

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DENHAM VILLAGE INFANT SCHOOL**

Denham, Uxbridge

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110219

Headteacher: Mrs P J Cameron

Lead inspector: Miss Cheryl Thompson

Dates of inspection: 26 - 27 April 2004

Inspection number: 264362

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	60
School address:	Cheapside Lane Denham Nr Uxbridge Bucks
Postcode:	UB9 5AE
Telephone number:	01895 832768
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Hollands
Date of previous inspection:	05/10/1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Denham Village Infant School is a much smaller than average school with 60 pupils on roll aged four to seven. There are twice as many boys as girls. There is not usually a high turnover of pupils. Nearly all pupils are white with their origins in the United Kingdom. There is a very small number of ethnic minority pupils although none have English as an additional language. Approximately half the pupils come from the locality and half from further away, for example Uxbridge. Children start school with skills and levels of development that are broadly average, although in some years these are above average. Many parents of children with learning difficulties choose to send their children to Denham. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average although the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is currently above average and in some years has been well above average. Pupils' main needs are identified as moderate learning and speech and communication difficulties. No pupils take free school meals.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22822	Miss Cheryl Thompson	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Music Physical education Religious education Special educational needs The foundation stage
13828	Mr Rob Ibbitson	Lay inspector	
32592	Mrs Julie Chambers	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Geography History Information and communication technology

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school where pupils do well. It provides sound value for money. Very good leadership by the headteacher has ensured a happy and well-ordered school where pupils are very keen to learn and parents very willing to help their child succeed.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in national tests are usually well above average
- Teaching is good. Proficient teaching assistants also play an important part in pupils' good achievement
- Pupils are known and looked after very well
- Very good links with parents help home and school work very profitably together
- There are not enough checks on teaching and learning
- Good provision for pupils with learning difficulties

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in October, 1998. Resources for information and communication technology have improved significantly. Pupils are very interested in their lessons and there is no shouting out as noted in the last inspection. Monitoring of teaching is difficult to arrange in a small school, nevertheless, it has kept pace with national requirements.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Caution has to be taken when interpreting the school's results as there is a relatively small number of pupils taking national tests. The variations from year to year are often because just one or two pupils did or did not reach a particular level.

#### Year 2 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	A	A	B	C
writing	A	A	A	B
mathematics	A	A*	A	B

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

From the table above, it can be seen that over time standards are normally well above average. Indeed, in 2002, standards in mathematics were similar to those attained in the top five per cent of schools in the country. Achievement is **good**. Boys and girls achieve equally well in the school and boys are successful compared to boys nationally; for example in reading, they are about two terms ahead for their age. Standards in Reception are wide ranging but around average for their age; by the end of their time in reception most children will have attained the goals they are expected to reach. Children achieve well, especially in developing social skills and an interest in learning. Many parents of children with learning difficulties choose to send their children to Denham. These pupils achieve well and have good self-esteem for two main reasons - first, all pupils are very well understood by the adults in the school and, secondly, they have work and support at the right level for them to succeed. Inspection evidence and data supplied by the school show that the current Year 2 pupils' achievement is good, but their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are likely to be more average than well above. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education are around those expected.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Pupils have very positive attitudes about their learning and school life. They are respectful and show genuine care and concern for one another. Behaviour is good. Attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

Denham school provides a **good** quality education. Pupils work from a good curriculum and teaching is **good**. Through their good assessment, teachers provide good learning opportunities that are motivating and relevant. Consequently, pupils are very interested and involved in what they learn and do so at a good rate. Throughout, basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught thoroughly, which gives pupils very good foundations for future learning. The very good links with parents mean that they contribute a great deal to their child's progress through homework activities and helping in school. Within a framework of very good relationships, teachers set high expectations for behaviour and quality of work. Therefore, pupils take care with their work and, in lessons observed, they work very well together for their age and show a good sense of responsibility.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher provides a very good sense of purpose for the school, not only in ensuring pupils' good achievement but in creating strong links with the community. In a small school, there are few people to share the leadership roles. Within the time available to them, subject leaders provide satisfactory leadership and management for several subjects. In the very limited time available to the headteacher (one day per week) after routine management, there is little time left for checking on teaching and learning. However, she has a good idea of standards through the good system for tracking pupils' progress and the analysis of data provided about national test results. Governance is satisfactory. There are three pieces of statutorily required information missing from the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents. Governors are well organised and very supportive of the school but are not yet challenging the school to think how it can do even better.

