

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **BARLEY CLOSE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Mangotsfied, Bristol

LEA area: South Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 109047

Headteacher: Mrs Ann Henderson

Lead inspector: Geoff Burgess

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2005

Inspection number: 266365

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary and Nursery  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 3 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 205

School address: Barley Close  
Mangotsfield  
Bristol

Postcode: BS16 9DL

Telephone number: 01454 867090

Fax number: 01454 867091

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of Mrs Mary Pearce  
governors:

Date of previous November 1998  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Barley Close is a one form entry community primary school built in 1968 to serve local housing estates, with just over 200 pupils on roll. The number on roll fell from around 200 at the time of the last inspection to just over 180 in 2002 as a consequence of a new school opening in the area and another increasing in size and moving to new accommodation. This caused a good deal of turbulence with well above average numbers of pupils leaving and joining the school during the school year. It is significant that 8 teachers left the school and 10 joined in the past two years causing further disruption notably in Years 3 to 6. A new purpose built Foundation Stage unit including part time nursery provision for up to 60 three and four year olds and all day, all year care provision for two to four year olds, opened in September 2004. Out of school provision for older pupils managed by the governing body is made before and after school and in the school holidays. The school has gained many awards including Investor in People in 2001 and 2004, the Sport England Activemark award, the Schools for Health award in 2002 (and again in 2004), and a School Achievement award in 2003. There are more boys than girls in each year group. A small percentage of pupils have ethnic backgrounds other than British, and the percentage of pupils who qualify for free school meals is average. The percentage of pupils on the special needs register is broadly average but currently the number with statements of special need (6) is higher than in similar sized schools. The attainment on entry to the reception class of most year groups currently in school was below average, and sometimes well below, notably in language and personal and social development.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23708	Geoff Burgess	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Art and design, Design and technology, Music, Physical Education.
9487	Frances Hurd	Lay inspector	
24342	Denise Franklin	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, Science, Personal, social and health education, Religious education, Special educational needs.
21313	Harold Galley	Team inspector	English, Information and communication technology, Geography, History.

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school, with strengths, weaknesses and great potential. It provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Current achievement in Years 4 to 6 is very good in English, mathematics and science, and standards in Year 6 have never been better and are now average.
- The overall quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good and sometimes excellent.
- Teaching is less effective in the nursery, reception and in Year 2.
- Staff provide a good range of learning opportunities in the main school and a commendable range of extra activities for boys and girls to enjoy before, during and after school.
- The curriculum and environment in reception does not fully meet the needs of the children.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) do not match levels seen in other schools.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is good. Pupils enjoy learning, behave well and get on well together.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn about, and celebrate, the richness and diversity of other faiths and cultures.
- Staff do all they can to ensure that pupils are safe and happy and able to do their best in a secure, high quality learning environment.
- Very good leadership and management by the head are making it possible for staff and governors to develop their roles within the school, and contribute to its continued development.

Since its last inspection the school has made very good improvement in most aspects of its work. This has included its ethos, the accommodation and learning environment, the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum, expectations, attitudes to learning and the way the school is led and run. Pupils in Year 6 are set to achieve the school's best ever results in national testing this year.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E	E	E	C
Mathematics	C	E	E	D
Science	C	E	E	C

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

Overall achievement is satisfactory. Children in the nursery and in the reception are achieving satisfactorily. Most children in the current reception class are expected to achieve the early learning goals this school year, having started school in September with average attainment. Pupils in all other year groups started school with below, and sometimes well below, average attainment. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 are making satisfactory progress in

reading, writing and mathematics from a low base, but standards in Year 2 are below average. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are achieving very well in English, mathematics and science, and standards in Year 6 are average. Standards in ICT largely match those in the core subjects. Sound provision in the humanities, the arts and physical education ensures that pupils are doing as well as expected. Boys and girls have developed good attitudes, values and behaviour. Older pupils notably make a very good contribution to their learning through very good attitudes and behaviour in class. Relationships are good throughout the school. The school makes good provision for most aspects of pupils' personal development but pupils' awareness of other faiths and cultures is less well promoted. Despite the school's considerable efforts, attendance levels are below average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

Barley Close provides a good quality of education. Teaching overall is good with strengths in the older classes, especially in literacy and numeracy, and broadly satisfactory teaching in the younger classes. Teaching assistants make a sound contribution to learning notably in supporting pupils who find learning difficult or who need a boost to their learning. Overall provision for these pupils is good. Staff provide a good range of well planned learning opportunities for pupils in the main school with a commendable range of enrichment activities for pupils to enjoy. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is less well developed, although the new accommodation provides great scope for improvements in this area. Staff know all pupils very well, understand their needs and take very good care to ensure that they are safe and happy and able to do their best. The school makes good provision for promoting pupils' personal, social and health development, and works very hard to support parents, involve them in their children's education, and keep them informed.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

This is a very well run school with a positive and inclusive ethos. By providing vision, motivation and strong leadership, the headteacher has raised expectations, confidence, and levels of professionalism within the school community. Her leadership is very good and the school is very well managed. Very good use is made of the outcomes of a range of monitoring activities to identify priorities and measure progress. Subject co-ordinators, many new to the role, are making a good contribution to developments in their areas of responsibility. Day to day management is very efficient and user friendly and the school's finances are managed very efficiently and monitored closely to ensure value for money. Although many are new to the role, governors provide strong support and are made very aware of, and are involved in, the activities and developments of the school. They make a good contribution to the good governance of the school and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents are pleased with the school, especially the quality of teaching, the high expectations and the help they receive in supporting their children's learning. Pupils are happy with their school and particularly enjoy working with their friendly and fair teachers, and the wide range of activities available to them. Some children are concerned about the behaviour of a minority of their schoolmates. Inspectors investigated a specific complaint and found no grounds for action.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Make the most of the opportunities presented by the new Foundation Stage accommodation by fully implementing the Foundation Stage curriculum in all the areas of learning and improving the quality of teaching and learning in nursery and reception.
- Improve achievement and so raise literacy and numeracy standards in Years 1 to 3 by raising expectations and matching the quality of teaching to that of Years 4 to 6.
- Make better use of much improved information and communication technology facilities to improve levels of skill and understanding and so make it possible for pupils to make much more use of ICT in other subjects.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement overall is satisfactory. However, this is a combination of very good achievement in Years 4, 5 and 6 and broadly satisfactory achievement in the rest of the school. Current standards are below average in all year groups except reception and Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are making very good progress in English, mathematics and science in Years 4, 5 and 6.
- Achievement is much slower in the nursery, reception and Year 2.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below what are now expected and pupils are not currently catching up fast enough.

