

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ARDLEIGH GREEN JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Hornchurch

LEA area: Havering

Unique reference number: 102270

Headteacher: Mr John Morris

Lead inspector: Mr Terry Dentith

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> September 2004

Inspection number: 266315

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	356
School address:	Ardleigh Green Road Hornchurch Essex
Postcode:	RM11 2SP
Telephone number:	(01708) 443 014
Fax number:	(01708) 454 623
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr William Jennings
Date of previous inspection:	17 <sup>th</sup> May 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Ardleigh Green is a larger than average junior school situated on the outskirts of Hornchurch. There are 356 girls and boys on roll aged from seven to 11, taught in 12 classes with approximately 30 pupils in each.

The area served by the school shows social and economic circumstances which are broadly typical by national standards. Around six per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is below average. Pupils' attainment on entry has been close to the national average but is rising due to the value added by the infant school and is now above average. Approximately 20 per cent of pupils have special educational needs; this is broadly average and three per cent have a statement of their special needs which is higher than is found in many schools. There are no pupils for whom English is not their first language and mobility is very low.

The school has gained national recognition in the arts, sport and in its work with information and communication technology and has been awarded the Active Mark Gold, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the NAACE (National association of advisors for computer education) Quality Mark and formerly had Beacon school status. It is also an exemplar school for the London Grid for Learning, an associate information and communication technology test bed school for the department for education and skills (DfES) and is part of the DfES boys' literacy attainment project.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15088	Terry Dentith	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education
13874	Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector	
19246	Liz Taylor	Team inspector	English Art and design Religious education Special educational needs
33827	Mike Jude	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography History Personal, social and health education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Ardleigh Green Junior is an outstanding school.** It is very highly effective in providing its pupils with a very good quality of education which enables them to achieve very high standards in almost all subjects. The excellent leadership, particularly that of the headteacher, inspires all pupils and adults in the school to strive for quality learning. The breadth of quality and success continues to make Ardleigh Green an exceptional school. **The school provides very good value for money.**

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

- Standards are well above average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- Standards are excellent in information and communication technology (ICT) and history.
- Standards are well above those expected nationally in art and design, geography, design and technology, music and physical education.
- Pupils achieve very well in all subjects of the National Curriculum.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent and their behaviour is very good.
- Leadership, especially that of the headteacher, is excellent and management is very good.
- The school's provision for pupils' social, moral spiritual and cultural development is excellent.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teaching pupils strategies to systematically solve problems needs developing.
- The teachers' use of assessment is very good. There is scope for greater involvement of pupils in assessing their own progress.
- The planned curriculum and the range of extra-curricular activities are excellent as is the school's participation in sport, arts and other activities outside the school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and the progress they make are excellent.
- The school makes a significant contribution to the work of other schools.

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection, which took place in May 1999, when standards, teaching, climate for learning and leadership and management were all judged to be very good. Overall standards have continued to rise from a high level; there is more very good and excellent teaching and the work of the senior management team and subject leaders is having a greater impact on pupils' quality of learning. There were no key issues in the last inspection but all minor points for improvement have been addressed.

### 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*	A*
mathematics	A	A	A	A*
science	A*	A	A	A

Key: A\* - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.

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

The table shows that in 2003, standards in English were in the top five per cent nationally (A\*) and in mathematics and science standards were well above average when compared with results in all schools. The picture is even more positive when the results are compared to those in similar schools as mathematics, in addition to English, is also in the top five per cent nationally. The results for 2004 show standards to be well above average in all three subjects and the results of the current Year 6 are on line to be also well above average. **Pupils achieve very well** in all subjects of the National Curriculum. Standards in ICT and history are excellent. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum: art and design, geography, design and technology, music and physical education, standards are well above those expected nationally. Within physical education, standards in swimming and athletics are excellent. In religious education, standards are good and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress and those who are gifted or talented make very good progress. The school sets challenging targets in English and mathematics, based on value added predictions, which it always exceeds.

**Pupils' personal development is excellent. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.** Pupils' attitudes are excellent and behaviour is very good. Relationships are excellent and pupils collaborate very well to produce joint work. Attendance is well above average because children want to be at school. Punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching is very good overall.** In nine out of ten lessons, teaching is good or better. Over half the teaching seen was very good or excellent. As a result of the high quality teaching, **all pupils learn very well and the progress they make is very good.** Assessment practice has improved and is being used to track pupils very well in most subjects. The individual targets set with pupils help them know what they should focus on next and the planned greater involvement of pupils in their own assessment will move this on. The full curriculum is in place and the cross-curricular links built into the first rate planning and the practice is a major contributory factor to the high standards. Pupils have access to an excellent range of well attended clubs and activities that take place before and after school as well as at lunchtimes. Relationships with parents are very good. There are very good systems to inform them of their child's progress and their views are taken into account when significant decisions are taken.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership of the school is excellent and management is very good.** The excellent leadership of the headteacher gives clarity of vision and engenders a culture of learning, evident throughout the school. The governing body is highly effective in supporting and challenging the school. It makes sure all statutory requirements are met. Subject leaders take significant responsibility for their particular subject and, although standards are high, there is no complacency as they strive to improve even further. Teamwork in the school is impressive and the joint working has contributed to the high quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Finances are managed very effectively and the school applies the principles of best value very well.

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

Parents are very supportive of the school and are delighted with all its aspects. There were no concerns expressed at all. They all felt their children were treated as individuals and the support and opportunities they received were outstanding. Pupils feel confident and secure at school and are very pleased to be at Ardleigh Green. They appreciate all that is on offer at the school.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

There are no significant issues for the school to address. To improve further its highly effective work, the school should:

- Continue to improve pupils' involvement in their own assessment.
- Help pupils extend their range of systematic approaches to improve their thinking skills.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

The achievement of pupils is **very good** across the school and standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are **well above average**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the core subjects are well above average.
- Standards in information and communication technology and history are excellent.
- Standards in the other subjects of the National Curriculum are well above average.
- Pupils' overall achievement is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress.
- Gifted and talented pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils' ability to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects is very good.
- Pupils make excellent use of ICT in other subjects.

#### Commentary

1. Results in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have risen steadily from the high levels at the time of the last inspection. In 2003, standards in English were in the top five per cent nationally and in mathematics and science standards were well above average when compared with results in all schools. The picture is even more positive when the results are compared to those in similar schools as mathematics, in addition to English, is also in the top five per cent nationally. The results for 2004 show standards to be well above average in all three subjects and the results of the current Year 6 are on line to be also well above average. The upward trend is due to the high quality teaching, strong subject leadership and effective analysis of performance data to identify steps for improvement.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.1 (29.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.6 (28.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.8 (31.0)	26.8 (28.3)

*There were 89 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school has been close to the national average but is rising due to the value added by the infant school and is now above average. The school sets challenging targets in English and mathematics based on value added predictions from the pupils' Year 2 national test results. Pupils make very good progress as they move through the school and their achievement is very good. Hence, the targets are always exceeded.
3. Pupils' standards and achievement in ICT are excellent. They are highly competent in a wide range of applications and use them confidently in work in other subjects. All staff use ICT effectively in their teaching and this has a positive effect on pupils' standards.

