

# INSPECTION REPORT

## LANCASTER RYELANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lancaster

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119132

Headteacher: Mrs L Myers

Lead inspector: Mrs P Allison

Dates of inspection: 23 – 26 February 2004

Inspection number: 260535

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:	307
School address:	Torrisholme Road Lancaster Lancashire
Postcode:	LA1 2RJ
Telephone number:	(01524) 64626
Fax number:	(01524) 842723
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Rivet
Date of previous inspection:	13 September 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

With 307 pupils, Ryelands is bigger than most primary schools. However, the school has had a fall in roll, because of changes to one of the local estates from which most pupils come. There are currently more boys than girls and this can affect some year groups quite significantly. The school caters for pupils aged four to 11 and they are taught in 13 classes.

The school works in a particularly challenging context. Indicators suggest that the socio-economic circumstances in which pupils live are low. The school is situated to the north of Lancaster, a mile from the city centre and serves predominantly two large estates of mainly council-owned homes. This is an area of identified social deprivation and high unemployment. There is a frequent turnover of tenancies, which means that the school has a high mobility rate. Sixty four per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. All pupils are of white British ethnic origin and there are nine children from traveller families.

Not all pupils have had nursery or pre-school educational experience before starting school and assessments made as children enter the reception class indicate that attainment on entry is well below what might be expected of children of this age. There are identified weaknesses in communication, speech and language skills and in personal and social skills. Currently there are 44 children of reception age, taught in two reception classes. Twenty one per cent of pupils have identified special educational needs, which is above average. Seven per cent have Statements of Special educational needs, which is very high compared to other schools. Most of the identified pupils have moderate or specific learning difficulties, but a number have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The school is a partner in an *Excellence in Cities* cluster. The school has close links with the special school and the nursery school, which is part of the Family Centre, both of which share the same campus.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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3242	Keith Sanderson	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Music Physical education
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very effective school**, providing a particularly high level of support for pupils and their families. Despite standards that are below average, pupils achieve well from their own starting points, and they reach high standards in terms of their attitudes and personal development. The school is very well managed and provides **very good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The quality of the leadership of the headteacher is the driving force of the school. Her passion for including all pupils and ensuring that they have the opportunity to achieve is shared by all who are involved with the school and is what is distinctive about it.
- Members of the senior management team also provide very good leadership; there is a shared commitment to improvement and high achievement.
- As a result of efforts made, standards are improving year on year.
- Pupils enjoy school and participate enthusiastically in all that is offered to them.
- The quality of teaching is good; teachers encourage pupils well and help them to learn effectively.
- The progress of pupils is well monitored, but assessment procedures are not sufficiently developed to ensure that performance targets are set for individuals. Pupils themselves are not sufficiently aware of how well they are doing and how they can improve.

Since the last inspection in September 1999, improvement has been good. There has been an upward trend in standards, with many more pupils now reaching the expected levels in English, mathematics and science. Improvements in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) have been quite spectacular and have led to pupils now making good progress and achieving standards that are well in line with what is expected. Improvement in the provision for children under five has also been dramatic. They now have a wide range of learning opportunities, and the accommodation and resources are used effectively. Assessment procedures have been developing well and this has contributed significantly to the raising of achievement. In addition, substantial improvements have been made to the accommodation, making it a more pleasant and effective learning environment.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average;*

*E\* - lowest five per cent.*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Achievement is good.** As can be seen above, standards in Year 6 are still well below the national average, but they are getting better and are now in line with, or very slightly below, similar schools. This is a distinct improvement from previous years. The upward trend in standards is above the national trend. The school sets challenging, but realistic targets, which it consistently reaches or exceeds. In Year 2, pupils are doing particularly well. They are

reaching levels that are getting closer to the national average and are much better than those in similar schools.

Achievement is good. Many children enter the school with weak skills. They make good progress in the reception classes, particularly in their personal and social development. They then continue to achieve well through the school. Sometimes pupils have barriers to learning and they do well to achieve as they do. Intervention programmes and the range of extra support that the school provides ensure that pupils with special educational needs, and any who are found to be underachieving, are given the boost they need. This is what lies behind the success of the school's support.

### **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.**

Attitudes are very positive. Pupils enjoy school. They are interested and often excited by what the school offers them. Behaviour is good. There are some pupils who on occasions display challenging behaviour, but this is very well managed by teachers and supported by systems in the school, so that there is no detrimental effect on the learning of others. Adults have high expectations of pupils, who respond well to this. They have a clear framework within which they learn to control their own behaviour. Pupils' personal development is very good. During their time in school, they gain confidence and self-esteem and they learn to respect others. The school's commitment to including all pupils has a positive impact on relationships within the school. Attendance is below average, but the school does all it can to promote good attendance.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

### **The quality of education provided by the school is good.**

**Teaching is consistently good** through the school. Teachers encourage and support pupils, so that they learn effectively. They involve everyone in lessons and plan well for their needs. Support staff make a very valuable contribution to the quality of learning. Assessment procedures are developing well. The school now has a clear understanding of where pupils are and how well they are progressing through the school. However, not enough use is made of assessment in subjects to provide learning targets for pupils. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in knowledge of their own learning.

The curriculum is good and provides a breadth of learning opportunities for all pupils. Enrichment, with such things as extra-curricular activities, is very good. Pupils are very well cared for. Support is a key strength of the school's provision and pervades all it does. The school has very good links with the community, promoted tirelessly by the headteacher. There are very good links with partner schools and institutions. Of particular benefit is the link with the neighbouring special school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** The leadership of the headteacher is central to all that the school is. She is dedicated to the school, its pupils, parents and the community and inspires and motivates all who are involved with the school. The school has a very positive ethos, based on a commitment to inclusion. Individuals matter and everyone has the opportunity to achieve. The school provides particularly well for pupils who are troubled and in need of support. The senior management team also provide very good leadership. There is a strong sense of team work in the school and very good relationships. Governors are strongly committed to the school and its community. They are very supportive of the inclusion policies and have developed a more strategic role. They ensure that statutory requirements are met,

with the exception of a minor breach in relation to the information provided in their annual report to parents.

