

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **EDLESBOROUGH SCHOOL**

Bedfordshire

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110225

Headteacher: Ms J Hatfield

Lead inspector: Mr C Rhodes

Dates of inspection: 24 – 27 November 2003

Inspection number: 260555

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:	224
School address:	High Street Edlesborough Dunstable Bedfordshire
Postcode:	LU6 2HS
Telephone number:	01525 220431
Fax number:	01525 221819
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Ian Binks
Date of previous inspection:	13 September 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Edlesborough School is a nine class community school near Dunstable in Buckinghamshire. There are 232 pupils aged between four and 11 on roll, which is average for a primary school. Some pupils join the school at the beginning of Year 3, on transfer from a neighbouring infant school. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Most are of white British origins. A below average proportion are entitled to free school meals. A very few pupils have special educational needs, usually specific learning difficulties. No pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Attainment on entry is currently slightly above nationally expected levels.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16408	Chris Rhodes	Lead inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education
11072	Shirley Elomari	Lay inspector	
30490	Alison Traska	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Geography History
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very good school.** Standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science, and pupils have made very good progress since they started in the reception class. The quality of teaching and learning is good, and overall standards of leadership and management are very good. **The school gives very good value for money.**

#### The school's main strengths are

- The headteacher is a very effective leader.
- Overall academic standards are very high, and have been so for some years.
- The quality of teaching is good. It is very good in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils make very good progress. They work hard and want to improve.
- Pupils behave very well and have very positive attitudes. Relationships are very strong.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and are active partners in helping their children to make progress.
- The governing body is extremely efficient, especially in the way it monitors and evaluates the school's performance.

#### The two main areas for development, as already identified by the school as priorities, are:

- Standards in the humanities and creative subjects although satisfactory should be higher.
- The current provision for children in the Foundation Stage is not fully developed.

**Improvement has been very good** since the school was previously inspected in 1999. Standards in English, science and information and communication technology (ICT), and particularly in mathematics, are higher. The quality of teaching has improved significantly. The quality of leadership and management has been strengthened. There is an improved and effective whole school approach to assessment so that teachers know exactly how well pupils are doing and what they can achieve with effort. Attendance rates are not as high.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A\* - very high (top five per cent); 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.*

**Pupils achieve very well.** Current standards in Year 2 are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards in Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Boys and girls do equally well. Overall standards in the 2003 national tests, although well above average, were not quite as high as in previous years when attainment was in the top five per cent. These slight variations are normal and reflect the abilities of the particular groups of pupils. The Year 6 pupils who sat the tests in 2003 did very well in comparison with the standards they had reached four years earlier when they were in Year 2. The children who started in the reception class in September 2003 have made satisfactory progress, and are on course to exceed the goals expected for the end of the school year. Current standards in ICT and other subjects in Year 2 and in Year 6 are in line with expected levels, with the exception of history in Year 2 where

they are higher. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in Year 2 and exceed them in Year 6.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good.** They behave very well and have very positive attitudes to school and to learning. Relationships are very good. Pupils have a very clear understanding of right and wrong, and an increasing awareness of life in a culturally diverse society. Levels of attendance are unsatisfactory because too many pupils lose important school time when holidays are taken during the term.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

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

Teaching is good overall, with particular strengths in the teaching of English, mathematics and science. Teachers have a very good knowledge of their subjects, which gives the pupils confidence as learners. Work is planned thoroughly and is carefully matched to the different abilities within the classes so that all pupils can make good progress. Teachers have a high expectation of what pupils can achieve, and detailed, supportive marking indicates how they can improve. Pupils learn effectively. They are very well behaved, and work hard and happily to meet the many intellectual challenges they are given. They relish the very good teaching observed in many lessons. In a few rare examples, the work is not challenging enough, and pupils waste time or spend too long on work they can complete easily. Teaching assistants play an important part in supporting individual pupils or groups.

The curriculum is good. It is enriched by many challenging opportunities, including extra-curricular activities. The current provision for children in the Foundation Stage is not fully developed. Provision for the care and welfare of all pupils is very good. There is a very strong partnership with parents, who support the school's work very effectively.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Very good.** The headteacher is a very effective and astute leader. She is strongly supported by a very high quality governing body and a committed senior management team. There is full compliance with all statutory requirements. The role of subject leaders has been strengthened, and they are having an increasing impact on standards and levels of achievement.

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

Parents and pupils feel very positively about the school. Parents value the way in which the staff are committed to high standards. A few have concerns about homework. Arrangements are appropriate.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Continue the implementation of the school's programme for the development of teaching and learning in the humanities and creative subjects.
- Develop the Foundation Stage curriculum further in its own right, including more opportunities for learning outdoors.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average in Year 2 and in Year 6, the ends of the two key stages in primary education. Achievement is very good because the pupils in both year groups have made substantial progress since they first started school. The same levels of progress can also be seen in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5. Boys and girls, and pupils with special educational needs, do equally well. Children in the reception class have made satisfactory progress since they joined the school in September, and are on course to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the summer term.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment in the current Year 2 is well above average in reading, writing and in mathematics. It is well above average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6.
- Overall standards in English and mathematics have been at consistently high levels for several years.
- Pupils in Years 1-6 make very good progress in English, mathematics and science as they progress through the school. They also make better than expected progress in ICT and physical education.
- Standards in Year 2 are well above expected levels in science and above in history. Pupils in Year 6 achieve above expected levels in religious education.
- Standards in the other foundation subjects are not as high as in English, mathematics and science.
- Children in the reception class are on course to exceed the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development, and for personal and social development.

#### Commentary

1. The results of the reading, writing and mathematics tests for pupils in Year 2 in the summer of 2003 were very good. Although statistically they were not quite as high as in the previous year, attainment in reading and mathematics was in the top five per cent when compared to schools across the country and well above average in writing. The percentage of pupils who reached the higher Level 3 was twice the national average. Girls and boys did equally well. The results compared very favourably with schools containing pupils from similar backgrounds. Standards have been at similar high levels for four years.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	18.7 (20.4)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.8 (17.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.9 (20.1)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The results of the English, mathematics and science tests for pupils in Year 6 were also not quite as statistically high as in 2002, but were well above average in comparison with other schools. The percentage of pupils who attained the higher level 5 was above the national average for English, and well above average for mathematics and science. Boys and girls did equally well in English and science, but girls were slightly better than boys in mathematics.