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

Parents have very positive views of the school and many very good things to say about it. They like the 'family atmosphere' and always feel welcome in school; they feel they are valued. Pupils like school and their teachers and particularly like mathematics, art and the gardening club. They know that someone will always listen to them if they are worried.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Provide more opportunities for the headteacher and subject leaders to check on teaching and learning so as to raise the quality of teaching further.
- Make sure that all the statutorily required information is provided for parents. Governors should report to parents on the facilities for the disabled and the prospectus should state that parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship and religious education.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement is good. Standards, as measured by National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments, are normally well above the national average and the average for schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Across all subjects boys and girls do equally well in the school, but, compared to boys' attainment nationally, Denham boys do very well.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- High standards have been sustained, but there is no complacency
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well regardless of their starting point

#### Commentary

1. At Denham Infants the number of pupils taking national tests is small and therefore, the results of just one or two pupils can sway the school's results from well above average to average. Over time, however, the school has sustained very good standards even though some groups of pupils start school with around average attainment and others above. Over the past five years, national test results show standards fluctuate but, on average, pupils are ahead of pupils nationally by around one and a half terms, and, in mathematics, very nearly two terms. In science, the school is particularly successful in helping pupils attain a high proportion of the higher Level 3.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.6 (18.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.9 (16.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.5 (19.2)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. Even though standards are high, there is no complacency. The headteacher tracks pupils' progress very carefully to make sure all are achieving as well as possible. Challenging targets are set for pupils' attainment by all staff and shared with parents, who contribute significantly to helping their child achieve these targets. Over several years the school has had significantly more boys than girls on roll. As a result, the school has very successfully adapted teaching methods and purchased resources with the aim of ensuring these fit in with boys' learning styles; for example, there is a good range of non-fiction reading material, and ideas for writing are geared towards boys' interests.
3. All pupils achieve well. Many parents of children with learning difficulties choose to send their children to Denham. These pupils achieve well and have good self-esteem for two main reasons - first, all pupils are very well understood by the adults in the school and, secondly, they have work and support at the right level for them to succeed.
4. Inspection evidence and data supplied by the school show that the current Year 2 pupils' achievement is good, but their standards at the end of Year 2 are likely to be more average than well above. In this year group, there is a small but statistically significant number of pupils with learning difficulties who are doing well but are not likely to attain the expected or high standards for their age. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education are around those expected. By the end of their time in Reception most



children will have achieved the standards expected for their age, except for personal, social and emotional development and physical development where they are above.

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

Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good
- Pupils' achievements in and out of school are valued and celebrated, which promotes self-esteem and confidence
- Relationships are good; pupils care for one another
- Pupils have a good understanding of the school rules, which they feel are fair
- Teaching assistants are deployed well to guide pupils' behaviour

### **Commentary**

5. Throughout the school, attitudes to learning are very good and are encouraged through praise for effort as well as attainment. Reception children have very positive attitudes to all their tasks and, for their age, show a mature approach to sharing and taking turns. They behave well in lessons and, in outdoor sessions, play very well together. By the time they start in Year 1, all children will have reached the expected standards for their personal, social and emotional development with a good proportion exceeding these.
6. In Years 1 and 2, pupils participate enthusiastically in lessons. In group work, they work well and sensibly, listening to each other, taking turns and sharing resources. They listen carefully to instructions so are able to do the tasks required of them and work independently for good lengths of time. Pupils are encouraged to strive for the Star of the Week award for hard work and look forward to receiving a Fantastic Friday certificate in assembly. In discussion, pupils say their lessons are interesting and fun and they enjoy finding out new things. A good variety of clubs such as those for recorder, sewing, football and the environment are enjoyed by a significant proportion of pupils and attendance at these reinforces their positive attitudes to learning and social skills.
7. Pupils have a folder containing certificates which they cherish as a celebration of all their achievements. This system develops pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Achievements in activities outside the school are also recognised by a display of certificates on the Out of School Achievement board. In one Circle Time, a session where pupils share their ideas and feelings, pupils were observed admiring and congratulating two pupils for their awards in rugby.
8. Relationships between pupils are good; they show genuine concern and care for one another. For example, when a child with special educational needs managed to make a contribution in Circle Time, two other pupils spontaneously applauded. Pupils all play well together. There are no signs of bullying or racial harassment. There is a mutual respect evident between pupils and staff, leading to very good relationships. The adults in the school appear to take very genuine delight in being with the pupils and talking with them. Circle Time is used well to enable pupils to explore and express their feelings and share their feelings with others. Pupils say that they feel happy to turn to staff if they have a problem.
9. Behaviour is good. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour and actions. All staff apply a clear behaviour policy consistently and have high expectations of behaviour. Golden Rules for the school are displayed as reminders for pupils about behaviour and pupils feel these rules are fair. They are encouraged to aim for Class of the Week award for behaviour outside the classroom. On visits outside the school, pupils behave sensibly and take full advantage of the learning opportunities. Teaching assistants work well with any pupils

who need reminders about behaviour and do this in a gentle way, which encourages the pupils to see that they must be in control and take responsibility for their behaviour.

10. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong, as noted in a Circle Time session when pupils discussed kind and unkind actions. Pupils are encouraged to care for others through activities like fundraising for organisations such as UNICEF. Pupils learn to value ethnic diversity and to understand that cultural and religious beliefs affect the way in which people live their lives. Pupils have been studying Hinduism and some pupils have brought in their own deya pots in which to place Diwali lights. Pupils have also written a version of the story of Rama and Sita meeting the King of the Demons. The study in geography of the Philippines has done much to enhance pupils' understanding of people living in other places in the world.
11. Pupils are encouraged to show respect for living things and the environment. They take part in various gardening projects in the school. Many pupils belong to the environment club and have prepared winter food for the birds, regularly feeding them and taking great delight in the visit of a robin to the bird table.