#### Commentary

1. Results achieved by seven-year-olds in national tests in the past have been inconsistent from year to year, and between subjects, ranging from well above average in mathematics in 2001 and 2002 to well below average in all subjects in 2003. However, mathematics has regularly been the strongest subject and writing the weakest. This was once again the case in 2004 when mathematics was average with reading and writing below. The achievements of eleven-year-olds have been weaker over the past four years. Only in mathematics and science in 2002 were national test results better than well below average. Results in 2004 were all well below average but the data shows that pupils made an average improvement over the four years to 2004 and that, when compared with similar schools, results were average in English and science and just below in mathematics.

#### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004**

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.0 (13.8)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.9 (12.5)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.1 (14.9)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

#### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.8 (25.4)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	24.3 (25.0)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	26.5 (25.6)	28.6 (28.6)

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

2. Achievement over the longer term is satisfactory throughout the school. However, high quality teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 has enabled pupils to make very good progress this school year in English, mathematics and science. For the first time pupils in Year 6 are expected to achieve at least national average standards in all three subjects by the end of

the school year. Having started from a lower base and suffered more from staffing problems in the past, standards are below average in Years 4 and 5 but pupils in these classes are catching up fast. Progress is slower in Years 1, 2 and 3 and overall attainment in each year group in reading, writing and mathematics is below average in Year 2 with mathematics once again the stronger subject. Achievement is much affected by unavoidably high numbers in the Year 3 class, and attainment by the presence of several pupils with significant levels of special need in Year 1. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils who are gifted and talented make good progress. Good co-ordination between class teachers and special needs staff ensures that pupils' needs are identified, that clear, manageable targets are set, and that regular reviews take place.

3. A combination of factors including the impact of gaps in learning due to staff changes in the older classes and a lack of confidence and expertise in some younger classes means that standards in ICT are not as now expected. Standards in other subjects are broadly as expected with strengths where teachers have particular expertise.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall and those of older pupils are very good. Provision for personal development is good. Attendance is below average, with well above average unauthorised absence almost entirely because of holidays taken during term time.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's very good efforts to promote good attendance are not matched by the efforts of parents and carers so overall attendance is relatively poor.
- The school makes good provision for the social and moral development of pupils, who respond with good behaviour and attitudes to work and school, notably in the older classes.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to learn about and celebrate non-European cultures.

### **Commentary**

4. Pupils are happy with their school and particularly enjoy working with all the adults in the school. They are friendly and welcoming to visitors and keen to talk about their work. No unsatisfactory behaviour was observed during the inspection in class. In the three oldest classes attitudes and behaviour were generally of a very good or excellent standard, reflecting the very good relationships between pupils and teachers and the high quality of teaching. Elsewhere pupils sometimes became disengaged from learning when their task was either too easy or too difficult. Pupils were very well behaved in assemblies, despite the limited opportunities for their participation in some.

5. The school develops pupils' awareness of themselves as responsible members of a community. All pupils help in class, and pupils in Years 5 and 6 help during lunchtimes, playtime and in the library. However, children in reception have too few opportunities to take some responsibility for their own learning. Pupils know right from wrong and have a good understanding of the school's sanctions and rewards system. Adults treat them with respect and some very good relationships exist. Ethnic minority and physically disabled pupils are very well integrated with their peers. Provision for pupils' social development at playtimes could be improved. The principle occupation is chase games, with much coat pulling and play fighting, particularly amongst boys. Damage to new playtime toys meant most had been withdrawn (apart from skipping ropes), and the system of playtime 'buddies' functioned only during the junior pupils' playtimes, despite the school's intention that it should benefit younger pupils.

6. Planned provision for pupils' spiritual development has a low priority, although the quality of teaching in some classes means that some moving and thought provoking activities were observed. Some assemblies lacked a focal point or a sense of a 'special occasion': few gave pupils an opportunity for reflection, and little use was made of music. Some barely fulfilled the requirements for acts of collective worship, and some pupils were withdrawn for reasons other than religious objections. Pupils visit theatres, and actors and musicians visit the school: the provision for music and art education is satisfactory. However, the multicultural element in these activities is low and few books or other resources reflect other cultures. Religious education includes an appropriate degree of multifaith teaching. No multicultural displays were observed.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.1	School data	0.9
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

7. Attendance is below national averages. A significant proportion of parents take holidays in term time, generally for financial reasons and consequently unauthorised absence is well above the national average. The school follows up unexplained absences on the first day they occur and regularly monitors attendance data. Every effort is made to explain the importance of regular attendance and to help parents find strategies to bring their children to school every day. The school works closely with the education welfare service.

**Ethnic background of pupils**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Any other ethnic group

**Exclusions in the last school year**

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
184	2	0
5	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	0	0
2	0	0
4	0	0

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a good quality of education.

**Teaching and learning**

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good with very good teaching in several classes especially in English and mathematics.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The great majority of teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 is very good with some excellent features.
- Most lessons in English and mathematics are very good in Years 4, 5 and 6.
- Few lessons in the nursery, reception and Year 2 are better than satisfactory.
- Nursery nurses and teaching assistants make a good contribution to children's learning.

## Commentary

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	11 (28%)	9 (22%)	17 (42%)	1 (2%)	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

8. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was said to be satisfactory overall although good in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2. Two lessons were very good and three unsatisfactory, all in the older classes. The information in the table above indicates a good improvement overall. This is especially in Years 4, 5 and 6. However, the quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Year 2 is not as good.

9. Teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 is a strength of the school with three-quarters of lessons observed very good or excellent and only one lesson satisfactory. Significantly, all literacy and numeracy lessons in the three classes were at least very good. The main reason for the very high percentage of very good and excellent lessons is the high priority the head and governing body have placed in recruiting the best possible staff to meet the needs of the school. The staff involved are 'natural' teachers with a real affinity and understanding of the pupils in their charge. They intuitively promote enthusiasm, respect and a real desire to please in their pupils. It goes without saying that all the basics of good teaching such as planning, preparation, management and control are very well implemented with the minimum of fuss at a good pace. Very good use of assessment and ongoing monitoring (such as the very good use of individual whiteboards in numeracy) helps teachers to provide exactly what pupils need to succeed.

