught in a class with Year 1 pupils. Currently, the number in this mixed class is only 20, which is a small class. The teacher is supported by a learning support assistant for most of the morning session, but has the whole class for the afternoons. Whilst this means that there is a good child to adult ratio, because the reception children and Year 1 pupils work on different tasks, children in the Foundation Stage do not always have the level of adult support that they need. When there is only one adult in the class, it is difficult to supervise learning activities in the inside and outside areas. Consequently, most children are achieving satisfactorily, rather than any better and make steady progress. They are on line to reach the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning. Many exceed these levels in their personal, social and emotional development. There is scope for making more use of the outside area to develop children's skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning. This was an area for improvement from the last inspection, which has not been addressed. There is a designated area for the Foundation Stage children outside the classroom, but it is not enclosed or developed with fixed equipment to provide appropriate learning opportunities. One of the teachers is responsible for the day-to-day leadership and management of work in the Foundation Stage and undertakes this well.

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

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

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

- Very good relationships between staff and children underpin the work in this area.
- Staff encourage children to show independence and to think for themselves.
- Children are encouraged to co-operate with each other.
- Children understand the clear expectations set for good behaviour.
- Children are not expected to plan what they will do during the activity part of the day, or review what they have learnt.

#### **Commentary**

59. Teaching is good and consequently children make good strides in their learning. Children clearly enjoy being at school and are confident in their relatively new surroundings. The staff have formed very good relationships with the children and are positive and encouraging. Children emulate their teachers and in their turn are kind and helpful to other children. There are clear expectations set of how children should behave and all clearly know the difference between right and wrong. Teachers encourage children to work independently. Children select activities from a range offered and spend extended periods concentrating on their chosen task. At the moment, they are not expected to plan the activities that they will tackle in any one session, or review what they have done. Children collaborate well with each other, taking turns and helping each other to tidy up.

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

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

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

- Children are provided with good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills.

- There is a good emphasis on helping children to understand phonics.

### **Commentary**

60. Teaching is sound and children's achievement is satisfactory. There is a wide range of opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills. These include discussions with the teacher in small and large groups and collaborative work with their friends. Most children listen carefully and speak confidently. They enjoy books and stories and this enjoyment is fostered by support from parents and carers at home. The school has adopted a new approach to teaching children about sounds fairly recently. There is every indication that this is providing a good platform for children to develop their reading skills. Some children are already tackling simple texts. Children are learning to form letters and most write their own names.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good emphasis on the use of mathematical language.

### **Commentary**

61. Teaching is satisfactory and children's achievement is satisfactory. They make steady progress. Sessions are planned well and teachers take care to introduce children to mathematical language. Teachers' planning shows that rhymes and counting games are used to reinforce children's understanding. In one session seen, children worked on a practical task to find out which sock held the most cups of sand. The teacher took care to encourage children to estimate and then count. However, a lack of adult support affected the overall quality of the teaching, in spite of the best efforts of the teacher who managed the reception and Year 1 groups well. Children do not record much work at this stage, but it is evident that some are already matching numbers to ten.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children use computers very confidently because of good teaching in this area.

### **Commentary**

62. Overall, children make steady progress in this area as a consequence of sound teaching. Their achievement is satisfactory. Most of the work planned is based on their own experiences, with work about spring the main focus during the inspection. In one session, children used hand lenses to see how tadpoles moved, for example. They undertake a range of practical activities planned to help them to find out about the world around them. These include planting seeds, washing clothes and painting walls with water to see what happens. Children use computers very confidently because they are taught effectively. They have good control of the mouse, use programs independently and print their own work.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children use construction equipment very well.
- There is no balancing or climbing equipment in the outside area.

### **Commentary**

63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in this area. Children have opportunities to develop their physical skills in outside play. They move and run confidently and enjoy using the wheeled toys. However there is no permanent, large climbing and balancing equipment for them to use outside. Twice a week they have a timetabled hall session with Year 1 pupils and the large apparatus is available for them. This goes some way to compensating for the deficiencies outside. Children have the opportunity to use a range of construction equipment. They manage this very well and in one session seen made some complex wheeled vehicles. Most children handle small tools, such as scissors confidently.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Music is taught well and children have a good sense of rhythm.