### Attendance

The attendance rate at Denham is average. The school has good systems for promoting and checking on good attendance.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.4	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.*

### Exclusions

There have been no exclusions in the past year.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good standard of education for all its pupils. The great strength of the school is that all pupils are well known to all staff. Teaching is good and pupils' learning benefits from good staffing levels and very good links with parents. The curriculum is good and enriched by interesting visits and visitors as well as a good range of out of school activities.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships coupled with high expectations
- Work is well matched to pupils' abilities so all achieve well
- Proficient teaching assistants are deployed very well to maximise pupils' learning
- Homework is planned carefully to reinforce class work
- Though teaching is good overall, some lessons lack moments of excitement to enthuse pupils and enliven learning

### Commentary

12. All pupils are known very well by all staff. Relationships are very good and provide the good foundation for teachers' high expectations for hard work and good behaviour. Pupils try very hard to meet these expectations. For example, in Reception, children come into school in the morning and settle, without any fuss, to work at their chosen activity. They are well aware of class routines and expectations and do not need to be reminded of what to do or how to behave. In Years 1 and 2, lessons move along at a brisk pace and no time is wasted in managing behaviour. It is very clear from examples of pupils' work that teachers set very high expectations for work to be completed to the best of pupils' abilities, finished and presented neatly.
13. In all subjects, but especially literacy and numeracy, pupils cover a lot of work, and this is reinforced with very well-planned and organised homework. The very good links teachers have with parents means that parents are aware of the school's expectations and very willing to help their child at home. In English and mathematics, pupils have appropriate targets for improvement which are shared with parents. Most pupils can discuss how well they are doing in meeting their targets. Good assessment ensures work is matched to pupils' varying abilities which means that more able pupils have work to make them think hard and homework to encourage them to find out more by using the library or Internet. Pupils who have learning difficulties or problems managing their own behaviour are provided with just the right level of work and support to help them make suitable progress and feel good about themselves for achieving their targets.
14. The school has used its budget wisely to provide a teaching assistant in each class and has invested in their training. Teachers deploy their assistants very effectively to maximise pupils' learning. This help may be by keeping pupils' attention focused in whole class teaching situations or by working with individuals or small groups and giving them extra attention. In Reception, teaching assistants keep good records of individual children's achievement in set activities in order to report back to the teacher so that future work can be planned accordingly.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 12 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	0	8	4	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.*

15. During inspection, the majority of teaching was good. From examination of pupils' work on display and in class, it is clear that learning is consistently good. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught thoroughly and provide pupils with solid foundations for future learning. All staff encourage pupils and praise success. Pupils with learning and/or behavioural difficulties also learn well and make good progress in learning how to manage their behaviour. In lessons where teaching was satisfactory, teaching lacked moments of excitement which would have made learning more memorable.

**The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is good and made interesting and relevant through a good range of visits and visitors. For its size, the school provides a good range of clubs, including sports. The resources for learning and accommodation are good although, currently, the Reception classroom is cramped.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A varied and wide range of visits and visitors supports and enhances the curriculum
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and emotional education is good

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good; teaching assistants support all pupils' access to the curriculum very well
- The library provides a useful learning resource centre

## **Commentary**

16. The school has developed a broad curriculum in which all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and statutory requirements are met. Religious education is taught according to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Provision for ICT has improved since the last inspection, with there now being 11 networked computers in school.
17. Reception class children work from a good curriculum and the small, 'family atmosphere', noted by parents, supports children's personal, social and emotional development very well. Even though there is no special outside area for these children, the back play area, field and hall are used very well to provide opportunities for play and learning.
18. The good range of visits and visitors to the school enhance learning. During the inspection, pupils walked around the village identifying the older houses as part of their history work. Visits to the locality enhance pupils' understanding in history and geography but there are also visits to Blakelocks Museum in Reading and Katesgrove, where pupils experience a Victorian classroom. Recent visitors to the school have included the local Member of Parliament as well as a farmer bringing lambs and piglets for pupils to see as part of a topic on spring.
19. The curriculum for pupils' personal, social and emotional education has been well developed and all relevant policies are in place. Circle Time is an important part of the curriculum for pupils to discuss views and emotions. Pupils' work is displayed attractively throughout the school, showing the respect for pupils' efforts and thereby enhancing pupils' personal development and self-esteem.
20. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in the school and have full access to the curriculum. Their needs are carefully provided for and very good use is made of the time, skills and personalities of the teaching assistants to help pupils learn.
21. The school's outside accommodation is good. Playgrounds and fields provide space for pupils to play. A gardening area enhances pupils' understanding of the natural world. A piece of high quality outdoor play apparatus helps in developing pupils' confidence and physical skills. The indoor accommodation is cared for well. There is no outdoor play area specifically for the Reception class but this is a planned development for the school.
22. The school library provides a useful learning resource base for pupils. It is well stocked with fiction and information books, which have been colour coded in order for pupils to easily access the information they require. It is also used as a teaching and learning base for small groups. Pupils have a weekly library session and those in Years 1 and 2 also use the library van which visits the school on a weekly basis. These opportunities promote pupils' interest in books and help to develop positive attitudes to finding out more by using non-fiction books.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The school takes very good care of its pupils. It provides very good pastoral care and good academic guidance. The school has informal ways of taking note of pupils' views and they feel they are listened to.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In this small school, all pupils are well known and cared for by all adults
- Pupils with special educational needs do well
- Good tracking procedures ensure challenging targets can be set