4. Standards and pupils' achievements in history are also excellent. Their understanding of historical facts and concepts are enhanced through themed days and the excellent use of drama, together with the use of primary source evidence involving interviews with elderly local residents and of secondary source evidence from personal research.
5. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum - art and design, geography, design and technology, music and physical education - standards are well above those expected nationally and pupils achieve very well. Within physical education, standards in swimming and athletics are excellent. In religious education, standards are good and pupils achieve satisfactorily.
6. All subjects contribute to pupils' application of literacy and numeracy in a wide range of contexts. The linking of the curriculum in the planning ensures very good, purposeful connections are made by the pupils. This is a key factor in the high standards achieved across the school.
7. The positive learning ethos throughout the school allows pupils with special educational needs to make exceptional progress during their time in the school. The majority achieve national expectations, or above, in English, mathematics and science. One third of pupils on the special educational needs register achieve above national expectations in science and a few achieve above national expectations in mathematics. During lessons pupils with special educational needs are confident to rise to challenges set because they are working in a supportive climate. As a result many achieve beyond their own expectations. Although the provision for special educational needs was very good in the previous inspection the results achieved by pupils on the register indicate that the school has improved even further. Pupils identified on the gifted and talented register achieve very well at the end of Year 6, some achieving two levels (Level 6) above that expected.

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

Pupils' attitudes and personal development are **excellent** and make a positive contribution to the standards achieved. Behaviour is **very good**. Attendance is **very good** and punctuality is **good**. The provision for pupils' social, moral spiritual and cultural development is **excellent**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The excellent ethos of the school stimulates a desire in pupils to learn.
- Pupils show high levels of interest and motivation in school life.
- The confidence and self-esteem of all pupils are very evident when they are challenged to achieve high standards.
- Pupils' respect and consideration for each other are excellent.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

### **Commentary**

8. Pupils consistently show great enthusiasm and interest in all aspects of school life. The youngest pupils are keen to come to school because there are "lots of clubs", "more enjoyable things" and "you find out lots". They like having older pupils in the playground because "they are nice to little children and help you to make friends" which indicates the very high level of social responsibility which older pupils have developed during their time

in the school. Pupils voluntarily attend a wide range of clubs before and after school or during the lunch break. In a club before school, a small group of targeted pupils arrived with a sense of urgency and talked with interest about a computer based mathematics program they were following, to consolidate and practise their skills and knowledge.

9. During lessons pupils are well behaved and rise to the high expectations of their teachers. When pupils are working on group tasks outside the classroom, where they are not directly supervised, they maintain commitment and enthusiasm for their work and demonstrate a high standard of behaviour. Around the school pupils show respect and consideration for each other. For example, they demonstrate great awareness by automatically moving to allow access for a child in a wheelchair. All adults are respected and pupils talk with a sense of ownership and pride about their school environment. Pupils' behaviour before and after school is also very good.
10. Pupils of all abilities are very confident learners. They find their own books and resources to complete tasks individually or in groups. Older pupils who leave the room to use resources in the library or computer suite use their time effectively and always make sure that they return in time for the plenary session. Independence and choice are further developed through well organised but flexible lunchtime routines. A pupil in Year 4 described how he always brought his packed lunch into the dining hall later to avoid the queue and to enable him to play football before eating.
11. The process of pupil consultation is well established and opportunities exist in all year groups for pupils to take responsibility. Members of the School Council have executive roles and are very active. In their discussions they demonstrate awareness of the need to survey the views in each class, for example about setting up a Breakfast Club. The current Year 6 pupils have established a positive image for the new pupils in Year 3 by showing them round the school in the term before they started. Pupils in Year 3 listen to Year 1 pupils read once a week and keep records to inform the teachers.

**Attendance in the last complete reporting year**

Authorised absence	
SCHOOL DATA	4.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
SCHOOL DATA	0.1
National data	0.4

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

12. Attendance has increased to even higher levels than before over the last year and there is virtually no unauthorised absence. Parents prize the education their children receive at the school and make sure that they attend as regularly as possible. There are no exclusions at the school.
13. The school has introduced visits to places of religious worship and has identified the opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development within subjects across the curriculum.
14. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. They are given opportunities both within lessons and daily assemblies to reflect on important issues. During a religious education lesson pupils in Year 4 were deeply moved when they put their heads on the table to think quietly about a time when they had hurt someone else. On rare occasions when pupils

lack confidence their peers will challenge and support them to believe in themselves in a way that reflects the models provided by their teachers.

15. Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong. In Year 5 pupils made sensible suggestions, asked meaningful questions and re-evaluated their own values when discussing the broader concept of friendship in relation to Jesus and different groups of people in society.
16. Relationships between pupils and with adults are excellent. This has a major impact on pupils' confidence and desire to learn. Pupils confidently share views and opinions with each other knowing they will be valued. Their excellent collaborative skills enable them to resolve problems by negotiation, use the strengths of each person in the group and achieve success together.
17. The confidence of pupils when talking about cultural issues is a result of the successful inclusion of cultural aspects across the curriculum. In discussions, older pupils talked with enthusiasm and interest about their visits to the synagogue and a Sikh temple. They showed appreciation of the opportunity to learn about other cultures and talked with pride about the child they have sponsored in Uganda.
18. Since the last inspection the school has further improved the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

**The school provides a very good quality of education.** Strengths include the very good teaching and learning, the excellent planning that ensures the breadth of the curriculum and the strong cross curricular links.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is **very good** with excellent features in many lessons. Most of the teaching is good or better with more than half being very good or excellent. The assessment systems are **very good** and are used very well to raise standards.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Excellent relationships exist between pupils and adults.
- Highly effective cross-curricular planning enhances learning.
- Teachers have consistently high expectations and challenge all pupils.
- The teachers encourage, interest and motivate pupils very well.
- Excellent use is made of available resources, particularly ICT.
- The teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Very good use is made of assessment to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- Pupils' collaborative skills are impressive.
- Pupils are confident and persevere in order to achieve well.
- Assessment procedures are very good.
- The pupils' participation in the assessment process needs further development.