### **Commentary**

64. Children make steady progress as a consequence of sound teaching. They achieved well in a music lesson seen and although they found it hard to differentiate between low and high sounds, they used percussion instruments to tap out a beat very well. In this session, the teacher used her voice very effectively to explain about high and low sounds. Children enjoy using the role-play area to act out their own stories and engage enthusiastically in a range of drawing, painting, modelling and printing tasks that are available each day. They achieve satisfactorily, but could do better with more adult support.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good overall.
- Standards have been above and often well above average in Year 6 national tests.
- There is a good emphasis on helping pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Most teachers do not set high enough expectations for good presentation of work.
- Home-school reading diaries are not used as effectively as they could be to establish a dialogue between home and school.
- The library is in need of replenishment and updating.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to write for a purpose.
- Pupils develop their literacy skills in other subjects, but there is a lack of formal planning to ensure that this happens systematically.

## Commentary

65. Standards are currently average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection. This does not reflect the improvements that have been made. In reality, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are doing better than they were. Standards have been above or well above average in recent years in the Year 6 national tests. Pupils currently in Year 6 have made good progress overall since their Year 2 tests and have done well to reach the standards that they have. Consequently, their achievement is good. The achievement of pupils in Year 2 is satisfactory.
66. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. These include whole class discussions at the beginning of lessons and a good emphasis on paired discussions. Consequently pupils speak confidently and coherently. At the moment there is no long-term planning framework to identify the skills that pupils need to develop year on year. Drama is used to enhance learning in other subjects, but it is not regularly timetabled.
67. Pupils enjoy reading and make good use of various strategies to help them to identify new words. There is focused teaching on developing phonic skills in Years 1 and 2, which helps pupils to become confident readers. Pupils learn about a range of authors and genres in group reading, the literacy hour and when teachers read stories to their class. This helps pupils to develop wide reading experiences. All the pupils spoken to enjoy reading and have clear preferences for certain authors or types of books. Pupils take books home regularly to share with parents or carers. However, some teachers do not regularly monitor pupils' reading diaries and so opportunities to develop a dialogue between home and school are lost. There is scope to develop classroom book areas. Few have displays to attract and engage pupils in reading. Opportunities are also lost to help pupils to learn more about the texts that are referred to in the literacy hours. Many extracts are used, but pupils do not routinely have the opportunity to read the whole book. The school is fortunate in having a library. It has already identified the need to update and replenish the book stock and to include guidance for pupils about how the books are arranged.
68. The school has worked hard to improve pupils' writing recently and standards are currently broadly average. Good attention is paid to helping pupils to develop spelling strategies and to improve the content and style of their writing. Pupils undertake a good number of writing activities and some good links are made with other subjects. Generally, teachers do not have high enough expectations for the presentation of pupils' work, although this is not the case in Years 3 and 4. Regular handwriting activities are planned, but pupils do not transfer what they learn in these to their everyday work. Sometimes pupils are asked to write for real purpose or for an audience, but this is not a regular feature of the work.
69. Teaching and learning are sound in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6, where more is expected of pupils. Work is planned effectively and teaching assistants provide good support, especially for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils work on similar tasks to their peers, but manage well with extra support. Teachers collect detailed information about pupils' progress, especially in relation to the development of their phonic understanding and spelling development. Most work is marked, but does not provide pupils with a clear understanding of what needs to be improved.
70. Pupils spend extended periods on literacy tasks each day and this limits the time available for work in other subjects. The co-ordinator has a clear view of the strengths and areas for development in the subject through her discussions with staff, sampling of pupils' work and monitoring of teaching and learning. Her leadership is sound with some good features, particularly related to the development of work in older pupils' classes.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum



71. Teachers take care to develop pupils' literacy skills in other subjects, most particularly history. However there is not an overarching plan to outline these opportunities year on year. Similarly, teachers make good use of paired discussion to help pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills in a range of subjects, but there is not yet a planning framework to identify the development of these skills as pupils move through the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
- Standards in Year 6 are consistently above average.
- Teaching is good in Years 3 – 6 so pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' written work is often poorly presented and does not reflect their level of understanding.
- Teachers' use of assessment is inconsistent and marking does not always give pupils a clear picture of what they need to do to improve.
- The use of ICT to support pupils' learning in mathematics is developing well.