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

Parents' views are very positive. In particular they hold the headteacher in high esteem. Pupils are happy in school. They like all the activities and feel cared for and supported.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

In order to continue to raise standards the most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Further develop assessment procedures to help teachers set realistic short-term targets for pupils and enable pupils to understand how they can improve their work.

and to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure the governors' annual report to parents contains all the required information.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Standards overall are well below average, but are in line with similar schools in Year 6 and are well above similar schools in Year 2. Pupils throughout the school achieve well.

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

- Standards are improving and are considerably higher than they were at the time of the last inspection.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and the school regularly exceeds its own targets.
- The range and quality of support provided for pupils ensures that everyone has the opportunity to succeed.
- Pupils achieve very well in ICT.

#### **Commentary**

1. Standards in English and mathematics in Year 6 in 2003 were well below the national average, as the table below shows. However, they were as high as those achieved in similar schools and this is a considerable improvement from the time of the last inspection.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.8 (23.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.6 (23.8)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.4 (26.5)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 were also well below average, but they were considerably higher than those achieved in similar schools.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.7 (15.3)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.6 (12.7)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.2 (16.6)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. These results show how much the school has improved in recent years. At the time of the last inspection only a minority of pupils achieved the expected levels. Now a big majority do so. The upward improvement trend is above the national trend and the school last year received an achievement award in recognition of this. Efforts made by the leadership of the school in terms of raising expectations, improving levels of support and the development of monitoring processes have played a major part in the drive to raise standards. The school sets itself challenging, but realistic, targets and regularly exceeds them.

4. Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress through the school and achieve better than might be expected, given their starting points. Parents are very confident that their children make good progress in school. Pupils start from a very low base. Assessments made as children enter the school show that many of them have poorly developed skills. Not all children have had nursery or pre-school educational experience and many lack the confidence and the social and personal skills that might be expected for children of this age. Skills in language and communication are also weak. Children make good progress in the reception classes. They make particularly good progress in the development of personal and social skills and this gives them a good basis for their entry into Year 1. Despite this though, inspection evidence indicates that many children are unlikely to reach the learning goals that they are expected to do by the end of reception. This is particularly so in language and mathematical development.
5. Pupils progress well through the school. The school's own records show how well pupils achieve from their starting points. They gain skills, knowledge and understanding, but they also gain confidence and a realisation that they can succeed. Many are helped to overcome barriers to learning through sensitive and timely support. Pupils with special educational needs are very carefully monitored and supported and they achieve well because of this. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and this encourages pupils of all attainment levels to try hard and set their sights high. There are some differences in how well girls and boys achieve, for example, girls do better in reading and boys do better in science. However, the school has identified and addressed this and the gaps are much smaller now than they were. Pupils who have been identified as being able and talented are being given the opportunity to achieve through an *Excellence in Cities* project. For example a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils are reaching very high standards in ICT.
6. Achievement in ICT is particularly good. Now that the provision is so much better than it was at the time of the last inspection, pupils are gaining skills and confidence at a rapid rate. Year 6 pupils are working at levels expected of pupils of this age and Year 2 pupils are working at levels above what is expected. This is very good achievement.

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

Pupils enjoy school and have very good attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is good. Provision for spiritual, moral, cultural, and social development is very good. Attendance is below average.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have positive attitudes towards school and they take part enthusiastically with all that is provided for them.
- The school has carefully managed structures that enable pupils to feel secure.
- There are high expectations of behaviour and clear guidance to help them understand what is right and wrong.
- The school has a very strong sense of inclusion and community.

### **Commentary**

7. The pupils listen attentively in lessons and enjoy their learning. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have very positive attitudes towards school and learning. The whole-school approach to creating and maintaining a very calm, positive atmosphere motivates pupils and keeps them interested and working hard. Initiatives, such as nurturing groups and a full-time learning mentor, combined with teachers' very good use of praise and encouragement, ensure that all pupils feel valued and appreciated. Pupils are encouraged to feel proud of producing high quality work, and to celebrate the achievements of others.

8. Behaviour is usually good. The high, yet realistic, school expectations of behaviour are seen in the way that pupils conduct themselves and go about their business. Pupils know how to behave in lessons, so any disruption is rare. Pupils mix easily and happily, so that there is positive social harmony. Pupils say that the links with the nearby special school make them more sympathetic to other people's problems. They feel that behaviour is mostly good and that staff quickly deal with any incidents. A few parents have a concern about behaviour in school, but this does tend to centre on a few pupils, rather than the behaviour in school as a whole, which they all agree is good. There are some pupils who display challenging behaviour, but they are very well managed by teachers, who are highly skilled at dealing with incidents and ensuring that the learning of the rest of the pupils is not disrupted. There have been seven fixed term exclusions in the last year. However, the school makes good use of a separate referral unit that gives pupils with very disruptive behaviour an opportunity to improve before they are re-integrated into the school. This is a practical solution to what can be very challenging behaviour in certain circumstances and is a reflection of the school's excellent philosophy of inclusion.
  
9. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Moral education has a high profile, coming together with the school's positive work on behaviour. Pupils have a strong sense of what is right and wrong and are encouraged to manage their own behaviour. The community focus of the school has a significant impact on pupils' social development. The school is always focused on bringing out the best in each pupil and encouraging respect for others. Pupils are given responsibilities and learn to listen to other people and value the views of others.
  
10. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. The shared aim of the school is to raise low self-esteem and build confidence in all pupils. This is achieved by celebrating achievement, academic and social, and by all adults taking every opportunity to make pupils feel good about themselves. This is a secure basis for pupils to develop spiritually. Pupils learn to appreciate their own cultural traditions and those of others. Teachers take every opportunity to introduce pupils to other cultures, for example, in the books they choose to read and the resources they use.
  