### **Commentary**

19. Teachers and other adults have created a positive learning ethos where pupils are encouraged to believe that they can achieve well.
20. The very highly effective planning links the content from different subject areas to provide opportunities for pupils to use and apply skills in different contexts and consolidate their knowledge and understanding. For example, older pupils use what they have learnt about people in Tudor times to write biographies of a very high standard. The detailed short-term planning ensures that the learning is clearly focused with differentiated activities so that pupils of all abilities make very good progress during lessons. Teachers take every opportunity to reinforce knowledge or skills taught in other subjects. Learning objectives are clearly written and shared so that pupils explain with confidence what they are doing and why.
21. The teachers have consistently high expectations for all groups of pupils within a very supportive atmosphere. Very good subject knowledge enables teachers to ask challenging questions to make pupils think and deepen their understanding. The excellent relationships between pupils and teachers give pupils the opportunity to extend their work because they have the confidence to take risks, make mistakes or ask questions to clarify meaning. Teachers make very good use of subject specific vocabulary which they expect pupils to use in their verbal explanations or written work. At the beginning of the school year teachers are establishing the routines and procedures for different activities, particularly with younger pupils new to the school. They make very effective use of positive behaviour management to teach the standard expected in their new class.
22. Time is used effectively to provide a balance between teacher instruction and active participation for pupils. In many lessons a range of visual, auditory and practical activities engages and motivates pupils. The very good explanations or demonstrations given by teachers, using well designed multimedia presentations, captivate attention and provide very good role models for pupils.
23. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support pupils' learning. They provide excellent support for pupils with special educational needs because they are well informed about individual targets and the activities or programmes of work identified to help pupils achieve. They also provide very good support for groups of pupils identified by the teacher because they have access to the planned learning objectives for all lessons. Teaching assistants have very good questioning skills that allow them to support pupils to achieve well without taking away their independence or creativity.
24. Where teaching is satisfactory more emphasis is placed on recording and less on giving pupils time to think and explore their own ideas. The activities are less varied than in better lessons so pupils are less engaged and motivated. The timing of lesson content does not always match the available time so the ambitious learning objectives are only partially achieved.
25. Pupils are highly motivated and work exceptionally well with each other. Their collaborative skills are impressive. They confidently share ideas, value each other's contributions and negotiate with maturity when working independently or in groups. During activities pupils share resources and support each other very well. They have a very positive attitude to school and are excited about learning. They concentrate well and rightfully take great pride in their work.

26. Procedures are in place for the school to track the attainment of all pupils in all subjects so that planned work is matched appropriately to different ability groups. Teachers know the pupils well and use observations made during interventions and performances to inform future planning. Marking is good overall. Some examples of very good marking, where pupils are told what they have achieved and how to improve, are evident in English work. During lessons pupils are given positive but constructive oral feedback so that they know how to improve. In one literacy lesson the targets for speaking and listening were read out to the pupils so that they could use them when evaluating the performance of their peers in a plenary session. Where pupils participate in assessing the work or performances of their peers they focus on the success criteria or targets identified in order to make their evaluations. Pupils demonstrate great sensitivity and value the views of others. The school has already identified the involvement of pupils in the assessment process as an area for further development.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (7%)	20 (49%)	14 (34%)	4 (10%)	0 (0%)	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.*

**The curriculum**

The school provides an **excellent** curriculum with **excellent** opportunities for enrichment. **Good** use is made of the currently **satisfactory** accommodation and resources for learning are **very good**.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides an excellent broad and balanced curriculum with excellent opportunities for enrichment.
- Provision to ensure equality of opportunity is excellent and all pupils are fully included in the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent.
- Pupils are prepared very well for secondary school.
- Curriculum development and innovation are excellent.
- Accommodation is currently satisfactory but the new building programme should improve provision.

**Commentary**

27. The curriculum provided is excellent and fulfils all statutory requirements. Whilst emphasis is rightly placed on English and mathematics, there are excellent planned opportunities for literacy and numeracy skills to be developed across the curriculum and sufficient time is allocated to all subjects. Curriculum planning is excellent and is marked by thoroughness and consistency through the school. This ensures that pupils experience a highly systematic and ordered programme of learning, which contributes to very good progression and the high standards they achieve. Certain aspects of the curriculum, for example, in history and music, are particularly inspiring and capture the imagination and interest of the pupils.

28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. Much support takes place in the classroom and excellent use of explanation and questioning ensures that this group makes excellent progress. Teaching assistants are fully briefed about each lesson and there are very good systems of communication between teachers and teaching assistants. Excellent provision is made for the pupils identified as gifted and talented to ensure that they are challenged to achieve their best.
29. Provision for the development of pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. In all classes pupils have opportunities to discuss matters influencing their personal development, through circle time and dedicated personal, social and health education lessons, linked to the programme of class assemblies. Teachers plan and teach effectively to ensure that all pupils have access to the full curriculum and this provision is excellent. Links with the local secondary schools are very good and pupils are prepared very well for transfer at the end of Year 6. There are good examples of Year 7 bridging projects in mathematics being used effectively during the last half term in Year 6.
30. Curriculum development and innovation are excellent. The school benefits from the national accreditation it has received. The award of the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Active Mark Gold and the NAACE ICT Quality Mark has provided recognition of excellent practice. The school's status as a London Grid for Learning exemplar school, an associate ICT test bed school for the DfES and a beacon school has enabled this excellent practice to be disseminated more widely, both locally and nationally. An example of this is the CD the school has produced to cover all aspects of classroom organisation and management for newly qualified teachers, which is now used at local education authority training sessions.
31. An excellent range of extra-curricular activities is provided for the pupils. Well attended activities take place before and after school and during lunchtime. A very good range of sporting activities is provided and, in addition to the traditional sports, there are opportunities for pupils to learn and practise gymnastics, disco dancing and badminton. The school is rightly proud of its inter-school sports record. Musical opportunities include an excellent choir and orchestra. Drama, a computer mathematics club and dance add to the very rich programme of activities, which significantly supports pupils' learning.
32. The school is very well staffed and very good use is made of individual areas of expertise as, for example, in the case of the history co-ordinator, who is a history graduate. The teachers are very well supported by teaching assistants. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. Buildings are currently satisfactory, as the separate kitchen/canteen block, Year 5 temporary classrooms and library make access difficult, especially in wet weather. The current major building programme should remedy this situation. The classrooms in the main school block are well maintained by a very conscientious school caretaker. The school has good outdoor facilities including a playing field, hard play area and a swimming pool. The very good quality and quantity of resources support pupils' learning very well. For example, in music the wide range of good quality instruments and recorded music available supports multicultural awareness. The recent provision of interactive whiteboards in every classroom is having a very positive affect on pupils' learning. All staff use these confidently to provide a visually stimulating and exciting method of enhancing learning and engaging pupils' interest.

## Care, guidance and support

The attention given to pupils' care and welfare is **very good**. Support and guidance, based on monitoring, are **very good**. The involvement of pupils, through consultation, is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between staff and pupils around the school are very good.
- Welfare and support systems are very well organised.
- Pupils are very well involved in the school's decision making process.

### Commentary

33. All staff have pupils' best interests at heart and treat them with care and respect throughout the school day. In the classroom, teachers inspire, motivate and challenge pupils and support and guide them through high expectations for their success. Formal systems for using targets to move pupils forward work very well in literacy, where pupils know their targets and refer to them during lessons.
34. Procedures for pastoral care have been very carefully thought out and run like clockwork in practice. Arrangements for administering first aid and looking after sick and injured children, for example, cover every eventuality and ensure that parents are kept fully informed. Links with the infant school to provide for a seamless induction process between Years 2 and 3 are very good. New pupils hardly realise that they have moved schools. Good attention is given to the key areas of child protection, pupil absence and health and safety. The school has exciting and imaginative plans to transform and improve its playground once the building works have been completed.
35. The school council is a well-established part of the school's decision making process. Pupils know that the school listens to what they have to say and takes their ideas seriously and they have the confidence to play their part in the school community. The council members organise charity fund-raising activities, for example and canvas the opinions of their classmates on changes which would affect them, with great enthusiasm. The school also makes good use of surveys to gauge pupils' views where appropriate.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnerships with parents and with other schools are **very good**. Educational and support programmes for parents and the community are **very good**. Links with the community are **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school keeps parents very well informed.
- Parents are very happy with everything the school does for their children.
- The school offers excellent adult education in ICT.
- Outstanding work has been done through the school's beacon status.

