

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CONNOR DOWNS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hayle

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111847

Headteacher: Mr A Lawrence

Lead inspector: Mr L Lewin

Dates of inspection: 12 – 15 January 2004

Inspection number: 260513

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:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	172
School address:	Mutton Hill Connor Downs Hayle Cornwall
Postcode:	TR27 5DH
Telephone number:	01736 753 135
Fax number:	01736 759 068
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Ridge
Date of previous inspection:	20 September 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Connor Downs School is located in a rural area at the west end of Connor Downs in West Cornwall. Pupils are drawn from the village and from a wide area outside the school's immediate catchment zone. With 165 pupils on roll the school is smaller than most other schools nationally. The number on roll has been fairly stable over the last few years but the school now predicts that a drop in its roll will occur due to local demographic trends. The Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are taught in single age group classes. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught in mixed age group classes: one Year 3/4 class, one Year 4/5 class and one Year 5/6 class. Seven teachers, including the headteacher and six teaching assistants, teach the pupils. Nearly all of the pupils are from white ethnic cultural backgrounds. The attainment of pupils on entry to school is generally below average. The socio-economic backgrounds of families are very varied, but the level of unemployment is higher in this region than in most other parts of England.

<b>Comparison of the school with all other schools nationally</b>	<b>This School %</b>	<b>National Average %</b>
Pupils with special educational needs	16.36	17.5
Pupils with statements of special educational needs	1.8	1.6
Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	8.8	17.9

The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the expected times of admission or transfer is higher than in most schools nationally. The school received the Healthy Schools Award in 2003. French is taught to pupils in Year 6 for one hour per week.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22330	Mr L Lewin	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Science, Humanities
11564	Mrs J Mckay	Lay inspector	
23917	Mr A Clarke	Team inspector	English; Creative, aesthetic, practical and physical subjects and Special educational needs
15334	Mrs J Hooper	Team inspector	Foundation stage

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school with a very caring ethos.** Good leadership and management and good teaching enable pupils to achieve well. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good provision for promoting pupils' moral and social development results in pupils developing very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- The school has established very strong links with parents and the local village community.
- Pupils are very well supported and cared for and in particular very good provision is made for supporting pupils with special educational needs.
- The school's extra-curricular activities programme and personal, social and health education programme provide very good enhancement to the curriculum.
- Attainment in science is below average by the time pupils reach Year 6.
- Not enough time is spent monitoring the quality of lessons.
- Although the school regularly checks on pupils' progress, not enough use is made of the information gained to set targets for pupils' future performance.

The school has improved at a satisfactory rate since its last inspection in September 1999. Issues identified at that time have been suitably addressed so that teachers' planning systems are now good and, although further development is still needed, proper systems have been established to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning. Good improvements have been made to the provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs. Overall, standards of attainment have continued to rise although some slippage in standards in science has occurred and the school has put specific plans in place to address this situation. Many improvements have been made to the buildings and accommodation and, in particular, the building of a computer suite has strongly enhanced the work pupils do in information and communication technology (ICT).

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

**Overall, all groups of pupils achieve well** as they progress through the school to Year 6. When they begin school, the majority of children show below average attainment. They show satisfactory achievement, but most are currently not on course to reach the expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good so that most pupils are on course to reach average levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Overall, this good achievement continues for pupils in Years 3 to 6 so that most will reach the expected levels in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6, with a significant minority on course to exceed the national expectations. However, achievement in science by Year 6 is currently unsatisfactory and attainment is below average. The school's national test results confirm these inspection judgements. Overall, the school's test results have been steadily improving over recent years.

**Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall;** their moral awareness and social development are very good. **Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are**

**very good** and pupils achieve good standards in their personal development. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good overall.** Teaching is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 to 6, with much very good teaching seen in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have a strong rapport with their pupils and are very good at encouraging them and developing their self confidence. Mathematics is particularly well taught to pupils in Years 3 to 6. Booster teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very effective and helps pupils to make much improvement to their work. Foundation Stage children do not have sufficient opportunities to pursue their learning through independent activities. Science is not taught in sufficient depth at Years 5 and 6. Although the school regularly checks on pupils' progress, most teachers do not make enough use of the information gained to set targets for pupils' future performance. Teaching assistants provide very effective support for pupils and teachers. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught.

Satisfactory provision is made for the curriculum. It is very well enhanced through the provision of a wide range of good quality outdoor education experiences, extra-curricular activities and the personal, social and health education programme. Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good and strongly promoted by the very caring ethos that exists in the school. The school very successfully involves parents in their children's learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The school is well led and managed.** Good leadership by the headteacher ensures that the school operates in a well organised and efficient manner. The headteacher is very successful in promoting an atmosphere in which staff work together in a committed and enthusiastic way. Governors are fully informed about and involved in the school's overall management and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met. The school manages its finances very efficiently. There is not enough involvement of the staff and governors in constructing the school development plan. Not enough time is spent monitoring the quality of lessons. The management of special educational needs is excellent.

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

Parents and pupils have a very high regard for the school and the work of the staff.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in science at Year 6.
- Set precise targets for individual pupils' performances based on the information available from the regular checks on pupils' progress.
- Provide regular opportunities for monitoring and evaluating the quality of lessons.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, pupils achieve well by Year 6. Children's achievement is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and pupils' achievement from Years 3 to 6 is good. Standards are similar to those noted at the time of the last inspection with the exception that attainment in science is not as good as it was.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well overall.
- Standards have risen overall in national tests.
- Most children are unlikely to reach the expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- English and mathematics performance has improved as a result of the school's focus on these areas.
- Attainment in science is below average in Year 6 and pupils' knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry is weak in most classes.

#### Commentary

1. Children start school showing mainly below average attainment. Their achievement in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. In nearly all of the areas of learning a few children show that they are on course to exceed the expected levels, a significant minority look set to reach the expected levels but it is likely that most will not. An exception to this is in the area of physical development where most children do well. Children do not show sufficient development of their skills to investigate and explore independently.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.7 (16.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.5 (13.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.5 (16.5)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

As with other small schools, the school's national test results vary from year to year and much caution is needed when analysing and interpreting these. Further caution is needed with this school's results due to its above average rate of <sup>1</sup>pupil mobility and the wide variation it experiences with the attainment of children on entry each year.

2. Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 ensures that pupils make good progress and achieve well by Year 2, with most of them reaching average levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in the 2003 national tests, compared to all schools nationally and to other similar schools, were well below average in reading and writing due to the fact that too few pupils reached the upper Level 3. Nonetheless, these results confirmed the good progress, as this cohort of pupils were assessed as being well below average on entry to school. Moreover, the average results in mathematics reflect the success of the school's strategies for improvement in this subject.

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<sup>1</sup> The rate at which pupils join or leave the school other than at the normal times of admission or leaving.



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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (26.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.5 (26.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.5 (27.0)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. Steadily improving English and mathematics national test results over recent years reflect the success of the school's action plans to improve attainment. Good teaching in these subjects ensures that pupils achieve well. English results were average when compared to other schools nationally and when compared to similar schools. As at Year 2, mathematics results show a particular improvement, with test results being above average compared to other similar schools and average when compared to all schools nationally. The results confirm inspection findings that the majority of pupils attain the expected levels in English and mathematics, but with a significant minority attaining above average levels.
4. National test results in science were well below average in 2003 compared to all schools nationally and other similar schools. Although most pupils attained the expected level, too few reached the upper level (Level 5). However, work currently seen in Year 6 shows most pupils reaching a below average standard and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Evidence suggests that poor teaching from a temporarily employed teacher last year meant that limited progress was made in science, and the current class teacher and the booster teacher are working very hard to help pupils catch up. Work in Year 5/6 pupils' books indicates that much of the science work covered, has not been in sufficient depth and pupils lack experience of carrying out full science investigations.
5. Throughout the school pupils attain average levels in ICT and religious education. Improved facilities in ICT now mean that pupils use ICT in an increasing range of ways to support their work in different subjects. Not enough evidence was gained to make judgements about attainment in other subjects. However, good work was seen in a Year 4/5 gymnastics lesson, and a good standard of swimming was noted in lessons for the Year 3/4 and Year 4/5 classes. Although geography and history work was only briefly sampled, there are indications as in science that too little in-depth work has been covered in recent times in the Year 5/6 class.
6. Across the school, standards of speaking and listening, reading and writing are average. Standards in writing have tended to lag behind reading in the past, but as a result of the school's action plans for improvement in this area the gap has now narrowed and classroom displays and pupils' books show that the widespread emphasis on developing extended writing opportunities for pupils is beginning to make a positive impact. A significant minority of pupils across the school experience difficulty in expressing themselves verbally, show limited vocabulary and lack the confidence to readily join in discussions. The school has identified this problem and is taking steps to address it. In mathematics, improved standards are reflected in the very positive approach of pupils in lessons. Pupils use and apply their mathematical skills in a good range of practical activities and, in this way, gain an in-depth understanding of the concepts taught. Pupils show quick responses with mental oral work and in Year 6, a small minority of pupils showed particularly rapid recall with complex mental calculations. In most classes (apart from Year 5/6 mentioned above) pupils cover an appropriate range of science work and show sound knowledge and understanding. However, although good examples were seen in the Year 3/4 class, generally, pupils' experiences with carrying out scientific investigations are too limited and they lack sufficient skills, knowledge and understanding in this area.
7. For pupils with special educational needs, reference to the targets in their individual education plans, school tracking records and discussions with the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers, and teaching assistants indicate that most pupils are making at least good progress towards meeting their individual learning targets.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. While overall provision for their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is **good**, provision for pupils' moral and social development is **very good**. Attendance is **satisfactory**. Pupils' behaviour and the provision for promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have improved since the school's last inspection, but attendance is not as good as reported previously.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic and well motivated.
- Pupils behave very well in school and when on visits.
- Strong relationships exist between pupils and all adults in the school.
- Pupils are not sufficiently prepared for living in a multi-ethnic society.

### Commentary

8. Pupils have very good attitudes towards learning and participate fully in lessons. They listen attentively, are enthusiastic and well motivated learners, and therefore make good progress in their work. In the classroom and on visits, for instance to a local swimming pool, they behave very well, show good concentration, listen carefully to instructions, and try their best with all activities. Parents consider that their children like school and that it is very successful in achieving good standards of behaviour. Pupils are clear about the way they should behave. They are tolerant of each other and play well in groups. Pupils with special educational needs have a good self-image and display a positive attitude to school and their work. They are fully included in the life of the school.
9. Pupils relate very well to each other, collaborate very well effectively and are quick to help each other out and make suggestions. Teachers capitalise on this by ensuring that there are many good opportunities for pupils to work in partners or small groups. All staff provide good role models and are consistent and fair in their promotion of good discipline and, because their relationships with staff are strong, pupils respond very positively.
10. The school's very good range of extra-curricular activities teaches pupils to be team players, and also contributes significantly to their personal development.
11. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their spiritual awareness through personal, social and health education lessons and also in daily acts of worship. Collective worship is planned effectively and takes place in a quiet, reflective atmosphere. The school's high expectations for behaviour help to ensure that pupils develop a keen awareness of right and wrong and the very good systems for rewarding achievement also fully support pupils' moral development.
12. The school provides very effective opportunities to promote pupils' social awareness; for example by giving pupils clearly set responsibilities. Pupils take these responsibilities and duties seriously; for instance, the Year 6 pupils who act as prefects and those who help to organise games for others during the lunch break. The school takes good account of pupils' views and a whole school emphasis upon ideas such as recycling means that pupils develop a very good awareness of the responsibility of living in a community together. Sound provision is made for promoting pupils' awareness of local and national culture. Although the school makes some good efforts to celebrate the festivals from other cultures and has made the effort to create some links with schools overseas, overall not enough is done to prepare pupils for living in a multi-ethnic society and there is no clear whole school approach to developing this area.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.5	School data	0.2
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.