11. Attendance levels have been below the national average for several years. However, the figures compare more favourably with those achieved by similar schools. At the last inspection, attendance was judged to be just satisfactory. Poor support from some parents over attendance is the main cause of the problems. The level of unauthorised absence is well above the national average. The school promotes good attendance well and there is good co-operation with outside agencies over this matter. However, the school does not have adequate arrangements to monitor registers. Therefore, basic data about attendance including, for example, the success of policies is not available.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	5.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.3
National data	0.4

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

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	307	7	0

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is consistently good and pupils learn effectively. The curriculum is broad and well planned. The level of care provided is very good. Partnerships with the community and with other schools are very good.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment is satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils are included in lessons and given the support they need to enable them to learn.
- Teachers encourage pupils and as a result pupils try hard in lessons.
- Positive relationships and very good management of behaviour help make classrooms into positive learning environments.
- Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Assessment procedures are not used well enough in all subjects or to set targets for pupils.
- Pupils are not sufficiently aware of how they can improve their work.

### Commentary

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	10 (28%)	15 (43%)	9 (26%)	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.*

12. The quality of teaching is consistently good through the school and, as can be seen from the table above, it is often better than this. Pupils learn well and make good progress. This is an improvement from the last inspection, when there were some inconsistencies in teaching quality and not a lot of very good teaching. Parents are very happy with the quality of teaching their children receive. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are confident that they learn new things. They feel that they have to work hard, but are well supported and can get help when they are stuck.

13. This confidence is well-founded. Teachers encourage pupils and ensure that their needs are met. They involve all pupils in lessons and keep them interested. The way in which all pupils are given the opportunity to succeed is a major strength of the teaching and illustrates how strongly the leadership of the school is committed to inclusion. Positive

relationships, liberal use of praise and skilful management of behaviour create an effective learning environment in which all pupils thrive, including those who sometimes find it difficult to concentrate. Pupils respond well. They are interested in lessons, can be positively excited by what they are learning and they work hard. This was illustrated in a Year 2 ICT lesson, where the teacher was introducing pupils to using the Internet by using an insect web site. There was a high level of pupils with special educational needs in the class, but all had the opportunity to join in with the lesson, because of the skill of the teacher, the well chosen resources and the sensitive help of a support assistant. Every pupil was totally involved, they were excited by what they were finding and the learning was considerable.

14. Where teaching is not as effective, it is usually because of a lack of pace in lessons. Introductions and explanations that are too long result in pupils not getting through the amount of work they could do. This does not happen often, but when it does it has a negative effect on pupils' learning.
15. Throughout the school support staff are deployed well. They work effectively with teachers and make a valuable contribution to the quality of learning of all pupils, and in particular for those with special educational needs. They provide sensitive support, seeming to know instinctively when individuals need help and when they are going to gain more from solving their own problems. In very carefully planned systems, they unobtrusively take out individuals and groups of pupils for extra support and they make the most of short spans of time to help boost pupils' skills and confidence. The school makes a substantial investment in support staff and it pays off in the achievement of pupils.
16. Teachers are very competent in teaching key skills, such as in literacy and numeracy and now in ICT. They plan carefully and keep these lessons going at a pace that helps all pupils to be involved. As a result pupils gain skills and this is a major factor in their good achievement. For example, in a Year 5 literacy lesson based on myths, the teacher had planned well to meet the needs of all pupils. She demonstrated a very high level of subject knowledge and carefully and effectively taught some key writing skills, such as embedded clauses. Her high expectations and use of praise created a calm learning environment and kept all pupils focused on the work. Good progress was made in the lesson.
17. At its very best, the teaching encourages pupils to think and solve problems. An excellent numeracy lesson in Year 1 illustrates this.

#### **Example of outstanding practice**

##### **A numeracy lesson in Year 1, illustrating how pupils can be encouraged to think and solve problems.**

Pupils were asked how they could find out what type of house most people lived in. Suggestions were made and tried out, but none worked well. When the teacher introduced the idea of making a pictogram on the carpet, with everyone contributing their picture, pupils saw a graph appearing before them and they instantly realised how well this did the job. At the same time a well-primed teaching assistant tried to write down all the information, producing a long and laborious list. 'That was very hard work' was one pupil's comment, as they all realised how much more effective the pictogram was as a means of finding out. Some very good learning had taken place and pupils were later able to apply it as they were asked to solve their own 'showing the information' problem.

18. Assessment systems have been developing well since the last inspection. Teachers now have a much better idea of how pupils are progressing, particularly from year to year. They can identify underachievement and do something about it. Information from assessment is used to help teachers to group pupils, to plan for them and to target support. As yet, it is not used sufficiently well for setting short-term individual or group targets. There is some good practice in this in the school, but it does not spread across all subjects or as a whole-school system. Neither is marking, although very encouraging, always used as well as it could be for helping pupils understand how they can improve. Pupils usually know how well

they are doing, but they do not have a clear idea of what the next steps are and how they can get there.

## **The curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum is good overall. Opportunities for enrichment are very good. The quality and range of learning resources is good and the accommodation is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has a very inclusive curriculum, which is being further developed to specifically meet the needs of pupils at Ryelands School.
- Opportunities for enrichment are very good, especially in sport and other extra-curricular activities.
- The match of teachers and support staff is very effective in promoting learning.
- Opportunities to utilise key skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum are insufficiently developed.

