

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DENBIGH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wallsend

LEA area: North Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108608

Headteacher: Mr G Dignan

Lead inspector: Mrs J Morley

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> October 2004

Inspection number: 266727

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: 360

School address: Denbigh Avenue  
Howden  
Wallsend  
Tyne and Wear  
Postcode: NE28 0DS

Telephone number: 0191 2007341  
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body  
Name of chair of Mr Kevin Miles  
governors:

Date of previous December 2002  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- There are 360 pupils on roll including 25 boys and 13 girls who attend Nursery part-time.
- Almost all pupils are white British and few a tiny proportion are from other ethnic backgrounds.
- A very tiny minority is at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- There are three pupils in public care but no refugees, asylum seekers or travellers.
- 127 children are on the school's register of special educational needs: an above average proportion. The needs of 20 are more significant. For these pupils the school received additional professional support / advice. Their difficulties relate to dyslexia, moderate learning, social, emotional and behavioural problems, speech or communication problems and hearing impairment.
- Pupil mobility is relatively high.
- The social and economic circumstances of pupils are well below average, as is attainment on entry.
- The school is involved in the following local and national initiatives:
  - Education Action Zone;
  - Excellence in Cities;
  - Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools;
  - Sure Start.
- It holds the following awards:
  - Basic Skills Quality Mark (2002);
  - Healthy Schools (2002).

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25470	J Morley	Lead inspector	English Art & design Personal, social and health education and citizenship Design & technology
9333	K Schofield	Lay inspector	
20038	G Watson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information & communication technology Music Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language
29188	G Ulyatt	Team inspector	Science Geography History Physical education The Foundation Stage

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory and it provides sound value for money. Pupils enter and leave with attainment that is well below average overall. Achievement is satisfactory. Several factors combine to give this overall picture. The school has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and mobility is high. Although teaching quality is satisfactory overall, a significant proportion is good. Most aspects of the way in which the school is led and managed contribute positively to its effectiveness, but there are issues to address. In particular, whole school assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and some aspects of the statutory primary curriculum are not taught.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in literacy and numeracy vary from year to year but are improving slowly.
- Assessment procedures and the use the school makes of assessment information are unsatisfactory. This inhibits pupils' progress.
- The full curricula for information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, design and technology, and music are not taught.
- Pupils have good attitudes to work and enjoy lessons because teachers engage them well.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to write independently and at length.
- Pupils are well cared for and enjoy good relationships with all adults in the school.
- There is a good range of opportunities on offer outside the school day.

The school was last inspected in 2002 and was found to have serious weaknesses. Leadership and management were unsatisfactory as were pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships. The school is now soundly led. Relationships and attitudes to work are now good. Behaviour is variable but satisfactory overall. The school was also charged with improving the quality of teaching in order to raise standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The proportion of teaching that is good or better has improved. Standards in English and mathematics are rising slowly. Science standards remain well below average and those in ICT remain well below average in Year 6 although they have improved in Year 2. Relationships between the school and parents were unsatisfactory in 2002. They are now sound. Staffing has been very unstable. It is now much more settled and provides a firm foundation on which to build. Overall, therefore, improvement has been sufficient to conclude that the school no longer has serious weaknesses.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
E\* means that the results were among the lowest five per cent nationally.*

*Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals, as pupil mobility is high, so the usual comparison with schools whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2 cannot be made.*

**Achievement is satisfactory** throughout the school. Attainment on entry is well below that generally expected and communication, language and literacy is a particularly weak element. Through Nursery and Reception, children make sound progress overall but, by the end of Reception, still fall well short of the goals expected in the key elements of communication, language, literacy and mathematics, as well as in their creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Achievement in personal, social, emotional and physical development is good although the majority of children still do not reach the goals expected. Through Years 1 to 6, achievement continues to be satisfactory. In the 2004 national tests, standards in literacy and numeracy were well below average at the end of Year 2. Because of a more able group of pupils in Year 6 last year, standards in English, mathematics and science were below average, rather than well below. Inspection evidence and the school's own predictions for the 2005 tests both indicate that standards are likely to be well below average again this year. Amongst these low standards, writing is a particularly weak element. Achievement is not better than satisfactory because school systems do not ensure that assessment information is used to help pupils achieve as well as they could and because the primary curriculum is not taught in full. Currently, pupils attain average standards in physical education, fall short of them in art and design and history, and well short in design and technology, ICT, music and religious education. No judgement was possible in geography.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are satisfactory.** Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory and they have good attitudes to work. Attendance is below the national average but is improving. There are still too many parents who do not ensure that their children arrive punctually to school.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is satisfactory, as is the quality of teaching** and learning. Teaching quality ranges from very good to poor, although the large majority is good or satisfactory. Common, positive features are teachers' explanations to pupils of what they are to learn, and high expectations of their conduct. Staffing levels are adequate in Years 1 to 6 but are frugal in Nursery and Reception, particularly in light of the children's poor communication skills and, therefore, the heightened need for productive talk within small groups. The school has much assessment data but its efforts at using it to raise standards are ineffective. The curriculum is unsatisfactory because statutory requirements for four subjects are not fully met and because opportunities for pupils to write are not good enough. The school is aware of these omissions and is taking steps to address them. Opportunities on offer outside the school day are good. The school takes good care of its pupils and has good links with other schools and colleges.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are satisfactory.** There is a clear strategic plan for the development of the school and, working within the constraints of a deficit budget, the headteacher has successfully led change on the key issues from the last inspection. To date, however, although he and the senior staff know how well pupils are doing academically, they have not used assessment information well enough in order to raise attainment. Governors do not fulfil all of their statutory duties because the primary curriculum is not covered in full. However, they are not aware of these technical omissions.

Governance is satisfactory. The chair provides good leadership and governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school because the headteacher keeps them well informed.

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

Parents think well of the school and their views are largely justified. However, they are incorrect in their view that pupils' progress is good: it is satisfactory and improving slowly. Pupils like school and enjoy warm relationships with their teachers.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- Improve assessment procedures and the use of assessment data to raise standards.
- Ensure that pupils have frequent opportunities to write at length and for a range of purposes.

And, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that all subjects of the National Curriculum and of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are covered in full.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain standards that, overall, are well below those expected nationally. All pupils achieve satisfactorily overall.

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

- Achievement in ICT, design and technology, music and religious education is unsatisfactory because the school does not cover the full curriculum in these subjects.