## **Commentary**

23. The 60 pupils are very well known to all staff. Very good links with parents and good links with pre-school play groups help the school get a very clear idea of pupils' personalities and accomplishments before they start school; therefore, there is a smooth start to school. Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils with behavioural or learning needs. A particularly good feature is that some teaching assistants are also midday assistants; therefore there is a continuity of adult care which is particularly helpful for those pupils with behavioural difficulties. Discussions with pupils show they feel very safe in school and know that they can go to any adult if they have any concerns. The school has informal ways of taking note of pupils ideas and views and they say staff listen and act if there are reasonable requests. Staff are always vigilant and note pupils who may not be feeling too well or who may be going through emotional upheaval. There is always someone to listen and organise for an unwell child to be collected by family. Child protection procedures are good. The headteacher is the named person and has up-to-date training.
24. The strong caring ethos of the school provides a very good learning environment for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils have good self-esteem and are fully included in the life and work of the school. Pupils' individual education plans are well organised and it is easy for parents, pupils and staff to see if the targets set are being achieved or if different strategies are required. The good links with outside agencies, such as speech therapists, are beneficial to pupils because the school's staff learn from experts how to help pupils in school. Staff are assiduous in carrying out specific, recommended programmes of work with individuals.
25. The headteacher collects a good deal of assessment information in order to keep track on pupils' progress as they move through the school. The information is used effectively to check if enough progress is being made and to set challenging targets for future attainment. Teachers are well aware of these targets, which help them keep a tight focus on moving pupils on at a good rate. Targets are also shared and reviewed with parents on a termly basis. This good practice helps all those involved make a very good contribution to pupils' achievement.

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

Links with parents and the community are very good. Links with other schools are good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Links with parents are very profitable in helping pupils succeed
- Very good links with the community make an important contribution to pupils' academic and social development
- A small number of pieces of information are missing from the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents

## **Commentary**

26. In the two meetings held for parents and in informal discussions, very nearly all parents hold the school and its staff in very high regard. They appreciate the openness and friendliness of staff and know that their comments and concerns will be listened to and acted upon. Very nearly all parents complete the school's questionnaire and their views, ideas and concerns help inform the school improvement plan. They feel well-informed about how to help their children at home and know what targets have been set for their child to reach. As a result, children read very regularly at home and homework is taken seriously. Parents help their children with spellings, investigative work and learning number bonds and tables; pupils also read regularly with their family. All this parental input has a very good impact on pupils' achievement.
27. Parents of pupils with special education needs are very pleased with the help and expertise provided by and through the school. Many parents have chosen to send their child to Denham

because of its reputation for good care and teaching and they are not disappointed. They feel their children are 'getting on well and are very happy in the school'.

28. The school belongs to a group of small schools, which is very beneficial as the schools can share costs for professional development training days and/or invite speakers. Staff from several schools meet together to discuss aspects of assessment and share judgements on National Curriculum levels. There are good links with local pre-school providers which help children settle into school. Pupils transfer from Denham to several schools. Links with these schools are sound.
29. The school has very good links with local businesses, clergy, police and the fire-service and is currently building on the links made with a local Asian community to link up with a school in India via the Internet.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are both good. Governance is satisfactory, although there are some statutory pieces of information missing from the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good leadership from the headteacher for pupils' achievement and the school's place in the community
- Management procedures are good but the headteacher does not have enough opportunities to check on teaching and learning
- Subject leaders work very hard to provide sound leadership for many subjects but they need more time to get a good overview of standards, teaching and learning
- Funding is used well to meet the main points in the carefully constructed improvement plan

### **Commentary**

30. The headteacher has a very clear sense of purpose for the school, recognising that children need good basic skills to benefit from education and prepare them for life in a wider world. These basic skills are not just in reading, writing and mathematics but include social skills. Accordingly, a strong and successful emphasis is placed on teaching literacy and numeracy skills and also encouraging social skills through links with the community, such as providing vestry teas at the local church.
31. All staff and governors share the headteacher's sense of purpose and give generously of their time to provide out of lesson clubs and accompany pupils on a good range of visits. People from the local community are actively encouraged to contribute to the life and work of the school. A local vicar, the fire-service and police work with pupils regularly. Many parents help in school on a very regular basis. A recent gardening project showed just how profitable community links are. Within two days of the Easter holiday, pupils and their families, local businesses and staff worked together to transform the overgrown garden of the school house into a quiet area for pupils to use at break times.
32. Within the context of having only one day per week for her management role, the headteacher has good procedures in place to check on the work of the school. Results of national tests are analysed carefully to check if there are areas where teaching needs to be modified. Good tracking procedures are in place to pinpoint each pupil's progress. These procedures are based on reading test results and teachers' termly assessments and give a good overview of how well all pupils are doing and if extra support or challenge are needed. The headteacher is always mindful that, for many years, the school population is usually made up of significantly more boys than girls. As a result, careful thought is always given to types of resources and

teaching methods to ensure that boys are well motivated. Test results show these strategies are successful.

