

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CLIFF LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Ipswich

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124647

Head teacher: Owain Richards

Lead inspector: Grace Marriott  
Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> May 2005

Inspection number: 266634

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 -11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	322
School address:	Cliff Lane Ipswich Suffolk
Postcode:	IP3 0PJ
Telephone number:	01473 251604
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Jo Leek
Date of previous inspection:	January 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Cliff Lane is a larger than average primary school with a Nursery, in Ipswich, the county town of Suffolk. The school takes pupils from a wide area. It has over 320 pupils aged 3 to 11 on roll, which is fewer than at the time of the last inspection. The school has an area support class (ASC), which specialises in dyslexia; this means that there are more children with statements of special educational need than in most schools. Most of the children in the area support class are boys. The turnover of pupils is above average. In Year 6, less than two thirds of the children started school in Reception. Most children come from average homes, though the school serves some areas of deprivation. The proportion entitled to free school meals is below average. Very few children are from ethnic minorities or are at an early stage of learning English. The school has achieved the FA Charter School Standard for sport. Children attend the Nursery part-time and move to Reception at the start of the term in which they are five. This means that some children have only one term of full time education in Reception, whereas others have three terms. Children start the Nursery with lower than average speech and language skills and not as much independence as most children of their age but broadly average knowledge, skills and understanding in most other areas.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3674	Grace Marriott	Lead Inspector	Mathematics, Music, Religious education, English as an additional language
32670	Graham Saltmarsh	Lay Inspector	
10226	Susan Senior	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, Science, Physical education
34160	Anne Cameron	Team inspector	English, Art and design, History, Geography
28069	David Mylroie	Team inspector	Special educational needs, Information and communication technology, Design and technology

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Cliff Lane is providing a satisfactory education** with particular strengths in the development of pupils' personal and social skills and in the range of enrichment opportunities. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, as is pupils' achievement. Leadership and management are good and the new head teacher has a clear vision of how to improve the school. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achieve well in the humanities and in some creative and practical subjects
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in other subjects but not as good as it could be because expectations are not high enough
- The head teacher is providing a very clear vision for the school with a strong focus on raising standards
- Pupils have good attitudes and behave well; relationships are good
- The area support class (ASC) provides very well for its pupils
- Assessment is not being used effectively enough
- The partnership with parents is very good
- Very good enrichment activities contribute strongly to pupils' personal development
- Co-ordinators' monitoring does not always lead to action effective in raising standards

Although the education provided is satisfactory overall, this masks slow progress on a number of issues highlighted in the last inspection and an overall decline in standards until 2004 when the Year 6 results improved. Provision for ICT is better but it is still not being used enough across the curriculum. Assessment is not being used effectively to plan teaching or help pupils know what to do to improve. The new school improvement plan is clearly focused on raising standards through improving teaching and learning. Monitoring has been more systematic since September 2004. These changes have not had time to be fully reflected in improved standards of work. On balance, despite more recent improvements, the school has not made enough progress since the last inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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 achieve satisfactorily overall.** In 2004, national assessment results were below average overall in Year 2 and pupils did not do as well as those in similar schools in reading and writing, though they did better in mathematics. In Year 6, results were in line with the national results in terms of the pupils' average point score,<sup>1</sup> but below the national in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 or better. Pupils did much better than those in similar schools due, to a great extent, to the good progress made by pupils in the ASC. Current standards in English and mathematics are close to national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6 though still slightly below average. Achievement in these subjects is satisfactory, but not as good as achievement in design and technology, the humanities and physical education. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects. In the Foundation Stage, (Nursery and Reception) standards are above average in physical development, average in personal development, and below average in some

<sup>1</sup> Each level awarded in English, mathematics and science counts as a number of points. These are averaged to give an overall score for each subject and for the school as a whole.

aspects of language, literacy and number work. Most pupils will achieve the expected early learning goals, but this is less likely for the younger pupils who only have one term in Reception.

Pupils' attitudes, values, behaviour and other personal qualities are good. Pupils work and behave well, particularly where the teaching is stimulating. Where teaching is more pedestrian, they can be passive. Attendance is average and punctuality is satisfactory. **The school makes good provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** Personal development is good because the school provides a wide range of opportunities and pupils take full advantage of these. The provision for moral and social development is stronger than for spiritual and cultural.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school is providing a satisfactory education.** Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, in all stages. Teachers prepare interesting activities which encourage pupils to want to learn but the work is not consistently challenging enough to ensure that standards are as high as they could be. Assessment is not used well enough to plan teaching or ensure that pupils know how to improve their work. The curriculum is good in practical subjects and the humanities and satisfactory in the core subjects and in the Foundation Stage. The ASC is very good provision for the needs of this group of children. The enrichment activities which extend the curriculum, particularly the educational visits and sport, are very good. Accommodation and resources are good. Teaching staff levels are appropriate to the needs of the school, but the school has fewer teaching assistants than most schools. The school looks after its pupils well. The school's links with parents are very good and parents are strongly encouraged to become involved and support their children's education. The links with other schools are good, as are links with the community.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.** The head teacher provides a very clear sense of direction and a strong vision for what the pupils could achieve, without losing the school's very evident strengths in social development and enrichment. This approach is well supported by the good governing body, which has ensured that the school meets all statutory requirements. Subject management is more mixed in quality, and monitoring and taking appropriate action are less secure at the level of subject co-ordinators.

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

Parents and pupils are very supportive of the school. Their views are sought regularly and taken seriously.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important thing the school should do is to continue the drive to raise academic standards by

- Raising teachers' and pupils' expectations for what pupils can achieve, particularly in English and mathematics
- Ensuring that assessment is giving teachers accurate information on which to plan future work and give pupils guidance on how to improve
- Ensuring that co-ordinators' subject monitoring leads to effective action to improve the quality of teaching and learning

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall in all stages. Pupils in the ASC achieve well; the achievement of other pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Achievement in the core subjects, though satisfactory, is not as good as achievement in the humanities, art, design and technology and physical education. Pupils' standards are average or a little below when they start school and below average, though close to expectations, at the end of Year 6.

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

- Foundation Stage children achieve well in personal and social education and exceed the early learning goals in physical development
- Pupils achieve well in design and technology, art, history, geography and physical education
- Pupils' achievement is good in the ASC class
- In science, pupils were underachieving in Years 1 and 2 because not enough time is given to the subject
- Some pupils underachieved particularly in English and mathematics when not they were not suitably challenged
- Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects
- Younger children in Reception are not achieving the early learning goals in communication language and literacy and mathematics

#### **Commentary**

1. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve best in their personal development and in physical development. Attainment on entry to the recently opened Nursery is average in some areas but speaking and listening and aspects of personal and social development are below average. Most children who have spent two terms or more in Reception are on course to achieve the early learning goals (the standards expected at the end of Reception) in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and some aspects of literacy and mathematics. Many will exceed expectations in physical development. However, some children, particularly those who have spent only one term in Reception, are not on course to meet the expected standards in the early stages of reading, writing and mathematical development because they do not make sufficient progress in these areas during their time in the Nursery. However, their achievement in Reception is satisfactory.
2. The school's results in national assessments have fluctuated considerably from year to year with no clear overall trend, but standards in reading and writing are not as high as they were at the time of the last inspection. In 2004, Year 2 results were below average overall, but better in mathematics, where they were in line with the national picture, than in reading and writing. Pupils did not do as well as those in similar schools in reading and writing, but did better in mathematics. The main difference between the school and the national results in reading and writing is that fewer pupils achieved the higher levels, particularly in writing. The mathematics results were better because more pupils achieved the higher level (Level 3) than did so nationally. Girls were generally doing slightly better than the national average for girls, but boys were performing below the average for boys, particularly in reading and writing and to a lesser extent in mathematics. The difference between the performance of boys and girls in English reflects the fact there are more boys than girls in the ASC.
3. Current standards in English and mathematics are below average in Year 2 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory, given their standard at the end of the Foundation Stage. In English, most pupils enjoy reading but less able readers do not have a secure grasp of their

sounds and this affects their reading ability. In mathematics, pupils have reasonably secure computational skills but are not as good at applying their knowledge. This is limiting their achievement.