13. Attendance is satisfactory for the vast majority of the pupils in the school. Although the attendance rate is below the national average, this has largely been caused by pupils being away from school for medical reasons and by a small number of pupils who, in spite of the intervention of the educational welfare officer, continued to stay away from school. The school regularly reminds parents of the importance of regular and punctual attendance. However, many parents in the school work in the tourist industry, and are unable to take their holidays when the school is closed. Most pupils spoken to during the inspection said they enjoyed coming to school, and the vast majority arrive on time.

### Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
172	1	1
1	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

As noted at the time of the last inspection, the quality of education is **good** overall. The school is particularly good at ensuring that all groups of pupils are fully involved in all activities.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. The levels of good and very good teaching are similar to those reported in the previous inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a strong rapport with pupils.
- Very good teaching in mathematics.
- Booster teaching for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is very effective.
- Foundation Stage children do not have sufficient opportunities to pursue their learning through independent activities.
- Science is not taught in sufficient depth at Years 5/6.
- Most teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment information to set precisely focused targets for pupils' performance.
- Teaching assistants provide very effective support for pupils and teachers.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well taught.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9 (25.71%)	16 (45.71%)	10 (28.57%)	0	0	0

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

14. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage, but with some good features. The teacher succeeds in creating a welcoming, secure and encouraging atmosphere for the children. All individuals are very well supported so that they feel confident to join in and participate with the activities. The teaching assistant shows much talent and provides very effective support for the children and the teacher. Good whole class sessions were seen with literacy and numeracy work. However, overall not enough chances are given for children to pursue the good work in these whole class sessions through exploring and investigating activities independently.
15. Teaching for pupils in Years 1 – 6 is good overall although there is much very good teaching for pupils in the Year 3 – 6 classes. Throughout the school, teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. Conversations with the pupils show that they have a very high regard for their teachers. As a result, classes throughout the school reflect a purposeful, enthusiastic and happy atmosphere in which pupils are generally keen to work hard and please their teachers. Teachers capitalise on these very good relationships by using praise and encouragement skilfully to boost pupils' confidence and help them to improve.
16. Teachers generally show confident subject knowledge and provide clear explanations and instructions. This is especially apparent in the very good lessons in mathematics seen in Years 3 – 6. These lessons ran at a rapid pace with work skilfully targeted to extend all groups of pupils. Very good questioning ensured that the mental oral sections of the lessons provided a rigorous mental work out for all pupils. The teachers were very successful in creating an atmosphere of enjoyment in the work, and discussions with Year 6 pupils indicate that these are the lessons that many of them enjoy most.
17. The school has a very well organised programme of booster sessions for pupils in Year 5 and 6. The teachers who run these sessions have been very successful in raising pupils' levels of attainment – as can be noted by the fact that the school has exceeded targets set for pupils in the national tests. English, mathematics and science booster sessions observed during the inspection showed the teacher engaging small groups of pupils in very intensive support work. In particular the teacher is very skilled in developing pupils' confidence and self esteem to help them overcome areas of work that they perceive as being difficult for them. Even during the short duration of these observations it was clear that the pupils were making very good progress.
18. A staffing difficulty last year meant that the expected standard of teaching required for the Year 4/5 class in terms of teaching aspects of the National Curriculum was not met. Despite extra support provided for the pupils, there was clearly slippage in the progress that they made during this time. It is a credit to the school and the Year 5/6 teacher, and the booster sessions this year, that pupils have largely caught up, especially in English and mathematics. However, there is still a need to help pupils catch up in their science work where standards are currently not good enough. Similarly, a lack of in-depth work in humanities in Year 5/6 pupils' books indicates that there is a need to also provide more coverage in these areas.
19. The school has taken steps to improve its systems for using assessment information and the assessment co-ordinator has devised good target setting systems for the pupils in her class. However, these systems are not yet developed in other classes and the school rightly identifies

the need to implement this approach across the school as a means of further raising the standards attained by pupils. Also, although teachers have an increasing awareness of the need to analyse and make full use of any relevant assessment information, most have not yet reached the stage where test results are rigorously analysed to highlight weaknesses in pupils' learning. Analysis of this sort has been carried out in mathematics and clearly played an important part in helping raise standards and this model now needs to be extended to other subjects. With the exception of mathematics, not enough use is made of the analysis of assessment information to inform curriculum improvement action plans.

20. Across the school, teaching assistants are well briefed and provide very effective support for groups of pupils and individuals as appropriate. They know the pupils very well and often show a skilful approach with running small group activities for the teacher. The work of these members of staff is one of the touchstones of success of the school in ensuring the full inclusion of all pupils. For example, in a Year 3/4 science lesson, the teaching assistant worked very effectively with a group of pupils, explaining activities and making sure that all individuals stayed fully focused on the task at hand.
21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. All teachers are aware of the pupils' targets and make reference in their planning to ensure work matches precisely with the needs of the pupils concerned. Pupils are given very good, skilled help and encouragement from the experienced and committed teaching assistants.

## **The curriculum**

As reported after the school's last inspection, the curriculum provision is satisfactory overall. The school provides a sound range of appropriate learning experiences for its pupils. Opportunities for pupils to participate in activities outside the school day are very good. The quality and quantity of learning resources and the accommodation are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is very well enhanced through the extra activities that the school provides.
- The provision for special educational needs is very good.
- The provision for science in Years 5 and 6 is unsatisfactory.
- Most classes do not cover enough in-depth work in scientific enquiry.
- The school's library is too small.
- The school has a good range of resources to support teaching and learning.

## **Commentary**

22. Overall the curriculum successfully promotes the school's caring ethos and the intellectual, physical and personal development of the pupils. It prepares pupils appropriately for the next stage of their education. Inter-school matches and participation in sporting tournaments add to the schools' success in promoting healthy activity and participation in sports and the arts.
23. A very good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum and widens learning opportunities. Many pupils are involved in these clubs with teachers and parents involved in their organisation. Good use is made of the locality to support topic work and pupils' experiences are further widened by visits to theatres, museums and other places of interest. The school has a very good range of residential visits that are thoroughly enjoyed by the pupils and strongly enhance their confidence, social skills and overall learning. A very good programme of visits and visitors helps to make learning more meaningful and interesting. The school places a high priority on providing a wide ranging personal, social and health education programme and much good work is done, for example, to raise pupils' awareness about healthy living and conservation of the environment.

