

# INSPECTION REPORT

**CHESTER-LE-STREET C OF E (CONTROLLED)  
JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Hilda Park

LEA area: County Durham

Unique reference number: 114213

Headteacher: Mrs J Twomey

Lead inspector: Mrs M Fitzpatrick

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> April 2005

Inspection number: 266600

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  
School category: Voluntary Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 7 – 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 238

School address: Hilda Park  
Chester-le-Street  
County Durham  
Postcode: DH2 2JT

Telephone number: 0191 3882328  
Fax number: 0191 3892118

Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Revd. K Dunne

Date of previous January 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the suburbs of Chester-le-Street and is about the same size as most schools of this type, with 238 pupils aged seven to 11 on roll. The school draws more than half of its pupils from outside the catchment area. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs is below the national average. The number of pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Need has doubled in the current year and is now in line with the national average. There are no pupils who have English as an additional language that are at an early stage of fluency and all pupils are able to learn through English without additional support. Well over 90 per cent of pupils come from white British backgrounds, and less than 10 pupils come from other heritages. The overall attainment of pupils when they join the school is above average. In recent years the school has gained a

number of awards including, a School Achievement Award, the Healthy Schools Award, Investors in People, the Basic Skills award and accreditation from the Local Education Authority for its Anti-Bullying Programme.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2432 6	Mrs M Fitzpatrick	Lead inspector	English
			History
			Geography
			English as an additional language
1251 1	Mrs L Buller	Lay inspector	
1151 0	Mr K Oglesby	Team inspector	Mathematics
			Information and communication technology
			Art and design
			Design and technology
3213 8	Mr T Plant	Team inspector	Science
			Religious education
			Music
			Physical education
			Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very effective school** where standards are high and pupils achieve well. Pupils are happy and enjoy the hard work that is expected of them. The quality of education provided is very good, and the very good leadership of the headteacher ensures that the school has very good inclusion strategies and there is a very strong Christian ethos of care and tolerance. This is a school with many strengths, that serves the community well. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above the expectation for 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science and they exceed the expectation in religious education, geography and history.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and management for the development of the school, key staff also provide very good leadership in their subjects, governors play an effective part in developing the school.
- The school has a very good curriculum. Teaching and learning are good and the care and guidance pupils receive is very good.
- There is very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs.
- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour and the very good relationships in the school combine to create a very good climate for learning.
- Pupils in Year 3 are not as independent in their learning as they could be.
- Target setting in mathematics is not as well developed as it is in English.
- The school's links with parents, the church and the community are very good.

The school has made very good improvement since it was last inspected. The school has succeeded in maintaining high standards and the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level in national tests has risen to well above the national average. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has been significantly improved and standards in the subject are rising. Governors now play a full part in the strategic development of the school and links with parents are very strong. Given the quality of leadership in the school and the well established evaluation procedures the school is very well placed to continue to improve.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	C	A	B
mathematics	B	B	A	C
science	C	C	A	B

*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.*

**Pupils' achievement is good.** The school's overall results in National Curriculum tests are well above the national average and above those of similar schools. This reflects the commitment of staff throughout the school. Teaching is often very good in the older classes and pupils work very well with or without direct supervision. High standards have been maintained over time, with the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level in all three

test subjects well above the national average. The school's rate of improvement has kept pace with the national trend over the last four years. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Very many pupils who are now in Year 6 exceed the standards expected of 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science. In mathematics targets could be better matched to pupils needs, as they are in English. Overall, pupils in Year 6 exceed the level expected in religious education, geography and history, because the curriculum in these subjects is very well planned, it interests pupils and gives plenty of scope for the application of their research, thinking and numeracy skills.

**Pupils' personal development is very well promoted through the school's very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** Pupils behave very well. They work hard in lessons and are keen to do well. Attendance is very good and most pupils arrive at school on time.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning are good overall.** There is a good proportion of very good and sometimes excellent teaching in Years 5 and 6. The strengths of teaching throughout the school include: teachers' good use of assessment to group pupils and plan well for their learning; teachers' high expectations of pupils' effort and behaviour; practical tasks that enthuse pupils about subjects such as geography, science and mathematics and very good use of talk to consolidate pupils' learning and extend their thinking. Learning is enhanced in lessons when pupils are expected to work in pairs or small groups and this adds to the pace of their learning. In Year 3, these skills are less well developed with many pupils still dependent on adult support. The school provides a very good curriculum, which is very well enhanced by visits and visitors and out of school clubs. All pupils are very well supported and guided in their learning and this is one of the key factors in the good standards they reach. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, though classrooms are a little cramped, the grounds and outdoor facilities are excellent. Resources for learning are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are both very good.** The school has rigorous monitoring procedures and sets appropriate priorities for its improvement. Governance of the school is good. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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

The vast majority of parents hold the school in high esteem. They feel that their children are well taught and cared for and that they are expected to work hard. A small number of parents had concerns about some pupils' behaviour and possible bullying. During the inspection it was observed that teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well and pupils are confident that teachers handle any issues about bullying very well. There were no reported incidents of bullying during the inspection and the school has very good procedures for dealing with any bullying that should occur. Pupils love their school, are proud to belong to it and enjoy the challenges and responsibilities they are given. They are very pleased with their contribution to creating a caring school through the School Council, and in their roles as Buddies and mediators.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve opportunities for younger pupils to develop independence. \*

- Refine individual mathematics targets in order to raise standards in mathematics further. \*

\* These targets are already contained in the school's current development plan.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Standards are well above the expected level for 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science and the achievement of all pupils is good. In religious education, history and geography standards are above the expectation for 11 year olds.

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

- A high proportion of pupils in Year 6 are working at the higher level in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards in religious education, history and geography are above the expectation for 11 year olds because the curriculum is well planned and extended and pupils make good use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in these subjects.
- Pupils who have special educational needs are well supported to achieve as well as others and most reach the expected level for their age by Year 6.