#### **Commentary**

1. The big picture of attainment is that the children join the Nursery with skills and aptitudes that are well below those expected. They achieve satisfactorily through the school and, as a result, leave with attainment that remains well below average. The group of pupils who took the national tests in 2004 were, however, a more able group than is typical in this school. Hence, they achieved standards in literacy, numeracy and science that were below those expected nationally, and above those of similar schools. These results should not be considered representative of standards overall: the pupils who are currently in Year 6 are working at a level that is well below average.
2. Achievement through the school is satisfactory, despite the fact that the teaching seen in lessons was predominantly good. This is due partly to assessment systems that are inadequate, particularly at whole school level, and partly to incomplete curriculum coverage. Once these two issues have been addressed successfully, then the potential for good achievement will be in place.

3. When children join the Nursery their skills and aptitudes are well below those expected, particularly in communication, language and literacy. They make sound progress overall through Nursery and Reception, mirroring the quality of teaching they receive. However, they achieve well in personal, social and emotional and in physical development.
4. As a result, children's personal and physical skills fall a little short of the goals expected at the end of Reception. In communication, language and literacy, in mathematical and creative development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, pupils' attainment remains well short.
5. Through Years 1 to 6, all pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, continue to achieve satisfactorily. This is reflected in the test results at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, which are recorded in the tables below. What is clear from the tables is that standards rose from 2003 to 2004. In every test – reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2, and English, mathematics and science in Year 6 - there was improvement.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.2 (13.7)	16.0 (15.7)
Writing	13.5 (13.1)	14.9 (14.6)
Mathematics	14.6 (14.2)	16.2 (16.3)

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

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.9 (24.8)	27.0 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.2 (25.5)	27.2 (26.8)
Science	27.4 (26.2)	28.9 (28.6)

*There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

6. For Year 2 pupils these scores represent standards in the 2004 tests that were below the national average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics. All, however, were more favourable when compared to similar schools: well above average in reading and average in the other two areas. Overall, achievement was satisfactory, but good in reading. The better achievement in reading was due to the class teacher's emphasis on this element of English, and to the contribution of parents in hearing their children read regularly. In Year 6 standards were below average in English, mathematics, and science. Similar school comparisons were above average in all three. Inspection judgements and the school's targets for Years 2 and 6 both indicate, given the current rate of progress, that standards will be well below average again this year in both year groups.

7. In physical education, pupils make up the shortfall with which they enter school and leave with attainment that meets national expectations. In art and design and history they achieve well because of some teachers' particular enthusiasm for these subjects. Hence, they leave with below expected attainment. In ICT, design and technology, music and religious education attainment remains well below that expected nationally. The reason that standards are not higher is because of gaps in the curriculum. These have developed since 2002 when the school was found to have serious weaknesses, as it has been concentrating on improving standards in literacy, numeracy and science.

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

Attendance is below average, but has improved in recent times. Attitudes are good. Behaviour is satisfactory, although there is a significant minority of pupils who find it difficult to behave well at all times. Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is satisfactory, but their moral development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has worked hard and successfully to improve the issues raised at the last inspection.
- It actively encourages freedom from bullying and other forms of harassment.
- Its action to promote good attendance is good but punctuality is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' interest in school life is good.

### **Commentary**

8. In 2002, the school was charged with making a number of improvements: applying the school's behaviour policy rigorously and consistently, ensuring pupils are aware of sanctions as well as rewards, providing them with activities during lunch and break times, providing more opportunities for them to take responsibility and improving their attendance and punctuality. It has dealt successfully with all of these. Pupils now have good attitudes and this has a positive impact on their achievement. The groundwork for this is undertaken in Nursery and Reception where children's personal and social skills are nurtured and developed well. Despite this, they are not on course to attain the goals expected by the end of Reception.
9. In almost every lesson observed, behaviour was either good or satisfactory. In the playground, pupils play well together, often participating in games. There are a significant number of pupils who have difficulty in behaving well at all times but teachers and their assistants have developed classroom management skills that almost always contain any outbreaks of unacceptable behaviour. Quite rightly, they are continuing to refine them. Good leadership by the behaviour manager and learning mentor have contributed to the improvement. Overall, pupils are aware of what is and is not acceptable conduct, and behave accordingly. As a result of considerable efforts on the part of the school, their moral development is good.
10. At lunchtime, well-trained supervisors provide guidance and support for all pupils with careful attention to younger members of the community and those with special needs.

During the inspection, the weather was particularly poor. At lunchtime and break time, pupils were well supervised with activities to keep them happily occupied.

11. Since the last inspection, the school has provided pupils with more opportunities to take responsibility. Pupils routinely take responsibility for day-to-day activities in school, such as helping in class. Older pupils proudly wear their badges to show that they are prefects or members of the school council, which comprises one boy and one girl from each class from Year 1 upwards.
12. Pupils are encouraged by consistent ways of administering rewards and sanctions. Contrary to the perception of a minority of the parents who attended the parents' meeting, inspectors found that rewards were awarded fairly. Creditably, older pupils take care of their younger colleagues, encouraging good relationships through the 'Buddies scheme'. No harassment or bullying was evident during the inspection. The number of exclusions has reduced: four occurred during the last year, as shown in the table below:

***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	281	4	1
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0

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

13. Although the overall level of attendance remains below the national average, the school has been successful in reducing the high level of authorised absence. For the term during which the inspection was carried out, the attendance had risen to 93.8 percent with 6.2 percent authorised absence and no unauthorised absence. Punctuality has improved since 2002 but it still falls short of expectations. In the event of an unexplained absence or persistent late arrival, the learning mentor contacts parents to investigate the reasons and give advice. The school works hard to enhance the links with parents and has extensive plans to extend the relationship. This is expected to bring about a further improvement in punctuality.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	9.2	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

14. Among the school's special rewards are certificates for pupils with an unblemished record of attendance each term. At the end of the year, pupils who have gained this recognition three times participate in a special treat. For example, last year the successful pupils were taken on a short tour in a stretch-limousine and attended the 'Headteacher's Tea Party'. Every week, pupils eagerly compete for the silver trophy for the class with the highest attendance. The school targets parents with newsletters

about the importance of good attendance. Parents are actively discouraged from taking holidays in term time and are informed of important dates and events. Usually parents work closely with the school by following the advice given. In exceptional cases, the school has had to use the services of the local authority's educational welfare officer.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. The majority of lessons are well taught but inadequate assessment systems and incomplete coverage of the curriculum mean that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils are cared for well. There are good links with other schools and colleges.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school. Assessment is unsatisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The proportion of teaching that is good or better has improved since the last inspection.
- Most teachers are skilled at managing those pupils who display challenging behaviour, but for a small minority this is still a problem.
- Basic writing skills are taught well in English lessons but are developed poorly in other subjects.
- Assessment systems are ineffective. This is largely because whole school procedures are inadequate and do not allow the wealth of data to be used to raise standards.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7 (14%)	23 (46%)	18 (36%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	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.*

15. As is evident from the table above, the majority of the lessons seen during the inspection were of good or better quality. However, this improvement in the quality of teaching is not yet reflected in the standards pupils attain over the long term. There are four clear reasons for this.
16. Firstly, until very recently the school has been dogged by long periods of staff absence, high turnover rates and some unsatisfactory teaching. This has reduced teaching quality and limited pupils' attainment and progress. Staffing is now more stable and the quality of teaching has improved since the 2002 inspection, particularly in Years 3 to 6 where it was unsatisfactory. However, this improvement is too recent to have impacted positively on standards.
17. Secondly, the curriculum is not covered in full. (See the curriculum section.)