33. All teaching staff meet together to assess pupils' work in writing, which gives a good overview of standards. However, it is in gaining a good idea of the quality of teaching and learning in all subjects across the school where there is room for improvement. The two full-time teachers and headteacher are responsible for the leadership of several subjects, the foundation stage and special educational needs. In their various roles, they do a sound job. The part-time teacher who leads ICT gives very generously of her time to make sure teachers know about any new software and programs available on the Internet. Neither the headteacher nor other subject co-ordinators have the opportunity to observe lessons, and whilst teaching and learning are good overall, there are areas where, with encouragement, teaching could be even better.
34. Governors are very supportive and proud of the school. Parent-governors, especially, help in school very regularly and from their visits, know what is going on in the school. However, at the moment governors are not questioning and considering if the school could be even better. The school has completed a survey of its accessibility, but has not reported this to parents in the governors' annual report as it does not give information about the school's facilities for the disabled. Due to an oversight, neither does it include the national test results for seven-year-olds. The school prospectus does not include information about parents' rights to withdraw their child from collective worship and religious education.
35. The school improvement plan is good. It is comprehensive, with a very clear focus on sustaining high standards and achievement and the very good partnership with parents. All funding is prioritised appropriately. Governors seek best value for all building work. The current budget surplus is due to careful budgeting for building, renovation and refurbishment. This work was scheduled for the last financial year but did not take place. The work is now scheduled for the very near future. Exciting plans are in place, and approved, for providing access to a specific outdoor play area for the Reception class.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	207,805
Total expenditure	177,573
Expenditure per pupil	2,960

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	7,979
Balance carried forward to the next	30,232



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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the foundation stage is **good**.

Evidence for this judgement is drawn from two full lesson observations, short visits to the class to sample activities and observing children outside in the field area. Children's work was examined as were displays of work and the class teacher's planning and assessment records. The main areas of focus were **personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development** and **physical development**. There was not enough evidence to provide a judgement on the provision for **creative development**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership
- Achievement is good because learning opportunities are well matched to children's abilities
- Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught well
- Teaching assistants and other voluntary helpers are deployed very well and make a significant contribution to children's progress and personal development
- Accommodation is cramped

#### Commentary

36. The Reception class teacher provides good leadership for the foundation stage. She has undertaken suitable training and, from this, has written the school's good policy and put the planning format in place. Teaching and learning are good because they are based on good assessment of where children are and what they need to learn next. Within a framework of very high expectations, the very good relationships between all adults and children in the class make sure that children are gently guided and helped to behave appropriately, develop good social skills and self-esteem. Children's **personal, social and emotional development** are above what is expected for their age. They work very well together unsupervised for good lengths of time. They share kindly and help each other with large jigsaw puzzles. More mature children handle arguments over pieces of puzzle sensibly and help others know that, if they are patient, they will have a turn. At 'clear-up' time, children take immediate note of their teacher's quiet request and tidy up at an impressive rate. When playing outside, children willingly take turns, share equipment and show a good awareness of the reason for 'rules' for how many children can use certain pieces of equipment. In assemblies, children have a very good sense of occasion and behave impeccably. Children follow their teacher's and teaching assistant's example in making sure all are included. Very good examples were noted of children going out of their way to help others with special educational needs to be involved and included in their activities.
37. In the current Reception class, attainment is around average in **communication, language and literacy** and in **mathematical development**. There is a very wide range of attainment on entry to school. Nearly all children have attended some form of pre-school education, mainly play-groups. Through its very good links with parents and good links with the pre-school providers, the school has a good idea of children's personalities and basic skills. These, of course, are confirmed once the child has started school. Planning and assessment records show children make good progress over time in acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills.
38. Teaching and learning are good in both **communication, language and literacy** and in **mathematical development**. The teacher has a very good understanding of how to teach basic literacy and numeracy skills to ensure that knowledge is built up cumulatively with many

opportunities for practical experiences. Learning opportunities are based on what children already know and need to learn or reinforce. Thus, group work is appropriate and support for individuals is carefully targeted. More able children can use sounds they know to find out if the simple three-letter word they sound out is a 'real' word or not. For example, they soon say that *cag* is not a word and that *can* is. Other children, with adult support, can express in sentences what a grumpy ladybird or a friendly ladybird may say to another ladybird. Children with specific language needs are catered for very well, with explicitly planned programmes delivered by a highly proficient teaching assistant. All children have very positive attitudes to stories and listen avidly. They join in enthusiastically at the right places. Good use is made of number games to help children learn skills such as to count on and back. Most children observed could easily identify the pattern of dots on dice and say, for example, 'I've got three' and count on three on their board game. Around half the children can name shapes reliably, such as a square, triangle and circle. Very good links with parents means that children are helped to play number games at home, learn letter sounds and share books with their families.