10. What really makes the difference however, is the effort teachers and teaching assistants put into providing activities which will catch the imagination of the children and motivate them to learn and do their best. Excellent examples of this were seen in Year 5 where a literacy lesson was described as a 'dynamic, inspiring, uplifting experience' and in a numeracy lesson where the sheer pace and energy of the session kept every pupil engaged and interested.

11. Although basically satisfactory, teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Year 2 is less challenging, especially for potentially higher achievers, and the activities provided are less innately interesting to the boys and girls involved. As a consequence, pupils tend to lose interest and become distracted especially in overlong whole class sessions. Whilst good use is made of available adult help in Year 1 and the nursery, teaching assistants are underused in reception and Year 2. A shortage of adult help in the large Year 3 class, which has its fair share of challenging pupils, constitutes a barrier to learning for many pupils and was a major contributory factor in the one unsatisfactory lesson observed.

12. Good teaching by providing suitable activities for pupils to meet their individual needs, ensures that pupils with special needs achieve well. Support staff have a thorough

understanding of the needs of the pupils they work with and ensure that they are well catered for in class and when withdrawn to work in small groups. This is especially the case in Year 1 and in the three older classes where the contribution of teaching assistants is very good. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are dealt with well, with teachers reacting calmly but firmly to the occasional outbursts of poor behaviour.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a good curriculum.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 has been well developed since the last inspection.
- A wide range of stimulating visits and visitors and a good range of activities outside the school day enrich the curriculum.
- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage does not fully meet children's needs.
- The school has done a great deal to develop the learning environment.

## **Commentary**

13. The school meets statutory requirements for all subjects. As part of the school's determination to raise standards, curriculum planning has been improved and is now good. The school's effective systems for evaluating the quality of the curriculum are monitored rigorously by subject co-ordinators. All subjects have detailed schemes of work that ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered thoroughly as pupils move through the school. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and literacy and numeracy skills are developed well in most subjects. Individual subjects in the curriculum are well planned and, as a result, the majority of lessons are focused, lively and interesting. The personal, social and health education curriculum supports pupils' learning well and contributes to the strong and caring ethos within the school.

14. Provision for pupils who find learning or conforming difficult is good. Good support often provided for these pupils in the classroom enables them to have access to the same curriculum as the rest of the class. Some pupils are withdrawn for additional support and this is well managed to ensure that pupils do not always miss the same lessons, or are at an appropriate time when others are doing the same subject.

15. A wide range of visits and visitors for all year groups helps to enrich learning experiences and maintain pupils' interest. For example, a recent visit to the Old Vic Theatre in Bristol led to some thoughtful and impressive written work by pupils in several classes. Particularly good use is made of the local environment to support learning in subjects such as geography. The school promotes a positive approach to healthy lifestyles and was awarded the Sport England Activemark in 2002. Staff provide a stimulating range of popular and well supported activities outside the school day.

16. The purpose built Foundation Stage block is a major asset that will make it possible for good quality early education to be delivered. However, currently the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory overall. Planning in the nursery is appropriately detailed but in reception it is often not clear what the children are expected to learn from

each activity. The curriculum is very rigid and children have few opportunities to follow their interests and develop independence during 'choosing time'. Children spend too much time sitting and listening in large groups with little activity, which is not appropriate for the children of this class. The environment is uninspiring for young children with few displays of their work or interactive displays for them to explore.

17. Apart from this, the way the overall learning environment has been developed is a strength of the school. The Foundation Stage unit has its own outside play area with play equipment. Newly built pergolas provide seating and shaded areas around the main play area, and the former Foundation Stage play area will become a quiet retreat. Grant aid was obtained to develop an environmental and woodland area which will benefit the school and local community as it matures. All classes are now housed in the main building, and despite continuing problems with heating, insulation and leaks, it is well maintained and provides a good range of facilities including the computer and library area, the swimming pool and the music room. Resources are now generally good, an improvement since the last inspection.

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

The care, support and guidance for pupils are good. Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is very good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Procedures to ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are very good.
- The school is very active in encouraging a healthy lifestyle amongst its pupils.
- Pupils receive good support and guidance based on teachers' monitoring.
- Induction procedures for children in the Foundation Stage, and those new to the school, are good.

### **Commentary**

18. Ensuring the health and safety of all who work in the school community is a school priority. The governing body inspects the site twice annually, and its findings are incorporated in the school's action plan: the site manager does a daily check. All staff are briefed on child protection procedures and there is a rolling programme for first aid training. Well established procedures for risk assessment are used before offsite visits. Healthy eating is strongly emphasised, and the school's travel plan which has significantly improved traffic and parking, has been copied elsewhere. Staff are given additional training in managing medical difficulties and challenging behaviour. The headteacher regularly organises stress management training and social occasions to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of her staff. The site is secure and has suffered virtually no vandalism since closed circuit television was installed. The school recently won its second Healthy Schools award.

19. Teachers have detailed knowledge of each pupil's strengths and needs from the good assessments each class undertakes and from thorough marking of pupils' work. Whole school targets, individual and group targets, shared with pupils, are set based on assessment information. Pupils clearly know what they need to do to improve. Teachers work hard to promote the development of the 'whole child' so personal development is a high priority in the school and is carefully monitored. Good relationships mean that pupils are confident to share problems with one or more adults in the school. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by outside agencies. The school council including pupils from Years 1 to 6 meets the headteacher termly. Pupils give their views on the

school's plans and contribute suggestions of their own. Questionnaires are used to gauge pupil opinion on particular issues.

20. Induction procedures for children in the Foundation Stage are good. Parents are invited to several meetings before their child starts school and home/school booklets provide parents and children with plenty of information. Home visits are offered to parents of children in the nursery and in both classes children have opportunities to visit the classroom and join in some of the activities before starting school. Procedures for pupils joining at other times are thorough. Pupils are paired with another child until they settle and parents are kept informed of their child's progress.