18. Thirdly, the quality of writing is poor. That is not to say that the basic skills are badly taught in literacy lessons. They are not. Across the curriculum, however, pupils' writing experiences are too limited. For example, careful analysis of the complete work of individual pupils shows that much of the writing they do is heavily supported: handwriting practice is simply copying, there is excessive use of worksheets, lists and question and answer exercises. As a result, opportunities to write 'from scratch', at length and for a range of different purposes are in short supply. To sum up, writing opportunities are not planned systematically to raise standards.
19. Finally, the school has copious assessment data in English and mathematics but this is not used well enough to help pupils to achieve as well as they could. (This is essentially a leadership and management issue but is dealt with here, as it is an essential element in explaining the overall judgement on teaching and learning.) The key to the problem is that the whole school procedures put in place by the headteacher and senior staff are unsatisfactory. Hence, while this impacts on work at classroom level, it does not originate there. On the contrary, on a lesson-by-lesson basis, teachers make good use of what they know of pupils' attainment to set appropriate work. However, because they do not have an adequate understanding of attainment data and of 'value-added' (the progress made by pupils while in their class), teachers know that their pupils are making some progress but they don't know how much. For example, they are unaware of whether or not, in English or mathematics, their pupils are doing as well as they should over the course of a year / half-year. As a result, they do not know specifically what they need to focus on to improve their own practice and the achievement of the pupils in their charge. Target setting for pupils is at an early stage of development. Targets are not clearly linked to National Curriculum levels / sub-levels. They are not shared with parents. Hence, parents cannot become true partners in their children's learning. Except for English and mathematics there is no useful assessment. This means that senior managers and teachers do not have a clear understanding of the standards pupils reach, of their achievement, or of whether or not more should be expected of them. Senior staff fully acknowledge this shortfall and are eager to address it, not least through ensuring that each class teacher has a significantly better grasp of how well their pupils are doing.
20. With regard to lesson-by-lesson work, teachers are aware of the qualities that constitute good teaching and most of them display these on a regular basis. Common to all lessons, for example, is the practice of telling pupils what it is they are going to learn, and using the 'wind-up' session at the end of the lesson to check that this has been achieved. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and teachers are generally rewarded with pupils' genuine eagerness to learn. On most occasions teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, channelling their exuberance productively. This is no mean achievement as a significant minority of pupils present their teachers with particularly challenging behaviour. Occasionally however, teachers struggle to contain this energy and it overflows into unacceptable behaviour. On such occasions teaching is unsatisfactory and, very occasionally, poor. In English and mathematics lessons teachers almost always take adequate account of the levels of attainment in the class, and set work accordingly. In other subjects it is sometimes little more than a token gesture. There are several features that distinguish the good lessons from those that are satisfactory but key amongst these is the ability to engage and enthuse pupils: the skilful channelling of energy that could so easily cause disruption.

21. Teachers work closely with the support staff. This ensures that the work that pupils with special educational needs undertake is appropriate for them, while still relating to the work that the rest of the class are doing. A pupil mentor is in the early stages of working with a group of pupils who have been identified as needing personal, as well as academic support.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is unsatisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment are good. The accommodation is good and resources are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Coverage for some subjects is inadequate.
- There are too few staff in the Foundation Stage to ensure children get enough support.
- Enrichment activities are interesting, relevant and popular with pupils.
- The building and its grounds are of good quality.
- The outdoor area for the Foundation Stage is not yet fully developed.

### **Commentary**

22. The curriculum for English, mathematics and science is planned sufficiently well to provide worthwhile learning opportunities for all pupils. The school does however recognise that there are elements of non-compliance in some subjects and has begun to address this issue. The National Curriculum for ICT (in Years 3 to 6), design and technology and music is not fully covered. The curriculum for religious education does not fully reflect the content of the locally agreed syllabus. The time allocated to music and to design and technology is inadequate and does not meet national recommendations. This means that pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding across several subject areas. This impacts negatively on standards. The indoor curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, although staff are aware that planning for outdoor provision across the six areas is not yet developed. This limits children's development in all areas of learning.
23. In Years 1 to 6, the number of qualified teaching and support staff is sufficient to deliver the curriculum. They have an appropriate range of skills and experience to do the tasks assigned to them. In the Foundation Stage, however, there are too few adults for the number of children. This means that opportunities are limited for staff to interact in children's play and extend learning, particularly in speaking and listening skills.
24. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from work in all areas of the curriculum that matches their needs. Pupils receive extra literacy support from a support assistant working with them as a focussed group for 20 minutes per day. This enables them to make improved progress over time, in this area of their work.
25. Many pupils of all ages attend the good range of lunchtime and after-school activities. These cover a range of interests including sport, chess, art, ICT and dance. The Picasso Art Club attracts a great number of pupils throughout the year. Drummers also

run classes for enthusiastic pupils. The local comprehensive school organises sporting competitions for Year 6, including football. Older girls play in the girls' football league against local schools. After-school activities are well attended, particularly by pupils from Year 3 upwards. In these clubs pupils' social skills are enhanced as they learn to play in teams and to develop friendships with pupils from different classes.

26. The accommodation is spacious, safe and attractive. The grounds outside are spacious and attractive with a patio area, playing fields and wild areas. The school benefits from the use of a sports hall with a sprung floor, good changing facilities and access to an all-weather playing surface. These contribute to pupils' good achievement in physical education. The ICT suite has been recently refurbished to accommodate 30 computers. It has already had a positive impact on standards in Year 2. Nursery and Reception children are now accommodated in the Foundation Stage unit. This means that the youngest children in the school have plenty of space to move freely and engage in practical activities.

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

All aspects of pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. Support, advice and guidance and involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good procedures to ensure a high level of pastoral care for the pupils.
- Almost all pupils have a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults in the school.
- Pupils' access to well-informed support, advice and guidance is good on a personal basis, but unsatisfactory academically.