#### **Commentary**

1 By the end of Year 6 pupils achieve above the expectation in English, mathematics and science, because they are very well taught and are eager to learn. The use of setting throughout the school to place pupils of similar ability in the same group is effective in allowing teachers to plan learning, which is closely tailored to pupils' needs. This works particularly well in English lessons where the use of an additional teacher allows pupils who have special educational needs in literacy to be taught together in a small group. In mathematics and science lessons where the ability range of classes is wider, pupils continue to achieve well because of the teachers' very good planning, their effective use of support assistants and the high expectations that all adults have of pupils. Target setting is well established, but for some pupils targets could be better matched to their needs.

2 Pupils in Year 6 reach the expected level in ICT and they achieve well in the subject. Strengths in their learning include word processing and the use of databases and graphics. By Year 6, pupils exceed the expectation for their age in religious education where a well-taught, stimulating curriculum helps them learn from and about religious beliefs. In both geography and history pupils also exceed the expectation for their age because of the rich curriculum and pupils' application of their good literacy and numeracy skills to their learning. Pupils' ability to work independently and sustain a good pace during lessons in or out of the classroom are other factors which support their good standards in these subjects. In Year 3 pupils' independence is not so well established because some children need sustained support from adults to achieve well. Not enough lessons were seen to make judgements about standards in music and physical education, though it is clear from discussion with pupils and parents that they play an important part in pupils' learning.

3 Pupils, who have special educational needs, including those who have Statements of Special Educational Need, are very well supported to achieve as well as their peers, through the careful setting arrangements which are based on sharp assessment of their needs. They are well taught in small groups for English and are well supported in other subjects by teaching assistants who follow teachers' planning to help them reach their targets. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language in the school

who require additional support with their learning. Test data shows that the few pupils who do have English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers of similar ability.

4 The school sets and sometimes exceeds challenging targets for pupils in national tests. These targets are based on a thorough knowledge of pupils' attainment from the time they are assessed when they join the school.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.0 (27.4)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.7 (27.5)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.5 (29.3)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were pupils 56 in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Pupils' attendance is very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' attitudes are very positive and most are eager to learn.
- The school has a positive ethos and actively promotes pupils' self-esteem.
- Pupils get along very well with each other and adults in school.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility and influence what happens in school.

**Commentary**

5 In the last academic year the attendance rate at the school was well above the national average and the rate of unauthorised absence was well below. Most pupils arrive in good time before the start of the school day. There are rigorous procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality and the school promotes good attendance through the award of a weekly trophy which classes are keen to win. Unexplained absences are followed up and parents are discouraged from taking their children on holiday in term time.

6 Pupils are attentive and listen well to adults and each other in lessons and assemblies which makes a significant contribution to their learning. Teachers have high expectations for work and behaviour and adopt a consistent approach so that pupils respond positively. Pupils are well mannered, polite and confident, knowing what is expected of them. Pupils move around the school calmly and sensibly and help to create a good climate for learning. Breaks and lunchtimes are friendly and relaxed times with few problems. Trained 'Buddies' help adults and support other pupils on the playground, which helps to make free time an enjoyable experience. There were two fixed term exclusions in the last school year.

7 A small number of parents and pupils expressed concerns about bullying but there is no evidence that this is a problem and the school has very well thought out and effective anti-bullying strategies. The ABC (Anti-bullying club) to monitor bullying is run by a parent-governor, who has a special interest in anti-bullying issues. Freedom from any forms of

harassment is given a high profile and the school has been awarded accreditation by the Local Education Authority for its positive and robust approach towards bullying.

8 Pupils have mature attitudes towards their work and many are self-motivated and keen to do well. Teachers encourage pupils to be more independent and to ‘take a moment to think’ before asking for help. There are effective systems to reward good work and behaviour and pupils can gain weekly privilege time. The school focuses on helping pupils to feel good about themselves and staff have been given training in emotional well being which they put to good use in circle time when pupils consider issues that are important to them.

9 Pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility and they accept these readily. Discussions with the School Council and representatives from Year 6 showed that pupils feel that they are listened to and that they can get things done. For example, last year’s council was actively involved in planning the outside space and helped to design the ‘Path’ as a quieter area where all pupils can meet. A time capsule was buried in the centre of this area containing evidence of what the school was doing in 2004. Pupils on the School Council reported that this gave pupils a strong sense of their importance to the school. Older pupils, in particular, are given specific responsibilities as Buddies, prefects and house captains, which they accept willingly and discharge seriously. The many opportunities that pupils have to exercise responsibility contribute to their very good personal development during the time they are in the school. Pupils in Year 5 spoke of looking forward to taking on the more weighty responsibilities when they start Year 6.

10 Pupils’ personal development is a strength of the school and there is planned provision for it. In addition, subject co-ordinators monitor how well spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is being nurtured within their own subjects. Spiritual development is very well nurtured in religious education lessons and assemblies. Pupils are given good opportunities to reflect on their experiences and assemblies have a special atmosphere. There is a thematic approach to planning the content of assemblies and themes are linked effectively to work in other parts of the curriculum. For example, pupils are helped to make choices about what is right and wrong and made aware of the consequences of their actions. This is one strand of learning to become a good citizen and to understand that there are others who are less fortunate than themselves at home and abroad. Many charities have benefited from the school’s fundraising efforts, some of which were initiated by pupils themselves.

11 The school ensures that pupils understand other cultural traditions and increase awareness of their own heritage through as many direct experiences as possible. Visiting speakers to assembly and visits to local museums and places of worship all help to make things real for pupils. The school has links with children in other countries and sponsors a child in the Dominican Republic. These all help to confirm the view that, “We are all equally different.”

***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (96.3%)***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.7	School data	0.0
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.*

**Exclusions**

**Ethnic background of pupils****Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	231	2	0
White - Irish	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	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 very good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are good overall; the curriculum is very good and very well enhanced by out of school clubs, visits and visitors. There is a very good level of care for pupils, support and guidance for learning and links with parents are all very good.