### Commentary

36. The school treats parents as equal partners in their children's education and this is evident from the quality and quantity of information it provides for them. The website is an



excellent starting point for general information. Curriculum meetings have a regular slot in the school calendar and detailed termly curriculum letters from class teachers mean that parents have the chance to help their children with their studies. Homework timetables are innovative and ensure that parents understand the school's expectations. Reports to parents on their children's progress are very good. They make it clear how well children are doing and what they need to do to improve and are written in straightforward language.

37. Parents fully recognise and appreciate that this is an excellent school. When asked to describe the school at the parents' meeting, their responses included "fantastic", "brilliant" and "outstanding". Both the inspection questionnaire and the school's own consultation reveal no areas of discontent other than with the building and this is now being addressed. Parents know that they are welcome in the school, that their views matter and that their contribution is valued. Their relationships with the staff and the headteacher are very good. The support that parents are willing to give to their children's education adds to their achievement.
38. The school has very good links with the local community through visits, events and visitors to the school. The local and wider community have benefited enormously from the exceptional service the school offers through its ICT training courses. These range from the ECDL (European Community Driving Licence) qualification available to parents and local residents, to the tailor-made courses devised for other organisations and businesses such as a large national communications firm. The school and pupils benefit significantly from the revenue raised and the impact on staff motivation.
39. The school's former beacon status has enabled it to spread excellent practice far and wide. Through work within the local education authority and with university departments, staff have been able to share their best practice both in curriculum areas, such as history and ICT and in management issues, such as induction and target setting. Not only has this been of great use to other schools, but it has also been great for the teachers' own professional development and for their confidence in their abilities. This shows through in the lessons they teach.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the school is **excellent** and management is **very good**. The governance of the school is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has made very good progress in building on the high quality seen at the time of the last inspection.
- The headteacher's high aspirations are evident in the practice throughout the school; his leadership is excellent.
- The governing body makes a very significant contribution to the school's development.
- The leadership of senior managers and subject leaders is highly effective.
- All staff work together as a very effective team.
- Monitoring and evaluation are well developed and contribute to high standards.
- There is a total commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity by adults and children alike.
- The continuing professional development of staff is excellent.

- The school plays a significant role in local education authority in-service training and development, particularly in ICT.

## Commentary

40. The energy, commitment and high expectations of the headteacher permeate the work of the school. His excellent leadership ensures all subscribe to a shared vision for the future of the school with continued high standards and a focus on improvement, particularly in the quality of the learning experience for all pupils. A very effective deputy headteacher and two senior managers work with the headteacher to realise this vision, already evident in the very good progress made since the last inspection. The richly deserved Beacon status and the advanced skills status of the senior teachers have kept the school in the forefront of initiatives in the LEA and nationally, which has had a very positive impact on the work of the school.

**The headteacher's passion for learning is transmitted to all in the school and has a profound impact on the achievement of all.**

Why are standards so high and still rising? Why are staff so committed to the school and improving pupils' learning? Why is the school so involved with outside initiatives that bring benefit to the school? The reason is the excellent leadership of the headteacher who is passionate about learning. This is manifest in all he does. His daily assemblies celebrate learning, involve pupils, showcase their work and inspire them to have high expectations of themselves. His working with pupils on his daily visits to each classroom focuses on quality and raises self-esteem through praise and encouragement. His high expectations when running well attended extra-curricular activities instil in pupils confidence and an "I can..." culture. The pride when he talks about the many achievements of pupils, staff and the school, to anyone who will listen, is based on first hand evidence and is the major contributor to the high sense of worth and the ethos of celebration in the school.

41. The governing body, ably led by the chair of governors, is highly effective in supporting and challenging the school. Governors have a very good grasp of the school's considerable strengths and are aware of the areas that need development and those that the school want to develop further. The committee structure allows detailed discussions, such as when subject leaders present the findings of their monitoring and evaluation and the resultant action plan. Governors have taken difficult strategic decisions; for example, about how to raise the school's contribution to the current building work and about the potential impact of losing significant special educational needs support staffing.
42. In the aims of the school are the words "we value every individual and the contribution they have to make". This philosophy is evident in every aspect of the school and underpins its practice. The school is an exceptionally inclusive community, committed to making sure that every pupil is able to take part in all lessons and has access to all activities.
43. Even with very high standards, there is no complacency. Subject leaders are continually striving to improve even further. They very effectively lead subject teams to update and develop planning and embrace new initiatives, contributing to the very good teaching and learning across the school. A good example of this was the speed with which all teachers mastered the use of interactive whiteboards and the high quality, "home produced" teaching materials that were used within four weeks of them being installed.
44. The school is very effectively managed. Day-to-day routines are very clear and well understood. Staff receive very good support from the school secretary who provides a

cheerful welcome to visitors. Performance management, thorough analysis of assessment data, school self-evaluation and the extensive action plan of the school improvement plan are interlinked to give a powerful tool to drive improvement forward. Induction for new staff and the commitment to professional development of staff are excellent. Teaching assistants have regular updates on aspects of teaching, including training on new software that pupils will be using. The school runs sessions for newly qualified teachers from the local education authority and has produced valuable resources to help them set up their classroom.

45. The leadership provided by the newly appointed special educational needs co-ordinator is excellent. Policies and procedures are clearly identified. The revised formats for the whole school and class registers provide clear information for class teachers and senior managers to use. The targeted support from teaching assistants has been timetabled for each class so that both pupils and teachers know exactly what will happen in each lesson. Individual pupils have already been observed in their classroom environments this term and a common area for development identified. The co-ordinator is well informed about the pupils, is tracking the progress of everyone on the register and has some excellent ideas for how to improve the provision even further.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,118,547
Total expenditure	1,029,599
Expenditure per pupil	2,892

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	86,752
Balance carried forward to the next year	175,700

46. Finances are managed very effectively and the headteacher and governing body apply the principles of best value very well, based on the accurate financial information provided by the school's secretary. The large carry forward contains a prudent reserve and a significant contribution towards the extension to the school, currently being built.
47. Major aids to achievement of the school are the teamwork, the support of parents and above all, the charismatic leadership of the headteacher.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS**

### **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2**

#### **ENGLISH**

The provision for English and literacy is **very good** with some excellent features. The creative links that have been made across the curriculum and the emphasis on speaking and listening ensure that pupils make very good progress and achieve high standards.

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

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils make very good progress and achieve highly.
- The subject co-ordinator provides excellent leadership.
- The quality and quantity of speaking and listening activities highly motivate pupils.
- Pupils have excellent collaborative skills.
- The enthusiasm of teachers fully engages pupils.
- Successful links across the curriculum enable pupils to achieve high standards in their writing.
- The involvement of pupils in the assessment process needs further development.