4. The trend in Year 6 results had been downwards in all three subjects, but most sharply in English. However, in 2004, the improvement in English was considerable and some improvement was evident in mathematics and science. In terms of the point score, the school's results were similar to the national results in English and science, but below the national in mathematics. However, in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 or better, the English and mathematics results were still below average. In English, the more able pupils did better than they did in mathematics. The good progress made by the pupils in the ASC is a particularly significant factor when the results achieved by Cliff Lane pupils are compared with those of schools with similar Year 2 results.
5. Current standards in English and mathematics are closer to the national average in terms of the proportion of pupils working at Level 4 or better, though still slightly below average. In English, displays of pupils' writing on walls show that they enjoy writing from personal experience but they are not always secure about how to write in different styles and for different purposes. Lack of knowledge of basic spelling rules hinders some pupils. In mathematics, pupils build on their earlier knowledge of number, but have fewer opportunities to work on data handling or problem solving and in these areas their knowledge and skills are not secure enough. Pupils do not achieve enough in science during Years 1 and 2, through lack of time allowed, but progress steadily in Years 3 to 6 to reach broadly average standards by the age of 11.
6. In all year groups, achievement in design and technology and the humanities is good and in PE it is also good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects, but do not have enough opportunities to develop their ICT skills and extend their understanding of how to use ICT as a learning tool.
7. There is an expectation in the ASC that pupils will achieve well. As a result they make very good progress in meeting the targets, mainly relating to literacy, which are set out in their individual education plans. In other subjects, such as mathematics and science, they achieve in line with other pupils and often make a positive contribution to the overall standards attained in the school as a whole. Pupils were clear about what they were expected to achieve and proud of the progress they were making. Pupils in the mainstream also achieve well when they are supported by a teaching assistant and the work planned for them takes into consideration the targets in their individual education plans. However, this is not always the case. In many classes and lessons planning is not adapted to meet the individual needs of these pupils. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. The very few pupils at an early stage of learning English also make satisfactory progress overall and good progress when given more individual support.

### **Key Stage 1**

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.5 (14.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.9 (13.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.7 (15.5)	16.3 (16.3)

*There were 49 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2003.*

## Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.7 (25.0)	26.8 ( 27.0 )
mathematics	26.5 (26.0)	26.8 ( 26.7 )
science	28.6 (27.9)	28.6 ( 28.3 )

*There were 62 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2003.*

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

Pupils' attitudes to school are good and they behave well in lessons. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good attitudes and are prepared to work well together
- Pupils behave well around the school and in lessons
- Year 6 pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility
- Pupils are very positive about the school and say that bullying is not an issue
- The pupils' participation in extra-curricular activities is very good
- Moral and social development are very good; promotion of cultural and spiritual understanding is less extensive, though satisfactory

### **Commentary**

8. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour during lessons and around the school are good. They respond well to the staff's expectations of how they should behave. They show interest in their work, listen well to teachers and are eager to be involved in class activities. Their good behaviour contributes to the purposeful working atmosphere, enabling them to make progress in many lessons. In the playground, they play together harmoniously and enjoy each other's company. Mealtimes in the dining hall are notably good. Pupils are well mannered, polite to all staff and display well-developed social skills which make for a pleasant and sociable occasion during the lunch break. In lessons, any occasional lapse in behaviour is well managed by teachers and teaching assistants. The behaviour management policy is consistent and clearly effective. Pupils know how seriously lapses in conduct are viewed and understand what is expected of them. This in turn promotes a sense of personal responsibility for their actions and the advantages of living in a close community.
9. As a consequence of the school's strong provision for their moral and social development, pupils grow in confidence and maturity. The consistent application of procedures which promote good behaviour helps pupils to achieve a secure understanding of fairness and what is right and wrong. During the inspection, pupils commented that bullying or any other form of inappropriate behaviour towards them was rarely a problem and would not be tolerated by the rest of the school community. On the few occasions when it had occurred, the school quickly and firmly resolved the matter. Teachers and all other adults in the school set good role models and they treat the pupils and one another with respect and courtesy. Pupils, in turn, are well mannered to each other and to adults, especially visitors who receive a warm and interested welcome into the school.
10. All pupils with special educational needs have good and often very good attitudes to their work. They are involved in all activities and every effort is made to adapt the curriculum and the environment to their particular needs. As a result they are proud of their achievement, for example, an increase of two years in spelling age during one school year, and are keen to make further progress. Many lessons for pupils in the ASC are fully integrated with lessons in the mainstream school in subjects such as physical education. In these lessons it is impossible to identify which children are from the ASC.
11. Pupils are encouraged to work and play together in pairs and groups and, as a consequence, develop the skills necessary to build constructive relationships. Many older pupils learn how to take responsibility for others. For example, there is a rota of Year 6 pupils to act as "listeners" to other pupils who gather at the friendship bench in the playground and they train younger pupils how to use some equipment in the school. Fewer opportunities are provided for younger pupils to assume school-wide responsibilities.

12. Pupils respect their elected school council, which is serious and very enthusiastic about its responsibilities. The school council has taken a significant role in improving playground facilities and is working on a range of school improvement projects including a mural design to be painted on the canteen wall, new after school clubs and improving changing rooms.
13. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. There are opportunities in the humanities subjects for pupils to develop an understanding of living in a diverse society, but these are not extensive. By studying art from western cultures, pupils learn to appreciate and interpret a range of artistic styles. Displays around the school of artwork, class projects and other artefacts help to raise pupils' awareness of other cultures and lifestyles. In religious education they learn about the values and beliefs of others and overall spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies and religious education lessons promote spiritual development and enable pupils to reflect upon such issues such as "caring for others". A particularly effective assembly, conducted by a visitor from a local Christian youth mission group, discussed leprosy and the possible rejection of people who actually need help. Pupils are generally happy to express their own feelings and listen with respect to others.
14. The school provides a very wide range of clubs during lunch time and after school. Both pupils and parents actively support these. They range from sporting to academic activities. A significant example seen during the inspection was an extremely lively and popular dance club run by a parent and attended by a very large number of pupils.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.7
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.*

**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	312	2	0
White – any other White background	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British - African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Parent/pupil preferred not to say	1	0	0
Information not obtained	2	0	0