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are good overall. Assessment procedures are good and they are well used to raise standards.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the vast majority of lessons teachers make good use of assessment to set tasks that lead to good learning, though in a few lessons they do not provide the correct level of challenge for some pupils.
- Teachers make good use of discussion to promote pupils' thinking and reinforce their learning, though occasionally some teachers over explain the learning.
- Teachers place very good emphasis on learning through practical activities which leads to very good understanding for pupils.
- Pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm make a significant contribution to their good learning. By the end of Year 6 they are confident, independent learners well able to take responsibility for their learning and work unsupervised.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (6%)	7 (21%)	16 (47%)	9 (26%)	0	0	0

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

12 There has been a significant improvement to the quality of teaching since the last inspection, with a much higher proportion of good and very good teaching seen in this inspection. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall, with some very good and excellent teaching seen, especially in Years 5 and 6. Improvements to teaching are the result of challenging performance targets set for teachers which are linked directly to raising standards and improving the quality of provision. This, together with improved strategies to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs, has had a very positive impact on the learning of all pupils. The organisation of pupils into sets of similar ability for English and mathematics lessons is another factor which supports good teaching and learning.

13 In the main, teachers make good use of effective assessment procedures to plan challenging work for their pupils. In English, mathematics and science, pupils have targets which help them track their own progress and have a good idea of how well they are doing. However, in mathematics they are not always as closely matched to pupils' learning needs as they are in English. This results in some pupils' achievement being satisfactory rather than good in some lessons. Occasionally, teachers do not take enough note of pupils' prior attainment when planning tasks with the result that pupils in different ability sets have the same level of challenge. Where marking is detailed, this gives pupils a good idea of what they need to do to improve, and work in their books shows that this advice is acted upon and their standards rise.

14 In nearly all lessons teachers make very good use of discussion to promote pupils' learning. In many mathematics lessons when teachers use sharp questioning to set pupils problems to solve, pupils are seen talking in pairs to decide solutions. At these times their concentration is very good and they listen and follow each other's thinking closely. In

English lessons, pupils are encouraged to develop their ideas for stories through class discussion, as well as listen to each other's suggestions for powerful and descriptive words to improve the impact of their writing. The result is that all pupils' benefit from each others' thinking and extend their vocabulary at a good rate through hearing words used correctly in context. The use of talk in science lessons helps pupils to reinforce their learning, especially at the end of lessons when teachers invite them to comment on investigations, so that pupils of all abilities share their learning for everyone's benefit. Teachers work hard to ensure that all pupils understand the task, but should guard against spending too long on explaining and leaving not enough time for the task.

15 Other strengths of pupils' learning are the very good collaborative skills that they develop, particularly by Years 5 and 6, which help them learn from each other. Teachers in the upper school are particularly skilled at planning frequent opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and small groups and this makes a notable contribution to the rate of learning. Teachers recognise that these skills are less well developed in younger pupils and are working hard to create more opportunities for collaborative work to further develop their independence from adults.

16 Throughout the school there is a good emphasis on learning through practical investigation. In science, pupils are given frequent opportunities to explore their world and see the patterns in living things and the workings of the physical world, through investigation and observation. Pupils bring high levels of enthusiasm to this kind of learning and are not afraid to make suggestions or link ideas. In geography lessons, teachers plan fieldwork that takes pupils out of school to consider aspects of the environment, see the impact of pollution and consider how to improve local shopping facilities. Frequent trips to sites of historical or religious interest are another feature of the practical and extended opportunities that the school has developed to expand pupils' styles of learning.

17 The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is carefully planned to ensure that they succeed with tasks and develop confidence through regular success. The organisation of small groups to improve literacy skills and the in-class support of teaching assistants are strategies which work very well to enable these pupils to achieve as well as their peers. In Year 3, the commitment and hard work of teaching and non-teaching staff support inclusion very effectively. Pupils who have emotional or behavioural difficulties are very well supported by effective and positive strategies which help them manage their own behaviour and allow learning to continue for all pupils. Those pupils who have medical needs are very skilfully supported to learn alongside their peers and grow in self-esteem because of the sensitive and caring approach of their teachers and support assistants. All pupils who have an individual education plan make very good progress towards their targets because of the well planned support they receive.

## **The curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum throughout the school is very good. It caters very well for all pupils and offers very good opportunities for learning outside lessons. It is underpinned by a very strong commitment to pupils' personal development. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and resources for learning are good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school keeps its curriculum under review and looks for new ways to help pupils learn.
- The curriculum is fully inclusive, reflecting the school's very strong commitment to inclusion.

- Teachers make the best use of the accommodation inside.
- The school has a strong commitment to health education and holds a Healthy School Award.

### **Commentary**

18 The curriculum is broad and balanced. It is reviewed regularly to ensure that all statutory requirements are met and time is being used effectively. For example, some subjects, such as design and technology, are now being taught in blocks of time, typically two days. This concentrated effort means that pupils improve their understanding and are able to complete good quality pieces of work. Subject leaders are a strong team and work hard to keep the curriculum up to date. The school constantly looks for ways to give pupils opportunities to succeed, or have a go at something new. For example, on *enterprise days*, pupils are challenged to manufacture and sell table-top games, whilst nearly all pupils take part in the ambitious drama and musical productions.

19 The very good range of clubs, visits and visitors gives an extra dimension to the work of the school. Nearly all pupils join at least one club. It is a mark of the school's commitment to inclusion that one of these clubs was designed to meet the needs of a specific group of pupils. Teachers from the local secondary school give regular lessons to classes in dance and French; pupils enjoy these. There are two residential visits each year and the school takes a leading part in all the local sporting and musical events. Strong links with the church, the school nurse, police and theatre groups means that pupils have a steady diet of stimulating experiences.

20 The school's provision for personal and social education and citizenship is very good. Time is devoted to exploring issues that are important to pupils during circle time, so that all have a better understanding of the point of view of others. In health education the school is careful to teach pupils about the possible harmful effects of some medicines and drugs and as pupils grow older matters of growth, personal relationships and sex education are undertaken by class teachers and the school nurse.

21 Accommodation outside is attractive and spacious. Inside, despite some small classrooms, teachers organise carefully to use a full range of teaching styles. The level of equipment and resources for all subjects is generally good. The building is kept in good safe condition and is spotlessly clean. The school caretaker makes an outstanding contribution, not only in this, but in designing and making improvements both inside and out.

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

The school cares very well for its pupils. It provides very good support and guidance and involves pupils very well in the school's development by seeking and acting on their views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is a secure and happy place to learn in which pupils are cared for very well.
- Pupils are very well supported in their personal development.
- Pupils are regularly consulted about aspects of school life and their views are valued.