### **Commentary**

72. Standards in Year 2 are below average. This is because, although most pupils reach the expected level, there are few higher attaining pupils. In Year 6, standards are above average and have been consistently high for several years. They have improved from average at the time of the last inspection.
73. In Year 2, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They acquire a sound knowledge and understanding of basic number, shape and measurement. Good teaching in Years 3 to 6 ensures that pupils achieve well as they move through the school and in Year 6 most pupils confidently carry out calculations involving larger numbers. They deal competently with fractions and ratio and measure angles accurately. Although not as high as in 2003, a significant proportion of pupils in the current Year 6 are working above these expected levels.
74. The National Numeracy Strategy is used well as a basis for planning, with a commercial scheme providing more detailed guidance on individual lessons. This ensures that there is a clear focus on the teaching of number skills within a broad and balanced range of experiences that cover all strands of the subject. In most classes, pupils do not take enough care to present their work well and this often leads to mistakes and confusion in their calculations. The use of ICT to support learning is developing well and becoming an integral part of teaching and learning in mathematics. Good examples were seen of pupils consolidating their number skills as well as extending their data handling skills.
75. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. It is reflected in the more rapid progress pupils make in the older classes where teachers expect more from pupils and introduce increasing challenges to extend pupils' learning. Lesson planning is thorough. It generally takes account of the different groups within the class although extension work is not always provided for the most able. Teaching assistants are well briefed and know exactly what is required of them. The quality of marking is variable and does not often indicate to pupils how they can improve.
76. A good example was seen in Years 3 and 4 of the teacher managing the mental mathematics starter session well, so that pupils of all abilities were fully and actively engaged in the activity. In Years 5 and 6, pupils used 'post-it' notes at the end of the lesson to let the teacher know how

well they felt they had done. Each of these are examples of good practice that could be shared if there was a more regular pattern of lesson observations.

77. Leadership and management of the subject are sound. The co-ordinator has quite rightly identified the need to review procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress, which at present are inconsistent. She has produced helpful booklets about the way mathematics is taught and ways to help children at home. Parents have welcomed these.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

78. Pupils often use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects, giving them an opportunity to use their skills in a variety of practical situations. For example, they use graphs and tables to record data in geography, measure and record temperature in science investigations and measure materials in a range of assignments in design and technology. Teachers take advantage of these opportunities as they crop up but they are not planned systematically or highlighted in the planning frameworks for the different subjects. This is an area for development.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is broad and balanced.
- Practical activities capture pupils' interest and increase their understanding.
- Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- Assessment is not well enough established to help pupils move forward.

### **Commentary**

79. Most pupils in Year 2 and almost all pupils in Year 6 reach the expected level. However, standards are brought down because too few pupils are working above the expected level. Therefore, standards overall are below average in Year 2 and Year 6.
80. Since the last inspection, the school has carefully analysed national test results, although with small cohorts it is difficult to generalise about strengths and weaknesses. It has adopted national guidance as the basis for planning and purchased a commercial scheme to support teaching and learning. Teachers make good use of these when planning lessons and this ensures a consistent approach.
81. Practical activities are used well to capture pupils' interest. In Year 1, pupils enthusiastically recalled the details of their recent walk to a local pond and a classroom game helped consolidate their knowledge of the frog's life cycle. In Years 5 and 6, pupils carefully and accurately measured the diameter and circumference of dandelion flowers. They used their prior knowledge well in trying to explain why the size of the flower varies from one location to another. However, the presentation of their written recordings was untidy and careless.
82. There is evidence in pupils' books of a good range of practical activities. At present, most of these are led by the teacher and this is helping pupils to understand how to structure a scientific investigation. They consist largely of worksheet tasks, which restrict the opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills by developing their own methods of recording. It limits the progress of more capable pupils in particular. More challenging opportunities are needed for them to become more independent in planning and carrying out their own worthwhile investigations.

83. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are well planned with good use of resources. Clear explanations help pupils to develop their understanding. Pupils largely complete the same tasks, with teachers and, when available, the well-briefed teaching assistants providing good support for lower attaining pupils. Teachers do not make enough use of marking and end-of-unit tests to show pupils how well they are doing and precisely what they need to do in order to improve and move on to the next level.
84. The leadership and management of science are satisfactory overall. They have been strengthened this year by the provision of opportunities for the co-ordinator to carry out joint lesson observations with a designated governor.
85. ICT is being used increasingly to support learning. A good example was seen in Year 6 where pupils confidently used a spreadsheet to record the results of their dandelion investigation. However, the school has quite rightly identified this as an area for development as it is not yet consistently and regularly used to extend pupils' learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There have been significant improvements in resources and teachers' confidence and expertise.
- Direct teaching of ICT skills is good so pupils achieve well.
- Teachers provide stimulating learning activities that capture pupils' interest and motivate them to do well.
- Enthusiastic subject leadership encourages innovation and provides good levels of support.
- Increased use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects.
- The quality of assessment is variable and inconsistent.