### **Commentary**

27. The school provides a safe and caring environment. Since the last inspection, the school has put in place relevant policies that are up to date and distributed the policies to all staff to ensure that there are consistent practices throughout the school.
28. In particular, the school caters very well by providing a high level of inclusive care that is needed for the above average number of pupils who need special support. Procedures for health and safety, first aid and child protection are known to work successfully. Caring practices extend to lessons and, as part of the personal, social and health education curriculum, pupils learn about such things as their relationship with each other and with the wider community.
29. The learning mentor has taken on the formal role of a mentor for a group of 12 pupils who have emotional, behavioural or social difficulties. Each pupil receives individual attention and, as the needs of each pupil are resolved, another pupil replaces the original one. In reality, there are many more pupils who informally meet with the learning mentor to discuss and work out their personal problems. They just turn up at the learning mentor's door and are never turned away.

30. Staff are highly regarded by the pupils for their caring, dedicated and committed approach to their welfare. The welfare of pupils starts before the school day. For example, many pupils have an early start to the day at the school's Breakfast Club, where the learning mentor and other staff provide food and a warm, caring environment.
31. Teachers and their support staff know their pupils well and, on an informal basis, are able to cater for their individual needs. This informal approach from permanent staff ensures that pupils are effectively challenged with their work. However, at a more formal level, there are insufficient records maintained on pupils' all-round development, the academic aspect in particular. New teachers and temporary staff, such as supply teachers, cannot readily provide advice and support for each individual pupil. The school has recognised the need to have a more rigorous approach to assessing and recording information about pupils. The support and guidance for pupils who have special educational needs are satisfactory and sometimes, good. Support assistants know the pupils well and show genuine concern for their welfare. The work they do has been planned to match each individual's targets. These targets are regularly reviewed.

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

The school has satisfactory partnership with parents and carers. The school's links with the wider community are sound. The school's connections with other schools and colleges are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Information to parents about the school, including pupils' standards and progress, is good, particularly in Nursery and Reception.
- Educational links are good with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer.
- Not all parents avail themselves of the opportunities provided by the school.

### **Commentary**

32. Parents are kept up to date about the life of the school with attractive newsletters and frequent bulletins. In addition to receiving a comprehensive annual report on the progress of their children, they are also able to attend a consultation evening with staff twice per year. Leaflets about the topics that their children will be studying are circulated to parents every term. The information for children in the Nursery and Reception is particularly good. For pupils in other years, the content of the material, while good, is more limited: leaflets are well laid out but do not provide specific guidance to parents about practical ways in which they could help their children at home. The school has recognised this shortfall and has plans to deal with it.
33. Teachers and other staff make themselves readily available to parents and carers who need to resolve any concerns. The vast majority of parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire confirmed this: they said that they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem or complaint. Parents of pupils who have given their teacher concerns are involved at an early stage. They are invited

to review meetings. They are involved in setting targets to meet the needs of their child.

34. Few parents help in school but there is a small core of people who work hard for the Parents and Friends Group, organising social events and raising money. For example, funds have been used to provide blinds for the school hall and other equipment. The school is well aware of the need to extend the partnership by increasing parental involvement and encouraging parents to come into school. Since the last inspection, the school has tried hard to achieve this aim by inviting parents to contribute to the behaviour policy and attend meetings about the subjects that their children will learn. However, the events have been poorly attended. The outline of a new strategy has been created to attract more parents into the life of the school. The first step, a 'Parents Room', is almost completed.
35. The school has a strong partnership with the local secondary school, to which the great majority of pupils transfer. For example, older pupils at Denbigh have participated in the Junior Sports Leaders scheme. Denbigh Community School also features regularly in the secondary school's attractively published newspaper, especially when there have been sporting successes. Other educational links are well established with the local college of further education and with a university.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall leadership and management of the school, including that by the governors, the headteacher and the senior managers, are satisfactory. Statutory requirements for ICT, design and technology, music and religious education are not met because the school does not teach all the necessary skills and knowledge. Governors had not been informed of these omissions.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has successfully led development on the key issues identified at the last inspection.
- In a climate of difficulties with recruitment of teachers, the headteacher has, wisely, been determined to make an appointment only if there was a fully suitable candidate.
- Senior staff have not used assessment information adequately as a means of raising attainment.

### **Commentary**

36. The governance of the school is satisfactory, an improvement since the last inspection. Governors are clear in their appreciation of the strengths of the school, particularly in relation to standards since 2002 and the work towards improving aspects of the school that were found unsatisfactory at the previous inspection. While the headteacher and subject leaders keep them informed about standards, they do not yet feel in a position to hold the school to account for the standards it achieves. They do, however, challenge the school's spending intentions. The school does not fulfil all of its statutory duties because gaps have gradually developed in curriculum coverage during the last two years as the school has been concentrating its efforts on raising standards in

literacy and numeracy. Governors, however, were unaware of these omissions and inspectors judge that, despite this shortfall, their work is satisfactory overall.

37. Whilst good strategic planning has brought about improvement since the previous inspection, there are other issues that are yet to be addressed. Firstly, while the school has concentrated on raising attainment in English and mathematics, aspects of some other subjects have not been covered in full. Secondly, assessment information is not used to keep an eye on the progress made by specific groups, classes or year groups, or to ask questions of the teaching that generated such progress. Senior managers do not know, therefore, if pupils are making even progress through the school. Hence, in the school's performance management system, there can be no fair assessment of accountability. The headteacher and key staff fully acknowledge these shortfalls and are eager to address them.
38. The headteacher and his staff are committed to providing an inclusive school in which all pupils are valued and supported. He is involved with many agencies to ensure that present and potential pupils experience a secure and caring environment in which to learn and develop. He is determined, as far as possible, to help those parents who find difficulty in supporting their children academically.
39. During periods of staff mobility and other school changes, the headteacher has, wisely, shown a determination to appoint only those who were professionally 'right for the job' and who were willing to give a full commitment to the long term good of the school.
40. The subject leaders and the senior managers of the school are aware of several of the issues raised in other areas of this report, although too little monitoring and analysis of assessment information takes place in some subjects. The result is that managers are not ready to support those subjects, such as religious education, where provision is unsatisfactory or where statutory requirements are not being met. As a part of the school's performance management system, teachers have targets to reach in relation to pupils' progress. Currently, because senior staff know too little about the use of assessment data, these are too imprecise to be useful.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,011,576
Total expenditure	979,597
Expenditure per pupil	2,698

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-18,650
Balance carried forward to the next	13,329

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

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

41. There has been a slight decline in provision since the last inspection, when it was judged to be good. This is because staff absences have been considerable during the last two years; hence, there has been too little continuity. In addition, the school has just changed from separate Nursery and Reception classes to a Foundation Stage unit and planning and organisation for the unit are at the developmental stage. Staff work hard to settle children into the new routine. When children enter the unit in the academic year following their third birthday, the majority have limited vocabulary and immature listening skills; their experiences are limited and attainment is well below what is normally expected. Teaching is satisfactory and children of Nursery and Reception ages, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. However, by the time they enter Year 1, the majority of children have not reached the expected early learning goals in all six areas. Staff assess children, but have not adopted a streamlined system to inform planning. Hence, they do not always achieve as well as they could. The adult-to-child ratio is low and this means that, at times, staff are not able to interact with children while they play, so opportunities for challenge are limited and this impacts negatively on standards. The accommodation indoors is spacious and the enclosed area outside is satisfactory. However staff are aware of the need to make better use of the outdoor area to support all six areas of learning. Leadership in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory with some good features. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for improvement. She has already created a team who work well together.