### **Commentary**

22 The procedures relating to health and safety and child protection are very good. They are known by all adults and properly carried out. Routines for dealing with potential hazards and accidents are well established. Pupils feel that school is a welcoming and safe place to be and parents appreciate the quality of care that the school offers.

23 Pupils feel that adults are fair. They know they can rely on them for help when they need it. The quality of support for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. This is not left to chance and goodwill, but is carefully planned through the curriculum, events, visitors and all aspects of school life. Pupils can earn a range of rewards and certificates to mark successes. Support for academic achievement is good. Thorough records are used to group pupils and provide additional teaching. Pupils like having their own targets to work towards, however these are most effective in English because they are personal; the pupils are closely involved in setting them and teachers marking often refers to them. The school is currently revising its target setting arrangements in mathematics. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils to secondary school are very good; pupils say they have no worries about this.

24 Pupils feel that their opinions matter. The school encourages pupils to make their views heard, for example through circle time or pupil surveys. The School Councillors know their role is important because they are helping to make the school a better place. They know the school acts on their suggestions where possible and point proudly to some very good changes in the school grounds. In lessons, pupils are keen to offer an answer or an opinion. They are not afraid of making a mistake because both teachers and classmates listen with respect.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is open and responsive to parents' needs and concerns.
- Information to parents is good overall, though pupils' annual reports could be written more simply.
- Links with the church, the community and local business make a significant contribution to pupils' development.
- Very good links with feeder and receiving schools ensure smooth, effective transition for pupils.
- Parents of pupils with special educational needs feel very well supported by the school.

### **Commentary**

25 Since the last inspection, when links were considered satisfactory, the school has made very good progress in developing its links with parents. Parents now feel they are valued partners in their children's learning and know they are welcome in school. The school provides many opportunities for parents to be involved in its work. Parents are regularly involved in school visits, such as a Year 6 theatre visit and residential trips in Year 5 and 6. In the current year, pupils in Year 5 and 6 who have a talent for mathematics are given extra tuition by a parent-governor to develop their skills further, while another parent-governor chairs the Anti-Bullying Club. Since the headteacher took up post, a newly formed parent group - The Focus Group - has been very active in fund-raising and supporting developments in the school. Their fund-raising has enabled the school to develop the grounds and provide outdoor furniture, as well as subsidising educational visits.

26 A significant majority of parents feels that the school listens to their concerns and is willing to give advice on how they can support their children. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs, especially those with children who have a statement of their special educational need, feel very well supported by the school. They are kept well informed of the provision made for their children and are involved in any adjustments to targets that are required. Parents of pupils with a statement of their special educational need comment on the care the school takes in appointing staff who have the right skills and experience to help their children integrate and benefit from the school's provision. The high quality of care and support given to pupils is one of the features of the school that most parents agree on.

27 The quality of information to parents is good overall. The school keeps parents well informed about what their children are learning and the visits and visitors they will have to support their learning. Regular newsletters and questionnaires keep parents up to date with school events and give them the opportunity to express their views about developments in the school. Teachers are flexible and make time for parents at the end of the school day, so they can discuss particular concerns. Parents receive a clear picture of their children's progress and say they recognise their child from the information in the annual reports. However, some improvements could be made by ensuring that the language is clearly understood by parents and pupils.

28 The school has very good links with local schools to ensure that pupils transfer from one phase of education to the next successfully. School links are also used to extend the

curriculum and to share expertise and good practice. As a result pupils have increased opportunities to take part in sport, dance, music and modern languages. Teachers too benefit from these very good links and are able to extend their own skills by working alongside specialist teachers from the local secondary school.

29 The school's links with the church are a strength of the provision. Pastoral support, provided by the church for pupils and staff, is available weekly and this supports the school's very strong commitment to all having the opportunity to reflect on issues that may concern them. The school has very good links with the community and makes good use of local facilities to extend learning for pupils. Business links nurtured by the school caretaker have resulted in good support for the school's highly esteemed musical productions.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management in the school are very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and management for the development of the school. The leadership of key staff is very good. Governance of the school is good. The school manages barriers to learning very effectively, by providing good quality, well targeted support to meet the complex needs of pupils in some classes.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has rigorous monitoring procedures that ensure it identifies the correct priorities for improvement in order to maintain high standards.
- The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The governors give good support to the development of the school.
- Financial planning is very good.

### **Commentary**

30 The headteacher provides very high quality leadership for the school. She is ambitious for all pupils to do their best and has a clear focus on high standards in all areas of the school's work. The school places very good emphasis on rigorous inclusion practices, because of the headteacher's determination that all pupils will be supported to achieve their best. These very good inclusion practices are a key feature in the school's success in maintaining high academic standards. They ensure that despite learning difficulties, the vast majority of pupils reach the expected level for their age in all subjects. Pupils' social and academic needs are well monitored by teachers who use their findings to plan effectively for pupils' needs. The school's very successful development of pupils' personal qualities is underpinned by well thought out and effectively implemented strategies, which are central to the headteacher's vision for a school that develops the full potential of every child. The leadership of the headteacher has been very successful in developing a very strong team of teaching and non-teaching staff, all of whom fully support her vision for a high achieving, inclusive school.

31 The headteacher has managed change very effectively since she took up post five years ago. She has developed rigorous evaluation procedures and the skills of key staff to carry out this work very effectively. Because staff are directly involved in monitoring standards and the quality of provision in their subjects they have good insights into how the school is improving and what needs to be done to make further improvements. They are quick to share good practice for the benefit of all pupils and any areas of weakness are quickly acted upon. A good example was the school's response to a difference in pupil performance between English and mathematics. The deputy headteacher's very good leadership of assessment has ensured that staff have devised more refined target setting

for pupils in English lessons. The very good leadership and management of key staff make a strong contribution to the school's continuing improvement. This has enabled the school to identify the correct priorities for improvement in order to maintain the very high standards that it achieves.

32 The school has rigorous and effective performance management procedures, with staff targets linked to raising and maintaining high standards in teaching and learning. All staff are aware of the headteacher's expectations and are able to work at a manageable pace to bring about improvement. Staff new to the school are well supported by working alongside other staff as appropriate. This ensures that staff are able to settle into new routines and absorb the schools' culture of high expectations. Staff development is well promoted and followed up with effective professional development programmes.