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

The school has a good partnership with parents overall. It works very hard to involve parents but the response is often limited. Links with the local community are good. Links with other schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school makes every effort to get to know the parents, carers and families of its pupils, and tries hard to get them involved in school life.
- Parents appreciate the wealth of information the school provides about the school and their children.
- Any complaints or problems are quickly dealt with and feedback to parents is of high quality.
- A significant proportion of parents make little effort to support their children's learning.
- A very good range of activities and care arrangements have been organised to help and support parents.

### **Commentary**

21. Virtually all parents completing the Ofsted questionnaire think the school has high expectations of their children, their children enjoy school, that teaching is good and so are the induction arrangements. Parents are strongly encouraged to get involved in school life and a good number do so through the Friends' Association committee (which raised £8,000 last year), or as parent governors, class helpers, or helping to manage the swimming pool. Some parents lack confidence in their ability to support their children's learning and the school provided a workshop on numeracy to help them. A Homework Club supports pupils who find it hard to do it at home. However, parental support for learning at home is much less than in other similar schools. All teaching staff are available before school, and parents can usually see the headteacher without an appointment. The school office provides a friendly 'public face' for visitors. Complaints and concerns are always taken seriously and thoroughly investigated. The inspection team looked into a specific case concerning bullying, but found no case to answer. The school welcomes parents' ideas and suggestions, and acts on them whenever possible.

22. The school provides plenty of information through its well designed website and detailed newsletters. Parents are regularly told what pupils are studying. There are some indications in newsletters and at parents' meetings about how parents can support learning but there is still room to develop this. The prospectus and governors report fulfil statutory requirements. The pre-school booklet is designed like a storybook for parents to read to their children. The prospectus, like the newsletters, provides a wealth of information that might overwhelm less confident parents. Reports show the good personal knowledge teachers have of their pupils. The scores from various tests are given, but some parents find these difficult to understand despite an accompanying, explanatory letter.

23. The range of provision that the school has supported or arranged to help and support parents in and out of school is very impressive. Although only a few parents have attended the classes on 'Keeping up with the children', those who have found them beneficial. Regular very popular confidential 'drop in' clinics for parents are run by the school nurse. The school has 24 places for all day care for pre-school children, a breakfast club and after school care, and provides day care during holidays.

24. The school always participates in the Mangotsfield Festival, providing musical contributions as well as manning stalls. Regular lettings, particularly to a football club, and the use of the swimming pool by the local community, are very positive community connections. The Scouts and Women's Institute joined the school to win a 'People's Places' award, creating a community environmental area, and two local businesses funded other grounds development. The school works closely with local clergy. Elderly residents regularly attend special events, and are given produce from the Harvest Festival.

25. Mangotsfield Secondary School provides specialist teaching for older pupils and Year 6 pupils begin a transitional project completed in Year 7. Transition arrangements are well established. Staff meet their counterparts from other primary schools in various working groups and the cluster group organises shared sporting and musical activities.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are very good. The head provides very good leadership and the staff team contributes to the school's very good management. The governing body makes a good contribution to each. The quality of governance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The head provides vision, determination and a sense of educational ambition and involves the whole school community in the decision making process.
- The school has a positive, inclusive ethos and is very well run.
- Subject co-ordinators make a good - and sometimes very good - contribution to the promotion of, and provision for, their areas of interest.
- Good use is made of the outcomes of monitoring and data analysis to evaluate the work of the school, set targets, identify priorities and judge the impact and value for money of any actions.

### **Commentary**

26. As noted in the summary of this report, improvement since the last inspection has been very good and Barley Close is a very different institution to that inherited by the present head a few years ago. This is very creditable in itself but what makes it even more so is the fact that much of this has been achieved against the odds. The problems caused by the goings and comings of pupils, chronic difficulties with staffing, consequent problems with funding, and recently, substantial building works on site, have all been coped with and eventually overcome, often in an exemplary manner. Positive management has seen the number on roll back above 200, an investment in experienced staff has bought quality, expertise and stability to the staff team. The budget is back in balance and the Foundation Stage unit is up and running. Key to all this has been the role of the head who has provided the clear vision, resolve and educational ambition needed to maintain the necessary focus on raising standards and improving the learning and working environment.



27. Under the head's very good leadership, the school has evolved a very effective process leading to improvement. Great care has been taken to give everyone the opportunity to share in the decision making process. Through this, whole school policies and ways of working have been agreed with clear and specific roles and responsibilities. Even though many of the staff involved are relatively new to the school, the comprehensive procedures and arrangements the head has put in place to empower staff to fulfil their responsibilities have made it possible for all staff to make a positive contribution to developments in their areas of interest. Most have good, and sometimes very good, effects. However, although the Foundation Stage unit is established in its new building, little has been done to ensure that best use is being made of the opportunity it presents. Leadership and management in this area have not been active and dynamic.

28. Monitoring and evaluating have high priorities with the lead taken by the head who keeps a very close watch on what is happening. Notable among the procedures and arrangements mentioned above is the time provided for each co-ordinator to work on her area during the school day, and the very good use of monitoring to evaluate trends and inform action planning. Standards, planning, classroom practice and the effectiveness of policies and procedures are kept under review by responsible staff and governors. Detailed assessment procedures for 'tracking' individual pupils and similar groups through the school have made this an even more rigorous process.

29. Very important in the smooth running of the school is the school office where the school secretary and finance manager provide a warm welcome and easy point of communication with the school, and very efficient administrative back-up to the head, staff and governors. Despite a large overspend the school's finances are very well managed. The school is judged as giving good value for money.

30. Recent months have seen major developments in the governance of the school. Many members of the governing body are relatively new. However, strongly led by the chair, governors' knowledge of, and impact on, the role of the governing body and the life of the school is significantly greater than in the past. Focused training, regular planned school visits, involvement in full and committee meetings and the open ethos of the school have given governors the confidence to begin to challenge as well as to support senior management. Difficult issues have been faced and major policy decisions, such as the very successful investment in experienced staff, seen through to good effect.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	451087
Total expenditure	459288
Expenditure per pupil	2355

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-2437
Balance carried forward to the next	-10638

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** overall.