#### **Commentary**

48. Standards in English are well above average when compared to standards nationally and in similar schools. In 2003, the school's results were in the top five per cent nationally. By Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are very high. By the time they leave the school almost two thirds of pupils with special educational needs reach national expectations although they enter the school with standards well below average.
49. During lessons observed pupils consistently make good or better progress. Evidence in books shows very good progress over time. The effective use made of the very good teaching assistants to support pupils with special educational needs enables this group to make excellent progress during lessons and over time. The excellent provision for pupils on the gifted register, both within and outside the school, enables them to make very good progress. The planned and regular opportunities for pupils to use and apply the skills they have been taught have a major impact on progress.
50. The strong emphasis on speaking and listening has enabled all groups of pupils to develop a high level of self-confidence. All literacy lessons include a speaking and listening group task that most pupils work on independently of an adult. Their collaborative skills are excellent. Younger pupils listen carefully and take turns to talk and value each other's ideas. Older pupils negotiate the best ideas to use and how to organise themselves. For example, when more than one pupil wants to use the same musical instrument to accompany the reading of a poem aloud they think creatively so that pupils swap over roles during the performance.
51. When teachers read to their classes they provide excellent models of reading aloud with expression. Their enthusiasm and interest are reflected in pupils' reading during plenary sessions or individually. They use different voices for characters and make effective use of punctuation to read fluently using increasingly more complex texts. Pupils infer

information when reading books that are well matched to their ability. Selecting and organising information are developed as pupils move through the school so that older pupils use a range of resources to research new topics effectively. In discussions, all pupils express an enjoyment and enthusiasm for reading. One pupil has a timetable for reading different types of books on different evenings. Teachers encourage pupils to read a wider range of books using an effective range of strategies. Pupils in Year 5 list their favourite authors and are then directed to select a book from the library by another author. A boy in Year 6 maturely discussed how he was reading a text suggested by the teacher, “a girls’ book”, so that he could get a different perspective that would help him when he was writing.

52. The emphasis on spelling and the introduction of spelling journals have had a very positive impact on pupils’ writing. The spelling journals encourage pupils to take responsibility for identifying words they need to learn and also the methods they will use to learn them. Evidence in the journals indicates that pupils are taught a range of strategies to help them remember different words. The planned links with other subjects provide pupils with the relevant knowledge to produce quality content and vocabulary in their writing. For example, pupils in Year 6 use geographical language and their understanding of the features of a river to write excellent poems.
53. Teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils. They use technical vocabulary when explaining or discussing and expect the pupils to use the same terminology when they are reporting back or answering questions. They constantly challenge pupils with searching questions or ways in which they might improve during their interventions. Pupils in Year 4 included adverbs to improve their instructions for making beans on toast and confidently listed the features they were expected to include in this genre of writing. Teachers’ very good subject knowledge is demonstrated by their ability to ask searching questions that lead pupils to deeper understanding.

**In a carefully structured literacy lesson, Year 5 pupils were drawn into the life of a “borrower”.**

All pupils sat captivated by the enthusiastic reading of a well-selected extract from “The Borrowers”. Very good questioning by the teacher made pupils think beyond the text and highly motivated them to empathise with the life and feelings of a Borrower. This excellent start to the lesson fired up pupils’ enthusiasm to compose a dialogue between a Borrower and an interviewer. Their excitement showed in their facial expressions and body language as their discussion led them to a new discovery about the life of a Borrower. The outstanding presentations to the class demonstrated the pupils’ continued depth of thinking during the independent activity. A Borrower who thought the interviewer’s microphone was something to eat succeeded in appealing to the sense of humour of the audience who sat captivated once again.

54. Pupils with special educational needs have very high self-esteem and a positive attitude to learning. Their successes are celebrated equally alongside their peers. They are fully integrated into class activities and confidently persevere with tasks in order to achieve success. Pupils achieve their identified targets by the systematic and integrated implementation of selected programmes or schemes. They are confident to rise to challenges set because they are working in a supportive climate and as a result many achieve beyond their own expectations.
55. The subject leader, who is a leading literacy teacher, provides excellent leadership. She provides an excellent role model both within the school and the local education authority. Her monitoring of the subject is excellent and she has a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for development. The initiatives she has introduced are well

managed so that they are successfully implemented. Pupils identified the need for ideas and prompt sheets around the school to support writing. These are clearly evident in displays and are used well by pupils.

56. Since the last inspection subject leadership has improved even further. The school has taken very effective steps to improve the use of the library and to increase the range of pupils' reading.

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

57. Other subjects in the curriculum make a major contribution to pupils' competence in literacy. By the time they leave the school their communication skills, both oral and written, are highly effective.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve very well.
- Teaching is very good across the school.
- The leadership and management of the subject are excellent.
- The use of ICT to enhance pupil learning is excellent.
- Pupils would benefit from greater opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in investigational and problem solving work.

### **Commentary**

58. Standards by the end of Year 6 were well above the national average in 2003 and very high based on the pupils' prior attainment at the end of Year 2. The same positive picture of attainment is evident for the test results for Year 6 pupils in 2004. Standards in this high performing school have risen since the last inspection. Inspection evidence indicates little difference in attainment between boys and girls, although trends over time suggest that boys perform marginally less well than girls. Excellent progress is made by less able pupils and this reflects the excellent support they receive throughout the school.
59. Teaching throughout the school is very good and sometimes excellent. The teaching of mathematics is at least good in nearly nine out of ten of lessons and very good in over seven out of ten; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Lessons are very well planned and teachers have a confident understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. Excellent use is made of ICT through interactive whiteboards, to stimulate pupils' interest and explain strategies. Mental starters to lessons are challenging and brisk and pupils' mental skills are very good. In one Year 6 class, pupils showed excellent understanding of the links between fractions, decimal fractions and percentages in a very lively "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" mental starter. Teachers match work very well to the varying needs of their classes and pupils of all abilities are challenged. Pupils achieve very well because teachers build very effectively on their prior knowledge and move them forward methodically stage by stage. Pupils in Year 4 learnt about equivalent fractions and in Year 5 they used this knowledge to compare, add and subtract fractions with different

denominators. Teachers emphasise and repeat correct subject vocabulary and as a result of this, pupils use terms correctly when talking or writing about their mathematics.

60. The pupils' books show that a very good quantity of work is completed in lessons and that the curriculum is covered very well. In Year 6, pupils are provided with plenty of opportunities to apply their skills in investigational and problem solving work but opportunities are more limited in the rest of the school. All work is very well presented and graphs and measuring work are accurately recorded. Assessment procedures are very good and effective use is made of pupils' target cards, to help teachers to track pupils' progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
61. Leadership of mathematics is excellent. The co-ordinator, who is a leading teacher for mathematics in the local education authority, has a very clear idea of the strengths of provision and areas for development needed to raise pupils' achievements still further. Monitoring of work is very effective and improvements, as in assessment procedures, are linked to the outcomes of rigorous self-evaluation.
62. Resources, particularly in ICT, make a significant contribution to the enhancement of pupils' learning. Teaching assistants provide excellent support for less able pupils through very well focused explanation and the use of questioning, reflected in the excellent progress they make. Pupil attitudes towards mathematics are very positive because of the very good teaching they receive and the imaginative use of resources. Pupils speak with great enthusiasm about their mathematics and this contributes to a culture of success in the subject. This success is also celebrated in the displays of very good quality pupils' work around the school. Two and three dimensional shapes are well represented in the displays and many of these enhance learning through the use of open ended questions, to stimulate thinking. A very good "Maths Toolkit" display in a Year 5 class highlighted and defined appropriate mathematical vocabulary, such as negative numbers and percentages.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

63. Greater use is now made of the potential in other subjects to extend and reinforce pupils' learning of mathematics. Good links exist with science, information and communication technology and design and technology, which successfully expand the pupils' understanding of how mathematics is used in their everyday lives. The co-ordinator recognises the need to develop these links further.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in science are well above average and pupils achieve very well as a result of very good teaching.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to science and their collaborative work is excellent.
- Planning is excellent, effectively linking science with literacy, numeracy and ICT.
- Pupils use ICT very effectively in their science work.
- Leadership of science is very good.