33 The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very well managed. There has been a significant increase in the number of pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs in the current school year. Two pupils with very different Statements of Special Needs have joined the school in the same year group. The needs of pupils on the special educational needs register range from physical or emotional through to medical needs, and the school has been very careful to appoint and deploy staff who meet these various needs extremely well. Thorough planning for the involvement of these pupils in whole class or small group activities ensures that they take their place alongside their peers and are fully integrated into lessons. The provision for individual pupils is constantly reviewed to evaluate the impact on their learning as well as upon the rest of the class. The result of this review process led to one pupil having shared provision arranged so that one day each week is spent at a specialist centre which is of great benefit to the pupil. Pupils who have special educational needs, but do not have a Statement, have very well written individual education plans which teachers use to meet pupils needs through careful planning for lessons. The special educational needs co-ordinator makes very good links with parents and external agencies, gives regular feedback about how pupils are progressing and consults over any changes made about the provision for the pupils. The school generously supplements the funding it receives for pupils with special educational needs by supplying a qualified teacher for small group teaching in English and by maintaining full time support for pupils who need it. All of the strategies devised by the special educational needs co-ordinator make a very significant contribution to the good progress that all pupils make.

34 The governors have a good knowledge of the school. They are well involved in the work of the school through their links with subject leaders and their visits to classrooms. They monitor the work of the school effectively and those governors who can are involved in some of the school's initiatives, such as offering pastoral support for pupils, families and staff. While governors are very supportive of the school, they are also rigorous in the way they challenge the school about planned improvements. They are fully committed to the school's inclusion policies and are keen to pursue the best opportunities for pupils to achieve their best. They are well aware of the reasons why the school's performance is better than most other similar schools and of the contribution that the headteacher's leadership makes to this. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met and that the school's policy for race equality is understood and properly implemented.

35 The school's finances are very well managed. Very careful use of staff and constant monitoring of spending and provision allow the school to make the best use of funds available for the benefit of pupils' learning. The school office staff play a very important role in the smooth running of the school and in providing parents with a warm

welcome. They run the day to day finances efficiently and the office manager provides very good information on which the headteacher and governors can make spending decisions.

36 The school has a number of barriers to learning arising from the complex mix of needs in some classes. These are very well managed by teachers and support assistants so that learning in every class in the school is at least good and all pupils achieve well. The quality of leadership and management in the school as well as the enthusiasm of pupils for learning are significant aids which help the school maintain the very high standards it achieves.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	531,188
Total expenditure	531,024
Expenditure per pupil	2176

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	19,371
Balance carried forward to the next	19,535

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

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

#### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

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

- Standards are well above average because teaching is good leading to good achievement for all pupils.
- The very good leadership of the co-ordinator ensures that provision is rigorously evaluated and improved.
- Writing is well taught and reading is well promoted.
- Provision for pupils of all abilities is well tailored to their needs because of the grouping arrangements; this enables pupils with special educational needs to make the same good progress as other pupils.

#### **Commentary**

37 By Year 6 standards are well above average in all aspects of the subject and pupils of all abilities achieve well. There is a much higher percentage of pupils who are working at the higher level 5, than is usually seen and the percentage of pupils who reach the expected level is also higher than usual. Pupils who have special educational needs are very well supported to make the same rate of progress as their peers and to meet the targets that are set for them.

38 Teaching and learning are good overall, with a high percentage of very good teaching seen. In Year 5 there is some excellent teaching. A strength of teaching throughout the school is the organisation of each year group into three, instead of two, classes for English lessons. This allows teachers to target their teaching more accurately at the needs of pupils and ensures that pupils' learning maintains a good pace. Teachers make good use of their detailed knowledge of pupils' learning to plan work, which meets their needs while giving a good level of challenge to extend their thinking. Writing is well taught especially in the older classes where pupils build rapidly on their previous learning. In most of the lessons seen writing skills are based on well-staged learning and skilfully managed discussion. In a lesson where teaching was excellent in Year 5, average and lower attaining pupils developed very good ideas for narratives through their discussion of possible events in a crime they investigated. The teacher's timely interventions and very good questioning meant that at every stage pupils consolidated their ideas and developed their writing skills. Pupils rise well to the challenges set in lessons and particularly enjoy discussion where ideas are exchanged and developed. In all lessons seen pupils set to work promptly and concentrate hard to complete tasks. They have very good collaborative skills and work well in pairs and small groups to complete tasks. In many lessons teachers make good use of these skills to encourage pupils to learn from each other and increase the pace of learning. Reading too is well promoted by teachers. Teachers have revamped the reading scheme this year in response to a survey of pupils' views. Improvements to resources and to the planning of guided reading sessions has increased enthusiasm for reading and given pupils much wider choice in what they read. Teachers report acceleration in pupils' skill development, with many pupils drawing on their extensive reading for ideas and vocabulary for their own writing.

39 Pupils with special educational needs are taught a well structured programme which includes a very good mix of activities designed to allow pupils to work independently and develop confidence through their success. Their confidence grows significantly in these lessons and the impact of their learning is seen in the good progress they make in other subjects.

40 The careful and thorough assessments that teachers make of pupils' work means they provide tasks that help pupils make good progress in lessons, especially in Years 5 and 6. All teachers give effective feedback to pupils about their learning both orally and in the written marking they do. This acts as a real spur and in many lessons seen pupils were eager to check what the teacher had written in their books. Teachers plan the use of ICT into lessons and in most classrooms the use of the electronic whiteboard is further developing pupils' skills.

41 The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator joined the school at the start of the year and since then the reading scheme has been improved and assessment procedures have been further developed. Building well on the good work that has gone before, the co-ordinator has won the support of colleagues for change and is well placed through her own knowledge and expertise to lead further improvements. Since the last inspection there has been very good improvement to the curriculum through regular revision, high standards have been maintained through careful organisation of pupils into groups and the quality of teaching has improved.