Attainment in English was broadly in line with that obtained in similar schools, but was higher in mathematics, and well above average in science. Crucially, the year group achieved well above average results when compared with their own previous attainment in Year 2. Attainment trends remained above the national average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3 (30.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.5 (31.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	31.0 (32.4)	28.6 (28.3)

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

3. The school has set challenging targets for the current Year 2 and Year 6 to reach by the summer of 2004. Pupils are well on course to achieve them.
4. Current standards in other subjects in Year 2 and in Year 6 are in line with expected levels, with the exception of history in Year 2 where they are higher. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in Year 2 and exceed them in Year 6. Standards in ICT, below expected levels at the time of the previous inspection, are now in line and many pupils are attaining at higher levels. The school made the decision, following the previous inspection, to channel its main energies into raising standards in English, mathematics and science. This it has achieved and sustained in all three subjects, with particular success in mathematics. The governing body, headteacher and staff have already recognised that standards in other subjects should now also rise, and have started to implement appropriate strategies.
5. Achievement is very good in English, mathematics and science. Very good progress can be seen in the many lessons when the quality of teaching inspires pupils to greater effort, and in their ‘achievement books’ in which pieces of writing and samples of mathematics can be compared over several terms. Greater than average progress has also been made in religious education and in design and technology in Years 3 to 6, in ICT and physical education in all classes, and in history in Years 1 and 2. Progress in other subjects is satisfactory.
6. Many children in the reception class start school with higher skill levels than is expected nationally. They continue to develop in all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum and are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals expected for their age by the end of the summer term. They make satisfactory progress overall. Progress in physical, social and creative development is limited by the restricted nature of the current outdoor provision.

**Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

**Standards are very good.** Pupils enjoy school. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. They reflect the school's very strong ethos in their confident, friendly and thoughtful behaviour. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Punctuality is good but rates of authorised absence are above the national average.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships are very good.
- Pupils are highly motivated by good teaching.
- Pupils make an active contribution to the school decision making process.
- Inclusion is very good. Individual effort is recognised by the school and other pupils.
- The rate of authorised absence is too high.

## Commentary

7. The provision for the development of pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities is very good. Pupils are happy, confident and eager to learn. Parents are pleased that their children enjoy school. They acknowledge the high standard of work and the progress their children make. Pupils learn well together in pairs and groups, and their level of co-operation is very high. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Behaviour is very good in lessons and at play and lunch times. The school is a harmonious community, free from all types of oppression or bullying. There have been no exclusions in the past two years.
8. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an integral element in the curriculum, and has a direct and positive effect on their attitudes and behaviour. Pupils have many rich opportunities to develop their spiritual awareness and reflect on their own values and beliefs as well as those of others. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils are responsible school citizens and readily follow the school's rules. They are self-disciplined, thoughtful and sensitive to the needs of others. Social development is very good. Adults know the pupils well and the strong rapport is evident in the maturity with which pupils approach their work. Pupils are eager to accept responsibility, including their enthusiastic membership of the school council.
9. The school is effective in promoting pupils' cultural awareness through the content of the curriculum, artefacts and displays. There is a good range of reading materials with cross-cultural themes and the curriculum is enriched by visitors and visits. A good number of pupils learn to play musical instruments, perform in school assemblies and for their parents. The school is looking to extend its international links.
10. Ethos is reported in greater detail at the school's request: a strong ethos is at the centre of the school's philosophy. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good. Relationships are strong and founded on mutual respect. Older pupils willingly help the younger ones. Pupils are patient and tolerant. They care for each other and their school.

## Attendance

Attendance between 2002 and 2003 was unsatisfactory and below the national average. At the time of the previous inspection, attendance was well above the national average. Since then it has fallen significantly due to a marked increase in the number of parents who take holidays during term time. Many families ask the school for work to complete while they are away, which it is happy to supply, but the pupils concerned inevitably miss key teaching. Almost all pupils arrive punctually in the mornings and lessons usually begin on time. Unauthorised absence is low. Registration is efficient. The school follows up any unexplained absences on the first day. Parents generally support the school well by ensuring that their children attend school regularly and arrive punctually.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.5	School data	0.1
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.*

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

**Provision is good.** The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Curricular provision is good. It is fully inclusive and is enriched by many challenging opportunities, including extra-curricular activities. The Foundation Stage curriculum is not fully developed. The level of accommodation is satisfactory overall, and resources are good. The school makes very good provision for the care and welfare of all its pupils. Pupils feel safe. Teachers know pupils very well

and provide good support and guidance. Pupils are encouraged to express their views and are confident that these will be taken seriously. The school has developed strong links with parents, and values the support that it receives in return.

## Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, with particular strengths in the teaching of English, mathematics and science in all classes. Teachers make effective use of their knowledge of pupils' progress to set work at correct levels of difficulty and to adjust the pace of learning.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a very good knowledge of their subjects and teach with authority.
- Work is matched carefully to pupils' ability and they are able to make good progress.
- The quality of teaching in the reception class is not currently as strong as in the rest of the school.
- Teachers have a high expectation of what pupils can achieve, and detailed, supportive marking indicates how they can improve.
- Pupils learn effectively. They are very well behaved, and work hard to meet the many intellectual challenges they are given.
- In a few rare examples, the work is not challenging enough, and pupils waste time or spend too long on work they can complete easily.
- Pupils learn effectively because they are well taught.

### Commentary

11. Approximately three out of every four lessons seen during the inspection were good or better. Two were outstanding. Two were unsatisfactory because pupils did not make enough progress. The quality of teaching has risen significantly since the previous inspection. The proportion of very good or excellent teaching is five times as great.

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	15 (36%)	13 (31%)	10 (24%)	2 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. **The overall quality of teaching and learning is good.** The standard of teaching in English, mathematics and science, and in ICT and physical education, is very good. It is good overall in all other subjects. Teachers plan very carefully, and will adjust their lessons if they find that pupils need more time to understand a particular point or are ready for more challenging work. This increases the progress pupils make. Teachers have a very good understanding of their subjects and expect the pupils to work hard. Pupils respond positively because they respect their teachers' knowledge and ask questions confidently so that they can understand more clearly. They use 'new' vocabulary in their own answers - knowing what it means. Most lessons include a range of activities that are well matched to pupils' different abilities, enabling everyone to be fully involved in the 'main' teaching, with every opportunity to be successful at the correct level in their work in groups. On the very few occasions when this does not happen, pupils waste time completing a task rather than responding to the challenge of a piece of work that makes them think hard. Teaching assistants play an important part in supporting individual pupils or groups with special educational needs within the classroom or in a quiet area where they can work uninterrupted. Pupils enjoy these sessions, and teachers take care to tell them what has been happening if they have missed any significant points while they have been away from the main session.