39. In the area of **knowledge and understanding of the world**, due to timetabling, little was noted in lessons. However, it is clear from children's pictures and displays of work that they have very good first-hand learning opportunities. For example, some piglets and lambs came to school and children were able to see and touch them and make comparisons.
40. Through the school's very good links with parents, there are many willing volunteers who help in class on a very regular basis. The teacher makes sure volunteers are very clear about what they are expected to do and what the children are expected to learn. Consequently, the good adult to child ratio and clear planning ensure maximum achievement and good social interaction. In their meetings with inspectors, parents noted that the school was like 'a big family' and in lessons observed, this appeared to be the case.
41. In the area of **physical development**, standards are above average. Children are well co-ordinated and a few demonstrate very good co-ordination and balance when using stilts. Very nearly all children know how to jump then land safely. Children climb, balance and crawl in the large playground equipment and have a good understanding of moving safely and being considerate of others. When moving small model cars around a track, children show good manipulative skills. When cutting out ladybirds, most make safe and good use of scissors.
42. Although the school does not have a designated outside play area for the Reception class, this does not prevent children from having access to the full curriculum for their age. Very good use is made of the school's outside play areas and if the weather is poor, the hall is used. The classroom, however is cramped and this is where the proposed and soon-to-be-built class extension will be most beneficial. There will be far more room for pupils to use such things as the sand tray and the role-play area.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Good assessment and target setting ensure work is well matched to pupils' abilities
- Parents make a valuable contribution to their child's progress in reading and writing
- Teaching assistants are used very well to support pupils' learning
- Good resources enable an appropriate range of different types of texts to be studied
- Plans for improvement are effective
- Insufficient time for the subject leader to monitor teaching and learning

## **Commentary**

43. Standards in reading and writing are normally well above average. These standards are similar to those noted at the last inspection. Given that there are small cohorts and attainment on entry to Reception varies from around average to above, it can be seen the school helps pupils achieve well. Inspection evidence and data supplied by the school show attainment in Year 2 for reading is in line with national average and for writing is just above national average but below at the higher level in writing. Pupils make good progress in reading and writing because work and support is well matched to their abilities. Boys and girls make equally good progress in the school. Boys are successful compared to boys nationally and are two terms ahead in their reading. Pupils who have difficulties in learning to read and write are given very good help and individual attention; teaching assistants have good knowledge of pupils and provide an appropriate mix of support and encouragement to help them achieve well. They provide careful annotations on pupils' work to record the progress pupils make.
44. Teaching and learning are good, as they were at the last inspection. Lessons are well planned with clear learning intentions shared with pupils. Very good procedures for assessment make sure that pupils have work at the right level. Pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve their reading or writing because they know their targets. This is good practice, especially as the targets are shared with parents so that they can help their child in achieving them. Regular homework also refers to these targets and is valued by the pupils and their parents. Pupils in Year 1 commented how much they had enjoyed their reading homework which they had shared with parents.
45. The school's good resources promote pupils' story writing skills effectively. Reading texts provide good, stimulating models and story frames help pupils to write their stories in a good order and remind them to describe characters and settings. Pupils clearly enjoy writing, as displays of work indicate; examples show the impact of pupils reading well-written stories in books. One Year 2 pupil, understanding the impact of repetition, wrote 'Following this, a big, big storm came up and blew the cottage away!'. The use of these good resources, as well as good teaching, have helped pupils develop enthusiastic and positive attitudes towards English.
46. Raising standards in reading and writing has correctly been identified as an important part of the school's improvement and development plan. Actions taken for improvement have worked, as the positive impact on story writing demonstrates. The school has a clear idea of what needs to be done to raise standards, with much good work having been done already by the subject leader.
47. The co-ordinator has insufficient time for checking on the quality of teaching and learning and for evaluating the impact of actions taken as part of the English development plan. Although teaching is good, there are areas where, with a change of emphasis or even better deployment of classroom helpers, it could be better.

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

48. Speaking and listening skills are developed well. Pupils are confident in answering questions and explanations and do so clearly. In other subject areas, teachers have listed the key topic words pupils need to know and use, such as 'gravity' and 'friction' in a science topic on forces. On displays of pupils' work, these words are prominent and accompany questions related to the topic, which encourage the pupils to reflect upon their learning. Pupils use their reading and writing skills competently in other subjects. Practising and consolidating literacy skills in other subjects is an area the school has identified for further development.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching with a clear focus on developing fluency with basic skills
- Homework is very valuable in helping to reinforce learning
- Teaching assistants are used very well to support pupils' learning
- Insufficient time for the subject leader to monitor teaching and learning