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

The school is providing a satisfactory education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The curriculum is satisfactory, with very good provision in the ASC. The enrichment activities, which extend the curriculum, are very good. The school takes good care of its pupils and gives them sound support and guidance. The school's links with parents are very good; those with other schools and the community are good.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Over nine out of every ten lessons were satisfactory or better and about a third of lessons were good or very good. Assessment is unsatisfactory. It is carried out regularly but the outcomes are not used effectively to plan work or provide guidance for pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have generally good subject knowledge and plan a good variety of relevant activities that build on previous work
- Some lessons do not have enough challenge to enable all pupils to achieve as well as they could
- Assessment is not focusing enough on helping teachers to plan the next steps or on helping pupils know how to improve their work
- Classes are well managed and pupils know and understand expectations and routines
- Pupils are given good opportunities to use their skills in English and mathematics in other subjects from Reception onwards
- Children's independence is developed well through the teaching in the Foundation Stage
- Lesson objectives do not always focus strongly enough on what pupils should learn

### **Commentary**

15. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, with strengths in the promotion of personal development and independence. This starts in the Nursery and continues in Reception. The emphasis in both areas is on learning through play. From the time they start in the Nursery, children are encouraged to choose from a range of activities and take responsibility for themselves and their belongings. In the Nursery, they were managing their snack time well and, in Reception, they had learnt to change for physical education by themselves. They were also learning to share and take turns sensibly. Children's physical development is promoted well through outdoor, creative and practical activities. The relative weakness in the teaching is in the development of children's literacy and numeracy skills, particularly in the Nursery. Children are encouraged to talk, but adults do not always identify and take opportunities to develop children's vocabulary further or make sure they start to learn the skills needed for writing. Similarly the children learn to recognise numbers and to count, but the early calculation skills are not developed as well as they could be. This has an effect on what children can achieve, particularly the younger children who only have one term in Reception.
16. In Years 1 to 6 the teaching is also satisfactory but with variations between year groups and, in some cases, between the classes in the same year group. In general, teachers organise their classrooms well, relationships are good and the routines are known and understood by pupils. This means that very little time needs to be spent in managing behaviour. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good which enables them to plan activities that will engage pupils' interest. As a result, pupils enjoy lessons and are encouraged to work. The activities build on what pupils have done before and the links between different subjects are often used successfully to extend pupils' knowledge and skills. This was very evident in the way in which a Year 5 visit was being used to support work in a variety of subjects. In Year 6, the visit of a renal dialysis unit manager was supporting work in science and a Year 4 visit to Sutton Hoo was the stimulus for a good

range of work. The development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is a strong feature of many lessons. Homework is generally used appropriately to support work in class.

17. In the most effective lessons in all year groups, teachers explained to pupils what they should be learning and through careful questioning, checked how successfully they had achieved the objectives. The work was planned in small steps which showed pupils how well they were doing and gave them confidence. Teachers used a range of methods including demonstrations, group, paired and whole-class work. For example, in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 5 on converting fractions to decimal fractions, after the initial whole-class introduction, pupils understood clearly what was expected of them and worked in pairs with enthusiasm. The work was very well matched to the needs of different groups within the class and pupils were confident enough to risk making mistakes and to ask for help when they needed it. In a very good art lesson in Year 1, very clear explanations and good resources enabled pupils to work in groups to explore ideas and develop their own approach to the work of a sculptor. All pupils were fully involved in the lesson.
18. Though teaching was satisfactory overall, there were, nonetheless, some weaknesses. The work was not always well enough matched to the needs of everyone in the class. At different times, this affected both higher and lower-attainers. In several lessons, the aims of the lesson were expressed in terms of tasks to be completed rather than what pupils could expect to learn. This made it more difficult for teacher and pupils to know what they had achieved and what the pupils really understood. Expectations for what pupils could achieve were quite often not high enough and questioning was not probing enough to discover how much pupils had learnt. The work in pupils' books showed that too often the same work had been set for all pupils, with the difference in achievement being in the amount of work completed. In most classes, ICT was not being used enough to support learning.
19. Teachers mark pupils work regularly and the comments are generally encouraging. The best marking gives pupils good guidance on how to improve their work but this is not consistent. Formal assessment results are recorded but teachers are not making enough use of the information gained from assessment to plan the next steps in the work or to set individual targets with pupils.
20. Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught in the ASC. The work set is challenging and well planned to meet their needs. As a result, pupils make very good progress in meeting their individual education plan targets. A notable feature is the language rich environment created in the ASC classroom. Literacy targets are often met through work linked to other subjects. During the inspection, pupils were learning their spellings and writing sentences using their work on Ancient Egypt as the stimulus. Suitable homework is set for pupils, aimed at reinforcing work covered during lessons. Such good provision is not always the case for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes, where individual education plan targets are rarely used as a basis for planning teaching. In all cases, pupils benefit when they receive well-targeted support from the teaching assistants who work with them and, on these occasions, they make good progress. However, the school has fewer teaching assistants than most schools. The teaching of the mixed age classes is managed well and the deployment here of classroom assistants is effective.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	5 (13%)	6 (15%)	26 (67%)	1 (2.5%)	1 (2.5%)	0

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

**The curriculum**

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. It is good in practical subjects and the humanities and satisfactory in the core subjects and in

the Foundation Stage. The ASC has very good provision for the needs of this group of children. The enrichment activities for all pupils are very good. Accommodation and resources are good. Teaching staff levels are appropriate but the school has fewer teaching assistants than most schools.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities is wide, particularly in sport and in the extensive range of visits and visitors to the school
- Good links between subjects extend pupils' experiences
- The accommodation and resources are good except for ICT, where equipment is satisfactory
- Not enough teaching assistant support is provided, especially for younger pupils
- Not enough regular use is made of ICT in other subjects

### Commentary

21. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum and subjects are linked to make learning meaningful. For example, a display on Victorian houses linked history, design and technology, art and literacy. The school has recently produced its own document which details how it will implement *Excellence and Enjoyment*. Enrichment days are planned throughout the year for the whole school, helping to make learning enjoyable. Every class makes a visit to a place of interest which contributes to learning in at least one curriculum area. Year 5 had recently returned from a residential visit enhancing their learning in personal, social, health education and citizenship as well as history, geography and science. Although the school has a new ICT suite and classes are timetabled to use it, ICT is not sufficiently used as a tool for learning across all subjects in the curriculum. The improvement to the curriculum since the last inspection is satisfactory. Support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall, with very good provision in the ASC for literacy.
22. The school provides an impressive range of extra-curricular clubs both at lunchtimes and after school, which are well supported by the pupils. Pupils can choose from a wide variety of sports as well as "street dancing," RSPB bird club, music and computer club. The school is one of only two primary schools in Ipswich to achieve the FA Charter Standard. The pupils benefit from outside coaching. A very good range of visits and visitors extends the curriculum as well as providing important links with the community. Parents have been involved in a successful family literacy course to help with home reading and there are plans for a numeracy one. This broad range of learning opportunities is contributing well to pupils' achievement and personal development.
23. The accommodation is good overall. Classrooms are spacious and the good outside facilities include a large playground and grassed area. The Foundation Stage and Nursery have access to their own outside area for learning. The match of teachers to the curriculum is good, but the school has fewer teaching assistants than most schools. This is at times affecting the learning of some younger and lower attaining pupils. The school has a good range of resources apart from for ICT, where they are satisfactory. Most classrooms do not have computers available for pupils to use regularly to reinforce their ICT skills.
24. The programme for teaching pupils about drugs and sex education is satisfactory and the school is currently awaiting guidance from the local education authority before updating its policies. The very good *Learning Together* programme already under way invites parents to come into school and learn with their child about the effects of drugs and tobacco and the school has started work on achieving the *Healthy Schools* award.
25. The overall curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is very good in the ASC and satisfactory with strengths in mainstream classes. Pupils with special educational needs join in all of the activities, which take place in their classes and the school generally. Pupils in the ASC join in with science and physical education lessons with their mainstream colleagues and take part in all educational visits and the Year 5 residential visit. All special educational needs pupils benefit especially from the good range of after school activities. There is a definite commitment to inclusion in the school.