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

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

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

- Staff place good emphasis on this area of learning with the result that all settle well into the new system and are ready to learn.
- Children develop confidence and self-esteem because staff are caring role models.
- Children are interested and motivated to learn.
- Opportunities to develop independence in learning are not planned well enough.

#### **Commentary**

42. Teaching is good overall. Children benefit from the considerable amount of time that staff allocate to helping them settle into the new environment. This has a positive impact on learning and children achieve well. Children are already very familiar with the routines. They know when to wear aprons and where to hang them up afterwards. Staff encourage and praise children and this helps them to grow in confidence. Children are happy to talk with adults and visitors. Staff teach children how to work and play together and there are already good friendships established. Children take turns when using the computer or when riding tricycles. Overall they are well behaved, but do need constant support. They develop responsibilities for their classroom and

are learning to tidy away. Staff value children's work; they display it for all to see and consequently children are proud of their efforts. The good gains children make in their learning are as a result of the staff's continuous and caring approach. This leads to trusting relationships, and helps children to achieve well. Planning for staff-directed activity is well focused on learning objectives where activities are appropriate and challenging. For example, the parachute game in the playground inspires and motivates children and makes learning fun. The learning objective in choice activities is not always clear. Hence, some children are not sure about what they are supposed to do. The quality and range on offer does not always stimulate them so there are missed opportunities to extend learning. Adults are not always available to support children during their self-chosen activities because the adult-to-child ratio is too low. Children take care of their personal hygiene and know when to wash their hands. They line up sensibly when moving about the building and they follow staff instructions. At lunch time children collect their trays and make choices about the food they would like to eat. However there are missed opportunities to encourage and teach them to cut up their own food. They learn about other cultures through planned topics throughout the year. Children make good progress from a very low attainment on entry, but are unlikely to reach the nationally expected standard when they enter Year 1.

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

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

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

- Staff place a good emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills.
- Staff assess children but do not use the information sufficiently to challenge them.
- Children are sometimes taught in groups that are too large.

#### **Commentary**

43. Teaching is sound. Adults allocate a great deal of time to improving and developing children's speaking and listening skills. Children work and play alongside older and younger children and this has a good impact on their speaking and listening skills. Older children explain their ideas to younger ones and younger ones learn from older children. Children are beginning to improve their vocabulary because staff provide role-play scenarios such as the *Three Bears Cottage* and allocate good quality focused teaching time within role-play so children learn new words as they take on different parts. Adults teach a range of songs and rhymes to help children improve their vocabulary. For example, when learning about elephants, staff teach children the word *tusk* and encourage them to repeat it. It is difficult for staff to work with very small groups of children and in one-to-one situations. Therefore progress in speaking and listening skills is not accelerated enough. Reception children manage to talk about their ideas and discuss what they are doing, and most of their speech is in short phrases and simple sentences. Staff dedicate teaching time to encouraging children to recognise letter sounds, but these activities are sometimes done in isolation of other activities, so are not truly meaningful to children. Children enjoy stories and take books home to share with parents. A minority of Reception children can read more than ten words. Nursery children know how to turn pages and that pictures help you to find out about the story. Adults provide a good range of books linked to the topic in

the book area. This good practice helps children with both choice and preference and some already have favourite bear stories. Reception children are beginning to copy-write words and phrases with adult support, although the majority have poor pencil control. There is a satisfactory range of activities to support early handwriting skills, including the use of dough, and cutting and sticking activities. Staff are aware that assessment systems need improving. They observe children and overall know what they can do, but do not have a straightforward system of accessing information. Therefore children are not always grouped in ways that challenge them according to their stage of development. Children make sound progress, but they are not on course to reach the early learning goals set nationally for children at the end of the Reception year. As a result, their attainment is likely to be well below the expected level when they enter Year 1.

### **Mathematical development**

The provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

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

- There is too little time allocated to the development of number skills.
- Opportunities for free play in mathematics are not always well enough planned.

#### **Commentary**

44. Teaching is sound and children are beginning to develop an understanding of number. Nursery children learn to count by rote up to ten. Teachers make the activity fun by encouraging them to jump as they count. However, few Nursery children can show five fingers. The size of the groups they are taught in is too large, so achievement is barely satisfactory. There are missed opportunities to include counting and number recognition through everyday routines throughout the unit. Photographic evidence shows that Reception children learn to match objects to numbers. Nursery children match by colour. For example, they match a yellow bear to a yellow book, but do not know the word for *yellow* because their vocabulary is limited. Children play colour-matching games with snails and dice, matching colours to win. Reception children name colours accurately as they paint. The water tray is used well to encourage children's understanding of simple capacity. They fill and half-fill containers but, on the occasions when this is without adult interaction, learning is limited. Children play with three-dimensional shapes when constructing, but they do not know the names of the shapes they use. Progress for most children is satisfactory. The majority are likely to be well short of the expected goals when moving into Year 1.

### **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

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

- Children achieve well because they have regular access to challenging equipment outdoors.
- There are daily activities provided to promote fine finger skills.