### **Commentary**

86. As a result of good teaching, pupils achieve well throughout the school. In Year 2 and Year 6, almost all reach the levels expected for their ages. In Years 5 and 6, a significant minority do well to exceed these levels. This is a direct reflection of the teacher's expertise, enthusiasm and specialist resources such as the digital blue camera used by the 'Owlbert Broadcasting Company' to create their animated presentations. The presentations showed good evidence of editing, application of special effects and great perseverance by the pupils involved. Lower attaining pupils often work with more capable pupils or an adult to help them achieve as well as their peers. All pupils achieve equally well.
87. Since the last inspection, resources have improved considerably and training for teachers and support staff has led to better subject knowledge and greater confidence. As a result a key strength of the subject is the depth of coverage and the broad range of opportunities provided. Very good use is made of local guidance as the basis for planning to develop pupils' skills systematically.
88. Only one full lesson was seen, but a good range of other evidence, including observations of pupils at work in the computer suite and in classrooms, discussions with pupils and staff and samples of earlier work, confirm that teaching is good. Teachers are well prepared and make good use of the resources available. In the lesson seen, teaching was very good. A brisk introduction captured and held pupils' attention from the outset and ensured they understood how to complete the task successfully, using Screen LOGO to draw the face of a member of the 'Blockhead' family. Well-timed interventions by the teacher ensured pupils developed good working routines, reviewing and evaluating their work as they went along and this helped to

extend their thinking and develop their own ideas. On other occasions, well-briefed teaching assistants confidently provided good levels of support.

89. The co-ordinator provides enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership. She readily undertakes and leads new initiatives and enjoys close and supportive links with the local authority that allow access to equipment and expertise. Through her formal and informal monitoring she has a clear view of work and standards in other classes. Although not identified in her action plan, she is fully aware of the need to develop assessment procedures to track pupils' progress more consistently.

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

90. Overall, good progress is being made to integrate ICT into all areas of the curriculum. The school has identified this as a priority and teachers are clearly responding positively. In some subjects, for example English, mathematics, art and design and geography, good examples were seen. In others, such as DT, teachers are much more dependent upon the availability of suitable software. There is a need now to record these opportunities in the appropriate curriculum plans.

### **HUMANITIES**

91. Work in the humanities was sampled and only two lessons were seen. Inspectors also talked to pupils and looked at their work. It is not therefore possible to make a judgement on provision, although limited evidence suggests that it is satisfactory and maintained since the last inspection.
92. **Geography** is 'blocked' with history and was not being taught during the inspection. Pupils' work and teachers' planning show that there is reasonable coverage of the curriculum, although the Year 3 pupils, who are currently working with Year 2, have missed a year of the Year 3 to 6 syllabus. All the pupils within the mixed age classes work on the same tasks and there do not appear to be higher expectations for the more capable, older pupils in the class. Usually, these pupils complete more work. Teachers use worksheets quite extensively and there is more scope for pupils to undertake their own research and extend their literacy skills through extended accounts. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their geographical skills. Younger pupils, for example, develop an understanding of maps by marking their route to school on a map of Woodford, while in Year 6 pupils talk about their work using atlases. These older pupils could not recall work with Ordnance Survey maps, although there are several in school. Pupils learn about places. Younger ones have compared the imaginary Island of Struay with Woodford, while older pupils have looked at the differences between Chembokali and Woodford. There is some work undertaken that is based on the local area, such as a study of the River Nene, but scope to extend this further.
93. In **history**, there is evidence of some good links with other subjects. This helps to make the work more interesting and relevant. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils have made some fabric collages of Tudor monarchs in art and design. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have explored narrative writing through their work on the Victorians. Pupils clearly enjoy history and this is because teachers try to bring the subject alive by visits and visitors. During the inspection, younger pupils were planning a visit to a museum in Northampton, for example. Overall planning is sound and there is good coverage of the study units specified for pupils of this age, with the same difficulties for the small group of Year 3 pupils in the mixed Year 2/3 class that there is in geography. There is not such clear reference to the development of historical skills in teachers' planning. Pupils' work suggests concentration on the development of the acquisition of knowledge and understanding to the detriment of the development of their chronological and research skills. This was not the case in the lesson seen, where pupils worked on extracts from the school's logbooks to find out about Woodford in the past. They wrestled well with the challenge of Victorian handwriting and learnt a good deal about education in the past. As in geography, worksheets are used extensively, with higher attaining pupils

sometimes completing more than their peers. Standards were broadly average in the lesson seen.