13. The quality of teaching in the reception class is not currently as strong as in the rest of the school. Teaching is unsatisfactory if children have to wait far too long to take turns in an activity or if they are not given the opportunity to work at higher levels when they are capable.
14. Pupils learn effectively because they are well taught. Lessons move forward briskly, but with sufficient time for each activity to be completed satisfactorily. Very occasionally this does not happen, and pupils do not have enough time to complete their work to a high standard. Learning is then less effective. Pupils find the resources teachers use very stimulating: a sheep's heart in science, a Hindu figure from the teacher's own home or a dandelion seed head frozen by the teacher for six months in anticipation of a science lesson on seed distribution. Pupils are very well behaved, want to learn and work hard to meet the many challenges they are given.
15. Homework is set on a regular basis, and in accordance with the school's published policy. Some parents at the meeting were concerned about the amount of homework, especially in Year 5. The level is greater than that found in many schools, but many of the tasks are opportunities for research or individual investigation, and play an important part in consolidating class learning and giving pupils opportunities to extend their knowledge.
16. The arrangements for assessing pupils' work are good. Pupils are well known to staff, and assessment books give a clear indication of the progress they make over time. The results of termly tests are used effectively to set targets and measure pupils' progress towards them. Books are marked carefully, and often contain a comment that shows the pupils how they can improve. Pupils have individual targets and know that they need to work hard to achieve them. Pupils with special educational needs have very clear individual education plans which set out the steps they need to take to improve. These are shared with parents as well as pupils, and are reviewed on a regular basis.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum provided by the school is good. It is fully inclusive and is enriched by many challenging opportunities, including a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and resources are good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The breadth of the curriculum is good for pupils of all abilities.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The curriculum is enriched by visits and visitors.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- There are weaknesses in the provision of ICT hardware and limited application of ICT skills across the curriculum.
- Aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum need to be reviewed including opportunities for learning outdoors.
- Work in the humanities and creative subjects requires further development.

## **Commentary**

17. The range of learning opportunities is good and meets statutory requirements. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Schemes of work ensure that the teaching of skills and knowledge in all subjects is planned clearly at an appropriate level for pupils of all abilities, including those with particular gifts or talents. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they are well supported by teaching assistants. Subject co-ordinators monitor the impact and effectiveness of curriculum provision in their subject areas as part of the school's self-review procedures.

18. The school provides pupils with an appropriate range of interesting and stimulating activities including visits to places of interest such as the British Museum. Visitors and specialist providers add depth and immediacy to the curriculum. Themed days or weeks give pupils valuable opportunities to study a subject in greater depth. Parents make an active contribution by providing resources and supporting the work in classrooms. There is a good range of physical activities and provision for music is a strength. The school is looking to develop additional aspects of the humanities and creative subjects and ICT. Increased cross-curricular use of ICT has been identified as a priority. The school has also recognised that a review of the Foundation Stage curriculum is necessary to ensure that children achieve to their full potential.
19. Pupils receive good support for their personal development. There are effective links with a local organisation that provides a drugs awareness programme and other activities successfully promote pupils' personal, social and health education. Provision for extra-curricular learning is good with a good range of sporting and musical activities, including the school choir, orchestra, netball, football and rounders. An innovative opportunity is provided through a club to develop pupils' thinking skills.
20. There is an appropriate match of teachers and staff to the needs of the curriculum. Good use is made of teachers' specialist knowledge, for example in science and choral music. The level of accommodation is satisfactory although the classrooms and cloakrooms in the oldest part of the building and in Year 5 are of an inappropriate shape. The school grounds are attractive and extensive and provide a valuable resource for play and learning. Opportunities for learning outdoors in the Foundation Stage are, however, severely restricted due to the size and location of the available space.
21. Resources for learning are generally good and materials for teaching science have been recently augmented by the Parents' Association. The range and variety of books available in the two school libraries are good and the school operates a popular lending service to pupils. Resources for ICT are in the process of improvement. Current access to the Internet is frustratingly slow. Some classrooms do not have enough computer work stations.

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

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The school pays very good attention to the care, safety and well being of all its pupils. They are well guided, advised and supported throughout their time in school. The school involves pupils very effectively in its continued development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The arrangements to ensure pupils' health, safety and well being are very good.
- Induction of new pupils is very effective in helping them to settle in quickly.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff support pupils very well so that they are able to learn quickly and do their best.
- The school council makes an active contribution to caring for others by achieving changes that benefit all pupils.

### **Commentary**

22. The school has very good procedures to ensure the safety and well being of all its pupils. Child protection procedures meet requirements fully. Very close attention is paid to health and safety both in lessons and through regular checks. Teachers promote safe practice meticulously so that pupils learn how to work with due care. Arrangements for first aid and medicines in school are very clear. The medical room is part of a corridor, which is inappropriate. The school is working to become a health promoting school. Pupils feel safe in school and particularly value the fact that there is always an adult to turn to in time of need.

23. Induction arrangements for children starting school are very good. Children have the opportunity to visit the school several times before they start in the reception class. This helps them to develop very good, trusting relationships with staff and to feel secure. Pupils joining the school in Year 3 from a neighbouring infant school also have the opportunity to visit several times. They have a 'buddy' to help them settle in. A particular feature is that pupils already at the school are very well prepared to welcome the new pupils and this helps new friendships to develop quickly. Pupils joining the school at other times are similarly well supported.
24. Pupils' personal and academic development is well monitored. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils very well as individuals. The school is skilled at analysing the outcomes of tests and uses the results to set challenging individual targets. Teachers use marking and discussion to help them to understand how to achieve their targets and how to improve their work. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs have a tight focus so that pupils are able to learn effectively in small steps. The pupils and their parents are fully included in setting new targets and reviewing progress towards those previously agreed. Pupils are willing to seek support and guidance when they have concerns, whether about their work or a personal problem, confident that it will be readily available.
25. Pupils are confident that their views are heard because changes result. The school council seeks suggestions and ideas from every class. Pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 are elected to represent their class and take their responsibilities very seriously. They express their views confidently because they know that they will contribute to positive changes in school life, such as the provision of water fountains, benches and play equipment for the playground. Pupils take a real pride in their school because they know their views matter. They enjoy helping others by contributing to school development. School councillors present their work to the annual meeting held by governors for parents.

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

The school's links with parents are very effective. Parents are very supportive of the school and all that it does. The school has good links with the local community. It has developed strong partnerships with other local schools to support its pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very happy with the provision made for their children.
- The school's partnership with parents makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- The quality of information provided for parents is very good.
- Links with other schools ensure that pupils are well supported when they enter the school and move on from it.

### **Commentary**

26. Parents express very positive views about the school and are generally very satisfied with all aspects of the school's provision. A small minority have some concerns about the amount of homework. These were not borne out by inspection evidence: homework is set regularly and makes a positive contribution to the high standards pupils' achieve.
27. The school ensures that parents are well informed and able to support their child's learning at home. Information is provided about the curriculum at the start of each year and all parents are sent a copy of the homework policy. Homework often involves research tasks to encourage parents to become actively involved. The friends association (FOES) makes a very significant contribution to the school by raising large amounts of money to support the school's work, for example, by buying additional books and updating the computer facilities. The success of the partnership is also evident in the large number of parents who regularly help in school, while others volunteer when they can. The school makes effective use of parents' expertise to support the curriculum.