## Commentary

45. Teaching is good and children achieve well. The area outdoors is sufficiently resourced and children use the challenging equipment each day. They improve their skills when they crawl through the tunnel, climb the frame and step on to the balancing beam. Children master the art of riding tricycles and learn to control them by moving the handlebars to turn corners. Adults plan games using traffic lights to help children learn how to stop and start their vehicles. They play parachute games to encourage physical teamwork. Children improve their eye-to-hand co-ordination. They manipulate *playdough* and use knives and scissors to cut. They work with brushes, scissors and glue spreaders with increasing control. They develop an awareness of a healthy lifestyle and have healthy snacks. They know they have to wash their hands after using the toilet. Most children reach the expected goals for large movement skills, but their fine finger skills are less well developed and the majority are likely to be short of the goals expected for Year 1.
46. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about provision in the following areas of learning. In **knowledge and understanding of the world** children play with magnetic trains, but because there is too little staff interaction, their curiosity is not aroused sufficiently. Children make bears with moving arms and legs using split pins. They have regular access to the computer but their skills are limited. Staff know children well and engage them in talk about their home and family. Special events are celebrated throughout the year. There are missed opportunities to use the area outdoors for investigation and experimentation.
47. In **creative development** children have good opportunities to engage in role-play because staff dress up and pretend with them. Children have access to paint every day. They sometimes paint flowers from direct observation. They make sculptured shapes in the sand and models with found materials. Adults display children's portraits with captions about their likes and dislikes, for all to see. Children enjoy songs and rhymes and use instruments. They sometimes have dancing sessions in the school hall. In both of these areas of learning, the majority are likely to be well short of the goals expected by the time they join Year 1.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in reading is good.
- Teaching in individual lessons seen was invariably good.
- There are too few opportunities to develop literacy skills, and particularly writing, in subjects other than English.
- Assessment in the subject is unsatisfactory.

#### Commentary

48. The fact that current standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are well below average may appear to be a decline since the 2004 results. However, it is nothing other than the natural difference between one year group and another: the current Year 6 classes are less able than those of the last school year. The big picture is that pupils join and leave the school with standards that are well below average. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and achievement is satisfactory. There are indications that standards in other year groups are higher, although still below average. Overall, this represents good improvement since the last inspection.
49. Pupils generally listen attentively because their teachers have high expectations of them. As a result, they benefit well from classroom activities. Speaking standards are less positive. However, from a very low start, pupils acquire an adequate technical vocabulary. They speak confidently in front of their classmates and adults although they are less competent at explanation or coherently expressing a view.
50. Reading skills are taught well and pupils acquire them well. Parents make an important contribution when they read with their children. Books are well matched to levels of attainment and, as a result, pupils are challenged by what they read without being overwhelmed by it. The way in which books are displayed in school, and access pupils have to them, are less positive features. For example, there are few enticing 'come and read me' displays in classrooms and the library stock is currently housed on corridor windowsills and is not in regular use. In addition, most classes have set aside ten-minute slots through the week for pupils to read to themselves or to their teacher. Currently pupils gain little from these sessions.
51. Writing is the weakest element. Apart from the issue of unsatisfactory assessment, the school is insufficiently aware of the writing opportunities it offers to pupils over time. Analysis shows that pupils are generally heavily supported when they write – by worksheets, for example, or because they are simply making a list, copying text or answering simple questions. The proportion of writing undertaken from scratch is a very small part of the whole. Hence, opportunities to write completely independently and at length are minimal.

52. The quality of teaching is good on a lesson-to-lesson basis. Basic skills are taught well and pupils absorb them eagerly. Over time, however, teaching is satisfactory. This is because assessment information (of which there is plenty) is not used well enough to track pupils' progress, to set targets for them and to share with these with their parents, or to provide information for the school's performance management systems. Hence, it does not adequately fulfil its key role of raising attainment.
53. Leadership is sound. The coordinator has worked hard in a range of ways to raise standards. Data from the last two years show that they are improving slowly. Not all of her initiatives have had the impact they could have done, because of the issue of assessment.

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

54. The curriculum is not currently organised in a way that provides opportunities for pupils to practise, in lessons other than English, the skills they have been taught. This inhibits the progress they make.

### **Mathematics**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- This is an improving subject of the curriculum.
- Assessment is not used effectively.
- Some work in books shows objectives being taught from earlier years.
- There is little evidence of mathematics being used to support work in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

55. Standards in mathematics are well below average in Years 2 and 6. This is an apparent decline in Year 6 since the test results in 2004, when standards were below average. However, the difference is due to the fact that the 2004 year group was more able than the current one. The big picture is that standards are improving slowly and have improved since the last inspection. Achievement is satisfactory overall and in some lessons observed it was good. The achievements of pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory.
56. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory over time, although during the inspection teaching was never less than good, and occasionally it was very good. An example of a very good lesson in Year 6 demonstrated how the personal skill and confidence of the teacher enabled her to raise the pupils' attainments through good levels of support, guidance and good relationships. The 'starter' element of the lesson required pupils to study a grid of nine numbers and record their known facts for each: factors, multiples, are they square or prime? Pupils worked very well, sometimes in pairs, and contributed their findings when similarities were identified. The teacher clearly valued their efforts. The lesson developed into the introductory phase of a mathematics investigation. The teacher established the nature of the investigation and then 'let them go' in order that the groups could begin a true investigation that

followed their changing lines of enquiry and findings. Very good learning matched the teaching, standards were above expectations and achievement was good.

57. From other pupils' earlier work, teaching was not satisfactory when, in a minority of classes, it used the objectives and associated standards of younger year groups. For example, when pupils in Year 3 completed a worksheet on telling the time, the level of the work matched that for Year 2. Teachers' marking frequently only uses ticks, and is occasionally incorrect. Most teachers add a statement that indicates that the pupil understands, and has been successful in reaching the lesson's objective. Some of these seem to have been written at a different time to the 'ticks' and their comprehension by the younger children is questionable.
58. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader is enthusiastic and has appropriate priorities. She is fully aware of where teaching is strong and where it needs support. She has worked to raise standards in line with the issues of the previous inspection and remains in close contact with sources of external help and guidance. Whilst the results of end-of-year tests are recorded and analysed, the nature of the analysis is not capable of giving a clear picture of the value added by each year for individuals and groups.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Mathematics makes a satisfactory contribution to other subjects. Pupils use their knowledge and skills to carry out calculations. They present and interpret their findings using graphs.

## Science

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising, although they are still well below average.
- Good teaching is helping to improve achievement, particularly in Year 6.
- Where support staff are used well, pupils' learning is accelerated.
- Assessment is not used well enough in planning to challenge all pupils.