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

42 All teachers make good use of pupils' good literacy skills to enhance learning in other subjects. In all lessons, pupils are provided with many opportunities for discussion to generate or clarify their ideas. They make good use of their reading skills to research information from books or computers and are given opportunities to use this research to develop their speaking and listening skills when they report back to the class. Teachers plan writing activities in other subjects to consolidate and extend what pupils have learned in literacy lessons. In history and geography pupils have the opportunity to write in a wide range of styles for different purposes and boys particularly relish this idea of writing for a purpose.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well, because they have very positive attitudes and the teaching is good.
- Leadership is good. This is helping to raise standards.
- All the teachers work hard at raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence.
- Teachers put a good emphasis on mental work and thinking skills. However, in just a few lessons, they do not give pupils enough time to explore their own ideas or questions.
- Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they can. Sometimes more challenge is needed for higher attaining pupils.

### **Commentary**

43 Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above the national average. This matches the most recent test results, which were the best ever. Standards were above average at the time of the previous inspection, so the school has continued to improve. This is because teaching is good overall and sometimes excellent in Year 6, and the subject is led and managed well. Another important reason for the high standards is the enthusiasm of the pupils. They listen well, work hard and don't give up easily when the work is challenging. Pupils in Year 5, for example, wrestled patiently for a long time with a number problem that they described as *absolutely impossible*, but they all got there in the end. By Year 6, pupils are achieving well in mathematics. There are strengths in recalling number facts quickly, using these to calculate mentally, explaining their thinking and using the correct mathematical language. Achievement varies in some of the younger classes, though it is never less than satisfactory. Reasons for this are the significant number of pupils with learning or behaviour difficulties in these classes, together with a tendency for some pupils to be more reliant on adults than pupils are in the older classes. Teachers manage this group of pupils well, support in lessons for those with special educational needs is very good and they make very good progress by Year 6.

44 All the lessons are interesting, carefully planned, and pupils know what they are doing. Teachers explain ideas clearly, often using the new electronic boards effectively to demonstrate, or model new calculation strategies. This helps pupils to understand and stay alert, for example, pupils in Year 3 were thrilled when they spotted examples of their own previous work on screen. All teachers are good at drawing everyone into the discussions. They encourage and praise, so pupils learn to have a go and not be afraid of giving a wrong answer. As a result, pupils of all abilities are eager to contribute and willing to try new work. They use what they know about number, shape and data handling to solve problems and can explain how they arrived at an answer.

45 In the best lessons, pupils succeed because teachers provide a range of stimulating activities and learning styles. In one lesson in Year 6, for example, pupils enjoyed a sharp and focussed presentation and then had a chance to think, discuss, work alone and in pairs, try lots of examples and then move on to interesting tasks at the right level. The teacher then brought all this together in a triumphant plenary. Consequently, pupils jumped ahead in understanding and using percentages. One boy said, *I think we are doing well because we are getting more independent, we don't have to ask all the time*. Occasionally, teachers are so eager to make sure that everyone understands that they talk for too long and pupils' interest wanes.

12.46 In most respects, the school works hard to ensure that each pupil enjoys success and achieves as well as they can. This is in keeping with the very good care for individuals which is evident in all parts of school life. In mathematics, pupils are taught in ability sets to help teachers plan work at the right level. Information from assessments is used well, to keep an eye on progress and to see where some extra help would make a difference. In the best lessons, work is carefully differentiated to ensure all are challenged at the right level. However, despite all this, pupils of very different abilities within some sets are sometimes given the same work. Consequently, the more able pupils sometimes do not achieve as much as they could.

47 Leadership and management are good. The subject leader keeps a close eye on teaching, learning, assessment data and the curriculum. This means that the priorities for improvement are based on a clear analysis of the current position. For example, the school is improving its target setting system to give a clearer picture of what pupils of different

abilities should achieve. Lessons are monitored regularly, both by the co-ordinator and by senior staff.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

48 Mathematics is used well across the curriculum. Pupils use their skills and knowledge confidently in subjects such as design and technology, science and geography. In Year 5, for example, the data from traffic surveys and questionnaires is presented and analysed in various ways, sometimes using ICT. The use of computers by pupils in this way is an area for development, but teachers are demonstrating technology frequently in all subjects since the school's investment in interactive boards. This is having a good impact on standards both in mathematics and ICT.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is good planning to develop pupils' investigative skills.
- Standards are very high at the end of Year 6.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Presentation of pupils' work is very good.

### **Commentary**

49 Standards have improved since the last inspection and most Year 6 pupils now attain above the levels expected in standard assessment tests. The number of 11 year olds exceeding the expected level has shown a steady increase and last year (2004) almost two thirds of them reached the higher level. There is effective consolidation of knowledge and understanding for the oldest pupils and teachers take care to make revision interesting and enjoyable for them using games and challenges very well.

50 Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers plan well to link work in school to real life, for example, Year 6 collected evidence about the proposal to ban smoking in public places and Year 4 applied their knowledge of electrical circuits to make things light up. Learning objectives are clearly identified in planning and these are shared with pupils and explained to them. Teachers in parallel classes plan work together so that all pupils have the same curriculum and experiences. Since the last inspection the school has continued to focus on developing the experimental and investigative aspects of science. Pupils in all year groups use an investigation grid and are helped to plan a fair test to answer a key question, for example, 'Which surface will stop the car the quickest?' Equipment and resources for practical work are well planned and prepared.

51 There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils. Teachers appreciate pupils' efforts and achievements and pupils respond positively to the tasks and challenges they are set. Teachers have high expectations for the quality of pupils' writing and recording and pupils invariably do their best. An assessment system has been developed which includes tests at the end of each unit of work to check how well pupils have learnt. Pupils all have targets and are actively involved in tracking and recording their progress towards meeting these. Teachers use a good range of oral questions and listen carefully to pupils' responses so they are able to correct any misconceptions as they arise. Similarly pupils' written work is checked as it is being done and further advice and support is given. Teachers mark pupils written work regularly and make appropriate comments to

encourage pupils to reflect on their work and do their best. Oral questions are used well in the concluding parts of lessons to make an initial assessment of what pupils have learnt and pupils are often given an opportunity to assess their own achievements.

13.52 Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject, she is well informed through effective monitoring procedures. The current action plan shows a good understanding of where improvements are needed, for example, younger pupils need more specific guidance to enable them to collect and analyse data accurately. The co-ordinator has observed teaching and learning and tracks pupils' progress by scrutinising their books and analysing their test scores. Areas for development are fed back to teachers through staff meetings.