28. Parents receive a wide range of useful information about the school's daily life and routines. They have very good opportunities to discuss their child's progress with the teacher, both formally and informally. Reports are of a high standard, giving parents a very clear picture of their child's strengths and weaknesses, and providing targets to guide progress to the next stage of their learning in literacy and numeracy. Almost without exception, parents state that the school is approachable and deals effectively with any concerns they raise. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are very well informed and involved at all stages.
29. Links with other schools are good and are used particularly well to support pupils when they enter and leave the school. Good systems are in place to transfer relevant information and pupils have a wide range of opportunities to visit their new school. Pupils from the infant school are invited to all school productions. Those who are gifted in mathematics are invited to attend special events at the grammar school to extend their skills.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The overall quality of leadership and management provided by the headteacher and the governing body is very good.** The quality of leadership is very good because the headteacher and the governing body have a shared vision for the school and a very clear understanding of how the school should develop and grow. Very good management enables the school to fulfil its intentions. The senior management team is very effective and the role of subject leaders has developed and strengthened.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The governing body is highly effective and works actively towards shaping the future of the school. Governors have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The headteacher is very effective leader and manager.
- The senior management team is effective and has a very good understanding of its role.
- Subject leaders have developed and strengthened their roles.

### **Commentary**

30. The governing body is a particular strength of the school. Governors have a very clear view of the needs of the school and what needs to happen to promote further development. Governors feel very well informed by the headteacher and are actively involved in all aspects of the school's work. The governing body has developed a very effective committee structure that enables the main committee to concentrate on major decisions. The monitoring and evaluation committee is an outstanding feature. It focuses clearly on school improvement and complements the school's own monitoring and evaluation systems. It has a direct impact on raising standards and on the continuing development of the school. Governors are fully involved in setting the school's agenda through its improvement plan, and progress towards meeting the priorities in the plan is monitored regularly. Efficient systems ensure that the budget is used to best effect and in line with educational priorities. Performance management procedures are closely monitored by the governing body, who carry out their statutory duties efficiently. Governors take their responsibilities very seriously and are very successful. They work closely with the headteacher, and are able to both challenge and support within a climate of mutual respect and trust. There is full compliance with all statutory requirements.
31. The headteacher is a very effective leader. She has led the school forward with quiet determination and purpose since the previous inspection. She has been very successful in improving leadership and management throughout the school and in raising standards, particularly in the core subjects. She has a very clear view of how the school must continue to develop and is very effective as a team leader in expecting and enabling colleagues to take part in and achieve the school's aims. This is particularly evident in her development of the senior management team. This has strengthened since the previous inspection and is now a successful tool in overseeing and leading development, particularly in supporting the school's

focus on self-evaluation. All members of the team have a clear view of their role in future developments and are committed to continuing improvement. The headteacher's effective leadership is also evident in the development of subject leaders. The role has been strengthened as staff develop their confidence and skills, and there is a very clear understanding of how standards in all the subjects, particularly in the foundation subjects, need to be developed. The headteacher understands the need to transfer success in achieving the very high standards in the core subjects to the humanities and creative subjects, and is encouraging both the governing body and subject leaders to embrace this development.

32. The quality of management is very good. The school has very good systems that help it understand its current position and plan effectively for improvement. The school has introduced a rigorous system of school self-evaluation since the previous inspection which involve all staff, those with management responsibilities, governors, pupils and parents, in determining success in all aspects of the school's work. The senior management team has a crucial role to play in monitoring and evaluating major areas of work including the analysis of results against predicted targets and in liaising with the governor's monitoring and evaluation committee. Subject leaders are closely involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning within their subject and the impact on standards. The school is very secure and energetic in setting challenging targets, particularly in the core subjects, for individual pupils' progress and in the rigorous analysis of their results. This is proving to be very effective in raising standards. The performance management of staff is well established and has had a significant impact in bringing about improvements in the school. The recruitment of new staff has been well managed and has created a team with many strengths who are deployed imaginatively and effectively in matching the school's needs. The budget is managed very well and the headteacher and governors are careful in applying the principles of best value. Additional sources of funding are used wisely to meet identified educational priorities.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	512,092.00	Balance from previous year	1,265.00
Total expenditure	508,939.00	Balance carried forward to the next	4,418.00
Expenditure per pupil	2193.70		

## OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

### Links with the community

The school has developed good links with the local community to broaden pupils' experiences. It plays an active part in village life but community use of school facilities is limited.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The programme of extra curricular activities benefits from community involvement.
- Links with the local playgroup help children settle quickly when they enter the school.
- Visitors to school and visits to places of interest enhance the curriculum.
- The school is highly regarded by the local community and is part of village life.
- School facilities are not used to any great extent by the community.

### Commentary

33. The school is able to provide a very good range of extra-curricular activities partly because it welcomes the involvement of members of the local community. This has led, for example, to the establishment of a popular French club and regular coaching in netball and tennis. The latter is



funded partly by the Lawn Tennis Association and partly by the parish council. The local football club also provides coaching.

34. Children from the playgroup are regularly invited into school and attend school productions. This helps to ensure that they settle quickly because they are already familiar with the school and reception class staff. They quickly become confident and enjoy their learning.
35. The school welcomes a wide range of visitors whose input into lessons and special days gives pupils the opportunity to broaden their experiences. The school nurse, artists and others contribute their expertise so that pupils gain a deeper understanding of the topics they are studying. The school is successful in attracting and retaining a number of voluntary helpers from the community, some of whom have been involved with the school over many years. Pupils have the opportunity to visit a number of places of interest in the area to extend the work in the classroom. They visit the church, a local mosque and gurdwara to help them gain an appreciation of the role of places of worship in society.
36. The school is highly regarded by the local community, who appreciate the high standards it achieves. The school always supports the community, including the annual carnival. School events, particularly those organised by FOES, are well attended by local people. However, although one well established evening class is held in school, its wider facilities are not used to a great extent by the community.

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

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

The overall provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage **is satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teacher and teaching assistant work very well together.
- Children are happy and confident.
- Arrangements for the induction of new children are good.
- Parents are welcomed as partners and actively support their children's learning.
- Links between the different areas of learning are underdeveloped.
- The level of challenge, choice and independence is limited.
- Opportunities for learning outdoors are restricted.
- More work is needed to develop the way staff assess how well the children are doing and what they need to do next.