31. A new purpose built unit, opened in September 2004, incorporates a nursery class from a neighbouring school (Foundation 1) and the school's own reception class (Foundation 2). Staff are still in the early stages of developing these classes into one cohesive unit and weaknesses in the planning of the curriculum, particularly in Foundation 2, are inhibiting progress. Attainment on entry is variable and in the past has been below average overall. A high proportion of children in the nursery have speech and language difficulties and some have behavioural difficulties. However, in the current reception class no children have been identified as having special needs and attainment on entry was average. Most of these children are expected to achieve the early learning goals in all the areas of learning by Year 1.

32. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and these enable most children to achieve satisfactorily. Relationships are often very good and most children enjoy coming to school. The activities provided for children when they come into school in the morning in Foundation 1 provide a focal point and enable children to be settled more quickly. Good planning in the nursery clearly indicates the objectives for each activity. However, planning in reception is less focused and does not clearly indicate what children will learn, particularly when they are given a free choice. Not enough regular observation of children's progress during activities is undertaken in either class to provide adults with the information needed to plan follow-up work for individuals. Consequently activities are not always matched well enough to what children need to learn next and the expectations, particularly in Foundation 2, are sometimes not high enough. Recording of assessment is not yet consistent across both classes, with different formats in use. Effectively used nursery nurses and teaching assistants provide good support for the children.

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

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

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

- Most children will achieve the early learning goals by Year 1.
- Relationships are very good.
- Children have few opportunities to plan their own activities, be responsible for their own learning, and so develop good independent skills, particularly in reception.

#### **Commentary**

33. All adults are good role models and work effectively as teams to provide secure environments for the children. The children quickly settle to daily routines. In Foundation 1 children develop social skills well during 'snack-time'. In Foundation 2 a satisfactory reward system ensures children know what is expected of them. Children understand what is acceptable behaviour and have an appropriate awareness of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. Most children are expected to achieve the early learning goals by Year 1 because teaching and learning are satisfactory. Opportunities are provided for children to choose their own activities, but children do not have to plan what they are going

to do or be responsible for getting equipment out, particularly in Foundation 2. Whilst some children work well independently a significant minority in Foundation 2 depend too much on adults to direct their learning and consequently quickly lose concentration during independent activity.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good opportunities are provided for children to enjoy stories.
- Opportunities to track children's progress are missed.

### **Commentary**

34. Children in Foundation 1 enjoy listening to stories. They respond well and are eager to talk about the pictures. Several more capable children predict what might happen in the story. Many children start school with poor speech and language skills and make good progress because of the focused support provided for them by adults. Adults are continually developing communication skills through questioning and encouraging children to talk about what they are doing. Children are keen to make marks on paper to communicate meaning.

35. In Foundation 2 children join in repeated phrases in stories and can retell what happens. For example, they confidently recount the events in the story 'We're going on a Bear Hunt' and, with adult support, some children use familiar letters to write a sentence about aspects of the story. They communicate satisfactorily in the 'Opticians' taking their roles seriously. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and by the end of Foundation 2 children are expected to achieve the early learning goals. Achievement is currently satisfactory. However, the introduction of a full literacy session in Foundation 2, even though some of the activities are now more practical, is too long for some children to concentrate. Although adults work with focus groups of children, very little evidence of ongoing assessments was observed during the inspection.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in Foundation 1 enjoy the daily number rhymes sessions.

### **Commentary**

36. At the start of each daily session children in Foundation 1 eagerly join in singing number rhymes. Good teaching of basic counting skills enables children to achieve well. Children count pictures of snowmen, flying saucers and toys accurately. They identify circles, rectangles and squares on faces of three-dimensional objects.

37. In Foundation 2 children begin to understand simple mathematical vocabulary such as 'under', 'on', 'forwards', 'backwards' and 'sideways'. A satisfactory practical session in the hall enabled the teacher to assess children's knowledge and understanding of mathematical vocabulary, although opportunities to record the children's knowledge through observation notes were missed. Achievement is satisfactory and most children are expected to achieve the early learning goals.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Young children have a keen interest in the world around them.

### **Commentary**

38. Children make satisfactory progress in knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Younger children in Foundation 1 showed curiosity and interest in what happens to ice cubes, left inside the room and outside in the cold. They exclaimed enthusiastically when they saw that the ice cubes left indoors had melted. They talk about the weather each morning and with adult support are keeping a record of the weather each week.

39. In Foundation 2 children can name parts of their body and are beginning to understand the importance of using their senses. They investigate why some people wear glasses and look in mirrors to see their reflection. Children are confident to use the mouse to control a computer program and to print their work. They use a range of materials satisfactorily to make a shelter and bedroom for the bears, and construction kits for building vehicles. Achievement is satisfactory because teaching and learning are satisfactory.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The outdoor area is secure with good facilities to develop physical skills.
- There are too few opportunities for children to plan activities for themselves to develop their physical skills.

### **Commentary**

40. The Foundation Stage unit has a good secure outdoor area and children make satisfactory progress in developing their physical skills. By the end of Foundation 2 most are expected to achieve the early learning goals. Children ride bikes and other wheeled vehicles appropriately and show awareness of space, themselves and others. They follow instructions and co-operate satisfactorily on the climbing frame, stepping-stones and low beams.

41. No physical education (PE) lessons were observed during the inspection, although evidence from teacher's planning indicates that regular PE sessions are held in the hall.

The outdoor area is used well for adult directed activities but is used less well when children have free choice. Planning for physical development is not as well integrated as some other areas of learning in Foundation 1 with children still having an outside playtime each day prior to going home.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

42. It is not possible to make a judgement on provision, attainment and teaching in this area of learning because very few opportunities for children to be creative were observed. In Foundation 1 and 2 individual children were seen painting pictures and children used their imagination satisfactorily in role play areas. In Foundation 1 children paint circles in the style of work by Kandinski and contribute to a display of 'snowmen'. In Foundation 2 children have used pens and crayons to draw pictures of themselves for a winter display in the hall. They make close observations of their eyes and draw them using pencils. They use instruments satisfactorily to explore sounds in the forest while on a bear hunt. The lack of opportunities for children to be creative and use a wide range of media is impacting negatively on the environment of both classrooms, which are not as stimulating as usually observed.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good** overall.

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

- As a result of very good teaching, pupils achieve very well in Years 4, 5 and 6.
- Writing skills of older pupils are developed effectively in subjects across the curriculum.
- Teachers' warm rapport with pupils supports the good development of speaking and listening skills throughout the school.
- Since the last inspection, standards in reading and writing in Year 2 have remained stubbornly below, or well below, average.