94. In **religious education**, work is securely based on the agreed syllabus. Good use is made of visits and visitors to engage pupils' interest. During the inspection, for example, the local Anglican priest spent time with the oldest pupils explaining the significance of colour in church vestments. Pupils used this information to design a small banner, a stole or piece of fabric for use in worship. Pupils' written work does not always reflect the interesting activities that pupils undertake in lessons. Again, extensive use is made of worksheets, which do not always challenge higher attaining pupils. Sometimes, teachers design their own sheets, and in the lesson seen these were used effectively to help pupils to appreciate the sayings of Mohammed. Standards in this lesson were broadly average. At the time of the inspection, there were very few displays to remind pupils of what they had learnt or to celebrate what they had achieved.

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

95. Work in these four subjects was sampled. Six lessons were seen in total and inspectors talked to pupils and looked at their work. This is insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement about provision, although there is indication that this is broadly satisfactory and maintained since the last inspection.
96. Only one lesson was seen in **art and design**. Teaching in this lesson was good and pupils achieved well. The teacher's good subject knowledge was used well to help pupils to develop techniques in sculpting with paper. Standards in this session were broadly average. Throughout the school there is evidence that pupils use a range of media, including ICT. There are some good examples of computer-generated designs based on the work of famous artists, such as William Morris and David Hockney. Older pupils use a range of media effectively to denote a range of feelings. There is less evidence of pupils working on observational drawing. The quality of work in pupils' sketchbooks is broadly average, with more scope for work to develop drawing techniques and skills. Teachers make good links with other subjects.
97. In **design and technology** pupils work with a broad range of materials and techniques. They design and produce a variety of products, including different working mechanisms. Work on display shows a strong emphasis on the skills of measuring, cutting and joining. There are regular assignments also in food technology. In Years 2 and 3, pupils investigate and taste different types of bread before baking their own and making a sandwich. In Years 3 and 4, they design and make a bag to keep the lighthouse keeper's lunch safe and dry. They produce detailed sketches and list the materials to be used. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' slippers are finished to a high quality and displayed attractively. There is evidence in all cases of pupils evaluating their designs and suggesting ways of improving them. There is every indication that standards are in line with expected levels.
98. Extra-curricular clubs and a range of visitors enhance work in **music**. Currently, there are two hand chime clubs after school as well as recorder clubs for beginners and more advanced pupils. This year the school has taken advantage of county rock and pop initiatives and have some African drummers booked for later in the term. The county music service also visits the school to play to the pupils. Eleven pupils and one teacher are learning to play the violin. This varied programme outside of lessons, in addition to the opportunities provided for pupils to perform to parents and pupils, makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' skills and understanding. In lessons, good use is made of teachers' expertise, and the good subject knowledge of the teacher contributed to pupils' learning in both of the sessions seen. In both lessons, pupils worked with instruments to create a rhythm and the good range and quality of these instruments, together with good teaching, enabled pupils to achieve well. Standards in these lessons and in singing in assembly were broadly average.

99. Teachers' planning in **physical education** shows that athletics, dance, gymnastics and games skills are taught during the course of the year. In addition, all pupils meet and some exceed, the expectation that pupils swim 25 metres before leaving the school. Two lessons were seen during the inspection: athletics in Years 3 and 4 and gymnastics in Years 5 and 6. In the athletics lesson, teaching was satisfactory. Good teamwork by the teacher and teaching assistant ensured that all pupils were actively involved throughout the lesson. Teaching was good in gymnastics, although some pupils failed to follow instructions promptly and this affected the pace of their learning. The teacher's very good management skills meant that the majority achieved at least satisfactorily. Her clear explanations and demonstrations by pupils promoted good understanding of symmetrical and asymmetrical movements. Pupils' standards in both lessons were as expected for their ages. Opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sport are limited. The school acknowledges the need to review the time allocated to physical education for older pupils to ensure a more balanced programme. Currently not enough time is given to physical education in the Year 5/6 class.

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

100. Only one lesson was seen so no judgements are made about overall provision. In the lesson seen, the teacher made good use of ICT to stimulate discussion and to alert pupils to a range of concerns surrounding the use of mobile phones and text messages. Because the issues were relevant, pupils became engrossed in the activity using an interactive package, which helped them to understand how to respond to different types of messages. A recent staff training day has renewed interest and activity in this area of the school's work. It has resulted in several whole-school projects, including playground design and recycling. In addition, it led to plans to establish a school council and to work towards the Healthy Schools Award. The current programme of activities includes work on diet, health, sex, drugs and personal safety.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

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

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

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

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