## Commentary

60. Since the last report provision has improved and there is now an upward trend in standards in science. Overall, work in the pupils' books shows satisfactory achievement as pupils move from Year 1 to Year 6. Nevertheless, the standard of work seen in Year 2 and Year 6 was well below average. Pupils enjoy science lessons and discuss the work they have covered with enthusiasm. They are developing an understanding about the importance of fair testing and are beginning to recognise that scientists sometimes get it wrong the first time. They are learning to plan, carry out and record investigations and to present their results using recording frames, charts and diagrams. In some lessons, class assistants support groups of pupils and this ensures all are involved.
61. In Year 6, pupils carry out investigations and their active involvement in scientific experimentation improves their understanding. Provision for investigation is good in this year group. Elsewhere it is satisfactory. For example, there are too few on-going experiments in classes where pupils are learning about living and non-living objects. So some pupils in Year 1 are unclear in their understanding that plants live even though they can't move.
62. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in Year 6. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and encourage them as they learn. They are generally well organised and make sure all resources are at hand. In good lessons they use resources well and provide a hands-on approach to learning. Through investigation, pupils in Year 6 are quite clear about the differences between *melting* and *dissolving* solids. In some lessons, teachers' knowledge is less secure. For example, pupils in Year 4 measured the force of pushing in kilograms. In most classes teachers display scientific vocabulary for all to see, but miss opportunities in teaching time to allow pupils to use the new vocabulary during focused discussion with, for example, a talking partner.
63. Where support staff are used well, pupils' understanding is clear. For example, during a baking activity pupils in Year 2 learned that ingredients change when heated and understood why this happens. There are missed opportunities to use the school grounds and gardens to support learning in aspects of science.

64. Assessment systems in science are not robust enough and they are not used efficiently to ensure that planning and subsequent activities are pitched at the right level. This means that for some pupils the work is too hard and for others it is too easy. Hence, while planning is developing well, some teachers still provide the same work for all pupils.
65. Overall, leadership and management of science are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is very new in post and is clear about the strengths and weaknesses in the subject in terms of teaching, assessment and resources. He understands what needs to be done if standards are to improve. Only a limited amount of monitoring of science has taken place. He is aware that planning needs to be improved and that resources need increasing and organising.

### **Information and communication technology**

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There has been considerable improvement to resources.
- Since the last inspection, standards have risen in Year 2 but not in Year 6.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils have not covered all the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- The use of ICT to support teaching and learning, particular in other subjects of the curriculum, is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

66. In the previous inspection, the resources for ICT were unsatisfactory. The installation of a computer suite and the relocation of the original computers into classrooms have improved computer resource levels and pupils' access to them. This gives the school a good platform on which to build. Standards at Year 2 have already improved and now meet the national expectations. Pupils have all of the skills expected by Year 2 and their achievement is very good. However, by Year 6 there has been no improvement in standards: they fall well short of national expectations, largely because the full statutory curriculum is not covered but partially because there remains a legacy of low standards for the school to deal with. Lack of full curriculum coverage makes achievement through Years 3 to 6 unsatisfactory overall. However, pupils achieve well in the aspects that are covered. Viewed overall, achievement and improvement since the last inspection are both sound. Assessment has yet to be used in a way that identifies each pupil's needs and contributes to improved standards.
67. In the aspects of the subject covered in the lessons observed, standards were in line with expectations and teaching was good. This is not the case over time because the full curriculum is not covered and there is some unfamiliarity with, and lack of confidence in the use of all available facilities. Year 6 pupils used an information base to research their work on the Victorians' school life. They were producing a booklet and combined pictures and text. During the research, they were able to run a video at their own workstation and take notes from it. When their booklets are complete, the

reader will be able to navigate through the information using a contents page containing *hyperlinks* that will take them to their chosen section. These hyperlinks have been programmed and inserted by the pupils and this enables a test to be presented as an *e-book*. In this lesson, teaching was good as it offered good levels of guidance and support without too much intervention, enabling all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to achieve well. From discussions with pupils in Year 6, it is clear that this quality of provision has not been extended into all ICT applications and opportunities. For instance, they have not used e-mail as a means of communication or used the equipment to sense environmental changes, such as light and temperature, and record them. They cannot recall using spreadsheets for mathematical functions and modelling. Digital cameras have been used for some lessons although pupils only recall teachers' use of them. Until there is further development of teachers' confidence, and the use of the full range of ICT equipment by them and by pupils, standards are unlikely to rise.

68. A further potential of ICT is to enhance teaching, and therefore, pupils' learning. This is not yet in common practice. There is a data projector in the ICT suite and some staff use it efficiently. Interactive whiteboards are not available in the classrooms.
69. The subject leadership is satisfactory. The leader is aware of the standards being attained but, because the assessment of pupils' work is not thoroughly analysed, she is not well placed to identify the year groups and classes where ICT needs more support. She receives little time to monitor this subject, not least because available time is frequently taken up in practical issues related to the network and other equipment.

### **ICT across the curriculum**

70. At present, ICT supports pupils' work in other subjects to a limited extent. It is part of the subject leader's development plans. She understands that staff training will be required to ensure that all staff have the necessary skills to plan lessons that use ICT to enhance teaching and learning.

### **HUMANITIES**

*Religious education was inspected and is reported below. Geography and history were sampled.*

71. At the time of the inspection there was no **geography** evidence in pupils' books, except in Years 2 and 3. Discussion with Year 6 pupils made it clear that there were gaps in their knowledge and understanding. They talked about rivers and water treatment plants, but were not able to name major capital cities or the countries that make up the British Isles. While the evidence was too limited to be conclusive, this may indicate that the full curriculum is not being covered. In lessons seen, younger pupils developed the skills needed to read and understand maps. There was clear progression between the age groups. In Year 2 there were good links between geography and literacy as pupils learned about the physical features of a fictional island in Scotland from stories of Katie Morag. In Year 3, pupils go for walks within the locality to identify main buildings. They look at local road maps and identify main towns, cities and means of travel. Pupils enjoy the lessons and overall make steady

progress. At present there is no subject leader for geography to ensure the curriculum is followed and that pupils' learning progresses steadily.

72. **History** was sampled in a similar way and included examples of work from each year group. The work seen varied in quality and quantity and there were missed opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills to support history. Pupils in Year 1 are learning early skills of sequencing by comparing old and new toys. Older pupils in Year 5 learn how myths teach us about the way the Ancient Greeks lived. From discussions with pupils in Year 6 it is clear that they enjoy history and recall periods they studied recently. In a very good Year 6 lesson – because of its strong impact on pupils' understanding - the teacher and pupils acted in role pretending to be in a Victorian school. The hands-on approach to learning was very effective in creating an idea of how life was for young people over a hundred years ago and enables pupils to achieve well. Overall standards of work throughout the school are below those seen in other schools, and there is a need to systematically extend the work of more able pupils. However, from a well below average start, this represents good achievement.
73. The co-ordinator knows what needs to be done to improve provision. At present there is very little subject monitoring. She is developing a portfolio of work to assist staff in moderation of work. Assessments are not yet in place.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils in the same year group but in different classes are not always taught similar content.
- There is no leadership in the subject.
- Marking is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils learn about a good range of religions.
- There is very good teaching in Year 6.