#### **Commentary**

43. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily, but find tasks involving reading and writing challenging. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests and assessments, standards were below the national average in reading and writing, and well below the average of other similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms a similar picture in the present Year 2 class. A particular weakness is the below average proportion of pupils reaching the higher level 3 in reading and writing. Standards in Year 2 have not kept up with rising national trends over the last four years.

44. In Year 6 there is an entirely different picture, with standards in the present class being the highest ever and, for the first time, pupils are on course to reach nationally average standards in the 2005 National Curriculum tests. The school has recently focused on improving pupils' writing skills and this has paid off handsomely. Pupils in Year 6 write accurate and detailed accounts, showing a keen awareness of using complex sentences. Written work is constructed carefully and presented imaginatively, with a good emphasis on neat handwriting. Two positive features of pupils' written work in Years 4 to 6 are the positive use of literacy skills in subjects across the curriculum, as well as the wide range of

genres evident in pupils' work over time. Pupils' poetry, inspired by pictures taken from the air, is inventive, thoughtful and very well presented.

45. Speaking and listening skills are developed well throughout the school. In all classes, teachers have a positive and often warm rapport with pupils and this gives all pupils the confidence to speak clearly and confidently in front of the class. In many lessons, paired or collaborative work gave pupils the opportunity to discuss ideas in a calm and purposeful atmosphere.

46. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, good in Year 3, and very good, with some outstanding features, in Years 4 to 6. Throughout the school, teachers make good use of the National Literacy Strategy, planning lessons that are well organised and have a clear structure. Another strength of teaching is the good quality of assessment records kept by teachers, carefully tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school. However, the marking of pupils' work is too variable across the school. In Years 4 to 6, teachers' marking is good, with useful, analytical comments that give pupils a clear picture of their strengths and weaknesses. In Years 1 to 3 teachers' comments are blander and, in some cases, teachers' writing is a poor role model for pupils.

47. The teaching of reading is given a high profile throughout the school, although the use teachers make of pupils' personal reading records is variable. In Year 6, for example, the teacher monitors pupils' records rigorously with the result that pupils take great pride and care in maintaining their own 'reading logs'. As a result, pupils achieve very well in this key area of learning. However, the reading records of younger pupils are not maintained with the same rigour, with the result that some records are poorly maintained, sometimes not dated, and occasionally with significant gaps. A feature of the teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 is the lively and sometimes dynamic pace, the effective use of humour, and the very high expectations teachers have of every pupil in terms of effort and the quality of work. Teachers' infectious enthusiasm in these classes has a significant impact on pupils' attitudes and the quality of learning. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are at least good throughout the school. Teachers keep careful records of pupils' progress and plan work that is closely matched to their previous work, thus ensuring their involvement in all aspects of the lesson.

48. Leadership and management are good. The school has an undoubted determination to improve provision and has been highly effective in raising standards for older pupils. The school's focus on improving pupils' writing skills has paid off and standards in the present Year 6 are the highest ever at the school. A scrutiny of pupils' work in Year 5 indicates that this rising trend is set to continue. Much less effective have been attempts to raise standards in Year 2. Although rigorous monitoring has underpinned much of the recent improvement in provision, this has not had enough impact on provision in Year 2, where standards have remained below average for some time. Despite the lack of improvement in Year 2, overall improvement since the last inspection is good because of the significant improvements in provision for older pupils.

### **Literacy across the curriculum**

49. English contributes very well to other subjects across the curriculum, especially in Years 4 to 6. Pupils' writing skills are well developed in subjects such as history and geography, exemplified by some thoughtful, accurate reporting by pupils in Year 5 as a part of their study of an Indian village.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are making very good progress in Years 4, 5 and 6 thanks to very good teaching.
- Standards in Year 2 are below average.
- Gaps in learning caused by staffing problems in the past continue to slow progress.
- Very good use is made of assessment to identify trends and modify planning.

### **Commentary**

50. At the time of the last inspection attainment in mathematics was said to be broadly average in Year 2 and below in Year 6, with a majority of older pupils making unsatisfactory progress. The reverse is now the case with attainment below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6 with the great majority of older pupils making very good progress, not just in Year 6 but in Years 4 and 5 as well.

51. Although achievement in mathematics in Years 4, 5 and 6 is very good, attainment is much affected by the relative abilities of the three year groups when they started school and the impact of the staffing difficulties mentioned previously in the report. Attainment on entry to school for the Year 6 class was the best among all year groups and this group managed to keep the same teacher each year. Hence pupils' progress was not affected and with very good teaching by the very confident and skilled mathematics co-ordinator this year, there is every prospect of many more pupils achieving average and above average scores in national testing than ever before. The mental mathematics session preceding the main lesson was particularly impressive with less confident mathematicians answering a range of mental maths questions under strict time constraints and the teacher following up by leading the group through the various strategies they used or might use to find the answers; all very empowering and confidence building.

52. In Years 4 and 5, pupils started school with much less understanding of mathematics and both groups suffered from changes of teachers. Standards are consequently lower than expected in each class but very good and excellent teaching is seeing both groups catching up fast. However, the impact of gaps in learning caused by changes of teacher was very well demonstrated in a Year 4 lesson where the teacher found it necessary to retrace her steps to ensure that her pupils understood the basic principles before moving on to new work. In a very good lesson, very well established work habits, high pace, high quality questioning and explanations all interspersed with incidental reinforcement and hints, all with a smile, ensured that pupils made very good progress and enjoyed the experience. Teachers in all three older classes made very good use of the very recently acquired interactive whiteboards, pupils' individual whiteboards and the support of very well involved teaching assistants to support learning and monitor understanding.

53. Good teaching in Years 1 and 3 is seeing most pupils achieving well. However, high numbers of pupils in the Year 3 class, some of whom are difficult to handle, are inhibiting progress for some despite the hard work of the teacher who only has help for part of the lesson. Conversely, with good reason given the levels of special need in the class, the Year 1 teacher has a great deal of support for individuals and groups. Teaching assistants are very well used to make it possible for all the members of a class with a very wide range of abilities to succeed in their own terms. This was very well demonstrated in a good lesson on shapes. Achievement in Year 2 is satisfactory overall but teaching lacks the energy and pace seen in other classes and pupils' attainment is below the average standards achieved

in national testing in 2004. In the lesson observed and in the scrutiny of pupils' work there was little evidence of work being set to stretch higher attaining mathematicians.