24. The very good, school-wide provision for pupils with special educational needs is a strength. Individual education plans are informative, detailed and helpful. Provision is made very well for those pupils who have specific learning difficulties in English and mathematics through the provision of extra support programmes. The provision for those pupils who have behavioural and physical difficulties is equally comprehensive and detailed, and they make good progress towards targets set for them.
25. Although across the school pupils generally cover a suitable range of science work, at Years 5 and 6 the work is not sufficiently in-depth. Also, in most classes not enough attention is paid to developing pupils' skills of scientific enquiry by involving them in investigative work.
26. The contribution of the teaching assistants, particularly in support of pupils with special educational needs, is considerable. The school's library is too small and does not give enough scope for pupils to develop their library research skills. Overall, the level of resources is good and staff generally make full use of these to support teaching and learning.

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

There are very good procedures to support pupils' welfare, health and safety. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is satisfactory. There are very good procedures for ensuring each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with an adult in the school. Overall, this area of provision has strengthened since the school's last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has very good systems to ensure the proper care, health and safety of all pupils.
- The school promotes a very caring ethos.
- There is a strong awareness of the needs of all pupils.
- There are good arrangements to help children start school and to help pupils transferring to secondary school.

### **Commentary**

27. Procedures for ensuring child protection are well known and are carried out in accordance with local practice. Staff are supported well by outside agencies who regularly visit the school. A number of parents spoken to during the inspection said how much they appreciated the very good care and guidance that their children receive. Staff know pupils well and cater very sensitively for their needs. The school places a high priority on the health and safety of all its pupils, and makes regular safety checks around the school. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were very proud of their school's Healthy School Award and, in connection with this project, and a good range of other opportunities, the school ensures that very effective arrangements are made to seek and act upon pupils' views.
28. The personal development of pupils is at the heart of the school's very caring ethos and is monitored well by all adults in the school. Parents spoken to during the inspection said they would have no hesitation in approaching the school if they had a problem. Teachers work sensitively and very conscientiously to meet the needs of all pupils in their care, especially those with special educational needs. Teaching assistants show considerable skill, sensitivity and patience as they guide and support individuals or groups of pupils. The organised and caring approach of all staff results in the school being a well-ordered community where good behaviour is successfully promoted.
29. There are very effective induction arrangements for pupils both entering and leaving the school. As a result, children settle very quickly to the routines of the school when they start and pupils transferring to the next phase of education feel confident about doing so.

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

There are **very good** and effective links with parents and the community. The school also has **good** links with other schools and with the local comprehensive schools. The school has improved its provision in these areas since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The Parent Teachers Association provides strong support for the school.
- There is a very strong partnership between the school and parents.
- The school has strong links to the local village community.

### **Commentary**

30. The school's relationship with the parents is one of true partnership. There is an openness between parents and the school which has grown since the last inspection. Parents spoken to during the inspection said they felt able to offer their opinions and suggestions without jeopardising their relationship with the school. The strength of this link with parents makes a very positive impact on relationships within the whole-school community. There is a strong feeling of family, resulting in a very caring and happy environment that places the child at the centre of school life.
31. A number of parents come into school and help in many ways, for instance, listening to reading, and cooking, and helping with concerts. The Parent Teacher Association is very active and has provided a range of social and fund-raising events throughout the year to which members of the local community are also invited. The school's Summer Fete is a major community event. The Parent Teacher Association funds have recently provided furniture for every classroom, play equipment, lighting for the hall and computers. During the inspection many parents said proudly that they were themselves ex-pupils of the school, which has traditionally played an important part in village community life.
32. The school has good links with other schools in the area, including a link with a nearby 'Beacon School' and with the local comprehensive schools. Pupils spoken to during the inspection said they were confident and well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

As noted at the time of the last inspection, leadership and management are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher manages the school well.
- The headteacher is very successful in ensuring that the school has a very caring and inclusive ethos.
- Governors provide strong support for the headteacher and staff.
- The school finances are managed very efficiently.
- There is not enough involvement of the staff and governors in constructing the school development plan.
- Not enough time is spent monitoring the quality of lessons.
- The management of special educational needs is excellent.

### **Commentary**

33. The headteacher is very well organised and ensures that all systems and routines run efficiently and effectively. As a result, the school operates as a well ordered community. In particular, the headteacher ensures that there are good levels of communication between staff and also between staff and governors and this helps all to work together as a cohesive team.

The headteacher also provides an atmosphere in which staff work together as a fully committed and enthusiastic team. He ensures that the aims of the school are clear and the staff work hard to achieve these. In carrying out his role as mathematics co-ordinator very effectively, and in this way enabling standards in this subject to improve, the headteacher provides a strong role model for his staff. The deputy headteacher provides strong support for the headteacher through sharing in some of the organisational work and also through effectively co-ordinating English, religious education, the Foundation Stage and health and safety.

34. The headteacher is very successful in ensuring that all groups of pupils in the school are fully included in all activities. He achieves this by rightly placing a high priority on the pupils feeling happy and secure at school and having a wide range of opportunities to develop not only their academic skills, but also their social awareness and understanding. In this way he promotes an atmosphere in which the whole of the school community works together with a 'family' ethos. He helps pupils to feel included and develop as individuals by placing a strong emphasis on the provision of good quality outdoor education and personal, social and health education activities and by encouraging all pupils to involve themselves in these areas.
35. Governors are well informed about and involved in the running of the school. They ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met. They have a good relationship with the school staff and visit the school on a regular basis. As a result, they have a clear view on the effectiveness of the way in which the school is operating. The chair of governors works closely with the headteacher and has a very clear insight into the main on-going issues and areas of development within the school.
36. With excellent support from a 'bought in' outside support agency the school does a very effective job of organising and running its budget. Governors have a full understanding of best value principles and ensure that the maximum benefit is gained from all spending decisions.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	390,920	Balance from previous year	40,405
Total expenditure	405,701	Balance carried forward to the next	25,624
Expenditure per pupil	2,458		