- Pupils' work is thoroughly marked but there are few indications of what the next steps should be.

## Commentary

64. Standards have continued to rise from the well above average levels at the time of the last inspection. Results in 2004 show almost all pupils reached at least the expected level (Level 4) and two out of three reached the higher level (Level 5). This compares very favourably with the national picture. All pupils achieve very well throughout the school and inspection evidence indicates that the current Year 6 pupils will also achieve well above average standards. Pupils with special educational needs make particularly outstanding progress.
65. Pupils enjoy the practical nature of science lessons and respond very positively to the challenges of designing and using a fair test. Younger pupils give reasoned arguments for their observations and make sensible predictions, such as "thicker material is the best insulator", based on prior knowledge. By Year 6, they frame appropriate questions for investigation, design how they will test, for example, factors that affect sugar dissolving and select and use appropriate equipment. When given the option of choosing the groups they will work in, they organise themselves very sensibly and naturally ensure no one is left out. They share out tasks fairly and work with remarkable collaboration to achieve their objectives; pupils in a Year 6 class rightly analysed that they had worked very well in their groups. Pupils throughout the school take care with presentation, particularly when turning results into tables and graphs and persevere to produce work of a very good quality. The impressive interactive presentations produced by a Year 5 group, including hyperlinks and a video clip to illustrate an aspect of the solar system, demonstrated a very good understanding of their learning from previous lessons.
66. Teaching is very good, underpinned by excellent planning that effectively links science to other aspects of the curriculum. Many well thought out opportunities are included to support pupils' work in literacy and numeracy. Introductions are lively and varied through the teachers' expert use of interactive whiteboards, combining video, sound and interesting graphics. The lessons are clearly outlined to the pupils so that they understand the links with previous lessons and what they will learn in the current lesson. Good subject knowledge and effective questioning ensure pupils quickly grasp the concepts and high quality plenary sessions bring together the learning and reinforce the key learning points. The excellent support from teaching assistants helps all pupils access the lesson and contributes to the high quality assessments made of their progress, enabling the teacher to better meet the needs of individual pupils. The marking of pupils' work is thorough and includes many examples of praise and quality feedback, although there are few teachers who give pupils written guidance on how they can improve their work.
67. Leadership of science is very good. Through interviews with pupils, scrutiny of their work and lesson observations, the enthusiastic subject leader has a very good grasp of strengths and areas to develop. There is a clear action plan, focused on pupils' learning, to address these. The comprehensive portfolio of pupils' work, kept in the foyer so that parents and visitors can read it, gives a very good overview of the science work in the school. Very good resources, easily accessible, support pupils' ability to select equipment appropriately.



## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in information and communication technology are very high compared to those expected nationally.
- Pupils' achievement is excellent; they are highly confident and competent in using ICT in a range of subjects.
- Teaching and learning in ICT are very good.
- Teachers and support staff are skilled users of ICT.
- Leadership of ICT is excellent.
- The school's external links make a very positive contribution to its work.
- Resources are very good.

### Commentary

68. Standards have improved from above average at the time of the last inspection to very high compared to those expected nationally. Progress has improved from good to very good. By the end of their time in the school, pupils expertly access and use a wide range of software and equipment to effectively produce work of a very high quality. This is evident in their work across the curriculum where ICT is used as a tool to enhance their learning and the presentation of their work.
69. All pupils are confident in using computers to access information. The younger pupils use a range of styles and effects to create posters to advertise school fayres with a good appreciation of audience. This is built on throughout the school so that by Year 6, pupils add graphics, actions and sound to enhance the impact. The school's status as an exemplar school on the London Grid for Learning recognises the familiarity with which pupils use the Internet and manage their own information. A good example is the older pupils' own web sites where they share their research on topics of interest as well as the work they have done, such as their findings from science experiments.

#### **A Year 5 lesson in which pupils used information technology to design a presentation of their research on the solar system.**

Pupils understood exactly what they had to do from the excellent introduction. The teacher expertly modelled the task and challenged pupils' inventiveness, giving a good range of possible approaches to the work. Resisting the temptation to interfere with their creative thinking, the high quality assessment skills of the teacher and teaching assistant ensured pupils made significant gains in their ability to use the software effectively. Pupils rose to the challenge and produced original work of a high quality. They were clearly used to discussing their work. They supported each other and gave excellent feedback which was mainly positive with areas for development given sensitively.

70. Teaching is very good. All teachers and support staff, supported by regular updates on using the software, are secure in using ICT and model good practice. Well illustrated introductions, clear explanation of the learning intentions and high expectations ensure

that pupils produce work of high quality and a significant quantity in each lesson. Teachers are skilled at diagnosing how well pupils are doing and effectively judge when they are ready to move on. In the best lessons staff improve pupils' technical skills whilst allowing them to retain ownership of the work they are creating. This engenders in pupils a real sense of pride in their work. Work is well matched to pupils' abilities and the tasks allow pupils of all abilities to achieve personal excellence. Assessment is developing well with pupils keeping a log of some aspects and their individual portfolios demonstrate the range and quality of their work. Teachers effectively bring together the lesson at the end and revise the learning points in a variety of ways, including quizzes and the sharing of pupils' work. Pupils are often asked to comment on the work of others. They are quick to praise and sensitive in feeding back on areas that need developing.

71. There is a very good range of equipment, both in the suite and around the school, giving pupils very good access to computers, both during lesson times and in clubs before and after school and at lunchtimes. There are very few instances when the facilities are not in use. ICT planning is excellent, having a good balance between specific skills training and its use in other subjects.
72. The leadership of ICT is excellent. High quality monitoring and evaluation have moved the subject forward significantly and the next steps are already taking shape with the building of new facilities. Staff contribute to in-service training across the local education authority and this is having a positive impact on the school's ICT development. The work of the school has been recognised by being awarded a NAACE Quality Mark; the award judgement said "...the school has a strategic and innovative approach to maximising ICT in teaching and leadership, management of information and working with the community".

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

73. Pupils use ICT naturally in all subjects of the curriculum. They transfer skills easily and competently. Posters in geography, multimedia presentations in science, control in design and technology and the composition of music are a few examples of the range of applications seen in the school. Planning in all subjects, including ICT, identifies appropriate opportunities to link with other subjects and these are exploited to the full.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

Provision for geography is **very good**.

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

- Pupils' high quality work is at a level beyond that normally expected for their age.
- A structured programme of field visits significantly enhances pupils' learning.