### **Commentary**

37. At the time of the inspection, 17 children attended part time for the morning session. The number would increase with the planned intake of pupils in January 2004. The reception class teacher has been in post from September 2003. She has a clear idea of how to develop provision for children in the curriculum areas where there are current weaknesses.
38. Evidence from children's records, together with observations, scrutiny of planning and work, indicates that all children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals expected for the end of the reception year and that the majority will exceed them. The focus for inspection centred on whether pupils' standards are as good as they could be, and to make a judgement about the potential of children to achieve to their full capacity within the context of the Foundation Stage curriculum. In the light of full discussions with the headteacher and staff in the reception class, the conclusion is that pupils will indeed exceed the expected standard but a minority are underachieving. This can be attributed to the way the curriculum is planned, taught and assessed, together with issues related to the learning environment. Provision for learning outdoors is severely restricted. The designated outdoor areas are very small and underdeveloped.
39. The quality of teaching in the reception class is not currently as strong as in the rest of the school. Planning for teaching and learning is detailed and thorough, using a medium term and weekly programme. The teacher's planning is organised in separate curriculum areas, but does not make enough crossover links between the six areas of learning. This has the effect of fragmenting the curriculum, rather than developing a single connected programme. As a result, children are taught 'lessons' in a closely managed timetable, and there are missed opportunities for them to practise or develop their skills in a variety of independent activities across several linked curriculum areas.
40. The teacher and teaching assistant are thorough in their observation and assessment of children's learning. They use post-it notes for on-the-spot commentary and transfer their comments to a more detailed summary record. The school's use of the national Foundation Stage Profile to record children's progress is at an early stage. The teacher has already identified the need to sharpen the focus of the induction programme for newly admitted children from the local playgroup. She proposes to make greater use of the outcomes from assessment at the children's point of entry to the reception class in order to plan more closely according to pupils' prior attainment.

41. Development of provision for the Foundation Stage is highlighted in the school's improvement plan. It is recognised by the headteacher, co-ordinator and governors as a focus for the school's effective procedures for self-review. There is every indication that the school will build on existing strengths and overcome shortcomings.

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

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**. Most children are on course to exceed the expected standard for their age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are mature for their age, and behave very well.
- Relationships are good.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their social skills through activities based in the outdoor area.

### **Commentary**

42. Good relationships are established from the outset. Induction programmes are effective, and children are settled and secure. They work and play well together, and benefit from the support of older pupils at play and lunchtimes. They express their personal views as confident members of the school community.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**. Children are on course to exceed the expected standard for their age.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's early writing and reading skills are well established.
- They have good oral skills and talk readily about their work.
- Opportunities for writing at greater length are too limited.

### **Commentary**

43. Children join the class with above average attainment for their age. They enjoy books, speak with confidence and listen carefully to each other. Children identify sounds in words and practise letter formation. Some pupils record their work in sentences and are familiar with the use of capital letters and full stops. Opportunities to write independently and for a variety of purposes are restricted. An example was seen when higher attaining children were allowed to stop writing when they had completed a basic task, and were permitted to play by sorting some small toys, when they were well capable of writing more at a greater length and depth. Opportunities for children to write independently are limited to a technical level of performance rather than through variety and choice.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**. Children are on course to exceed the expected standard for their age.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have a secure understanding of the basic principles of counting.
- They enjoy extending their understanding of number through role-play.

## Commentary

44. Children practise songs based on counting such as 'Five Little Speckled Frogs'. They count the number present at registration time and identify the date and month correctly. They look for patterns in numbers through threading beads and count pairs of socks hanging on a washing line. Children identify the properties of flat shapes by looking at curved and straight edges. They compare size accurately, using vocabulary such as 'bigger' and 'smaller.' They learn the value of different coins and practise simple addition through role-play in the 'shop'.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**. Children are on course to exceed the expected standard for their age.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are naturally inquisitive and enjoy asking questions so that they can learn more.

## Commentary

45. Children explore the wider school environment and learn about autumn through collecting and examining patterns in leaves. They observe changes in familiar contexts such as making jelly and by adding food colouring to dough. They enjoy role-play in practising road safety and play the part of pedestrians, drivers, police and crossing wardens enthusiastically.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **unsatisfactory** because the opportunities and facilities in the outdoor classroom are too limited. However, overall, children are generally on course to exceed the expected standard for their age.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children move confidently and are well co-ordinated.
- They enjoy developing their gymnastic skills.
- They do not have enough opportunities to develop their physical skills in an outdoor environment.

## Commentary

46. Children experience a range of activities including movement to music, parachute games and practise their gymnastic skills. They use simple tools for cutting and shaping paper and dough. There is no explicit planning for outdoor play as the space available is limited and underdeveloped. Similarly, in a physical education session, children had very limited opportunities to make progress through practice because they had to queue for too long waiting to take their turn.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**. Children are on course to exceed the expected standard for their age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a secure understanding of colour and pattern.
- They do not have enough opportunities to develop their creative skills in an outdoor area.

## Commentary

47. Children select and mix primary colours. They print patterns with leaves and sponges. They create rainbow pictures and illustrate characters from 'Elmer the Elephant'. Children use a computer programme to experiment with colour and pattern. They play alongside other children in role-play and collaborate in exploring road-safety. Opportunities to experience creative activities outdoors are underdeveloped because of the limitations of the existing spaces.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good** and standards have continued to rise since the previous inspection.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average.
- Pupils make very good progress over time.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Setting pupil targets and tracking progress is good.
- Leadership is very good.
- The range of reading resources for older pupils is not broad enough.

## Commentary

48. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average. Pupils are able to express themselves clearly and use an interesting and mature vocabulary. Teachers use every opportunity to encourage the thoughtful use of words, as was observed in an English lesson in Year 6 where pupils were exploring the use of metaphors and similes. Encouraged by the teacher, their choice of words was both exciting and innovative. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils listen attentively and with respect to each other's points of view. Older pupils are able to listen responsively, relating each other's ideas to their own thinking, and adding depth to their replies. Group work, particularly in older classes, illustrates pupils' ability to reach a shared understanding dependent on everyone actively speaking and listening. This was very apparent in a Year 5 music lesson where pupils were making rhythm patterns in groups. There is room for more opportunities for speaking and listening to be regularly planned into every subject.

49. Standards in reading are well above average in Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils make very good progress over time. Pupils in all classes are able to discuss their reading with enthusiasm and understanding. Older, higher attaining pupils are able to deduce meaning from text and understand inference. For example, a Year 6 girl was able to interpret the differences between heaven and hell and explain the meaning of prejudice. Paired reading sessions where pupils in Year 1 share books with pupils in Years 5 and 6 support the development of reading skills very effectively and develop friendships, co-operation and understanding across the school. Older pupils, boys in particular, do not have enough access to a rich and broad range of reading materials such as journals, newspapers and hobby magazines to stimulate their reading. Younger pupils are confident and fervent readers who achieve well because reading is taught systematically and enthusiastically. The teachers' combination of an emphasis on technical accuracy and fun is very supportive and effective.