53 Provision in the subject is enhanced by day and residential visits to places such as the Planetarium and the Local Education Authority field study centre. A theatre group has also visited the school to give performances based on science topics such as light and shadows. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection, with a much improved curriculum, better quality teaching and many more pupils exceeding the level expected for their age.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision has improved since the last inspection leading to higher standards in the subject.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Teaching is good overall and often very good, so pupils work hard and are achieving well.

### **Commentary**

54 The school has made great strides since the last inspection. Standards then were below average and pupils did not use computers often enough to make progress. Standards by Year 6 now are in line with those seen in other schools. The main reasons are a significant investment in equipment and training, good teaching, very good leadership and pupils who work responsibly and want to learn. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well. The curriculum is well organised, so pupils are building up skills and knowledge in all aspects of ICT. There are strengths in word processing, graphics and using databases. By Year 6, pupils can bring all these skills together, for example, in their imaginative multimedia presentations on World War II.

55 The good new computer suite is used well. However, a few more computers would reduce sharing and allow teachers to make even more effective use of the time available. Teachers make good use of some of the computers grouped around the school to give pupils more opportunities to work alone; pupils like this and think it helps them to learn. A well-prepared team of support staff and volunteers makes this possible; these make a good contribution to learning. For example, in a lesson on spreadsheets in Year 5, one visitor bravely acted as a guinea pig, adding data on the large screen as the teacher explained. This made a very good demonstration even more vivid and pupils couldn't wait to begin.

56 Teaching is good overall and half of the lessons seen were very good. Teachers know their subject well. This helps them to give clear and helpful demonstrations. In Year 4, for example, the teacher gave a concise explanation on using a database, so the class was able to spend maximum time working on their task. Just occasionally, teachers try to cover too much; explanations go on too long and attention flags. In contrast, in Year 6, the teacher stopped her presentation at just the right moment, *no more, you know enough now to work it out yourselves*. The class responded well to this challenge and made very good progress. The new interactive boards are having a dramatic impact on the quality of demonstrations and so pupils are learning faster. These were a shrewd investment.

57 Pupils work responsibly because lessons are purposeful, challenging and carefully planned. They know what is expected and concentrate. Pupils in Year 6, for example, worked quietly for a long time on a programme to automate the signals from a lighthouse. They were not distracted by the extra effects available, persevered when things went wrong and helped each other sensibly when necessary. Attitudes like these are an important factor in the rise in standards.

58 Leadership and management are very good. The school has made great improvements to the curriculum, the confidence and expertise of staff, and equipment. The co-ordinator keeps a close eye on teaching and learning, for example, through regular interviews with pupils on how well they think they are doing. There are good plans for further improving standards. A whole-school system to keep track of what pupils can do is not fully in place. The school has wisely opted to look at the most manageable options and to explore ways that pupils could use the technology to assess their own progress. This would make good use of the pupils' mature attitudes.

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

59 The subject is already being used to support other areas of the curriculum, but the school is determined to take this further. There is regular use in history, geography and science, for example, pupils in Year 4 take the data from their science experiments and interrogate it using a database package. Teachers use computers regularly in literacy lessons, for example, when classes in Years 3 and 4 study persuasive writing. The use of the interactive boards is set to make technology a valuable tool in all subjects, for example, teachers are enhancing mathematics teaching by graphic illustrations of ideas and strategies.

### **HUMANITIES**

60 Only two lessons were seen during the inspection so no overall judgement is made about provision in **geography**. Samples of work in geography show that standards are above the expected level by the end of Year 6 and that curriculum coverage is good. Fieldwork forms an integral part of the work in the subject and enquiry skills are well developed. Year 5 pupils spent a very productive afternoon in the local town conducting a range of surveys on shopping and parking facilities and how they could be improved. Pupils were fired with enthusiasm for their work and the steady rain failed to dampen their interest. The trip was very well planned to give pupils of all abilities the chance to work independently to collect and collate data. Pupils were very well supported by a large number of parent volunteers who were very well briefed on their role. Work in the books of Year 6 pupils showed that this activity is followed up with very thorough recording of findings using graphs and spreadsheets, so that pupils can see patterns from which they can draw conclusions and make suggestions for improvement to the environment. In the other lesson seen, Year 3 pupils who were beginning their study of weather enjoyed investigating the contents of holiday luggage in their attempts to decide what destinations

the travellers might have. They made good use of atlases and travel books to tie up the clues they had and came to sensible conclusions. In both lessons the teachers careful planning ensured high quality learning and real fun for both groups of pupils. Leadership of the subject ensures that teachers' planning produces a balance of activities for pupils in lessons and makes good use of mathematical and ICT skills over time.

61 Standards in **history** are above the expected level by the end of Year 6. Only one lesson was seen where Year 4 pupils were learning about the rich and poor in Tudor times. They made good use of inventories to discover the possessions of two men living at the time and then produced well written adverts to include the items in a house sale. The teacher used the end of the lesson to allow pupils to present their work to the class and a nice touch was the use of a Tudor cloak and hat to give authenticity to the performance. Pupils relished this part of the lesson and listened closely. Work in pupils' books shows a good use of literacy skills - usually linked with the style of writing being studied alongside the history topic. Boys' writing in particular is of a high quality and shows a flair for writing that is 'real'. The subject leader ensures that the curriculum is well monitored and regularly upgraded. Well planned fieldwork, the use of visits and visitors and interesting resources make the subject very popular with children and parents who say they enjoy the topic work their children do at home.

## **Religious Education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The positive impact of visits and visitors enriches teaching and learning.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- There is little evidence of tasks being set at different levels of difficulty.

### **Commentary**

62 Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. By the age of 11 most pupils attain standards that are above those specified in the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The subject leader evaluates standards through sampling and assessing pupils' written work and judges their personal response by talking with them in small groups. In this way she is able to explore what they have learned and their ideas about how it might be applied in their daily lives. Throughout the school pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of some difficult concepts and vocabulary. For example, pupils in a Year 3 class were able to talk knowledgeably about the religious symbols that are important to Sikhs. Teachers set high standards for work and behaviour and pupils respond well to these demands.