### **Commentary**

19. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. The advice of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are effectively adapted to meet pupils' needs. However, the school regularly carries out a thorough audit of curriculum provision and its effectiveness. It seeks out the views of all staff and pupils. The upshot of these practices has been a growing realisation that the curriculum, although adequate at present, is not sufficiently meeting pupils' needs.
20. Consequently, the school has embarked on, and is well into, a major re-shaping of its curriculum. It is developing a skills based curriculum where strong links between subjects are exploited. Currently, this is inconsistent and not firmly planned. Above all, the inclusive nature of the planned curriculum is to be further strengthened to meet the widely varying needs of Ryelands' pupils. This curriculum is now in draft form after many months of hard work, with the intention of putting it in place in September 2004. The whole school community, including headteacher, senior management team, teaching staff and governors, have demonstrated outstanding professional and financial commitment to this project. It has proved to be a far sighted move, as recent national guidelines are encouraging all schools to develop their planned curriculum along these same lines.
21. The school places a very high priority on ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunity to enjoy the curriculum and all aspects of school life. The school is also developing opportunities for able and talented pupils, initially in English and mathematics, as part of its new skills based curriculum. Currently, the match of teachers and support staff in delivering the curriculum is good. The teamwork, careful planning and sharing of ideas and expertise are key factors in promoting the way pupils currently achieve. The support given to pupils with special educational needs is consistently very good. Their progress is very carefully monitored, and as a result work is planned to ensure that they learn very well. The school works very hard to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the opportunities it provides.
22. Opportunities for enrichment are very good overall, with a very good range of sporting activities, involvement with the arts, and extra-curricular clubs. These range from gardening and *Twitchers* bird club to *Get Moving* dance club and Spanish to *Art Awareness* and *Growing Together*. All are well-attended and make a valuable contribution to pupils' experiences, their attitudes and personal development.
23. Overall the school's accommodation and resources to support learning are good. The accommodation has been significantly improved, with the provision of a new ICT suite,

library and staffroom. The school has been completely re-decorated, and along with environmental improvements, now presents a far more welcoming and stimulating environment. Learning resources overall are good.

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

Provision for the care, welfare and health and safety of pupils and the support and guidance they receive is very good overall. The school is a very caring organisation and it is safe and secure. The way in which pupils are involved in the school and their views are valued is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is a very caring organisation and it supports its pupils well.
- The pupils have confidence in the adults in the school.
- Arrangements for the supervision of pupils are good.
- There are good arrangements for the induction of new pupils.
- The recording and monitoring of attendance is not sufficiently rigorous.

### **Commentary**

24. A very important and successful aim of the school is to nourish the pupils and raise their self-esteem. Their physical needs are catered for, for example, breakfast is provided when necessary, and the school is safe and secure. The pupils are valued and their achievements, along with those of the school, are celebrated and rewarded.
25. There is a large number of staff to provide support, and a learning mentor effectively helps pupils who have difficulties in learning. There are very good relationships with outside specialists, such as the school nurse and the community policeman, who extend the range of care. There are also good arrangements to help new pupils settle in school. Discussions with recent starters indicate that they are very happy with these arrangements and parents are very happy with how well their children settled into school. Support for families is included in the school's aim and is a vital element of how the headteacher works with pupils. For example, the school helps parents in their dealings with organisations such as social services. The caring ethos helps the children feel secure in school and this contributes to their enjoyment and progress. The school has very effective systems for identifying pupils with special educational needs. There is good and prompt access to outside agencies that provide additional advice or support. Teaching assistants provide very good focused support for those pupils identified as needing extra help. This aids their progress well.
26. The pupils like their teachers and they feel that they can turn to members of the staff with any problems. The headteacher is held in high regard as someone who can be approached. There are efforts to consult pupils about their views and they are pleased that they make a contribution to the development of their school. This helps to improve their self-esteem. Although the school does not have formal procedures to monitor and record the personal development of the pupils, staff have a very good personal knowledge of all pupils and are able to help when they are in need.
27. A conscientious effort is made to maintain high standards of health and safety but the roles of the staff and governors are not effectively co-ordinated. Attendance registers are not held at a central point and there is no formal record of pupils who are absent temporarily, for example, when attending a medical appointment. These details may cause difficulties accounting for pupils in an emergency evacuation.

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

The school has good links with parents. They hold the school in very high regard and, generally, support it well. There are very strong links with the local community and other schools.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have very positive views of the school and they support well school activities which directly involve their children.
- The school makes good efforts to develop strong links with parents.
- The school has very strong links with the local community and other schools and colleges.
- The governors' annual report does not meet statutory requirements.

### **Commentary**

28. Parents like the school very much and they have no significant reservations. A few concerns have been expressed about the behaviour of the pupils, but the inspection evidence suggests this is not an issue. The school is very keen to develop strong links with parents. It operates an open door policy. Parents are made to feel welcome and the staff are very accessible, which is appreciated. Courses are offered to parents and there is a satisfactory range of information. For example, each class teacher produces a booklet about what will be taught in the coming year.
29. Parents support activities such as special assemblies and school productions well. There is also good support for some parents' courses and this provides some help in classrooms. Parents commit to providing help as a condition of attending. There is less parental interest in supporting the broader work of the school. For example, there is difficulty recruiting parent governors and meetings about curriculum issues are generally poorly attended.
30. Information for parents is generally satisfactory. However, the content of the governors' annual report to parents does not meet statutory requirements. Well-established links with a nearby special school mean that pupils with special educational needs regularly benefit from the expertise of specialist teachers and support staff. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the review of individual education plans at all stages.
31. The school plays a central role in the local community. Mainly through the efforts of the headteacher, it has developed very strong links and it is held in high regard by members of the community. These links benefit the pupils directly. For example, close and regular contact with a nearby special school makes a significant contribution to the personal development of the pupils. There is also indirect benefit. The success of the school raises the profile of the community and, hence, the pupils self-esteem. Furthermore, major fund raising for the school is a community activity. Community links also enhance the curriculum, for example, through a range of visits and visitors, they provide sponsorship and access to sports facilities.
32. The relationships with other local schools and colleges are also very strong and they provide good benefits for the pupils. They make available a wider range of resources and good practice is shared. The links contribute significantly to the teaching of mathematics and provide courses in French. Arrangements for pupils transferring to the secondary school are very thorough and comprehensive. For example, all pupils are given an opportunity to visit several different schools. Discussions with pupils who are about to transfer indicate that they are very satisfied with the arrangements.



## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are very good. The governance of the school is good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The leadership of key staff is very good. The management of the school is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher is the driving force of the school.
- The ethos of the school is focused on valuing and supporting everyone.
- Teamwork is a strength of the school.
- Very good management brings about improvement.