## Care, guidance and support

The overall quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good. The school is very careful over procedures for health and safety and creates an atmosphere where pupils feel valued and supported. Their views are also valued. Guidance and support for pupils' personal development is very good and for academic development it is satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils and encourage them but systems for setting individual targets based on assessment data are not well enough developed.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a caring environment
- Information from assessment is not used well enough to plan support for each pupils' learning
- Relationships between pupils and staff are good across the entire school
- Induction arrangements are good, enabling pupils to settle quickly into school
- The school consults with pupils through a very effective school council

## Commentary

26. All adults in the school show concern for the welfare of pupils. Parents and pupils acknowledge this through strong agreement in their questionnaires and personal discussions with the inspectors for the positive way children are looked after in school. The warm relationships between staff and pupils also help to create a comfortable and cheerful atmosphere where pupils feel valued and supported. They know that their views and concerns will be taken seriously. Staff know each pupil well and make sure that each child receives the help and encouragement he or she needs. As a consequence, pupils are confident, outgoing and develop self-esteem.
27. The school regularly assesses pupils' progress but the outcomes of assessment have not been used rigorously enough when planning the curriculum or setting targets for individuals. This has resulted in some pupils working on tasks that are not well matched to their ability. The school is aware of this and is in the process of introducing a new monitoring system which is helping to identify underachievement and improve target setting.
28. An individual education plan is drawn up for all pupils on the special educational needs profile, including those in the ASC, to support their learning. These identify what each pupil needs to learn to overcome their problems and how this is to be achieved. Currently the contribution of parents and pupils is not recorded on these forms and in the ASC parents do not sign them to show they have been part of the process. The overall quality of individual education plans is satisfactory.
29. Child protection procedures are in place and staff have been appropriately trained. The school has well-developed levels of liaison and cooperation with other caring agencies. Health and safety checks of the premises and equipment are carried out regularly. The school site is well maintained and secure. Staff trained in first aid look after pupils who are ill and arrangements for dealing with accidents are clearly set out. Fire drills are carried out every half term. At playtimes pupils are well supervised and they have good relationships with midday supervisors.
30. Parents confirm that the school has good arrangements for new pupils. The initial parents' meetings are re-assuring and all parents and children are visited at home. The children start Reception on a mornings only basis and gradually build up to staying for the day. Parents are provided with a helpful welcome pack, Nursery booklet and school prospectus. Effective arrangements are in place with the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer, with visits and sample lessons.
31. The school makes a considerable effort to seek pupils' views through a very effective school council. Pupils are also encouraged to share their opinions or concerns through regular circle-time sessions. Pupils from every year group told the inspectors that they

found all staff at the school approachable and would not hesitate to discuss anything that might be worrying them. Pupils were recently able to express their individual views through a detailed, though easy to manage, questionnaire. At the weekly sharing assembly individual achievements are recognised, celebrated and rewarded.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are very good and parents are strongly encouraged to become involved and support their children's education. Parents' views are regularly sought. Links with other schools are good as are links with the wider community.

### Main strengths

- Parents have very positive views of the school and appreciate the dialogue and support it offers to them, as well as to their children
- Parental involvement in the school's daily life enhances and enriches pupils' learning and development
- The school communicates widely with parents; their views and opinions are sought and valued

### Commentary

32. Parents are very satisfied with the school which is very popular and has a good reputation in the locality. Approximately one third of its pupils are drawn from outside its formal catchment area. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting and in their questionnaires were mainly very supportive of the school. They have confidence in the staff and believe the teaching to be good. This, combined with subsequent conversations during the inspection, confirmed that almost unanimously, parents are appreciative of the support the school gives to them as well as their children. Staff work very hard to engage parents into the life of the school and in supporting their children's learning. For their part, parents are actively involved in helping the school in events such as visits and various school functions, clubs and other activities. The recently reinvigorated Parent Teacher Association is working on enhancing resources and increasing parents' participation in the life of the school. A wide range of fundraising initiatives and social events involve a supportive local community.
33. The school has an open door policy for parents to discuss any matters of concern. During the inspection, parents expressed a high level of satisfaction of the way they were kept informed about the school in general and their children in particular. Parents gain a wide range of information from the school brochure which is comprehensive and easy to use. Weekly newsletters, which are also emailed, keep parents up to date with life in the school, diary dates and any other information. Annual school reports are detailed and give both parents and pupils an opportunity to make their own observations and comments and these are complemented by a more compact report at the end of each term to ensure that parents can also monitor their children's progress. These reports are being revised to reflect the new monitoring system for target setting and achievement. The school hosts a variety of very well attended information evenings during the year.
34. The school places great importance upon its relationship and partnership with parents, and positively welcomes their contributions and participation. Parents are regularly and routinely consulted about future developments. A questionnaire is used to give the senior management and governors a picture of parents' perceptions of the school and half termly *Parent Forums* are used to discuss future ideas about the school with parents. The school works hard to encourage parents to support their children's learning. The *Family Learning Initiative* has motivated a large group of parents to come into school once a week. They work with a tutor from the local education authority to understand current teaching methods in core subjects and learn how work is set for their children. Many parents give their support by coming into the school and hearing pupils read. Parents are involved well in the work the school carries out with their children.
35. The school is working hard to develop links with the business community. One long-standing initiative is a partnership with a large accountancy practice whose staff regularly come into school to work with pupils to develop their literacy and reading. The school has well-developed links with the wider local community. A regular community assembly hosts visitors such as the local MP, town mayor, police and others to share their experiences and

views with the pupils. The school choir acts as an ambassador for the school by performing for senior citizens in the area. Its sporting links, especially through football, have ensured that the school is positively profiled in the local media who have also extensively reported upon its active and substantial fundraising for charity and its participation in *Local Democracy Week*. Many other school activities are reported in the local newspaper. The school building is made available to several neighbourhood groups and clubs, which further strengthen its links with the wider community.