50. Standards in writing are well above average in Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils make very good progress. Well taught writing strategies are used in pupils' later writing. Individual targets set in pupils' books include a wide range of challenges. Additional helpful comments include praise for the use of interesting vocabulary, structure of writing and the accurate use of grammar. This enables pupils to make very good progress because they feel encouraged to develop their

personal writing styles. There are examples of interesting and sustained writing in all classes. Year 3's "Lost in Woods" and Year 4's "The Haunted House" were both well structured and sustained pieces of writing. Year 6 pupils show an ability to write sensitively and inspirationally in their poetry, as in their work entitled "Sunsets." Poetry has been given a strong focus across the school and pupils from Year 1 onwards demonstrate a good understanding and love of verse. Year 1 pupils talked eagerly about a visit to the school from the poet John Foster, who they had clearly remembered since being in the reception class. Handwriting has been given due emphasis and the majority of pupils write clearly.

51. **The quality of teaching** is very good. Teachers have a very good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and use its ideas very effectively when planning lessons. They are very aware of pupils' individual needs and set work at an appropriate level of difficulty. Individual target setting challenges pupils to reach higher levels of achievement. Learning intentions are always shared clearly with pupils at the beginning of lessons and they are fully aware of what is expected of them. Teachers' planning is often annotated with their notes about previous lessons, which enables them to link any areas of difficulty to their subsequent planning. Older pupils are encouraged and expected to use dictionaries and thesauri confidently. Skilful intervention from teachers during lessons often extends the learning of the high attainers and is sensitive to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own learning at the end of lessons and results in greater progress because pupils see for themselves where they could improve.
52. The subject is **managed** very well by a co-ordinator who understands the role, and who has guided the school through many important changes since the previous inspection. Standards are higher. Unsatisfactory teaching in Years 3 to 6 has been eliminated and progress is better. One of the most important improvements is in target setting and assessment. Annual, realistic but challenging target setting and ongoing assessment of progress throughout the year ensure that pupils do make very good progress. Targets are written in pupils' workbooks, so that they know exactly where they need to improve. Assessment books include a specific piece of written work three times a year, which is levelled against National Curriculum criteria and used as the basis for the next set of long term targets. The co-ordinator regularly and effectively monitors and evaluates standards and progress through lesson observations and work sampling.

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

53. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented and adapted successfully to support effective learning. Cross-curricular links are strong. Pupils often write creatively and at length in other subjects, especially in history. High level skills in discussion are evident in subjects like science and religious education.

### **MATHEMATICS**

The provision for mathematics is **very good**.

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

- Standards are well above average in all classes.
- Pupils are very well taught and make very good progress.
- Standards have risen significantly since the previous inspection.
- The subject is well led.
- Good use is made of assessment to modify the curriculum, to track individual pupils' progress and to set targets.
- Not enough use is made of pupils' ICT skills in numeracy lessons.

## Commentary

54. **Standards** in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above average, and pupils in both classes are on course to achieve very good results in the 2004 national tests, especially at the higher levels. This is because they are taught to a consistent high standard in all classes and teachers have high but realistic expectations of what the pupils can achieve with effort. The pupils themselves enjoy mathematics and are very keen to be successful. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection when standards were average and pupils made unsatisfactory progress overall in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' books now demonstrate very good progress within lessons, because they are well taught, and assessment folders indicate very good progress term by term against challenging targets.
55. The quality of teaching is very good because teachers have a very secure mathematical knowledge, plan very thoroughly drawing on the guidance in the National Numeracy Strategy, and, in nearly all lessons, take great care to set work that challenges and interests pupils at the correct level of difficulty. Pupils **learn** very effectively because they are taught to understand mathematical concepts and ideas, rather than being given a 'quick-fix' route that will get a correct answer without the intellectual insight of real learning. Learning is not so effective on the very few occasions when higher attaining pupils spend parts of lessons completing work that is too easy for them. Teachers use mathematical language extensively in their teaching. Pupils listen carefully, and use the 'new' vocabulary accurately in their own answers. This increases their mathematical understanding and confidence. Pupils with special educational needs receive individual help when needed, are fully included in all lessons, and make consistently good progress.
56. The subject is well led and managed by an experienced and knowledgeable member of staff. School and national tests results are analysed carefully and changes are made to the curriculum where necessary. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully year by year, and targets are set that are realistic as well as challenging, and are based on potential progress rather than overall averages. The co-ordinator recognises that teachers do not use ICT as a resource regularly enough in their numeracy lessons.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

56. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills in other subjects: accurate measurement in science and design and technology, and understanding the sequence of historic events on a chronological time line. A very good example, cross-curricular numeracy was seen in a Year 5 mathematics/geography lesson when pupils used complex data about distance to plan journeys between cities in the United Kingdom.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve high standards and their progress is very good.
- The quality of planning and teaching are very good.
- There is an emphasis on investigational science.
- The subject is very well led and managed by the co-ordinator.
- Resources for learning are plentiful and well used.

## Commentary

57. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' achievement and set them challenging targets. Assessment is detailed and thorough.

Fieldwork, including the use of the school grounds, is a strong feature and opportunities for in-depth study include a science week.

58. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was consistently good, some being of the highest quality. Overall, it is very good. Lessons are lively, interactive and stimulating, and pupils pursue their learning with enthusiasm. Pupils in Year 1 were engrossed in planning a fair test to find a material suitable for an umbrella. On a similar theme, Year 3 pupils planned an experiment to test the durability of "William's trousers." Pupils worked effectively together to devise simple tests such as stretching and rubbing the cloth. The lesson promoted their capacity for logic and reasoning. Good use was made of ICT when Year 2 pupils investigated seed dispersal. Very good teaching, including appropriate scientific vocabulary, deepened their understanding. They used hand lenses and a microscope linked to a laptop computer to explore the structure of seed and seedpods.
59. Older pupils in Year 6 investigated the structure and function of the heart. The quality of teaching was outstanding. Pupils learned about chambers of the heart and the way blood is oxygenated. They were fascinated by the partly dissected sheep's heart and particularly enjoyed an enactment of a working heart in which they played the part of the valves and blood corpuscles. There was a strong spiritual element when pupils reflected that the heartbeat is 'evocative' because it is the first sound a baby hears. Similarly, the pupils were awed when the teacher explained that no artificial pump has ever emulated the efficiency of the heart. The quality of dialogue in this and other lessons observed was a strength. Scrutiny of pupils' past work indicated that coverage of the curriculum is very good. Work was clearly presented in a variety of formats including photographs using the digital camera.
60. Resources for teaching science are very good. There is a good range of texts and supporting materials available in classrooms and the school library. The recent purchase of a commercial scheme of work and a skeleton has been supported by the Parent's Association.
61. Opportunities for out of hours learning are good. Homework is set regularly, particularly in Year 5 and Year 6. There are gardening and science clubs, the latter reflecting the standards of the British Association for Young Scientists. Visits and visitors support the school's work including "The Bat Man" and conservation work on the school's listed pond, led by the coordinator with assistance from the Chair of Governors. Pupils have a good understanding of their responsibilities for recycling and care of their surroundings. The School Council is active in developing care and appreciation of the school's grounds.
62. The co-ordinator for science is very effective. Her specialist knowledge and enthusiasm are infectious, and she plays a key role in developing teachers' confidence in teaching science. Passionate about the subject, she provides strong leadership as well as managing and organising resources for learning. Strategies for monitoring the quality of planning, teaching and learning are well embedded and records of pupils' progress are used analytically.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have risen since the previous inspection.
- Pupils make good progress.
- The ICT suite is a valuable resource and is well used.
- Good but limited use is made of pupils' ICT skills in other subjects.
- The quality of the Internet link limits the ways ICT can be used in lessons.