### **Commentary**

33. The leadership of the headteacher is central to all that the school is. She is dedicated to the school, its pupils, parents and the community it serves. She inspires and motivates all who are involved with the school and is held in high esteem by everyone. She tirelessly promotes the positive ethos of the school, which is based on a commitment to inclusion. Individuals matter in this school and everyone is valued and has an opportunity to achieve. The ethos of care permeates all that the school does and results in its providing particularly well for pupils who are troubled or in need of support.
34. The headteacher and recently appointed deputy headteacher make a strong team. They have a clear vision for the future of the school and have worked together well in driving forward improvements. One of the many roles of the deputy headteacher is that of special educational co-ordinator and she fulfils this role capably. She is perceptive in meeting the changing needs of all pupils with special educational needs, through whole-school planning and through her own teaching.
35. The headteacher has created a strong senior management team, the members of which now provide very good leadership. They share the vision of the headteacher and have a strong sense of purpose. They provide good role models in their own teaching and their commitment to improvement. The school is a dynamic organisation, willing to change in order to improve. This is shown in the huge investment of time and work that is currently going into an ambitious review of the curriculum. All staff work together as a team, supporting each other and providing a good model for pupils in their positive relationships and working together.
36. Governors are strongly committed to the school and its community. They are very supportive of the headteacher and senior management team and of the inclusion policies that are so vital to the school. They work effectively in committees, have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and are closely involved in strategic decisions. They are currently developing their role further, in order to make a greater contribution in terms of monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.
37. The school is very well managed. It was as a result of extensive consultation and self-evaluation that staff realised the need to develop the curriculum. There are now in place secure procedures for monitoring the school's performance and tracking the progress of pupils through the school. Weaknesses are quickly identified and action is taken to bring about improvement. Staff development is well managed and in recent years has had a positive impact on such areas as ICT and the Foundation Stage.
38. Financial planning and administration are very good, both on a day-to-day basis and in the long term. Resources are well used and investments are made to support educational priorities. The school is currently carrying a substantial balance of reserves. However, this

is part of some careful financial planning which will enable the school to sustain the level of staffing and small classes during a period of falling rolls. There are also the funds carried forward as part of the school's five year plan to support continued refurbishment of the accommodation, support for pupils with special educational needs and to finance curriculum development.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	987,707
Total expenditure	913,046
Expenditure per pupil	2,835

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	111,297
Balance carried forward to the next	149,489

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

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

39. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in two reception classes. Provision for this age has improved considerably since the last inspection. The curriculum for the reception classes is now well planned and structured. There is a good balance between adult-directed activities and the opportunity for children to explore and experiment. Adult support is of good quality and is very well deployed. The accommodation is very well organised and the best use is made of available resources. Staff work well in partnership with the nursery that is part of the Family Centre and with the special school, both of which are on the same campus. There is currently no Foundation Stage co-ordinator, but the provision is well managed by one of the teachers and the deputy headteacher.

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

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

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

- The teaching is good and children soon settle confidently into the welcoming and secure environment.
- Although children achieve well, many do not reach the expected goals.

#### **Commentary**

40. Many children enter the reception classes with weak personal, social and emotional skills. There are very good introductory procedures and children soon become accustomed to the systems and are happy in the well organised environment. Adults sensitively provide support and encouragement, which make children feel secure and give them confidence. Relationships are very good and children soon get on well with adults and other children. Social skills are particularly well taught. For example, the teaching assistant worked with a group of children with the task of making a bed for a bear. She encouraged them to discuss how they would carry out the task and to cooperate with selecting the most suitable materials.

41. Children's concentration levels are often very limited and a large number of children have poor listening skills. Teachers work well with this, encouraging children to listen in large and small groups. There are now more opportunities for children to work independently and this they do surprisingly well. They are helped by the way in which resources are organised and the carefully structured environment. For example, during an activities session, children confidently selected the games or other activities that they wanted to use and quite happily found a suitable place to play in. During this session, all children were purposely occupied, many with self-chosen activities.

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

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

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

- The teaching is good but, although children achieve well, only a few are on course to reach the expected goals.
- Early literacy skills are carefully taught.

- Adults take every opportunity to encourage conversation and extend the use of language.

### **Commentary**

42. Many children enter the reception classes with weak communication skills and very limited literacy skills. Teachers plan for children to gain confidence in all areas of communication, language and literacy and there is a more interesting range of activities than there was at the time of the last inspection. All adults are aware of the importance of encouraging children to talk and to listen to each other, and during activities of different kinds they provide opportunities for children to extend their vocabulary and gain confidence in conversing. Role play is a particularly good feature in this provision. For example, there was a house for the *Three Bears* set up and children were able to act out the story they knew well. The teaching assistant worked very well with groups, encouraging children to take on roles, and suggesting what they might say to each other.
43. Literacy skills are carefully taught. For example, one teacher modelled writing as she composed a sentence and children followed this intently. They later tried out some of the things she had shown them and they made progress in attempting their own writing. Emergent writing is particularly well encouraged. Children are given a lot of opportunities to experiment with mark-making and most confidently attempt some form of communication on paper. All children make good progress. Many children can ascribe meaning to the marks they make and some children begin to form recognisable letter shapes. However, pencil control of most children is weak.

### **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

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

- Teaching is good and children achieve well, but not all are confident enough with numbers to reach the expected goals.
- There are many opportunities for children to use mathematical language in their activities.
- Focused sessions are carefully planned and promote children's understanding.

### **Commentary**

44. There is a much more practical approach to children's mathematical development than there was at the time of the last inspection. A range of activities is provided that encourages children to count, match and order, such as in role play and work with construction toys. Whole-class and group sessions take place so that all children have lots of opportunities to count and become familiar with numbers. Most children count to ten and some count confidently to 20. However, there is much more hesitation when it comes to ordering numbers or recognising numerals.