### Commentary

49. For the past five years, standards attained in national tests have normally been well above average. Given that there are small cohorts and attainment on entry to Reception varies from around average to above, it can be seen the school helps pupils achieve well. Inspection evidence and data supplied by the school show attainment in Year 2 is around average this year. There is a small, but very significant, number of pupils in this year's Year 2 with special educational needs who are making good progress but are not likely to attain the expected or higher levels. However, achievement is good. More able pupils have work at the right level to extend their thinking and less able pupils have appropriate support and tasks to help them succeed.
50. Teaching and learning are good, which is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall. In one lesson observed teaching was good and in the other it was satisfactory but, on occasions, lacked moments of excitement that could have made pupils' learning more memorable. A wide range of pupils' work was examined. It is clear, especially from pupils' past work and discussions with them, that teaching of basic numeracy skills is good, thorough and often fun. Targets for future learning have a high profile in pupils' books and these are also shared with parents. At the moment, these targets are not often referred to when teachers mark work and, as such, there are missed opportunities to remind pupils of what they are expected to learn or to congratulate them on achieving their target.
51. Pupils play dice games and apply their mathematical knowledge to solving simple problems. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics, and Year 1 pupils are quick to work out, for example, double 35 or half 90. They add on one more competently and more able pupils count in tens from 24 to 94, recognising the pattern and transferring their knowledge to count from 83 to 23. Year 2 pupils recognise right angles and most can relate these to quarter turns and know that four turns 'make a circle'. During inspection, due to recent network problems, the computer software was not working as well as it should. Therefore, there were times when pupils could not access programs and time was wasted. However, it is quite apparent that pupils do not normally waste their time.
52. Homework is very well organised and, together with parents' very good involvement, helps pupils practise and reinforce what they learn in school. Pupils often take mathematical games home to play with their families. Work is set to match pupils' varying abilities, is interesting and not over-arduous; therefore pupils enjoy what they do at home. Discussions with them shows that they understand the value of homework. Marking is good; teachers give praise for effort and make helpful comments to help pupils know what they need to do to improve.
53. Teaching assistants are highly proficient, respected by pupils and have a significant impact on pupils' good achievement. They use questioning well to make pupils think and encourage them to have a go and not to worry if the answer may be wrong. They know what is expected of them and have efficient ways to let teachers know how well pupils have got on or if there have been any problems. Teaching assistants supporting pupils with particular difficulties do

so sensitively. They keep a good balance between allowing pupils to try out things for themselves and intervening to ensure success and good self-esteem.

54. The headteacher is the subject leader for mathematics and as such has a good overview of the standards attained in the school. Through the good tracking system it can be seen if pupils are making the expected progress or not. However, the headteacher has very little time to check up on teaching in classes other than her own and therefore does not have the opportunity to see what needs to be done to make teaching and learning even better.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

55. Pupils' mathematical skills are used well in other subjects of the curriculum, particularly science. For example, they measure the number of ball bounces, number of skips and work out the highest score in a given amount of time.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good use of the environment and visits
- Very good attention to investigative work
- Good teaching ensures pupils achieve well

### **Commentary**

56. Standards in science are nearly always well above average and have continued to improve since the last inspection. In teacher assessments in 2003, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was similar to that in the top five per cent of schools in the country. This year, overall standards are above average but, again, the proportion of pupils likely to attain the higher Level 3 is well above average.
57. Pupils have very positive attitudes to science because the work set them is meaningful and interesting. Teachers make very good use of the school garden, visits and visitors to make the subject relevant and thought-provoking. Consequently, pupils have very positive attitudes, are keen to find out more and use scientific vocabulary confidently. Good links with art and health education are evident in pupils' work when they demonstrate their knowledge of 'healthy eating' and that most fruit have seeds. When two piglets and two lambs visited the school, pupils had first-hand experience of seeing young animals with different features.
58. The school garden is a great source of interesting learning. For example, in discussions, Year 2 pupils describe where they can find woodlice and what they like to eat. Pupils know about, and have helped to create various habitats, such as wood piles, for small creatures. In a good Year 1 lesson, pupils used magnifying glasses sensibly to note the differences between seeds such as sunflowers, sweet peas and broad beans. Their seed drawings showed a good eye for detail and they soon spotted similarities. The lesson continued with pupils learning how to plant the seeds in the garden and in pots. They quickly decided that there may be a difference in how the seeds grow in the two different places and offered ways of measuring differences.
59. Teaching and learning are good which is an improvement since the last inspection when it was seen to be satisfactory. Good, clear planning and very good deployment of teaching assistants and any helpers make sure pupils have good opportunities to learn and use scientific vocabulary correctly. Very good questioning focuses pupils' thinking and encourages them to pose their own questions. Pupils achieve well because tasks and support are carefully matched to their abilities. Displays of Year 2 pupils' work and discussions with them show they have had exciting learning opportunities when discovering about forces. They have had good fun and reinforced their learning about fair testing when finding out how far toy cars would

travel. They constructed a range of ramps to test out their hypotheses and recorded their finding very well.

60. The science co-ordinator provides sound leadership, but does not have enough time to gain a good overview of standards and teaching in order to see if teaching and learning could be even better.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory** with some good features.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of resources is good
- Support for teachers is very good
- Raised profile of ICT across the school
- Planning indicates where ICT can be used to greatest effect across the curriculum
- Very positive attitudes of pupils towards the subject
- Insufficient time for the subject leader to develop the teaching of ICT in the school