## Commentary

63. **Standards** in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations, and many individual pupils are achieving at higher levels. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 2 use computers confidently for word processing, and their assessment records show that they have been taught basic skills effectively. Pupils in Year 6 are familiar with 'power-point' presentations and use the Internet for research. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 have a very good understanding of the ways in which computers are used in modern life. Year 2 pupils understood what happened when a credit/debit card was 'swiped' in a shop, and those in Year 6 listed the parts of a modern car that used mini-computers. Pupils make good progress overall, and very good progress in the very well taught lessons. Progress is more limited when pupils' ICT skills are not used enough in other subjects.
64. The quality of teaching is very good because the teachers are very confident with the software they use. Pupils learn effectively because they are given clear instructions and plenty of opportunities to experiment, practise and learn through their own errors. They also learn quickly because tasks are interesting and teachers' own positive approaches and interesting ideas catch their attention. Pupils in Year 3 have used an art program to draw pictures of the 'Hungry caterpillar' for a book for the reception class, and quickly learned how to add a button and sound to each 'page' so that they could be turned over in the correct sequence.
65. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable member of staff. He is aware of the current strengths and weaknesses in provision, and has appropriate plans to address them. The ICT suite is a useful resource but pupils become very frustrated when links to the Internet are too slow.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. Information and communication technology skills are taught with links to other subjects. Pupils in Year 2, for example, learned and practised their skills with the 'return' key by setting out a list correctly in a literacy lesson. Letters written to Katie Morag on her Scottish island in a geography lesson were word-processed. Pupils in Year 6 used a web cam in a science project, and extended their understanding of musical composition using a computer program to add an accompaniment to a basic line of melody. Some classrooms do not have ready access to computers and slow links to the Internet mean that teachers do not feel confident that they can plan opportunities for ICT into their lessons in other subjects.

## HUMANITIES

### Geography and History

Provision for geography and history are **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Work in geography shows an improved emphasis on developing pupils' practical understanding.
- Standards in history are above expected levels in Year 2.
- Individual lessons are well taught in all year groups.

### Geography

#### Commentary

67. No lessons were seen in **geography** during the inspection. However, inspectors looked at pupils' work and discussed the current term's lessons with pupils in Years 3 and 4. Discussion with Year 6 pupils focused on their past understanding of the physical and climatic features of the British Isles as geography is not 'blocked' into this term's curriculum.

68. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with expected levels, which is the same as at the time of the previous inspection. However, scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils shows a greater emphasis on developing pupils' practical understanding of geography. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Year 6 pupils know the principal physical features of the British Isles. They explained why rainfall is greater in areas of high ground, making links with their knowledge of the water cycle, and why northern regions are colder than the south. Pupils in Year 2 base their work on an imaginary island in Scotland. Their recorded work on physical and human geography is satisfactory, and makes good use of their literacy skills in writing letters and accounts.

## History

### Commentary

69. Standards in history are above expected levels in Year 2. Younger pupils in Year 1 compared toys from past times with the modern equivalent. An interesting collection of books, soft toys and games was readily available for their examination and stimulated their interest and provided a vivid example of the difference between 'then' and 'now'. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrated above average standards and achievement when they studied the meaning of Remembrance Day. This challenging theme was handled very sensitively by the teacher and pupils reflected on the sadness of lives lost in conflict. A display of cherished photographs and memorabilia provided by the pupils' families, and the content of pupils' written work, was reflective and poignant. One pupil wrote about 'the grave of the unknown soldier' and pupils carried out their own homework research about the life of Sir Winston Churchill on an appropriate website.

70. Standards in Year 6 are in line with national expectations. Pupils demonstrated very good skills in summarising information about the lives of working children in Victorian times. The quality of the resource materials prepared by the teacher was very good. Pupils of all abilities take an active part in learning because the source materials are very well differentiated with photographs, accounts and statistical information. Very efficient questioning by the skilled teacher deepened pupils' understanding of the difference between 'sympathy' toward the Victorian children's working conditions and 'empathy' as pupils imagined themselves as factory workers themselves.

71. The quality of teaching observed in Years 3 to 6 lessons was good overall. No teaching was observed in Years 1 or 2. Pupils in Year 3 classes were studying the lives of the Ancient Greeks. There was great excitement as pupils and adults dressed in Greek costume and undertook a variety of activities in a practical workshop. They practised the skills of weaving, plate decoration and writing, and enjoyed sampling a variety of traditional foods. Year 5 pupils study the lives of poor people in Tudor Times. They use a variety of sources and a computer website but unfortunately the link is too slow to generate photographs. The range of artefacts, books and photographs provided for pupils' historical studies across the school is good and an improvement since the previous inspection. Displays in classrooms contain limited examples of pupils' own written work.

72. Pupils' work is generally marked thoroughly with comments and suggestions for improvement. Work is regularly sampled with assistance from subject co-ordinators and the school is developing its assessment policy for geography and history. The geography co-ordinator was on leave during the inspection, but scrutiny of the subject policy and discussion with the headteacher indicates that the subject is well led and managed. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable history co-ordinator provides good leadership and advice to colleagues. Pupils' work is assessed using guidance from national guidelines.

## Religious education

Provision is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above expected levels in Year 6.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards religious education.
- Individual lessons are well taught.
- The level of resources is greater than that often seen in schools.

## Commentary

73. **Standards** in Year 2 are in line with those indicated in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have a secure understanding of the basic facts of Christianity, including baptism and the principal events in the life of Jesus. They talk sensibly about things that are of value and concern to others. Progress is satisfactory. Standards in Year 6 are above expected levels. Pupils have a lively interest in religious education and enjoy expressing their own ideas and beliefs. They are very open minded and non-judgemental, and readily discuss a variety of views about matters of faith. They have a detailed recall of stories from the Old Testament, especially Moses, and a very good understanding of the principal facts of Christianity, including the importance of Easter and the Resurrection. Their analysis of the parable of the Good Samaritan showed that they knew why Jesus had chosen an 'outsider' to make His teaching point. Pupils had an appropriate recall of earlier learning about Islam and Hinduism.
74. It was not possible to make a judgement about the quality of **teaching and learning** in Years 1 or 2 because no lessons were observed during the inspection. The teaching seen in classes containing older pupils was consistently good. Pupils made good progress because teachers had a very good subject knowledge and caught pupils' interest through the use of artefacts. The lesson about Diwali was especially strong because the teacher radiated her own faith without promoting it, and gave the pupils confidence to ask questions and seek for a greater understanding.
75. The subject is strongly led by two very knowledgeable co-ordinators. They ensure that the subject has a high profile in the school. Resources are good, and effective use is made of a range of visits to local places of worship.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Overall provision is **satisfactory**.