54. A feature of most classes is the school focus on calculation identified as a priority from the analysis of national and optional test papers and part of the subject action plan. Detailed assessment and evaluation in class and the use assessment data to identify what needs to be done are strengths of the subject. Constructive marking and very useful lesson evaluations on planning in the older classes give a good indication of teachers' awareness of the understanding and needs of their pupils. Marking is satisfactory in the younger classes, but suggestions as to how to improve are less evident. The co-ordinator took over the subject in September having joined the school in April 2004. She already has a good understanding of the current position of the subject in the school and has made a good start in monitoring standards and provision. She undoubtedly has great expertise in, and enthusiasm for, the subject and provides a very good model of good practice for her

### **colleagues** **Mathematics across the curriculum**

55. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics in other subjects, notably in information and communication technology and in science. However, with a few exceptions such as where a teacher ensured that work in mathematics on reading scales was brought forward to enable pupils to carry out measurements in science, the use of mathematics is rarely planned into work in other areas.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are improving significantly because of good teaching in Years 3 to 6.
- Standards are still below average by the end of Year 2.
- Good assessment procedures are being used well.

### **Commentary**

56. Over the last few years, standards in science have not been as good as they should be. The recent turbulence surrounding the school both in staff changes and pupils leaving and joining the school has had a negative impact on standards and they have not been as good as at the time of the last inspection. However, the issues identified in the last inspection regarding balance of time in Years 3 to 6, and attainment in experimental and investigational science being less secure, have now been addressed.

57. By the end of Year 6 standards are average and pupils are achieving well. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to plan their own investigations. For example, in Year 3 pupils investigate what sorts of food cats eat as part of their work to find out whether different animals have different diets. Pupils in Year 6 investigate whether an object is lighter in water or air. Pupils have a secure understanding of what is needed for a fair test and the importance of accurate readings. They are confident to work in groups and support each other effectively in their learning.

58. Although achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, standards are below the national average at the end of Year 2. Pupils in Year 1 know what materials various objects, found in the hall, are made of, and are beginning to understand why objects are made of certain materials. Currently attainment of pupils in Year 1 is as expected for their age. In Year 2 pupils know that objects can be moved by pulling and pushing but do not associate



these movements as being forces. Evidence from samples of pupils' work indicates very limited use of basic scientific vocabulary which would enable some pupils to achieve the higher National Curriculum levels. Much of the work planned is for pupils of average ability and does not extend the more able pupils.

59. Good teaching in Years 3 to 6 is a significant factor to improving standards in these years. Teachers plan in detail to meet the needs of the pupils and are confident to adapt their planning when needing to reinforce new concepts. For example in Year 6 the teacher effectively reviewed pupils' understanding of the scientific term 'upthrust' through a series of questions on the interactive whiteboard and by organising a repeat of an investigation from a previous lesson. Consequently by the end of the lesson pupils had a much better understanding, and realised the importance of accuracy when taking results. Expectations are very high and behaviour management in these classes is often very good. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. However, less emphasis is given to developing scientific vocabulary in Year 2, much less is expected and the pace of lessons is mundane. These factors are not helping to improve standards by the end of Year 2.

60. Thorough assessment procedures are being used well to support pupils' learning, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Detailed analysis of standard and optional test results means that teachers clearly know what needs to be done to raise standards. Group targets are set across the school and pupils' response to their targets is often good. End of unit assessments are used well to ensure understanding of each topic, and lesson evaluations clearly indicate whether pupils have grasped the objective of the lessons. Marking is satisfactory, usually positive, but sometimes gives younger pupils an indication that they have done well when answers are incorrect.

61. The leadership and management of science are good. The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards and her monitoring is effective. She has identified staff training needs and organised appropriate support for teachers. Satisfactory resources are used appropriately in lessons.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below the expected levels in Years 2 and 6.
- Teachers make very good use of electronic whiteboards in Years 4 to 6.
- Teachers do not make enough use of classroom computers.
- Provision has improved recently and the school is well placed to improve further.

### **Commentary**

62. Provision in Years 1, 2 and 3 is satisfactory and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, pupils start school with a limited range of skills and standards at the end of Year 2 are below the expected level. Pupils use the mouse competently and pupils can 'click and drag' and use the 'flood fill' facility to create highlights of colour. Although pupils use word processing competently, the range and depth of work is only adequate.

63. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 are benefiting significantly from the regular use of the new interactive whiteboards in their classrooms. These were only installed shortly before the inspection, but teachers have worked hard, and with considerable effect, to maximise their use. Already, pupils use the whiteboards with confidence and skill. Pupils in Year 6 have completed lively PowerPoint presentations, using a range of media, and most have a basic knowledge of how to use e-mail and research projects using the Internet. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work over the course of the year shows that standards throughout Years 3 to 6 are below the expected level, with the range of ICT work lacking enough depth. The school recognises that ICT is a developing subject at the school and pupils' standards of attainment reflect some historic weaknesses in provision.

64. The quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection was satisfactory. Most teachers make satisfactory use of the school's well appointed ICT suite, although some opportunities for using this valuable resource were wasted during the inspection. Although the lessons observed were well organised and presented in a lively, interesting manner, a scrutiny of pupils' work reveals some gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding in all year groups. A weakness in teaching, evident from lesson observations and confirmed by a scrutiny of pupils' work, is the limited use teachers make of classroom computers to support pupils' learning.

65. Subject leadership is good. The co-ordinator has only been in post since the start of the school year but she has already developed a clear view of what is needed to take the school forward. She sets a good example with her own high quality teaching. Resources have recently been improved and the school is now in a strong position to improve the quality of provision. In the light of recent developments, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

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

66. As noted above, the use of interactive whiteboards in the older classes across a range of subjects has added a whole new dimension to the use of ICT across the curriculum. However, it is true to say that before this, this area was a weakness in ICT provision and it remains so in the younger classes. Few examples of the use of ICT in other subjects are on display or evident in pupils' books.