### **Commentary**

61. By Year 2, pupils' attainment is in line with national average in all aspects of information and communication technology (ICT), which is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The achievement of all pupils is good. This is a result of the school acquiring high quality resources for ICT, which is having a positive impact on teaching and learning. The school now has 11 computers, all less than three years old, and these have been recently networked. Unfortunately, during the time of the inspection, this recent networking had caused problems with some of the software. Computers have Internet access in each of the teaching rooms. The school has a good selection of software programs and other pieces of equipment such as a PIP and Turtle (programmable floor robots), which the pupils learn to control by programming moves. A microscope is linked to computers and enables pupils to magnify a variety of items and textures, thus enhancing their work in science and art. The school also has a digital camera and this is used well to record visits, events and pupils' achievements.
62. The school has invested time in training all staff to be proficient in ICT teaching skills. The subject leader has produced a very useful 'How to..' resource file for teachers, which goes a long way to ensuring that maximum use is made of the computers. The school also buys in the services of an ICT technician for one half day a week to help resolve any difficulties with hardware or software. The subject leader has compiled a comprehensive and extremely helpful assessment portfolio, which shows examples of the knowledge and skills required for ICT at the various levels of attainment. This helps teachers in gaining an understanding of what is expected of pupils in terms of their progress in ICT.
63. The profile of ICT has been raised across the school. There are many examples of word-processed pieces of pupils' writing, and of designs which have been computer generated. Teachers word-process captions and useful pupil resources to display in all classrooms. The computers are always switched on and used for a variety of tasks in lessons but some of these do not always link easily with the work in hand in the classroom. A school website has been developed and recently won an award. The site includes information about the work of the school, web links for pupils and parents and examples of pupils' work.
64. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards ICT. This was seen during a Year 2 lesson when pupils were learning how to programme moves for the Turtle. Pupils spoke animatedly about how to control it. Pupils co-operated well with one another to decide the programme of moves and learned eagerly from one another's knowledge. Pupils in Year 1 demonstrate with great pride how they save work in personal folders and are able to retrieve and edit this work. A pupil

with special educational needs gained greatly in self-esteem at being able to show other pupils in the class how to edit a piece of work.

65. The subject leader for ICT is very keen and is knowledgeable about how she wants to develop the subject. Her good ideas remain limited in their impact through insufficient subject leadership time to support teachers. Examples of these are the medium and long-term plans, where the subject leader has correctly identified when ICT links can be maximised and which programs and activities are suitable to enhance pupils' learning through the use of ICT. This remains at the planning stage and therefore a valuable resource is currently underused.

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

66. The school now has sufficient computers in each class to enable good use to be made of information and communication technology across the curriculum. The subject leader has itemised in planning where best use of ICT can be made in many subject areas and the next step the school has planned is for this planning to move into practice. In lessons seen, ICT was used mainly for word-processing, creating designs and for pupils to access programs supporting them in literacy, numeracy and science. During the inspection, unfortunately, staff were unable to show how well ICT is used because the very recent network installation had interfered with the loaded software.

### **HUMANITIES**

67. In humanities, work was sampled in **history** and **geography** and only one lesson in **history** was observed. Therefore, it is not possible to give a judgement on provision in these subjects. In **geography**, work scrutiny was limited to aspects of the subjects displayed in school, such as a study of the Philippines and the model of a town for Piglet. Discussions with pupils shows that they enjoy the study of places and especially enjoyed the study of the Philippines. This was because a teacher in the school had made a visit there and taken photos for the pupils. In **history**, links with pupils' own local environment are used profitably. The lesson observed involved a visit to the village of Denham to explore the differences between the older and newer houses. In this lesson, pupils were developing an understanding of how evidence can be used to learn about the past. Two parents accompanied the pupils on this visit and their presence enhanced the learning as they had good local knowledge and enabled a very good pupil-to-adult ratio for discussion.
68. Leadership and management of the subjects are satisfactory but more time needs to be given for the subject leaders to get an overview of standards and teaching. From the work seen and discussions with pupils it can be said that standards in geography and history are around average.
69. In **religious education**, due to timetabling, only one lesson was observed in Year 1. Therefore it is not possible to give an overall judgement about provision in the subject. However, discussions with pupils and examination of their work shows their knowledge and understanding to be at least in line with that expected in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Good questioning in the lesson observed helped pupils recall stories Jesus told and relate them to their own lives. For example, pupils are developing a good understanding for their age that gifts do not necessarily have to be purchased; kindness and help are gifts. Planning for the subject shows very good links with the provision for pupils' personal and social development. Examination of pupils' work shows that pupils have appropriate opportunities to learn about other cultures and how beliefs influence the way people choose to live their lives.

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

70. No lessons were seen in **art and design**, **design and technology** or **music**. Therefore no overall judgement can be made on provision in these subjects. Evidence was gathered by looking at planning, displays of pupils' work, pupils' art portfolios and discussions with pupils and teachers. Displays of artwork around the school show pupils have opportunities to use a

good range of media in a variety of contexts. Standards of work in displays and in pupils' portfolios are around the levels expected and show good progression in pupils' skills. In **design and technology**, pupils in Year 2 have made a variety of winding mechanisms using a good range of resources, including K Nex and Meccano. They have used the understanding gained in making these models to design and make their own using a variety of materials. Leadership of **art and design** and **design and technology** and **music** is satisfactory within the time available. No lessons were observed in **physical education**. Teachers' planning shows that a suitable range of work is covered. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular clubs which include football coached by staff of South Bucks Football in the Community. Around half of the pupils attend the recorder club.

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

71. This area of the school's work is seen as crucially important. There are 60 children in the school and all are known as unique individuals by all staff. Within a framework of very good relationships, pupils are expected to be thoughtful, considerate and responsible. Pupils who find this difficult are helped to understand the effect their behaviour has on others. Similarly, pupils also develop tolerance and understanding through learning that some children find it difficult to learn or to control their behaviour. Pupils are involved in making their class rules and regular Circle Time sessions give pupils the opportunities to share feelings and learn to understand other points of view.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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