37. Teachers work hard to develop the areas for which they are responsible when these are featured in the school development plan. However, the remit of the current school development plan is too narrow and does not indicate how subjects' areas will be maintained when they are not a priority area for improvement. The headteacher currently oversees the construction of the school development plan and although staff and governors have the opportunity to question and evaluate the plan, they are not sufficiently involved in its initial formulation.
38. Since the last inspection, the school has devised appropriate systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and the curriculum. However, not enough time is given to this area and monitoring visits to lessons are too infrequent to give the subject co-ordinators a clear overview of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning in their subjects across the school.
39. The management of the special educational needs provision is excellent. The co-ordinator is very experienced and is responsible for a number of important initiatives. For example, linking the co-ordinating of the 'Pyramid club', initiating the early recognition of pupils with speech and language problems and overseeing the 'Scally Wags club' for pupils with behaviour problems.



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

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

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** as at the last inspection. Teaching is **satisfactory** overall, with some good features, and the children achieve **satisfactorily**. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are **satisfactory**.

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

- There are very good links with the pre-school playgroup and parents before children enter school.
- The staff provide a very warm, caring learning environment.
- There are too few free choice activities to enable children to develop independence in their learning.
- Activities are too formal and over directed and there are too few opportunities for children to experiment.
- There are good resources to support learning in the classroom and outside.
- The teaching assistant provides very good support for children and the teacher.

#### **Commentary**

40. Liaison with the pre-school playgroup is good. Good systems are in place to support parents when their children start school. Young children are carefully introduced to life in reception and the effective arrangements enable them to settle quickly to the routines of the class.
41. Children start school showing below average attainment. Although a significant number are on course to achieve the expected standards in all areas of learning by the end of the year, there is a similar number who will not. A small number are likely to exceed the expected level.
42. The relationships in the class are effective in providing a positive social experience for these children so that all children feel encouraged and well cared for.
43. Although planned in line with the curriculum expected for children of this age teaching is not always specific or detailed enough to give the children the creative and investigative experiences they need. There is a good emphasis on developing reading, speaking, mathematical and physical skills. In some lessons, there is an overemphasis on adult direction and too much time is spent on formal tasks, whilst at the same time there are too few opportunities for activities that children choose for themselves. Planning does not always identify clearly enough the specific skills and what children are going to learn for individual lessons. The classroom assistant shows a skilled approach towards supporting the teacher and pupils, for example, using her very well developed musical skills to lead music activities.
44. There is a good range of attractive resources that are well used to promote children's learning. These are set out well to make the classroom an attractive and interesting place for the children.

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

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

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

- Children settle into school routines quickly.
- Children do not always put up their hands when they want to speak in lessons.

## Commentary

45. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Although a significant minority of children enter school with low levels of social skills, they settle into school and quickly learn the routines. They listen well to the teacher in short bursts and are eager to contribute their own ideas and answer questions. However, a great many call out and have not learned to take turns when making comments because the teacher does not always insist on them putting up their hands. Nevertheless, during a singing activity taken by the teaching assistant, the children learnt very quickly that unless they put their hands up, she would not ask them to choose a 'creature' for the next verse of the song. Most children behave well and co-operate sensibly with each other. They take care of their own toilet and hygiene needs and soon learn to dress and undress themselves with little adult help. Many children concentrate well and persevere with tasks for a good length of time when they are given the opportunity. They are keen to take responsibility. For example, two children were very proud that they had been chosen to fetch the register from the office.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory** overall, with good features.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good support is provided to help children develop their early reading skills.
- Not enough opportunities are provided to help children develop their skills independently.

## Commentary

46. Achievement is satisfactory. A significant number of children enter school with speech problems so a great emphasis is placed on providing opportunities to develop speaking skills. Children develop their vocabulary as they are introduced to new words through stories and discussion. Children's early reading skills are developed well through regular story sessions. Good questioning skills by the teacher help the children recall the stories and make suggestions about what might happen next. Children practise phonic skills by writing the letter shape, learning its name and sound, and naming words that begin with that sound. Children are encouraged to form letters correctly and nearly all recognise their own name and many write their names independently. However, whole class lessons are often too long and there are too few opportunities for developing writing skills through independently chosen activities.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Interesting activities are provided to support children's learning.

## Commentary

47. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Oral work is planned well so children enjoy joining in singing and action counting rhymes to practise counting forwards and backwards. Most recognise numbers up to ten and enjoy playing games which promote their understanding and use of number, counting and of sequences. They develop mathematical vocabulary such as 'tall' and 'short' when they decorate Christmas trees and dinosaurs of different sizes. In a creative art lesson they were developing an understanding of symmetry as they stuck different coloured shapes onto butterfly wings. However, lessons tend to last rather longer than children's attention span.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory** with good features.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of interesting topics and activities are provided.
- Teaching and learning opportunities are occasionally missed due to the methods of organising the work.

### Commentary

48. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Topics generally provide a good range of interesting and exciting activities to support learning in this area. A good range of activities gives the children opportunities to gain scientific knowledge. During a whole class activity where the children were planting polyanthus plants in the school garden, teaching opportunities were missed because there were too many children for the teacher and teaching assistant to manage at once. Smaller groups would have meant that the teacher could have discussed in more depth the various parts of the plant and their functions and what the plant needs for growth. There are regular opportunities for the children to discover the stories and festivals of Christianity and festivals such as the Chinese New Year. The children are given regular opportunities to use computers and work on display shows some colourful pictures created using an art program.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is generally **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided to help pupils develop the skills they need.

### Commentary

49. Achievement is good. There are good opportunities to develop fine motor skills using paintbrushes, pencils and scissors, as well as through joining together pieces when completing jigsaws, tracks and construction kits. Children are encouraged to hold pencils and other markers correctly. In a dance lesson with the Year 1 pupils, the older children showed very good control of their bodies as they developed imaginative sequences of shapes at different levels. They demonstrated a good awareness of space by avoiding bumping into each other. The outdoor area used by the children is well equipped with good resources for promoting children's physical development.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good range of musical experiences.
- Some activities do not provide enough opportunities for children to investigate and explore ideas individually and independently.