### **HUMANITIES**

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- When pupils study world religions, other than Christianity, some opportunities are being missed to visit places of worship and to have visitors to talk about their faiths.

### **Commentary**

67. By the end of Year 6 attainment meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. By the end of Year 2 pupils are beginning to understand some of the customs and practices of Christianity and at least one other world religion. Younger pupils retell stories from the Bible such as 'The Parable of the Good Samaritan' and 'Daniel in the Lion's Den'. They are beginning to discuss the moral

associated with the parable. Older pupils, in Years 5 and 6 confidently explain beliefs and practices of Islam. In Year 5 they looked carefully at how prayer affects the daily lives of Muslims. The pupils achieved very well in this lesson and attained better than expected for their age because of very good teaching. By the end of Year 6 pupils know that many different religions are practised in Britain today and are beginning to reflect sensitively on their own beliefs and those of others.

68. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Evidence from pupils' books and teachers' planning indicates that the agreed syllabus is being followed appropriately. Where very good teaching was observed, very good use was made of the interactive whiteboard and other resources to provide pupils with a focal point for discussion. Very good relationships with pupils ensured high quality discussions took place and pupils contributed eagerly. The teacher always values all contributions and this impacts well on pupils' learning. In Years 2 and 4 pupils have the opportunity to visit a local mosque, and Muslim and Hindu parents have made visits to talk about their religions. However, there is room to develop these opportunities further. Pupils regularly visit the local churches and clergy visit to take collective worship.

69. The new co-ordinator is supporting staff well in the implementation of the new locally agreed syllabus. Her action plan is appropriate and she is a very good role model. Resources are satisfactory and artefacts are used well to support pupils' learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

70. Only one lesson in each subject was observed during the inspection so there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about the quality of provision in these subjects. However, pupils' work was scrutinised, as were displays around the school. Evidence from these sources, as well as discussions with pupils and teachers, indicate that provision throughout the school is satisfactory although varied across the school. Teachers plan for geography and history in a thorough and well organised manner, ensuring that, as pupils move through the school, all aspects of the National Curriculum relating to these subjects are covered in appropriate detail.

71. A strength of provision in **geography** is the effective use the school makes of the local environment. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn about the local area, comparing the busy main road nearby with quiet, local roads. In Year 4 pupils undertake a thoughtful evaluation of wasteland adjacent to the school, using a digital camera to record their findings. Older pupils learn about the wider world, completing a detailed study of life in a rural Indian village, comparing characteristics with life in England. Pupils' work in geography has a high profile in lively, well presented displays around the school.

72. By contrast, **history** is not covered in such detail, either in displays or in terms of pupils' recorded work. Some projects, such as a study of the Anglo Saxons in Year 3 are supported by detailed, well written accounts, although, across the school, the development of literacy skills in history is only just satisfactory. Interviews with pupils reveal that older pupils have a sound knowledge of the historical projects they have studied, although some pupils demonstrated some confusion in terms of the chronology of historical periods.

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

73. Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were not primary foci of the inspection. Few lessons were observed in this curriculum area but where possible pupils' work completed this school year was scrutinised, planning evaluated and

pupils talked to about their views on the subjects. Although it was not possible to form a judgement about provision in individual subjects, overall provision, including the many extras the school provides across the whole curriculum area, is satisfactory and, where teachers have expertise in a subject, sometimes better. Planning shows that all four subjects are well covered in a systematic and organised way making good use of national and commercial schemes of work to give structure. A simple but effective means of assessing pupils' competence and understanding, or lack of it, is used in each subject to monitor progress.

74. The school's curriculum map shows that in Years 1 to 6 each class focuses on either **art and design** or **design and technology (DT)** each half term to give more time for larger scale activities. With three classes covering each, no **DT** lessons took place during the inspection and a lack of first hand evidence of pupils' work in the subject meant it was not possible to make a judgement about standards. In discussion, older pupils could recount some of the designing and making they had been involved in including pop-up books, making biscuits, and designing containers and vehicles. Sketchbooks and **art** work around the school showed the progression in techniques and the quality of finished work expected. This was well exhibited in the hall where work from each year group on a common winter theme was displayed. This ranged from symmetrical frosted designs and a large scale collaborative painting of leaves and berries to very detailed silhouettes of trees in winter.

75. Only one **music** lesson was observed in which Year 4 pupils learned about creating sound images, choosing instruments and working well together to portray 'jogging' in sound. In common with most work planned for the term this made good use of a commercial scheme and supporting materials. Music is an area much enriched by extra activities available such as instrumental tuition involving keyboards, guitar and violin, recorder groups and a choir. The school is fortunate to have the use of a temporary classroom as a music base but it was not used as such during the inspection.

76. The fact that the school gained the Sport England Activemark award in 2002 shows the importance the school gives to physical activity and the commitment of the **physical education (PE)** co-ordinator to her subject. Although a limited range of mainly indoor activities was observed during the inspection, planning and records show that pupils undertake the full range of the PE curriculum. Good use is made of the school's very good PE facilities in class and in extracurricular activities.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHEC)**

Provision in personal, social, health education and citizenship is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A comprehensive PSHEC programme is used across the school.
- The school has recently been re-awarded Healthy School status.

### **Commentary**

77. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to share their feelings and discuss topics related to their personal development. The ethos of the school promotes good relationships and good opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibilities through the 'Buddy' system and by being monitors and special helpers. Areas of personal, social and health education such as sex education and drugs and alcohol misuse are successfully

addressed. Assembly themes make a good contribution to PSHEC provision: for example the inspection week's theme was 'working together'.

78. Lessons observed during the inspection were mostly of high quality and pupils' responses were mature and thoughtful. Younger pupils think about people who care for them, while older pupils confidently discuss issues such as the dangers of smoking and the effects of 'name calling' on each other. Teachers are well able to adapt planning to meet the needs of pupils, quick to identify issues arising within their class, and deal with them promptly.

79. The whole school community has been actively involved in providing evidence for the Healthy School award. Initiatives undertaken include improving the school environment, learning about healthy eating, and recycling.

80. The pupil development team is working hard to improve pupils' personal welfare and has a comprehensive action plan for further improvements. For example strategies to engage children in learning through listening have been a high priority and issues such as improved behaviour and independence are on their agenda. These strategies are having a positive impact on provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship.

## 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	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).*