36. Links with other primary schools and the local high school are close. The school is part of an area cluster which has shared training days to discuss curriculum links and other issues. This includes meetings between head teachers every half term. The local high school has sports college status and supports the school in a range of coaching for the pupils. Overall, these productive links ensure that the procedures for pupils to transfer smoothly and with confidence are good. Students from the local further education college are regularly welcomed into the school for work experience, which is particularly well supervised and guided.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The school has a good governing body. The leadership and management of the head teacher is good overall, and he is providing a very strong vision for the future development of the school. Leadership and management of subject co-ordinators are satisfactory overall with strengths in some areas.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The head teacher is very strongly promoting a vision which is focused upon raising standards and developing further the existing strengths in personal and social development and enrichment
- The head teacher is well supported by the Deputy Head and governors
- Most subject co-ordinators are in the early stages of developing their role of leading and managing their subjects
- All staff are committed to including all pupils in everything the school has to offer
- The head teacher has made very good use of self-evaluation to identify areas for improvement
- Governors play a significant part in strategic planning and support the work of the school
- Good systems are in place for monitoring the finances of the school

### **Commentary**

37. The very good, albeit relatively recent, improvements in leadership and management stem from the head teacher's energy and purposefulness in pursuing his vision for the school. This is supported well by key members of the governing body. The head teacher, although in post for only nine months, is making a significant contribution to the school. He is leading staff and governors very well into improving pupils' standards of attainment and developing still further the opportunities for their personal development. Steps have been taken to involve staff, parents and pupils in decisions about the school. The head teacher is building an effective team of senior staff who share his vision and direction and provide him with good support. He has used self-evaluation very well to identify clearly what the school does well and how it could develop. He has identified improvements needed over a wide range of issues and is now refining the focus so that changes can be sustained.
38. Systems for checking the quality of teaching and learning have been put into place to ensure that teaching continues to improve and that pupils make better progress. Over time, school standards have been slipping. The new monitoring arrangements are rigorous at the level of senior management and are designed to deal with this issue, but are too new to have had an impact on results. Subject co-ordinators provide satisfactory advice, support and ideas for their colleagues. Co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science have

recently started to monitor planning, observe teaching and analyse work. They have not yet used the information gained from this to take effective action to raise standards in their subjects. The leadership and management of history, geography, RE, design and technology and physical education are good because co-ordinators have taken a more imaginative approach to the curriculum.

39. The staff have a firm commitment to including all pupils, whatever their ability, in all that the school has to offer. This is evident in the acknowledgement of the need for individual targets for progress and the inclusiveness of games teaching in physical education. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have access to a wide range of extra-curricular clubs. The ASC is very well led and this is a strength in the leadership of the school. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has overseen the development of a specialised teaching area and the development of the role of special educational needs teaching assistant. Both of these are helping to improve the overall provision in mainstream classes. However, since the post of SENCO is combined with that of a class teacher, the time available to develop the special educational needs provision is limited and does not allow for the direct monitoring of teaching of these pupils or to oversee their work.
40. The provision for continuing staff development is good. Staff have visited other schools to see good teaching and have a regular programme of on-site training related to ICT and school development plan priorities. Support staff are included in professional training and the performance management programme, which has been re-instated after lapsing for several years.
41. Governors support the school well and are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are involved in the strategic planning for improvement and, through recently formed committees, monitor the progress of the school towards the school development plan priorities. They discuss test results with key staff and give good support to the school in all that it does. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and, together with the head teacher, make sure that parents are kept fully informed of the work of the school.
42. Budgets are set with school priorities in mind, which have been identified in the school development plan. Finances are well managed by governors. The budget is judiciously spent with a focus of improving standards and provision at the school. A reduction in the number of school-aged children living near the school has meant that the reducing budget is requiring very precise financial management. Good systems are in place to monitor expenditure regularly. Staffing and other resources are used efficiently for the benefit of pupils. The day-to-day management of the budget is carried out efficiently by the office staff. Staff and governors constantly make sure they are getting best value for money through such procedures as obtaining quotations for work and linking this appropriately to the quality of the goods and services being purchased and the impact upon standards. Given that pupils achieve satisfactorily at the end of Year 6 and that they start school with standards that are average overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

***Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	981,159
Total expenditure	932,662
Expenditure per pupil	2605

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	19,366
Balance carried forward to the next	48,497

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

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

43. Provision for learning in the Nursery and Reception is satisfactory overall. Sound teaching leads to satisfactory achievement, though with some weaknesses in aspects of literacy and numeracy. When children start the Nursery, their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical skills are average. However, their speaking and listening and some aspects of personal and social development are below average. The school places particular emphasis on developing children's independence and social skills. Children's achievement is undoubtedly affected by the point at which they start full-time education in Reception. Children who have spent two or three terms in the Reception, except those with special educational needs, are on course to achieve the early learning goals (the standards expected at the end of Reception) in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and some aspects of literacy and mathematics. Many will exceed expectations in physical development. However, some children, particularly those who have spent only one term in Reception, are not on course to meet the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematical development because they do not make sufficient progress towards these expectations during their time in the Nursery. Children with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily. Teachers regularly check how well children are learning. The use of this information to plan for all stages of development is not yet secure. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Teachers and support assistants work as an effective team. They work well with parents for the benefit of the children.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good.

#### **Main strengths**

- Children form good, trusting relationships with adults
- The emphasis given to personal and social development is successful in developing children's confidence and independence

#### **Commentary**

44. Children enter the Nursery with average social skills but below average independence. They leave the Reception class being able to sit and listen in a group, to co-operate with one another and to carry out a task independently. This represents good achievement. Staff help children to settle quickly into their new environment by having established routines so that children are confident of what they should do. Clear and consistent rules provide children with the security which they need to be independent in their learning. For example, the children enjoy the freedom and responsibility of choosing fruit items for their snack and washing up their plate afterwards. Children behave well and choose their own resources. They do not tidy up until prompted by an adult. Children in Reception classes are able to dress and undress themselves for physical education and to walk in a controlled manner to the hall. Adults provide good role models by showing consideration and appreciation of each other as members of the school community. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory overall.

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

- An appropriate emphasis is placed upon developing speaking and listening upon entry to the Nursery. Teachers and teaching assistants help children well

- The preparation for the acquisition of early reading and writing skills is unsatisfactory in the Nursery
- Older and more able children make good progress in reading and writing in the Reception class

### **Commentary**

45. When children enter the Nursery they lack confidence in speaking with others. Teachers provide children with good opportunities to work in groups so that they can practise and successfully develop their speaking and listening skills. By the end of the Reception class standards in speaking and listening are average. Those in reading and writing are below average for over a third of the age group. The staggered movement of children from Nursery into the Reception class contributes to this lower achievement. Older and more able children achieve well and are in line to meet the expected standards in reading and writing. Early reading and writing skills are developed through a focus upon sounds. The sounds that letters make are taught by associating a sound with an action and identifying objects which begin with that initial sound. Parents support this learning well by practising the sound and actions with their children at home. Children are encouraged to use their sound knowledge to begin to write words or phrases which convey meaning. Teaching assistants in the Reception class make a good contribution to the development of writing skills by working with a small group to develop an awareness of rhyme as an aid to spelling. By the end of the Reception class more able children can read simple texts with familiar words and write sentences independently, using plausible attempts at spelling. Teaching and learning are satisfactory when there is a focused activity. Incidental opportunities to reinforce learning, through print around the classroom, such as in captions and sentences about activities, and appropriate adult intervention in play situations, are under-used. Standards are not as high as reported in the last inspection.