#### **Commentary**

74. Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. The high quality work evident from a sample of pupils' work from the last academic year is at a level beyond that normally expected for their age. This indicates standards have been maintained since the last inspection. In Year 6 the work about rivers, supported by a field visit to the local River Ingrebourne and the Thames Flood Barrier, displays a very good level of

understanding and an appreciation of water's effect on landscape and people. Work shows that geographical skills are very well developed as pupils move from year to year. Pupils gain a very good understanding of different localities and learn to interpret maps with different scales.

75. In the three lessons observed, teaching and learning in one were satisfactory, in another they were good and a third very good. Planning in all lessons seen was detailed and linked closely to the school's scheme of work. In a very good lesson in a Year 4 class, pupils could describe the similarities and differences between their lives and the lives of children from Kenya. The teacher skilfully included pupils of all abilities in her questioning. She challenged their thinking and she had very high expectations of what the pupils could achieve. In all the lessons seen, pupils showed very positive attitudes towards their work and an enthusiasm for the subject.
76. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has successfully introduced a programme of field visits that support and enhance the pupils' learning and understanding. She has introduced a nationally written scheme and has significantly developed assessment procedures, to include summative assessments at the end of each unit of work and the ongoing assessment of key objectives. A programme of lesson observations and pupil interviews planned for later this term will enable her to monitor the subject in detail.
77. Displays celebrate very good quality work and the Year 4 pupils' description of their environment, using the digital camera as an aid, was detailed and analytical. A very good display of river features in a Year 6 class linked the information to the recent Boscastle floods. Links with other curriculum areas are well developed, especially with information and communications technology and personal, social and health education. The school's link with the Watoto Children's Charity in Uganda enhances pupils' understanding about a contrasting locality in a less economically developed country than the UK.

## **History**

78. No lessons were observed in history but pupils' work from all year groups was scrutinised. The quality of this work indicates that standards are excellent by the end of Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Year 6 produced some excellent work in their journals of Tudor characters and the autobiographical writing was of a very high quality, exemplified by one pupil's account of the life of Jane Duster. This showed an in depth understanding of the everyday life of both rich and poor in Tudor times. In another Year 6 history project about the history of schools, excellent use had been made of primary source evidence through interviews with elderly local residents and secondary source evidence through personal research. Work from other year groups shows very high levels of expectation and superb standards of presentation. The "Expedition to Egypt" work in Year 5, which is part of the Beacon School project, makes excellent use of artefacts and of a visit to the British Museum to motivate pupils' interest.
79. The very high quality of work and the great enthusiasm that Year 6 pupils show when talking about the history they have covered in the school, suggest that teaching and learning are excellent and at times inspirational. The themed days that support the history scheme of work and the excellent use of drama in history clearly bring this subject

alive for pupils. Displays immediately engage pupil interest, as with the Egyptian artefacts in a Year 5 class.

80. Leadership of this subject is very good. The co-ordinator has introduced summative assessment at the end of each unit of work and the assessment of key objectives is about to be introduced. Links with English and ICT are well established but the co-ordinator recognises that these need to be developed further, especially in Years 3 and 4.

## **Religious education**

The quality of education in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teacher's presentations are lively and enthusiastic.
- The impact of the visits to places of religious worship on the pupils' understanding of beliefs and values in other religions is very good.
- During discussions pupils' confidence and maturity are very good.
- Activities pupils are required to complete do not always lead them to the achievement of the learning objective.

### **Commentary**

81. Standards in religious education are above average. The pupils' skills of empathy are well developed. Pupils recall details and key messages from significant stories in the Bible and talk confidently about aspects of other religions they have encountered. Pupils make satisfactory progress during lessons and over time.
82. Lessons are well planned in sequences to help pupils develop their understanding of a range of concepts. The well-orchestrated opportunity to reflect on times when they had hurt another person was a deeply moving experience for all pupils in one lesson. Resources are well chosen to illustrate the main points. Pupils were captivated when listening to the teacher telling a meaningful story to illustrate the importance of a holy day for Jewish people; they showed a keen interest in learning about the values and beliefs of another religion. The activities involving worksheets for recording do not always help pupils to increase their knowledge or understanding.
83. Visits to places of religious worship have a positive impact on pupils' interest and motivation. In discussions, older pupils expressed their enjoyment of making mezuzahs when learning about Judaism. The linking of assembly themes to those in the religious education scheme provides opportunities for pupils to further develop their knowledge and understanding.
84. Leadership in religious education is good. The new co-ordinator, this term, is aware of improvements that have been made in the subject and the areas for development.
85. Since the last inspection some improvements have been made to the scheme of work so that it now includes more visits and visitors to enhance pupils' learning.

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

## Art and design

The quality of education in art is very good. Teachers have consistently high expectations so that pupils achieve well above national expectations.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils.
- The use of expert artists to work with pupils is raising standards.
- Sketchbooks are used effectively to provide opportunities for research, design and trying out ideas.
- Involving pupils in the assessment of their own work is already a planned development area.

### Commentary

86. Overall, the standard of work in art is very good with some examples of excellent outcomes. The framed paintings produced by pupils working with a visiting artist show a degree of control rarely seen in primary school art and evoke strong feelings in the audience. Work seen in pupils' sketchbooks is very good and reflects the observation, exploration and modifications pupils make in preparation for their practical work in art. Pupils make very good progress. As they move through the school they include more detail and develop greater accuracy in their work. Links that have been made with other curriculum areas support pupils to include relevant detail. An example of this was the excellent framed collage portraits of Tudor people.
87. Teachers have very high expectations of all pupils. The very good subject knowledge of teachers is reflected in their focused questioning that makes pupils think. Their interventions empower pupils to be more creative in the decisions they make about how to improve. Pupils who have special educational needs work independently with confidence. Pupils who are identified as gifted or talented in art attend specialist weekend courses such as 'Still Life' and are also encouraged to enter art competitions.
88. Pupils are highly motivated and excited about the work they are doing or the work they have completed in the past. In discussions, pupils say that art is really exciting and it "makes you want to go home and make stuff". Pupils confidently develop their own ideas and show enthusiasm for sharing what they have discovered. They positively support and help each other. During one lesson a group of pupils positively encouraged and succeeded in giving confidence to one pupil who was feeling negative about her drawing ability. Photographs in the art portfolio demonstrate the pride of Year 3 pupils who are holding their three dimensional sculptures.
89. Oral feedback is provided during lessons and marking in sketchbooks indicates that pupils are given positive information about what they have achieved. The subject leader has already identified the involvement of pupils in the assessment of their own work as an area for development.
90. The introduction of a new scheme that includes more three dimensional work and ICT units in each year group ensures a balanced curriculum for art. Opportunities have been organised for pupils to work with a range of experts from outside the school so that they

achieve high standards of work. These sessions have also enabled teachers to develop their own subject knowledge.

91. The subject co-ordinator provides very good leadership. She has a very good understanding of the strengths in art and has identified appropriate areas to develop in line with whole school initiatives. She knows how to support her colleagues effectively and what needs to be done in order to impact on standards. Her monitoring role is well developed. Pupils' perceptions are included in monitoring activities and the outcomes are acted upon.
92. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. Teaching was judged to be satisfactory and now it is very good. All pupils are challenged to achieve the levels of which they are capable and teachers' subject knowledge is very good.