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

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

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

- Teaching is good and children achieve well. Most are on course to achieve the expected goals.
- There is a wide range of opportunities for children to explore and find out.
- Provision for children to work with ICT is particularly good.

## Commentary

45. There is a lot to attract children in the reception environment. Adults provide imaginatively for children to explore the world about them and find out how things are and how they work. This is good improvement from the last inspection. For example, at one stage children were able to add porridge oats to the water tray and spent a long time exploring the result. This encouraged a lot of conversation and interaction between children as they delved elbow deep into the murky water.
46. A wide range of construction toys is available and often children have free access to them, giving them the opportunity to choose and work independently. Because they are given the time to continue, some children work with concentration on quite complex models. The classes are well provided with computers and children soon learn to use them confidently. Although mouse control is often weak, most children can work independently, for example, with simple jigsaw game and paint programs. In one session the teacher worked with a group of children as they learnt to control a *Roamer* or programmable toy. During this session they gained a lot of experience of giving instructions and seeing what happened. They worked with a high level of concentration and were excited and often amused by the results of their actions.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

47. It was not possible to observe this area fully, mainly because of inclement weather. The reception classes have no safe, secure, suitable and easily-accessible outdoor area of their own, but they do make good use of what is available. Particularly valuable is the arrangement they have with the Family Centre to share their facilities. Teachers also make use of the school playground on a daily basis, for such activities as circle games and play with small equipment. Children take part in these enthusiastically and demonstrate a reasonable degree of control in their movement. They are not however, always aware of other people or of how their movements affect others. Children have a lot of opportunities to use tools and other equipment. In one session, children confidently helped themselves to scissors so they could cut and stick bits of paper onto teddy bear shapes. They did this with varying success.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good; children achieve well and are on course to achieve the expected goals.
- Children are provided with opportunities to explore and experiment with a wide range of materials and media.

## Commentary

48. Children are given many opportunities to work with a range of materials and to explore and develop their ideas. This is good improvement from the last inspection, when choice was limited. Children now draw, paint, cut and stick on a regular basis. They make models and work together on large pictures. They have access to musical instruments and experiment with sounds and rhythm.
49. There are still some very effective adult-focused activities where children are encouraged to think about what they are doing more carefully. In these sessions children develop their ideas, but also gain the vocabulary they need to express themselves. For example, in one

very well taught activity, the teacher helped children to make choices of paper that would be suitable for making a picture of their teddy. They were encouraged to think about the size and colour of paper they wanted to work with, and the choices they made were very varied. Through some carefully managed discussion, the teacher got the children to look carefully at their teddy and to select paint or other media with which to work. The results were very different and were a true expression of each child's ideas about their own teddy.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.
- Teachers have high expectations and there is very effective classroom support.
- Setting in Year 6 enables all pupils to progress well.
- Marking does not always give pupils a clear picture of how well they are doing or what they have to do to improve.

#### **Commentary**

50. Standards in English are rising because of the school's focus on improvement in this subject. This is evident in national test results over the last few years. In the 2003 tests, Year 2 standards in reading and writing, when compared with similar schools were at least very good; in Year 6 they were average. This represents good progress from entry, when many children were well below their peers.
51. The inspection found that pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported, and every effort is made by staff to raise all pupils' attainment by carefully planned work and good support and encouragement. For example, in a very good Year 1 literacy lesson, pupils were eager to use the well-established praise system to reward the very good achievement of two pupils in story telling.
52. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are well below average in Years 1 and 2 and below average in Years 3 to 6. Many younger pupils are limited by a restricted vocabulary. Consequently, both their understanding and their ability to communicate effectively are hampered. Staff work hard to help pupils to extend their vocabulary by repeating and explaining unfamiliar words. Pupils are encouraged to discuss issues in lessons, for example, in a Year 1 geography lesson pupils expressed their views about improving the local area. In another Year 1 literacy lesson, two pupils used soft toys and sound effects very effectively to present a *play speech* of a familiar story. The school has provided a wide range of activities to help improve pupils' speaking and listening skills. These include the *Better Talking Partnerships* with a nearby special school where small groups of pupils work with a specialist support assistant to improve skills. The weekly *Thought for the Day* sessions in class give pupils opportunities to express personal thoughts and share events.
53. Pupils achieve well in reading, but standards remain low. There is a structured reading programme, with pupils working through a published scheme. All pupils are encouraged to read with parents and carers at home, but this is not always successful. Readers are heard regularly in school, usually by teaching assistants, but the records of progress kept are not always sufficiently detailed enough to help plan effectively. Younger pupils are given planned intensive word recognition activities and there is a wide range of intervention and support programmes for pupils with special educational needs. All classrooms have well

organised book corners and the library is a large, attractive room, but many of the books are unattractive with difficult texts.

54. Staff have worked hard to drive up standards in writing that remain below average in Years 1 to 6. However, pupils achieve well and are making good progress from a very low level, because of good teaching and teachers' high expectations. Teachers are competent in teaching literacy skills. Good use of writing frames helps pupils develop their planning skills for a wide range of writing styles, and tasks are planned appropriately for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. In Year 2, higher attaining pupils can sequence sentences and use capital letters and full stops with growing accuracy. In Year 6 more pupils are beginning to use paragraphs although other forms of punctuation, such as full stops are not consistently used. Teachers make good use of ongoing, formal assessments to inform planning, but learning objectives for specific activities are not always shared and not all teachers check pupils' understanding at the end of lessons. There is no formal system for setting pupils' personal targets so that pupils can gauge their own progress. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is inconsistent so that pupils are not always clear about what they have to do to improve.
55. English is managed very well, because the temporary subject coordinator takes her role very seriously and works with class teachers to monitor assessments to check pupils' progress regularly. She has a clear view of what needs to be improved, for example, developing guided reading sessions and improving the quality of provision in the library. She has not been able to monitor work in classrooms yet, because of the temporary nature of her role.