63 Teaching and learning are good and pupils achieve well. Teachers have clear guidance on what to teach and planned coverage meets statutory requirements. The subject leader plans the content for each year group and gives advice on teaching and assessment to ensure a consistent approach. Lessons are planned in detail and they have specific learning outcomes which are shared with pupils so they know what they are expected to learn. A key feature of teaching and learning is the way in which what pupils learn about different religions is put into relevant contexts for them so they can understand the practical applications of peoples' faith and beliefs. By studying different religions pupils are developing respect for beliefs and customs that may not be the same as their own.

64 Teachers encourage pupils to use subject specific vocabulary appropriately and learn how to pronounce and spell key words. Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Teachers are mindful to make good personal links for pupils, for example, studying symbols from the Sikh religion alongside familiar symbols from groups they belong to themselves such as the Brownies.

65 Pupils' knowledge and understanding are not formally tested but their progress is judged at the end of each term. Careful marking of written work and oral questioning enables teachers to check how well pupils are achieving and to challenge them to do better or reflect on what they know. For instance a teacher had written in an older pupil's book, "Why do you think these charities help people?" In the concluding parts of lessons pupils are sometimes given a valuable opportunity to evaluate their own learning and even the youngest are able to do this appropriately.

66 There are good links between the school and its main secondary partner and there is a bridging unit from Year 6 to Year 7, "What do signs and symbols mean in religion?" Visits and visitors make a significant contribution to pupils' learning in religious education and the subject and collective worship are mutually supportive. The school naturally has close links with the parish church but pupils also visit other places of worship, for example, a Sikh temple. Visitors to assembly enhance the provision for religious education and spiritual development and special days and events are also celebrated, for example, Harvest and Holocaust Memorial Day.

67 Leadership and management of the subject is good, the co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject across the school and is having a positive impact on teaching and learning. The policy and planning for religious education was reviewed last year and the subject leader has had an opportunity to extend her knowledge of other cultures.

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

14.68 In **art and design** very little teaching was seen, but evidence is also taken from pupils' past work and teachers' planning. Teachers ensure that pupils experience a reasonable range of techniques and media. Pupils use sketchbooks to collect ideas and practise. For example, in Year 4, the pupils sketch images and details to use in their Tudor costume work. Another good link with history is seen in the well-made Greek urns in Year 5. Pupils know about some famous artists, such as William Morris and Van Gogh. In one part lesson seen, pupils in Year 3 were engrossed in recreating groups of figures in the style of Keith Haring.

69 In **design and technology** the nationally recommended programme of work has been in use for 3 years. This has ensured that skills are taught systematically. The subject leader is now encouraging teachers to use this experience to adapt the programme and try some new projects. A scrutiny of pupils' previous work and photographs confirms that all the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. In Year 3, for example, pupils make some good designs for their moving toys and explain the idea of air power with some clear sketches. A good feature is that pupils are encouraged to use their own ideas and materials. This is evident in the ingenious shelters made in Year 6 and the switches in Year 4. In Year 5, as part of food technology, pupils design and make biscuits. They follow this up with test and evaluation of their product and appropriate packaging. The subject is timetabled into a two-day block each term. Pupils like this as it allows them to finish things. There is valuable support from the governor for design and technology.

70 Only one **music** lesson was observed so there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about provision. The planned teaching programme for music is relatively new, teachers have been given good support to implement the new scheme of work and this has built up their confidence. Class teachers record what has been taught and how well pupils have achieved. There is very good singing and playing in assembly, pupils are taught to play the recorder, guitar and brass instruments and are keen to demonstrate their skills. Most pupils participate in school productions that take place twice a year. Most recently Years 3 and 4 performed "Holy Joe", while older pupils took part in "Joseph's

Technicolour Dreamcoat.” A group of pupils took part in a music competition (2003) and were awarded second place for their singing and playing. Parents have commented on how good music provision is.

71 Only one lesson was observed in **physical education** so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision. To extend physical education and sport is a target in the school improvement plan, current provision has been reviewed and priorities decided. Staff training has been organised and specialist coaches brought in to enhance teaching and learning. The school has very good links with its secondary school partners and makes the most of their facilities and expertise. For example, there was a very good dance lesson in Year 5 taught by a visiting specialist teacher. In this lesson pupils responded very well and made very good progress, quickly mastering a complex series of movements. The school works hard to include everyone, for example, by modifying the Sports Day programme to meet individual needs. The school competes in local and district sporting events and has an impressive record of successes. Indoor facilities for physical education are satisfactory but out-door space is excellent. Pupils learn to swim at a local school pool.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

72 The school has earned an award for **citizenship**. This reflects the emphasis that the school places on developing in pupils a sense of their place in the community. From when they join the school pupils are encouraged to accept responsibilities, first within their class and then increasingly for the wider school. Membership of the School Council is changed regularly to allow pupils the experience of representing the views of their peers and having a part in planning improvements to the school.

### Personal, social and health education

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The well planned programme for PSHE.
- The opportunities provided for pupils to reflect on their responses to situations.

### Commentary

73 The work the school does in PSHE has a strong impact on how well pupils achieve academically, as well as how they develop as responsible, caring young people. It underpins everything they do. The school has achieved the Healthy School Standard. There is an extremely well planned programme for personal, social and health education, which draws together all the possibilities in the curriculum, worship, school events and visitors. The school has a well planned programme for sex and drugs education which is effectively taught through science lessons and in circle time. As pupils grow older they have the opportunity to discuss matters relating to growth and relationships with the school nurse. The emphasis is on choices, *What would your response be? What would be the impact?* As a result pupils consider the issues that are important to them at an increasingly mature level as they move through the school. Pupils in Year 6, for example, all wrote very thoughtful reviews of a play on puberty issues. *There is nothing to be embarrassed about, it just made me feel more normal.*

74 The impact of all this is evident in the way pupils conduct themselves and the way they treat others. Relationships are very good, pupils are tolerant with those who have learning or behaviour difficulties and are good at sorting out minor incidents. The Buddy system works very well, pupils have training and take their role very seriously. Pupils love accepting responsibility or having chances to put in a little extra, for example, they all remember their moments in some of the ambitious school musicals. They leave this school with happy memories, but are self-assured and confident about the challenges ahead.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</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	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
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>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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