### **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is satisfactory.

### **Main strength and weakness**

- Children achieve well during direct teaching of numerical skills in the Reception class when interesting contexts are used
- Some opportunities for reinforcing numerical skills are missed

### **Commentary**

46. Overall, children achieve satisfactorily in mathematics and standards are average in counting and number recognition but below average in calculation by the time they enter Year 1, after at least two terms in the Reception class. The youngest children are less secure in counting and number recognition. In the Nursery, the focus is upon one-to-one counting. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Direct teaching sessions are good but, during the activities which children have chosen for themselves, adults do not always take opportunities to extend the children's thinking and learning. When these opportunities are used well the effect on the children's mathematical knowledge and understanding is clear. For example, in the Nursery, a teaching assistant, seeing a small group playing with the "teddies in the bed" encouraged the children to look at the numbers on the teddies' heads and arrange them in the bed in numerical order, constantly reinforcing the numerical sequence by counting as they went. In the Reception class, children are developing the ability to match and recognise numbers and begin to record the results of their counting through tallying and writing the numeral. Counting and recording activities are set in interesting contexts, such as catching and counting fish, which engage the children and make them keen to learn. Number rhymes are used well to reinforce the concept of

counting back in preparation for subtraction in rhymes such as *Five Little Fishes*. Standards are not as high as those reported during the last inspection.

**Knowledge and understanding of the world**

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good resources stimulate children's curiosity about the living world
- Children show skill in using the computer mouse
- There are insufficient ideas and stimuli to help children use their imagination

### **Commentary**

47. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children show great interest in the world around them when the resources are good. For example, one child was fascinated by the salmon which was being shown during a topic on water. She touched the skin, opened the mouth and used a magnifying glass to examine the teeth. She found a picture of a salmon in a nearby book and compared this to the fish she had before her. This was a good learning experience which stimulated curiosity and conversation and contributed to extending her knowledge of the world of the sea. Opportunities for children to ask questions and to work out why things happen are less apparent without these kinds of stimuli. Children develop their joining, cutting and finishing skills well when they are completing a focused task where the appropriate materials have been gathered and are directed by an adult. Tools and materials are readily available for making and constructing when children are working from their own ideas but there are insufficient books and photographs to stimulate and support their imagination. Children show good mouse control in using the computers for matching and fitting activities. Standards are similar to those reported in the previous inspection.

### **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is good.

#### **Main strengths**

- Good outdoor provision helps to develop coordination and balancing skills
- Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their hand eye coordination
- Healthy snacks contribute to children's understanding of how to care for their bodies

### **Commentary**

48. Children can move spontaneously between indoor and outdoor environments. The outside play areas offer facilities for taking part in energetic activities such as running, climbing, balancing and crawling. Children practise co-ordination and control on wheeled toys. Children's finer muscle control is developed well because teachers provide good opportunities to handle small apparatus such as interlocking shapes, pencils, pens and paint brushes. There are varied opportunities, such as catching a fish with a net, using scissors for cutting or a knife to spread butter on sandwiches, for applying these skills to new situations. Physical activities make a good contribution to personal and social development because children learn to take turns and be aware of the safety of others when using large equipment. During physical education lessons, teaching is good. Children listen well and show a good understanding of the use of space. They can control their bodies well when stopping and demonstrate above average skills in handling small apparatus in the hall. Snack time, when children have a wide choice of fruits, is used to emphasise the benefits of a healthy diet. Standards seen are higher than those reported in the previous inspection.

### **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is satisfactory.

#### **Main strength and weakness**

- Opportunities for developing imaginative play are good and role play areas are linked to themes for the week
- There are insufficient opportunities for appreciation of, and experimentation with, music

### **Commentary**

49. Achievement in creative development is satisfactory and standards are average on entry to Year 1. This is an improvement upon the standards reported in the previous inspection. Children enjoy developing their creativity through imaginative play and well-told stories. In

the Nursery, children express themselves through domestic play, dressing up, painting, collage and building imaginary objects. There is not as much opportunity for children to demonstrate creativity through music and dance because singing rhymes and songs do not form a regular part of the day and no musical instruments are on display. In the Reception class the role play area extends imagination by changing to match the focus of the week. For the inspection week it was an underwater scene with a deep sea cave for children to explore. Equipment for constructing and making is good and there is plenty of space for children to build larger models. Opportunities are satisfactory for drawing, painting and making pictures using a variety of materials. Teaching and learning are satisfactory.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is satisfactory.

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

- Standards are a little below average but improving, and achievement is satisfactory
- Pupils have a good attitude towards their work
- Speaking and listening skills are used effectively
- Literacy skills are applied well in other subjects
- Teaching of phonics and spelling is not structured enough

#### **Commentary**

50. Results in national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 have fluctuated since the last inspection. They have been below average over the last three years apart from 2002 when they were above in Year 2. Some pupils only have one term in the Reception class and until recently there has been little or no teaching assistant support in classes. This has had an impact on standards. However, overall pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In 2004, results in Year 6 were much improved on previous years and were average in terms of the overall point score but below average in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 or better. The very good progress made by pupils in the ASC in literacy means that when compared with similar schools, pupils have achieved very well.
51. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are average. They listen attentively in class to their teachers as well as each other, but some pupils lack the confidence to talk and express opinions. Teachers have tried to develop this further by encouraging pupils to talk to each other before answering a question or writing. This helps to promote discussion as well as clarifying their thoughts.
52. Standards in reading are below average. The school has good resources for reading and parents of younger pupils come into school to help with guided reading. In some classes, the guided reading sessions are not being planned effectively enough to teach skills of comprehension. Pupils are merely reading aloud. Although a phonic programme is available for teachers to use, there is no specific structured approach in place which can track pupils' progress. As a result, less able readers do not have a secure grasp of their sounds and this affects their reading ability. Pupils can express preferences for different types of books and enjoy reading at school and at home. In the best lessons, teachers model reading effectively during literacy hours and challenging questioning helps pupils to understand and improve their comprehension skills.
53. Pupils across the school write for different purposes and in a variety of styles. The writing is lively and often links well to another area of the curriculum such as a history or geography visit. In some classes, teachers demonstrate how to write for a specific purpose, linking this closely to reading. However, this is not sufficiently embedded in all classes to make a difference to standards, which are below average. Pupils are not always secure about the

structure and language needed for different types of writing and weak knowledge of basic spelling rules hinders some pupils. Pupils are encouraged to work together at times to share ideas and displays of pupils' writing on walls show that they enjoy writing from personal experience. This work is well presented and generally handwriting and presentation is neat.

54. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The most successful lessons are well planned, with clear learning objectives which are discussed with pupils and revisited at the end of the lesson. Teachers expect high standards of behaviour and pupils can work independently without adult supervision. In the best lessons the pace is good, the expected outcomes are made clear and teachers use a variety of teaching styles, which ensure that all pupils are interested and motivated to learn. Where teaching is less successful, teachers do not make objectives clear or check at the end of a session what pupils have learned. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough.
55. Assessment is not used consistently enough to inform planning and, in some lessons, pupils are doing work which is not matched to their ability. Some teachers have too many different tasks planned for the week, which results in a lack of consolidation in learning for the pupils. All pupils have targets in their books but in some classes the planning, learning and marking does not relate to the targets. One good example of marking was seen where the teacher's comments related to the expected learning and pupils were invited to evaluate their own learning.
56. Leadership and management of English are satisfactory. The co-ordinators are aware of the issues in the last inspection but only recently have begun to develop their role as subject leaders. An action plan has been put in place but has not yet had an impact on standards.