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

56. Pupils are encouraged to use their language skills in other subjects. At the moment, these opportunities to link subjects together are not structured, but the school curriculum initiatives should enable skills to be practised more effectively. On occasions, pupils' weaknesses in literacy skills affect their progress in other subjects, for example, as they struggle to record their work in science.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below average but they are improving.
- Teaching is good overall and helps pupils achieve well from a very low starting point.
- Subject leadership is good.
- Marking does not contain enough clear guidance on exactly what pupils have to do to improve.

### **Commentary**

57. Analysis of pupils' work and observation of work in lessons indicates that, whilst standards are below expectations for pupils at the ages of seven and 11, they are improving and moving nearer to where they should be. Recent national test results show standards to be well below average nationally but the school's results compare well with those of similar schools. Many pupils start school with very weak numeracy skills, and many find difficulty in retaining information even over short periods of time. A lack of confidence and an inability to adapt mean some pupils do not do themselves justice when faced with the strangeness of a national test. Nevertheless, pupils are achieving well largely because of good teaching through the school and the school's very positive, supportive *can do* ethos.

58. The good teaching across the school enables pupils to make generally good progress. There is a strong focus on teaching basic skills, especially during the oral and mental sessions at the beginning of lessons. Teachers know that many pupils have difficulty in retaining information, and are not fluent with numbers and they are resourceful in trying different teaching approaches and constantly referring back to what has been taught previously in efforts to consolidate learning. Teachers work hard, manage pupils very well and use praise extensively to motivate pupils. Pupils' contributions are valued. Successful adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy, the school's policy of tailoring programmes of work to meet specific needs and a consistency of methods of working support pupils very well. The support for pupils with special educational needs, in mathematics is very good. Teaching assistants and special support assistants work hard to make sure that these pupils are attentive during teacher led sessions, and they provide encouragement and support during activities. These pupils with special educational needs are included very well. All pupils generally display good attitudes towards mathematics. They work with enthusiasm and can produce sustained periods of hard work. These positive attitudes are a significant factor in pupils' good achievements.
59. Teaching is good or better across the school. However, more could be done by teachers, through their marking comments and the use of individual or group targets, to indicate very clearly to pupils exactly what it is they have to do to improve. Marking is often just ticks, or comments about presentation. These methods are not effective enough for teachers to monitor the progress of pupils and for pupils to be aware of their own learning.
60. The subject is well led. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has worked hard to raise the profile of mathematics in the school. All staff have attended a range of further training courses, and resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is well aware of strengths and areas for development in the subject. Recent assessment analysis showed that pupils were getting insufficient experience of handling data, and the school has moved swiftly to address this. The co-ordinator is also determined to further develop pupils' experience in solving written problems and using their mathematical skills in tackling real life problems, despite the constraints of often weak reading and writing skills.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

61. Examination of pupils' work indicates that an effective start has been made in using mathematics across the curriculum. There were satisfactory examples noted in science, ICT and geography. As part of the new, creative curriculum, the school intends such opportunities to be systematically planned rather than arising ad hoc.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

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

- Standards are below average, but pupils achieve well from a very low starting point.
- The subject is well led.
- Investigation skills are below average and are often hindered by weak literacy skills.

#### **Commentary**

62. From a very low base, many pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. Clearly planned tasks, effective use of resources and appropriate use of worksheets, especially to support those less confident, all offer good support for younger pupils. Well planned and deployed adult



support makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievements and helps ensure all, including pupils with special educational needs, are included in activities. By the age of 11, a good number of pupils achieve the standards required. However, national test results reveal that few achieve above the expected levels. Inspection evidence confirms this picture.

63. Whilst teaching overall is satisfactory there is evidence that, especially with older pupils, some activities are over directed by the teacher. Pupils have opportunities to conduct investigations, but they are making insufficient gains in knowing how to set up an investigation themselves. Pupils are capable of making predictions but there is limited evidence of them knowing how to set up a *fair test*. Also, weak skills in writing and spelling of subject specific words often prevent them from writing up their experiments independently and coherently. Pupils know what conditions are needed for a plant to survive; they know how the body works and what foods are essential to keeping a healthy diet. They can test materials and know which are best suited to a particular purpose, such as making a waterproof garment.
64. On occasions, because work is sometimes over directed by teachers, it results in a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils who, whilst reaching average standards, could be challenged further. The school has identified the need to develop pupils' skills of investigative and experimental science further. Very good provision is made for pupils who have special educational needs because of the effective way they are supported in lessons by support staff.
65. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator is thoughtful and thorough and has a clear view of strengths and needs in the subject. She has good awareness of the need to provide support structures for colleagues, where confidence in teaching science, although improved, is still variable. She is keen to sharpen the assessment of pupils' attainments in order to give better early warning of any weaknesses. A new skills based curriculum plan has been developed as part of the school's major re-shaping of its curriculum.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Improvement since the last inspection has been spectacular.
- Standards are particularly good in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils enjoy working with computers; they are often excited by what they learn.
- The coordinator has been very effective in bringing about improvements.

### **Commentary**

66. Since the last inspection, when standards were well below what they should have been and progress was poor, improvement has been dramatic. Investment in resources, training for teachers and very effective leadership have brought about a much changed situation. Achievement is now good. Pupils work with computers on a regular basis; they gain skills and make good progress in lessons.
67. Standards in Year 2 are particularly good, with pupils achieving standards that are above what is expected. Pupils in these classes are already working confidently with computers and have gained a range of skills. For example, they create quite complex pictures using a paint program and they explore Internet web pages for information relevant to their needs. In Year 6, pupils are working at expected levels and achieve standards in line with other pupils of their age. They prepare multimedia presentations, combining text, graphics and

sound. They use spreadsheet modelling to answer questions and solve problems and they know why modelling is useful. This is a huge improvement from the time of the last inspection, when they were leaving the school with only very basic skills.