### Commentary

50. Achievement is satisfactory overall. In the lessons seen, children had limited opportunities to experiment freely with the art materials provided. On other occasions children may be free to

use these in their own way. For example, some pictures painted in the style of Marie Græsén showed greater individuality. In a music lesson, some of the children showed they were developing a good sense of rhythm as they followed the teacher's rhythm patterns through stamping, clapping, slapping, clicking and whistling. A few managed to capture a rhythm by following a circular pattern of pictures representing body sounds. The children were provided with a percussion instrument each, but there was no planned opportunity for them to experiment properly with these instruments, to find out how to play them and to try making tunes. Children know a good range of rhymes and songs, which they sing tunefully and enthusiastically. Not enough opportunity is given for children to use their imaginations in creative play activities.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory** overall.

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

- Standards are rising in reading and writing.
- Pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good.
- Resources for teaching and learning are good.
- Some pupils show a lack of confidence with their speaking skills.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Insufficient attention is paid to what pupils know and can do to set appropriate learning targets.
- Lessons are not monitored on a sufficiently regular basis.

#### **Commentary**

51. Standards in English are rising as a result of the school's focus on improving the performances of the below average and average pupils, particularly in writing. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to reach average standards by the end of the year. A small minority of pupils in Year 6 looks set to exceed the levels expected. Given that many pupils enter the school showing below average attainment in language and literacy, this represents good achievement.
52. Although overall standards in speaking and listening are average in Year 2, a significant number of pupils lack confidence in speaking and have a very limited vocabulary. Many pupils enter the school lacking confidence in speaking and their listening skills are poor. Despite making satisfactory and sometimes good progress, inspection evidence indicates that a number of pupils attain below expectations in speaking and listening. Many teachers encourage the development of appropriate subject vocabulary, which has a positive impact on oral skills. However, currently there are insufficient planned opportunities provided for all pupils to express their own views and to fully extend their vocabulary. As a result, many are hesitant, speak indistinctly with poor pronunciation, and become frustrated at their failure to express themselves. Consequently, there is a tendency for a significant number of pupils to sit passively unless specifically encouraged by teachers to respond. In turn, this limits their ability to explain ideas and communicate their findings in writing and this is a barrier to learning. The school has already identified this area as in need of development.
53. Standards in reading are rising and are average at the age of seven and eleven. The rise in attainment is due to the school encouraging pupils to read regularly and supporting them with a variety of teaching strategies designed to improve their phonic (linking sounds to letters) skills. Attention is paid to increasing the vocabulary of younger pupils, as their very limited language skills have a negative impact on their understanding of sounds and their ability to decode new words. As a result, although reading standards are satisfactory, most pupils make good

progress. Older, higher attaining pupils have developed fluency and confidence in their reading and express opinions about the main characters and events in a range of texts.

54. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the good support they receive from their teachers and teaching assistants. The progress owes much to the structured reading scheme, the provision of additional literacy support, and the focussed input from external speech and language support services.
55. Most older pupils appear to understand the purpose and organisation of a library and the basic ideas about information retrieval. However, the library is too small and does not give enough scope for pupils to develop their research skills fully.
56. Standards in writing have risen slightly since the last inspection and are in line with the national average. The teaching of writing is good. Grammar and punctuation are taught systematically and pupils extend their range of writing to include stories, report writing, formal and informal letters, instructions and persuasive arguments. Overall older pupils are achieving well, but their limited vocabulary affects their overall attainment, particularly in extended and creative writing. Attractive word-processed displays celebrate pupils' efforts and achievements. Samples of work seen show that a small minority of higher attainers have a good command of language and their writing is exciting and interesting.
57. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing. The strong relationships enjoyed between staff and pupils together with the very positive encouragement given, ensure that pupils are enthusiastic learners who achieve well as a result. A good range of teaching methods is employed in an attempt to meet the needs of all pupils and teachers are very well supported by a team of knowledgeable, experienced and gifted teaching assistants. They give very good support to pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, who make good progress and achieve well as a result. In most lessons the plenary session is used well to challenge pupils to analyse their own learning and to highlight the purpose of the lessons. This helps to reinforce pupils' understanding and knowledge.
58. Teachers regularly assess pupils' progress, but not enough use is made of this information by most teachers to set targets for individuals or groups of pupils.
59. Although some monitoring and evaluation of lessons has taken place in the past, this does not happen on a regular enough basis to give a clear overview of the progress of the school's action to improve standards or the quality of teaching and learning.
60. Resources for the teaching of English are good and they are used well within classrooms. The school has made a considerable investment in acquiring a suitable range of books and the library contains a satisfactory range of fiction and non-fiction texts.

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

61. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils use their reading and writing skills appropriately to gather and present information – some detailed written accounts were noted in pupils' history, science and design and technology work.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- Very well led and managed.
- Good teaching.
- Pupils achieve well.

- Teachers' use of assessment information is under-developed.