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

57. Language and literacy are promoted well across the curriculum and pupils use their skills confidently. Links are evident in many subjects such as history, geography art, ICT, design and technology and personal, social and health education. The school has an impressive plan for enrichment days as well as visits for every class, which provide a stimulus for speaking, listening, reading and writing. Pupils talk enthusiastically about these visits and the displays around the school. Writing across the curriculum is satisfactory.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

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

- Pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics because activities in lessons are interesting
- Pupils are reasonably confident in number work
- Marking is not consistently giving pupils enough guidance on how to improve
- Planning is not taking enough account of the needs of all pupils or all aspects of mathematics

#### **Commentary**

58. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are achieving satisfactorily. Results in the 2004 national tests were below average in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or better but better than average in terms of the overall point score. Current standards are slightly below average. Pupils develop a satisfactory grasp of number and use a range of strategies to calculate mentally. They are mostly accurate when adding and subtracting two digit numbers to 20 and know their two and five times tables. Higher-attainers add and subtract numbers to 100 and are beginning to multiply and divide; they could apply their knowledge well to real problems. Working with money, they could give change quickly and accurately from £2 when 'shopping'. Average and lower-attainers found this more difficult. For

example, pupils knew that two times nine was eighteen but did not use this knowledge when adding up their 'purchases'.

59. By Year 6, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards had been in decline, but are now beginning to improve though they are still somewhat below average both in terms of test results and current standards. In 2004, girls did slightly better than boys but there was little difference evident in the current Year 6. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 build satisfactorily on the knowledge and understanding gained in the earlier classes. They have increased the strategies they use to solve problems or calculate mentally but do not have enough opportunities for problem solving and data handling and their work in these areas is not secure. Most pupils have the potential to achieve at a higher standard than they are at present.
60. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons teachers make good use of questions and pupils' responses to deepen understanding and provide ideas for all to share. This was evident in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 5, where the quality of questioning and the explanations enabled pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of fractions and decimal fractions. In most lessons, teachers introduced topics well and motivated their pupils successfully by providing interesting activities with the result that pupils enjoy mathematics. Year 2 pupils were keen to go shopping for toys and were learning how to calculate with money in a situation in which they felt confident. Year 4 pupils responded well to an interesting challenge on symmetry using sailing flags.
61. The most significant weaknesses in teaching are in the planning and marking of work. The planning for different abilities is not consistently good enough in most classes. A scrutiny of pupils' work over time shows relatively little difference in what is set, only in how well pupils complete the work or in the amount of work they do. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. All teachers praise pupils and usually mark work for accuracy, using a tick or cross. Comparatively little marking showed pupils where they had gone wrong or gave them clear advice on how to improve their work next time. In several lessons, the learning objectives were expressed in terms of tasks to be completed rather than what pupils should learn. This made it harder for the teacher to assess what pupils had learnt and for pupils to know what they had achieved. Whole-class sessions at the end of lessons were not used as effectively as they could have been to check pupils' understanding.
62. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Pupils' work and teachers' planning are monitored and the information gained from this has helped in the drafting of a subject action plan. This identifies the main strengths and weaknesses and priorities for action, but is much less clear about how the improvements needed will be brought about. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

63. The opportunities for pupils to use mathematics across the curriculum are good and pupils use their skills effectively. Pupils analyse and collect a range of data and produce graphs in science, history and geography. Visits and field trips are used well to re-inforce pupils' understanding of how to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is satisfactory.

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

- Standards are below average in Years 1 and 2 because insufficient teaching time is given to the subject
- Teachers use scientific vocabulary well in explanations

- Investigative skills are not developed in a systematic way
- Learning is made relevant to life outside of school through visits and visitors

### **Commentary**

64. Results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 indicated that standards were average in comparison to similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level in these tests was below average. Inspection evidence confirms these results and indicates that standards in Years 3 to 6 are at expected levels with some underachievement for the more able pupils. This is because pupils do not have enough independence in recording their work or in applying their investigative skills by testing out their own hypotheses. A similar weakness was reported in the last inspection. Overall standards are lower than those seen during the last inspection.
65. Results in the 2004 teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 indicated that standards overall were well below average in comparison with all schools. The proportion of these pupils reaching the higher level was average. Standards in the work seen during the inspection indicate that standards are below the expected levels in Year 2 overall because insufficient time is given to teaching investigative skills. Some above average standards were seen in the more able pupils' electricity work. The difference between Year 2 results in 2004 and the current standards can be explained by the improved coverage of knowledge and understanding of life and living processes. Pupils' achievement in the current work and lessons seen is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 in developing knowledge and understanding but unsatisfactory in investigative skills.
66. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory across the school. Teachers make pupils aware of what they are intended to learn in each session and set this in the context of previous learning or experiences. For example, in Year 5, following a residential visit to the Ridgeway, pupils carried out experiments to explore the properties of chalk. Pupils show interest in science and work well in groups or with partners to carry out investigations and compile a report of their findings. The use of worksheets and cloze procedure, however, limits independent thinking. As a result, pupils do not use scientific vocabulary well in their independent written work even though teachers use these specific terms in their initial explanations. The lack of teaching of a systematic progression in investigative skills from Year 1 to Year 6 leads to the presentation of results, and the interpretation and analysis of data being too teacher led. Good use is made of visitors, such as the nurse from the renal unit, to extend pupils' understanding and make good connections between information learned in class and applications in the world of work.
67. The leadership and management are satisfactory and have improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator is becoming more involved in the monitoring of the subject across the school.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Overall provision for ICT is satisfactory and improving.

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

- Standards are in line with national expectations and have improved well since the last inspection
- Computers in the ICT suite are used well as a tool for learning, linking effectively with work in other subjects
- The day-to-day use of ICT in classrooms is not as effective because too few computers are currently available
- Although pupils use computers confidently, they do not always know or use the correct vocabulary associated with them

### **Commentary**

68. Pupils' achievement and progress in ICT is satisfactory and improving as a result of the installation of the computer suite and the good links being made during lessons with other subjects of the curriculum. Evidence collected during the inspection from observing lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking to pupils shows that, by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is currently in line with national expectations for the subject. Pupils use computers confidently. During the inspection they were seen saving, retrieving and printing their work. They navigate their way through programs easily and are confident users of drop down menus, icons and tool bars. However, they do not always know the correct vocabulary to use which restricts their ability to explain how they have carried out a task. Further improvement is also hampered by the lack of computers in classrooms. They are not able to continue to develop their skills or to use the computer as a tool for learning in other subjects when not in the suite. Good plans exist to rectify this problem in the near future by installing a wireless network for use in classrooms.
69. The quality of learning and teaching in the ICT lessons observed ranged from good to satisfactory and was satisfactory overall. In the best teaching the teacher had a good knowledge of how to use a computer and was able to communicate this to the pupils; what was being learnt was put into context with other learning taking place in the classroom and good support was given by a teaching assistant. In one Year 2 lesson, for example, the pupils were creating speech bubbles on the computer to reinforce the work being carried out in literacy. In all of the lessons seen, pupils were continuing to develop their understanding of concepts from other subjects as well as developing their ICT skills. This good practice is helping to ensure that standards continue to improve. Where teaching was only satisfactory, pupils were not given anything to do when they had finished the activity, which resulted in them wasting time. Pupils from the ASC are enthusiastic about their time on the computer and make very good progress in meeting their individual education plan targets. Other pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers.
70. The subject leader and head teacher work together well to co-ordinate ICT. A good action plan is in place to identify future developments, with a definite commitment on the part of the staff and governors to continue to improve standards in this subject. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when ICT was judged to be unsatisfactory.