### **Design and technology**

93. No lessons were observed in design and technology but pupils' work from all year groups was scrutinised. The standard of designs, evaluations and finished products is very good. Pupils have a choice of materials to use and they modify their original plans in the light of ongoing evaluation. A detailed scheme of work ensures very good coverage of knowledge and skills over the four years in the school. Links with other curriculum areas are well developed. The Year 4 electrical quiz board project showed very good links with science and the Year 4 ancient Greek pop-up books demonstrated very good application and understanding of levers. Visitors enhance pupils' learning and understanding, as in Year 6 when a visit from one of the architects of the London Eye had clearly engendered great interest in structures. The structures evident in the finished Tudor houses were impressive. The display of Year 3 picture frames and sculptures showed very good written evaluation and the interactive questions fostered further thinking.
94. Leadership of this subject is very good. The co-ordinator has recently assembled a portfolio of evidence, which shows very good progression as pupils move through the school. The assessment of key skills is now being recorded by each teacher as a record of achievement. The co-ordinator is keen to make greater use of ICT in the subject and to provide more challenge for the most able pupils. She is aware that this will improve pupils' achievement still further.

### **Music**

Provision in music is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in music are well above those expected nationally and pupils achieve very well as a result of very good teaching.
- Pupils really enjoy music.
- The comprehensive range of extra-curricular activities enables many pupils to develop their musical and performance talents.
- There is an excellent range of resources.

### **Commentary**

95. Pupils make very good progress as they move through the school and their achievement is high. The many extra-curricular music groups and choirs are well attended and a significant number of pupils have specialist music tuition. This contributes to the well above average standards in the school.
96. In the two lessons seen, teaching was very good. Pupils respond very well and all join in the vocal warm-ups and sing with confidence. Younger pupils listen attentively to music played and are able to describe the feelings and pictures it evokes, for example, after listening to Beethoven's fifth symphony one child explained why it made her think of 'Tom and Jerry'! The lesson continued with a very good range of musical activities including listening to the teacher contrast the playing of a banjo and a trombone and pupils composing their own simple rhythms for him to play and others to identify. Excellent subject knowledge and good use of humour ensured pupils enjoyed the lesson and worked productively, both individually and in groups. This was also evident in the lesson for the older pupils who used a computer program to compose their own tunes using a range of rhythms, phrases and instruments to produce work they refined and polished. They also collaborated very well to produce words and music of a rap for the Harvest Festival, selecting appropriate instruments and practising. Each group played to the rest of the class who sensitively appraised the rap, using a high level of technical vocabulary. A brisk pace and the hard work of the pupils ensured that they made very good progress in the lesson.
97. The leadership in music is very good. The excellent range of resources, recorded music and instruments from around the world, the high quality planning and the use of specialist teachers contribute to the very good achievement of pupils in music. The emphasis on performance, such as the orchestra playing in assembly and the productions staged by each year group and involving all pupils, has a positive impact on their self-esteem and confidence. Music is rightly regarded by parents as a strength of the school.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards overall in physical education are well above those expected nationally and pupils achieve very well.
- Standards in swimming and athletics are very high.
- Teaching is very good.
- The wide range of well attended clubs and the involvement of the school in local fixtures and tournaments contribute to the high standards.

### **Commentary**

98. One swimming and one gymnastics lessons were seen during the inspection. These, together with talking to pupils and the wide range of evidence from portfolios, assessment records and extra-curricular activities show that overall standards are well above those expected nationally in physical education and are excellent in swimming and athletics. Pupils achieve very well in physical education, as is evident in the large number that take part in inter-school tournaments and the wide range of trophies won.

99. Swimming records show that, by the end of Year 5, almost all pupils swim 100 metres and can cover 25 metres in clothing. The national expectation is 25 metres by the end of Year 6. They have a very good understanding of water safety and are confident under water, doing handstands and exceeding three metres swimming. Records demonstrate that pupils develop a broad range of athletic skills in both track and field events to a very high standard. Many pupils successfully take part in school and inter-school competition and all talk positively about their abilities and strengths.
100. Teaching in both lessons seen was very good. Excellent planning and a very good pace to the lesson ensured that pupils gained the maximum exercise from the sessions. In the swimming lesson, pupils practised hard a range of skills in several strokes, on both back and front. The teacher's very good diagnosis of pupils' strengths and weaknesses and individual feedback helped the pupils refine their style and make significant progress. High expectations and individual success ensured that pupils enjoyed the lesson. They changed sensibly and quickly and behaviour was excellent.
101. In the gymnastics lesson, pupils quickly but safely put out the apparatus needed, using photographs to make sure it is correctly assembled. A very good demonstration of possible moves by the teacher with encouragement to experiment, practise and refine their skills led to pupils being on task, working hard and most concentrating very well. The teacher's high expectations and detailed feedback ensured that pupils made good progress in developing skills. When asked for volunteers to show their planned sequence, almost all did. The rest watched those selected and made supportive comments on strengths and areas for development. Very good use was made of music to help pupils' fluency and they all responded well.
102. There is an impressive range of extra-curricular activities and clubs, before and after school and at lunchtimes. Led by teachers, teaching assistants and parents, they are well attended by a significant number of pupils from across the school. Some are for the more able pupils, such as the gymnastics club taken by a national coach; others are open access. The annual visit to a Welsh activity centre is eagerly anticipated by the Year 6 pupils following feedback from those who have been in previous years and the display of last year's trip.
103. Leadership of the subject within the school is very good. All six aspects of the physical education curriculum are in place. Thorough planning and teacher expertise, together with the excellent resources in the school, ensure that pupils effectively develop their skills to a high level. The efficient use of the on-site pool and the use of a local deep water pool for the older pupils give all pupils very good opportunities to improve their swimming and contribute to the very high standards. The leadership of the links with other schools is excellent. The support given to other schools through guidance materials, in-service training and equipment loans has made a significant impact, particularly the innovative work on indoor athletics. The school has been awarded an Active Mark Gold in recognition of its work in physical education.

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

104. There is a very good planned programme for this aspect of the curriculum. This is enhanced by the very good provision for the pupils' personal development during lessons. Major themes are reinforced through planned links with school assemblies. Pupils gain an understanding of relationships and responsibilities within families, the school and the wider community and this is successfully modelled by the very good



practice seen in the school. Year 5 pupils support the induction arrangements for the incoming Year 2 pupils from the infant school, by providing a paired mentor scheme. Citizenship has developed very well with the establishment of an active school council. The members and minutes of meetings are prominently displayed in the entrance foyer. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Drug awareness and sex education are appropriately taught. The promotion of a healthy lifestyle is effectively supported through good display, for example, about "What I like to eat and what I need to eat".

105. The leadership of this subject is very good. The co-ordinator has established very detailed plans, linked to assemblies and other curriculum areas, to ensure effective coverage of the programme. Resources have recently been purchased to support this programme.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>1</b>
How inclusive the school is	1
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>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>1</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>1</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	1
The effectiveness of management	2

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