## Commentary

62. Working closely with the local education authority consultant, the mathematics co-ordinator put in place a very effective action plan to improve standards and provision in this area. The initiatives have been successful so that staff training and careful analysis of areas of weakness have led to a clear improvement in standards since the last inspection – reflected in the school's national test results and also in the quality of work seen in lessons. Year 2 pupils now reach average standards and, while Year 6 pupils also reach average standards overall, a significant and growing minority now reach above average standards. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school. Across the school, pupils work well in mental/oral sessions so that by Year 6 they show appropriately rapid mental recall of number facts, with some pupils showing a good ability to carry out quite complex mental calculations, such as  $14 \times 9$  or  $18 \times 8$ , and many show a good ability to explain the methods they use in such calculations. Pupils gain an in-depth knowledge of mathematical concepts well grounded in practical activities where they have much experience of using and applying their knowledge. In this way teachers work well with pupils across the school, ensuring that there are plenty of these experiences for the pupils and accelerating the learning of individuals by presenting the ideas in an interesting and enjoyable way. For example, much enjoyment was generated in a Year 3/4 lesson when the class teacher used role play – with pupils all part of the crew of a spacecraft – in teaching them about compass directions. This approach of 'making maths fun' is apparent in all classes and creates much enthusiasm for the subject. Very good teaching was noted in Years 3 – 6 with teachers showing a very skilled and knowledgeable approach. This was reflected especially in their precise questioning so that pupils at all levels of ability were challenged during mental/oral sessions or discussions.
63. Very good teaching was noted in the mathematics booster session observed for pupils in Year 6. The teacher showed a very skilful approach to boosting the confidence and self esteem of individuals through well paced and careful discussions of different concepts and ideas.
64. Much progress has been made in developing assessment systems for mathematics. The co-ordinator has now rightly identified that the next step in raising standards further lies in using assessment information more rigorously across the school to develop targets for individual pupils or groups of pupils.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Mathematics is satisfactorily developed and utilised in other subject areas – notably in conjunction with ICT to explore spreadsheets and data handling concepts. Also good use is made of computer graph work, for example in Year 2 - comparing the size of pupils' feet in science.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is currently **unsatisfactory** and not currently as good as reported at the time of the last inspection.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in the lessons seen.
- Very effective support from teaching assistants for pupils and teachers.
- Too little in-depth coverage of topics in Year 5/6.
- Work in scientific enquiry under-developed in most classes.
- The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped.

## Commentary

66. No lessons in science were observed in Years 1 and 2, but the work in pupils' books shows that they cover a broadly satisfactory range of work and reach the expected level by Year 2. For example, reasonably detailed work was noted in studying the parts of the body, looking at life cycles and understanding areas such as the water cycle and principles of evaporation. The indications from this work are that pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning are at least satisfactory.
67. A lesson was observed in the Year 3/4 class and the Year 5/6 class and, in both, the quality of teaching and learning was good. Teachers showed good subject knowledge and set up practical activities that enabled pupils to achieve well and build on their scientific knowledge and understanding. Similarly, the current work in pupils' books in the Year 3/4 class and the Year 4/5 class shows pupils cover a mainly satisfactory range of work and indicates teaching and pupils' achievement are good. However, too little work is evident in the books of Year 5/6 pupils and, what is there, does not reflect sufficient detail and depth. Conversations with pupils showed that they felt they were taught very little/no science last year when a temporary teacher taught their class. In the discussions, they showed a very limited understanding of concepts such as 'fair testing' and showed too little experience of setting up detailed science investigations over recent times. At this stage their level of achievement is unsatisfactory and their level of knowledge and understanding is below that expected for their age. Discussion with the class teacher also indicated that since September much focus has rightly been placed on ensuring that pupils have caught up in their learning in English and mathematics and the next step is correctly seen as boosting pupils' knowledge and understanding in science. To this end, good work is already underway with the booster teaching providing very effective support for groups of pupils. A combination of this support and the good class teaching seen means that there is clear potential for the pupils to recover lost ground over the remainder of the academic year.
68. In the Year 3/4 class, good examples were noted of pupils pursuing their understanding of scientific ideas through carrying out practical investigations and further good examples were noted in the Year 3/4 and Year 5/6 lessons seen. However, apart from the Year 3/4 class, work in pupils' books indicates that too little emphasis is placed on learning through scientific enquiry and investigations and where such work is apparent it tends to be in too little depth.
69. The science co-ordinator is enthusiastic to move ahead to improve standards of attainment and provision. However, his role is currently under-developed – he does not have sufficient opportunities to monitor and evaluate the work across the school or to formulate action plans to address the issues within science provision. No analysis has yet been undertaken of test papers to isolate any areas of weakness in learning and in most classes teachers do not use assessment information to develop targets for the performance of individuals or groups of pupils.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic.
- There has been good recent improvement in resources and staff expertise.

## Commentary

70. As at the time of the last inspection, standards in ICT are average. In the three lessons seen, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, made sound progress overall and achieved satisfactorily. There are many examples of pupils' work that show proficiency with

using ICT for word processing and some have experience of using PowerPoint to combine text and pictures. However, pupils' experience of handling data, control, monitoring and modelling is limited.

71. Teaching was satisfactory in the Year 1 and Year 2 lessons seen and good in a Year 3/4 lesson. Teachers' and teaching assistants' recently acquired knowledge was used to good effect to give succinct and clear explanations of the learning tasks. Very effective use was made of the digital projector and white board in the computer suite to demonstrate the different actions required.
72. The subject leader provides good support to ensure teachers' knowledge, understanding and confidence. In a short time he has encouraged and overseen the training for all staff. From a low base of expertise and confidence, most teachers are now reasonably confident and enthusiastic about teaching ICT. The subject leader has a clear vision for the development of ICT in the future and has developed a detailed action plan for future improvement.

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

73. Discussions with pupils and observations of displays around the school indicate that considerable use is made of the digital camera to highlight aspects of school life, and regular use is made of the Internet for research in areas such as religious education. Light sensors were used in a science experiment testing transparency, but by far the most extensive and effective use observed was in the word processing.

### **HUMANITIES**

74. Not enough evidence was collected in history and geography to enable overall judgements to be made about the quality of provision or standards. By Year 2, pupils have gained a suitable knowledge of the local and national maps, understand different symbols and basic grid references. They learn about historical stories such as the Gunpowder Plot and the knowledge about World War II is enhanced well by listening to senior visitors recounting their experiences of these times. Year 5/6 pupils study maps of the world and identify the locations of different places and features. They learn about places such as India and details about the lives of people who live there. They gain an understanding of how the Tudors lived and about famous characters such as Sir Francis Drake and the story of the Spanish Armada. Conversations with pupils and work seen indicate that work in these areas has not been carried out in sufficient depth and has provided pupils with only a superficial knowledge and understanding. No history lessons were observed, but in the small number of geography lessons seen the teaching was mainly satisfactory, with good teaching noted in the Year 3/4 class.
75. The history and geography co-ordinator leads and manages these areas well. In conjunction with the local education advisory service she has written a good quality scheme of work for the subjects and put together good systems to help the school move ahead with assessment and target setting for pupils.