## HUMANITIES

It was not possible to make overall judgements on provision in history, geography or religious education, but work in these subjects was sampled.

71. Conversations with staff and pupils and scrutiny of work, including very good displays by pupils, indicate that the curriculum is good in all three subjects. Each subject is well planned, led and managed. In history and geography, use of visits and visitors is imaginative. They are used to develop pupils' understanding in history and geography, and also make good links between different subjects. The work in religious education clearly meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. All three subjects make a good contribution to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, their personal development and their understanding of citizenship. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
72. The lessons sampled in **geography** were good. Skills of geographical enquiry were being used effectively and there was evidence of links with mathematics where pupils were using graphs to analyse the results of a survey. Pupils' work showed that they had been well taught and were making good use of the information gathered on a recent residential field trip.
73. The one lesson observed in **history** was satisfactory. Pupils were using a good range of resources, including the Internet, to find evidence about Sutton Hoo following a visit there. They talked enthusiastically about the visit and the work that they were doing. The work on display was of a high standard in all year groups and showed the effect of good teaching over time.
74. The **religious education** lessons sampled were satisfactory. Older pupils were interested in, and prepared to contribute to, the discussion on individual rights and responsibility and the need for respect for others' opinions. The work was closely and sensibly linked to citizenship, using the theme of the general election to help pupils to think about how they would improve life for everyone. Younger pupils were interested in how religious belief is often linked to attitudes to family life and were willing to talk about their own ideas about how other people should be treated. The work in books showed good coverage of Christianity and other world religions and, in the younger classes particularly, some good opportunities for pupils to explore ideas and use their literacy skills to write about their own experiences. The work in Year 2 on how it felt to be lost or to have lost something precious was particularly sensitive.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

It was not possible to make overall judgements on provision in design and technology and music but work in these subjects was sampled.

75. The **design and technology** displays and the discussions with pupils indicated that standards are above national expectations and pupils achieve well. This is as a result of the good quality of the work produced by the pupils and their careful attention to detail. Of particular note is the house and contents made by Years 5 and 6. However, all of the work displayed could just as easily be singled out. The curriculum is also enhanced significantly by work with a local secondary school and participation in outside events such as the national Young Engineers' challenge. The subject is well led and managed. The good subject action plan has identified the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and strategies to tackle the weaknesses. Teachers are well supported and the subject leader has attended appropriate training courses to update subject knowledge. This has contributed to the high standards. Standards have been maintained in this subject since the last inspection which represents good improvement.

76. In the **music** lessons sampled, pupils enjoyed using a range of percussion instruments to demonstrate how dynamics can illustrate particular sounds or poems. They were learning to listen to each other, generally handled the instruments with care and could follow instructions sensibly. The school has a good range of resources, though the music room is too small to be comfortable for whole-class teaching. Extra-curricular provision gives pupils the opportunity to learn the recorder and the violin, sing in the choir or play in the recently formed small orchestra. Music has not been a particular priority on the school recently and the development plans are very much in outline.

## **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths**

- Pupils enjoy art and are confident to try out new ideas
- The enrichment days in school provide the opportunity for pupils to work from personal experience

### **Commentary**

77. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and remain in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is good.
78. Pupils say that they enjoy art and are able to talk knowledgeably about the work on the walls and the materials and techniques used. Work on display shows a good range of activities including drawing from observation, collage and printing, some of which has been inspired by a multi-cultural day for the whole school. Work is also linked to design and technology and other areas of the curriculum such as history and geography.
79. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In one good lesson, young pupils were studying the work of a famous sculptor. They were able to talk about his work and express preferences for various pieces. They then worked in groups to produce their own design, choosing from a range of materials.
80. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. In this academic year, a new action plan has been produced and a planned curriculum agreed. Enrichment days are a regular feature of the school's work and a further day for art and design is planned for later in the term.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is good.

### **Main strengths**

- At the end of Year 6 pupils achieve well in a wide range of games skills
- External expertise from professional coaches and specialist teachers is used successfully to enhance teaching
- Resources for sports are very good
- An impressive range of extra-curricular sports clubs are provided as enrichment activities

### **Commentary**

81. From the lessons observed during the inspection, standards in physical education are in line with expectations in Years 1 and 2 and above average in Years 3 to 6. There is satisfactory achievement in Years 1 and 2 and good achievement in Years 3 to 6. Pupils achieve very well in tennis and basketball skills and swimming.
82. Teaching and learning are good overall. Lessons are well planned to develop both physical and thinking skills. This was illustrated in a Year 2 lesson on "points and patches", where pupils were encouraged to develop their own sequence of movements, and in the teaching of tactics for basketball in a Year 5 lesson. Teachers give clear instructions and have high expectations of pupils with the result that pupils work hard, stay on task and enjoy their personal achievement. Peer demonstrations are successfully used to illustrate teaching points and encourage pupils to consider how they can improve. During the very well organised sports lessons the focus is upon self improvement, tactics and team working rather than direct one to one competition. Groups under the guidance of professional coaches and specialist teachers as well as school staff, focus upon developing ball control,

passing, receiving and travelling with the ball. Pupils achieve levels of skill which are higher than those expected for their age. Resources are of high quality and plentiful.

83. Leadership and management are good and strongly committed to promoting physical education as an enjoyable part of a healthy life style and as a vehicle to fulfilling individual potential. Use of local facilities ensure, for example, that as many pupils as possible learn to swim by using the local swimming pool regularly. Sponsorship and liaison with outside agencies and local clubs supplement resources and provision. For example, the school's recent recognition as an FA Charter School has added resources and further enhanced the football provision for boys and girls. In conjunction with other staff and organisations, a range of high quality clubs and activities such as sailing, basketball, cycling, badminton, short tennis and street dancing are provided. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

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

Personal, social, health and citizenship education could not be inspected in depth. Pupils' work was looked at and inspectors talked to staff and pupils, as well as members of the school council.

84. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils to their work and others are good. Pupils are given good opportunities overall to develop confidence and responsibility and each class has representation on the school council. They are aware of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. The school has designated lessons with a planned curriculum but teachers also link the subject with other curriculum areas such as science, religious education and visits outside of school. Only two lessons were seen; one was judged to be very good, the other satisfactory.
85. Parents recently worked in some classes with their own children on a *Learning Together* project on health. This was very successful and will continue throughout the school. The policies for sex education and drugs are currently being updated following recommendations from the local education authority. Leadership and management are sound. The action plan shows an appropriate intention to continue with the already successful projects as well as developing further the cross-curricular links.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
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>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
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>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the head teacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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