### Art and design

The quality of provision for art and design is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Individual pupils make very good progress in response to good teaching.
- Not enough artwork is used in displays around the school.
- The subject is well led and managed.

## Commentary

76. An examination of the range of work on display and in pupils' sketchbooks indicates that standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations. The judgement is the same as at the time of the previous inspection.
77. Only one art lesson was observed. This was in Year 6 where pupils developed their skills in observational drawing by observing and drawing branches and roots using shading techniques. The quality of the teaching in this lesson was good. Pupils were well supported and motivated in their learning and all made good progress. Some made very good progress.

78. The subject is well led and managed, and the co-ordinator has made significant improvements since the previous inspection. These include revising and rewriting the art policy, developing the monitoring and evaluation of the subject and introducing an assessment system that will support the tracking of pupils' progress and ensure continuity. The co-ordinator has clear plans for the development of the subject, particularly in extending drawing skills and in promoting more three-dimensional work. Other developments include the proposed use of 'artists in residence'. All pupils' work is valued and promotes their self-esteem.
79. Stronger links are being made across the curriculum through art and design, particularly with history, science and literacy. Not enough art is displayed around the school, to celebrate success and to add an artistic dimension to work in other subjects.

### **Design and technology**

The quality of provision for design and technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils respond positively to high quality teaching.

### **Commentary**

80. Only three lessons were seen during the inspection but photographic records, a small sample of pupils' work, and discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils indicate that this is a developing subject and provision is **satisfactory**. Standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 are in line with national expectations.
81. The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory in the lessons seen in Years 3 to 6, and one lesson was very good. Where teaching and learning were very good, pupils were designing and making instruments using recycled resources, including tubes and boxes, with a clear intent of making loud and soft sounds. Later, they gave a performance of the "Recycled Orchestra". The lesson was successful because pupils had a clear brief, an agreed time in which to complete the task, and high expectations and challenge from the teacher that they would plan, negotiate, co-operate and make an instrument that worked.
82. A policy for design and technology has been written since the previous inspection, and the most recently appointed co-ordinator is fully aware of the urgency to develop and promote the subject still further. She is eager to develop her knowledge and skills through further professional development. Resources are satisfactory and have been re-organised, although there is now a need to include a full range of resistant materials. Assessment procedures are in place and ongoing monitoring and evaluation is beginning.
83. Opportunities for cross-curricular work are encouraged as, for example, with music and religious education. Last year there was a successful art and design and technology week. Next term food technology will be introduced with strong links to the Healthy schools initiative.

### **Music**

The quality of provision for music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good range of opportunities for singing and making music.
- The range of opportunities to perform music.
- The confidence of non-specialist teachers.

## Commentary

84. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection. However, the high standards of singing observed during assemblies, during choir practice and the confidence and skill with which pupils played both tuned and untuned instruments indicate that standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 are in line with national expectations.
85. Pupils have access to a good range of opportunities for singing and making music. These include a recorder club, peripatetic tuition for woodwind and stringed instruments, choir, orchestra, playing instruments in assembly, productions and entering competitions. Pupils are confident, enthusiastic and very willing to perform in front of each other. They co-operate very well when making music together. The commercial scheme used throughout the school supports non-specialist teachers very effectively and enables pupils to make consistent progress.
86. Teaching observed in Years 3 to 6 was often good where clear expectations and enthusiastic support enabled pupils to strive for higher levels of achievement. Learning is at its best when pupils are set challenges to practise, perform and evaluate their work. Pupils consistently work well together. This occurred in a lesson in Year 5 where pupils were asked to work in small groups to compose and record their compositions using notation to show rhythms on a grid. They worked very well together, confidently sharing ideas, problem solving and listening to each other with enthusiasm and respect. This enhanced the outcome of lesson. There is an enthusiasm to take part in music throughout the school. Good examples were seen of pupils with a range of musical abilities working well together in small groups using tuned and untuned instruments. The co-ordinator has continued to improve the range of musical opportunities since the previous inspection and has re-written the music policy in order to ensure consistency across the school. Another teacher has successfully taken on responsibility for the choir, which is attended enthusiastically by many pupils. Links are being established between music and ICT, and new assessment procedures will be carefully monitored by the co-ordinator.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education **is good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic due to good teaching.
- Teachers plan and evaluate lessons well.
- Resources are good.
- Leadership is good.

## Commentary

87. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and in Year 6. Pupils respond very positively to teachers' high expectations and made good progress in all the three lessons seen. The level of challenge was high and pupils responded with determination, knowing what they needed to do to improve their skills. There is a good balance of aspects within the subject and clear expectations for each year group are included in the updated policy. Swimming is arranged in Year 5. Some parents at the meeting were concerned about the balance between the aspects of physical education in Year 5. However, inspectors were able to see that teachers' planning over the year ensures that each part of the curriculum is covered in sufficient depth.
88. The quality of teaching and learning in the subject are very good. Teachers explain very carefully what the pupils have to achieve and ensure that every pupil is fully involved in the lessons. Teachers demonstrate new skills effectively and encourage pupils to practise confidently. Lessons are well planned. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their performance,

which results in higher standards because they work with the teacher to find ways in which to improve. Teachers use a good vocabulary and encourage pupils to use words such as “intercept” and “rotate” when talking about their own performance. All pupils make good progress. Resources are good. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Monitoring of the subject has begun through lesson observations. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the role and provides a clear direction for the subject.

89. Physical education has been revitalised since the previous inspection and is rapidly becoming a strength of the school. There is a good range of clubs including football, hockey, netball, rounders and athletics. Next steps will include a greater emphasis on dance and gymnastics. Close links are being made between the subject and the Healthy Schools initiative.

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

No overall judgement of provision is possible because no lessons were seen during the inspection. However, pupils’ personal development is a very high priority within the school and they are given a wide range of opportunities to discuss ideas, feelings and matters of importance within a context of trust and mutual respect. Pupils of all ages are mature and articulate, and discussions with them about their work indicated that they hold firm personal views, but respect those of others with different opinions. High quality collaborative work was a feature of many lessons, especially in older classes. They are made fully aware of social and moral issues appropriate to their ages and levels of understanding, and are actively encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle. The School Council provides them with an excellent introduction to citizenship. Council members take their responsibilities very seriously and make an important contribution to the greater good of the whole school community.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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