### **Religious education**

As noted at the time of the last inspection, provision in religious education is **good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good overall.
- Pupils achieve well.
- The subject makes a strong contribution to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- Systems for assessing pupils' progress have yet to be developed.



## Commentary

76. Overall, the scrutiny of pupils' work and the small number of lessons seen indicate that pupils are generally well taught and achieve well in religious education. Through discussion work and themes presented in assembly, pupils also receive good support for developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Work seen shows that most pupils reach the levels expected within the locally agreed syllabus. For example, Year 2 pupils know about worship in different world faiths, compare these to the traditions within the Christian faith, study stories within these faiths and learn about the rituals and symbols associated with baptism, for instance in different faith systems. Some of their work contains well written detailed accounts and gives good opportunities for utilising and developing their literacy skills. There are clear indications that work is well organised, prepared and presented by teachers enabling pupils to progress and achieve well.
77. By Year 6, pupils gain appropriate knowledge and understanding of the themes and areas laid down in the locally agreed syllabus. For example, in a satisfactory session seen for Year 4/5 pupils, they gained a clear understanding of the chronological occurrence of the important events during the span of a Christian's life. The work succeeded in getting pupils to reflect deeply on some of these issues and in this way promoted their spiritual development well. However, the associated tasks in the lesson tended to be rather lacklustre and no pictures or artefacts were used to enliven the discussion. In a Year 5/6 lesson, good teaching enabled pupils to enthusiastically develop their knowledge of world religions through studying the life of Guru Nanak. Good discussion work and questioning techniques helped pupils to develop their understanding well.
78. Religious education is very well supplemented by the presentations of Bible stories and other religious themes in assemblies. Visitors from different denominations and backgrounds also strongly enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school is fortunate in having one member of the teaching support staff who provides pupils with an interesting and detailed insight into traditional ideas and philosophy of the Bahai religion – this provides a particularly good opportunity to develop pupils' spiritual understanding and awareness.
79. The co-ordinator for this subject is effective in helping to ensure that resources are maintained well and in taking assemblies and organising the different visitors to enhance the programme across the year. She has rightly identified the need to develop systems for assessing pupils' progress in this subject.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

80. No lessons were observed in art, music or design and technology. As a result, no secure judgement can be made on provision or standards in these subjects. In all subjects an examination of planning, pupils' work and discussions showed that pupils experience a full range of activities, and skills are taught systematically.
81. It is clear from teachers' planning, observation of pupils' work and discussion with the co-ordinator that the work planned in art and design is varied and interesting. The examination of pupils' work and displays indicate that standards of attainment in art and design are in line with national expectation for seven and eleven year olds. The broad curriculum is enriched by a number of visits and visitors. In discussions, pupils talked about artists that had visited the school, but they knew little of the differences or similarities between their work or about any other artists. Good use is made of ICT to support learning in art through programs such as PowerPoint to combine pictures and text.
82. Discussion with pupils shows that they are gaining suitable experiences in design and technology, such as designing and making yoghurt in Class 3. Other activities throughout the school included designing and making Egyptian jewellery, designing, making and testing model boats, photo frames, physical education bags and reading packs.

83. In music, pupils are taught basic skills following a detailed programme. They enjoy music and talk enthusiastically about their lessons. Good opportunities are taken in assemblies to encourage pupils to listen carefully to music, and the well-led singing by a teaching assistant is both tuneful and very enthusiastic. Extra-curricular clubs, specialist instrumental tuition and an annual Christmas concert enhance the music programme.

### **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

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

- Standards in gymnastics and swimming are good for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Older pupils achieve well.
- Some teaching is very good.
- The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The management of physical education is good.

#### **Commentary**

84. The school places much importance on the provision of physical education and the adherence to a healthy regime. Consequently pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and attain above average standards in gymnastics and swimming by Year 6.
85. Not enough lessons were observed to enable an overall judgement to be made about the quality of teaching. However, in the lessons seen, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, took a full and active part. In a Year 4/5 lesson, pupils benefited from the very good knowledge and high expectations of the teacher when producing an above average range of movement sequences. They used the opportunities to observe and evaluate others well to refine their own performances. This resulted in good learning.
86. In a combined Year 3/4/5 swimming lesson, pupils attained above average standards with many pupils achieving very well. Teaching was knowledgeable and challenging and pupils responded enthusiastically. In all lessons seen, the behaviour and response of the pupils was very good.
87. A wide range of activities provided outside the normal school day provides strong enhancement for the physical education curriculum. Adventurous activities are undertaken on two annual residential visits. The headteacher as co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well ensuring the provision of a good range of well organised activities.

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

Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is **very good**.

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

PSHE forms an integral part of the caring ethos of the school. The curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils to explore sensitive issues and to share their feelings and concerns with each other and adults. The very good provision for social and moral education supports this area well. The school has worked well to achieve the Healthy School Award.

#### **Commentary**

88. The school's arrangements for PSHE and citizenship are very good. Personal development is promoted on a day-to-day basis through the good care and attention that staff pay to all pupils.

No lessons were observed, so no overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching. However, planning and discussion indicate that pupils have good access to information about healthy lifestyles, well supported by the school's involvement in the Healthy School Award.

89. PSHE is a valuable extension to the school's curriculum and enhances pupils' awareness of the school's high expectations for their behaviour and attitudes. It is ingrained in much of the work that the school does with a strong emphasis laid on encouraging pupils to develop strategies to overcome problems and achieve success. The provision effectively focuses pupils' attention on the need to reflect and to set themselves personal targets in relation to others by developing the qualities of resilience, concentration, determination and organisation. Through initiatives such as the 'Pyramid club' and the 'Huff and Puff' scheme the school places very good emphasis upon promoting pupils' self-esteem and good health and in this way maintains the momentum of enthusiasm for projects within its Healthy School Award work.
90. The school is good at linking PSHE with pupils' social and moral development so that these areas of provision complement each other with, for example, social issues explored well through assembly themes such as conservation.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
<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	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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