68. Teaching in ICT is good and can be very good. Teachers confidently use the ICT suite and other resources to ensure that pupils learn effectively. They plan carefully and structure the work, so that pupils are building on what they have already learnt. With sensitive use of pairings at computers, all pupils are included in lessons and have the opportunity to achieve. Pupils enjoy working with computers. One of the things they said they liked best about the school was working in the ICT suite. They are interested and involved in lessons and are often excited by what they are learning. They work well together, supporting each other and solving problems.
69. Leadership and management of ICT are very good. The co-ordinator has excellent subject expertise and she has worked hard to ensure that all teachers feel confident about delivering the curriculum. This together with a huge investment in resources has brought about the changes that have had such an impact on standards and achievement.

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

70. There are some good links being made between ICT and other subjects. For example, a Year 1 teacher gave pupils the opportunity to create pictograms on a computer after they had made them in a mathematics lesson. However, there is still some way to go before ICT really effectively supports teaching and learning across the curriculum. The school is aware of this and plans are in place for this to happen as part of the skill based curriculum to be introduced in September.

### **HUMANITIES**

71. No **history** lessons were seen and one lesson was seen in **geography** in Year 2, but inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' work in Years 3 to 6 and displays of pupils' work around the school. There is insufficient evidence to give a secure judgement on the quality of provision in history or geography.
72. In both subjects, a range of visits, like a local history trail, play an important part in making the work interesting and relevant. In geography, Year 1 pupils are able to talk knowledgeably about the local area and changes they would like to make to a local play area after a field visit. Subject co-ordinators are currently reviewing provision for both subjects within the school curriculum initiative in order to make them relevant to pupils' needs and to develop skills more effectively.

### **Religious education**

Provision in the subject is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and other world religions.

### **Commentary**

73. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Only three lessons were observed, but a range of pupils' completed work and displays around the school show that the school follows the current agreed syllabus. The good achievement of the last inspection has not been maintained,

mainly because the current locally agreed syllabus is outdated. Religious education is now part of the school's focus for curriculum innovation.

74. The focus is on learning about Christian teaching, as set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Additionally, pupils learn about Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism, but there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to make comparisons between the beliefs and values of the major religions. Evidence from work scrutiny and the two lessons seen in Years 4 and 5 indicate that the teaching is satisfactory. Pupils' work and displays around the school show that that by Year 6 pupils know about Bible stories from both the Old and New Testament and stories from the other major world faiths. In the Year 2 lesson seen, pupils continued a series of lessons about special religious places by drawing and describing their own special place and by explaining why it was special to them. This was a good link with personal and social education.
75. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The coordinator monitors teachers' plans and maintains the resources. However, she hasn't had any recent opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in the subject to enable her to have a clear picture of standards across the school.

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

### **Music**

76. No lessons were observed in music. The school has recently purchased a new music scheme which covers all aspects of the music curriculum for the 'non-specialist'. In addition, the school is intending to employ a specialist music teacher for each class to have a period of specialised music teaching. Pupils also visit the local special school for specialist teaching, and as part of the provision for able and talented, a local professional musician is to teach groups of older pupils. Overall, resources for teaching music are good with a wide range of instruments, both tuned and untuned, and recorded music.

### **Physical education**

77. Only one lesson in physical education was observed. This was a particularly effective lesson in Year 4, and the lesson was jointly taken by school staff and a member of staff from the local special school. Several pupils from this school, with a range of learning and physical difficulties, took a full part.
78. Overall, pupils follow a full range of physical activities including gymnastics, games, dance and athletics. In swimming, by the time pupils are 11, about 95 per cent of pupils are able to swim 25 metres or more, with many achieving much more and learning personal safety and life saving skills. Pupils are involved in a wide range of sporting competitions with other schools.

### **Design and technology**

79. There was insufficient opportunity to observe teaching and learning in design and technology and secure judgement on the overall quality of provision, or how it has improved since the last inspection, could not be made.

### **Art and design**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils gain a range of skills and learn about artists and their work.
- In the best lessons pupils have opportunities to explore and experiment.
- Standards are not as high as they were, but plans are in place to address this.

## **Commentary**

80. Overall, standards are in line with what is expected. Year 2 pupils have good knowledge of how different artists work and have had the opportunity to try out a range of techniques. Year 6 pupils have studied landscapes and tried out brushwork techniques. They draw and paint confidently. Pupils' work is valued and the display of pupils' art work is good.

81. Achievement is satisfactory, and is sometimes good. Through the school, pupils are introduced to a range of different artists and learn how to apply their knowledge to their own work. In Year 3, pupils have studied the work of Mondrian and have been encouraged to work with pattern, shape and texture. Year 5 took this further as they studied the work of Escher and then, in designing their own templates, developed a good understanding of how elements such as shape can be combined to achieve a specific effect.

82. Standards are not as high as they were at the time of the last inspection, although the quality of teaching overall is good and elements of very good teaching are still apparent. In a very good lesson given by the coordinator, Year 1 pupils made a weaving to their own design. They had a very wide range of materials to select from and had the opportunity to choose and try out until they were happy with what they were producing. In this way they were being given the chance to investigate possibilities and develop their ideas. The work they produced was imaginative and of a very high standard, above what might have been expected for pupils of this age. Achievement here was good.

83. This level of work is not taking place throughout the school. In some classes the work is too teacher-directed and pupils do not have enough opportunity to explore and experiment. The use of sketch books for such trying out is often limited. Sometimes there is an element of the teacher knowing what the end result will be, rather than pupils having the opportunity to develop their own ideas. The co-ordinator is aware that the subject has taken a bit of a back seat during the whole-school focus on raising standards in literacy and numeracy and she has not had the opportunity that she used to have to support colleagues in their planning. However, she is very keen to remedy this and there are secure plans in place to make sure that art comes back to the fore in the new creative curriculum.

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

84. There is an effective programme in place for the teaching of personal, social and health education. There are taught lessons and it is also taught through other subjects, such as religious education. Provision for sex education and drugs education is good, with planned programmes, good support from other agencies such as the school nursing service and the police and involvement of parents. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has made good plans for the subject to be properly integrated into the new creative curriculum and to be a key part of its work.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgments</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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