### **Commentary**

74. Standards are well below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus throughout the school. The low standards of work seen and the lack of consistency in planning and teaching form the basis of a decline since the previous inspection. Currently, provision does not meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Hence, pupils do not achieve satisfactorily.
75. For too long, this subject has not had a leader. Planning and consistency have been early casualties of the lack of monitoring. This has, over time, resulted in unsatisfactory teaching overall and standards that are well below expectations by the time pupils reach Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is unsatisfactory due to the lack of progression. An analysis of past work demonstrates this clearly. In Year 2 the work of the two classes is entirely different. One class's work has been based on knowledge of Jesus' stories and parables, as set out in the long-term plan, whilst the work of the other class has been largely concerned with personal and social education. This lack of

consistency means that pupils in the same year group can be taught different curricula.

76. When teachers mark work, it generally consists of a tick, sometimes a comment and often a '*You can .....*' statement that repeats the learning objective of the lesson. In Year 2 for instance, the comment too often referred to the quality of the pupil's cutting out skills rather than their religious education work. Because unfinished work is frequently accepted, as signalled by a tick, it is not reasonable evidence on which to base the '*You can.....*' statement.
77. The curriculum is not covered in full. That aside, teaching is satisfactory overall. However, there was some very good teaching in Year 6 on signs, symbols and those found in Buddhism. This demonstrated personal commitment to the teaching of the subject, high levels of subject knowledge, and good relations with pupils that enabled the teacher to give them opportunities to develop their independent learning with light-touch supervision. Pupils displayed good attitudes and a willingness to take charge of their own learning through book-based research.
78. Overall, religious education work is too concerned with facts and knowledge of religions without the vital component of understanding, gained *from* them. In discussions with pupils, they were able to discuss signs, symbols and characteristics of a good range of religions including Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity. They were not able to discuss their importance to the believer or how having a faith could affect the way an individual might react to others. They could not recall times during lessons when such aspects of religious education were discussed.

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

*Art and design and physical education were inspected in full and are reported below. Design and technology and music were sampled.*

79. No **design and technology** lessons were observed and there was very little work to see, either on display or in the form of recent photographs. Pupils say they do little in the way of design and technology. Year 6 pupils, for example, recalled working with fabric in Year 5 but could not recall any experiences of working with food or wood over the past several years. There is nothing to indicate that the design and technology curriculum is being covered, or that the necessary resources are available. The subject coordinator confirms that the subject has 'fallen by the wayside'. The headteacher is also aware of this shortfall, brought about by the school's concentration on literacy and numeracy since the last inspection. On the basis of this evidence, standards are well below those expected nationally throughout the school.
80. Standards in **music** are well below expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory, as is improvement since the last inspection when standards also failed to meet those expected. A discussion with pupils soon highlighted their lack of experience in using a wide range of instruments of different characteristics. Some pupils recall having used small, untuned, percussion instruments occasionally, as a simple accompaniment to a song. Their recollections paint a picture of unsatisfactory teaching that lacks challenge, expectation and motivation. Whilst there is a commercial scheme of work available to teachers, there is a general lack of

confidence in teaching music. This limits any benefit that could be gained from it. The school has a satisfactory range of classroom instruments, some of which need and are worthy of renovation: they are rarely found in primary schools because of their cost. Singing is satisfactory, but no better because no-one promotes appropriate stance and breathing. There are no lessons in which singing technique is the focus.

81. Whilst there are few activities in which pupils might join, such as choir or recorder groups, a good variety of visiting specialists give added breadth to their experiences. For example, pupils showed enthusiasm and enjoyment in a recent drumming workshop. This gave them a lot of practical experience using African drums through the high expectations of the tutor. In lessons, they do not use instruments in the composition of their own work. Too little time is planned for music lessons. In Year 6, for example, pupils receive approximately 30 minutes per week for only half of each term. This roughly equates to 15 minutes per week over the year and is insufficient.
82. Leadership is unsatisfactory. The subject leader understands the lack of confidence in music teaching though she doesn't have the time to monitor the subject more closely in order to identify where help is needed. She has, however, presented a report to the governors, highlighting essential developments that include her own training needs in order to equip herself yet further to support colleagues in their teaching.

## **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below expectations, but this represents good achievement from well below average attainment in creative skills when pupils enter Year 1.
- The subject coordinator has very good subject knowledge and uses this to help pupils achieve well.
- Picasso Art Club adds a valuable dimension to the school's provision.

### **Commentary**

83. As at the last inspection, standards in art and design are below those expected. Pupils do not fully make up for the well below expected creative skills with which they leave Reception although some of the teaching in Year 1 and the impact of Picasso's Art Club (see below) mean that Year 2 and 6 standards are below rather than well below those expected nationally. Overall, achievement is good. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The subject has taken a back seat while the school's main efforts have, understandably, been devoted to raising standards in literacy and numeracy.
84. The teaching seen ranged from very good to poor, and was satisfactory overall. Where it was poor it was because pupils' behaviour was wholly unacceptable and a significant proportion of time in what had the potential to be a good lesson was wasted. The coordinator taught the very good lesson and her impressive subject expertise and very good generic teaching skills shone through. This enabled her Year 1 class to achieve very well and to produce self-portraits that paid attention to detail and involved pupils

in making choices in media. Most of the work on display in the school, however, was not at an expected level and was representative of teaching and learning that was satisfactory at best, and limited in breadth.

85. Also on display in the school was a representative sample of work produced by pupils at Picasso's Art Club. The club was made possible because the school has secured external funding. The club caters for twenty pupils at a time, each group enjoying 90-minute weekly sessions after school, for a half-term period. The long waiting list is testament to its popularity – and it does reach about 120 pupils a year. Pupils try their hand at activities such as making mosaics, exploring aboriginal art and creating plate designs. In addition to providing a wide variety of artistic experiences, it also makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural development. This has helped to raise standards from well below to below expectations.
86. The subject coordinator is very knowledgeable. Her skill has benefited large numbers of pupils through the Picasso Art Club. However, opportunities to provide support to other staff, for example through demonstration lessons or team-teaching, have been limited.

### **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The impact of consistently good teaching ensures pupils achieve well.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Assessment systems are not yet in place.

### **Commentary**

87. Standards in Years 2 and 6 meet expectations, as at the time of the last inspection. Improvement has been satisfactory. Pupils achieve well and improve their skills as they move up the school. Some pupils benefit from specialist teaching and this has a good impact on their achievement. In lessons seen, teaching was consistently good in both Years 1-2 and Years 3-6. Teachers manage pupils well in lessons so all learn new skills in a safe environment. They make sure all are aware of the dangers during physical activity. For example, Year 2 teachers explained the hardness of basketballs so pupils could take care as they learned new skills. The pace of the lessons was good and pupils had many chances to improve their skills and techniques through a good variety of activities. There was no time wasted and pupils in Year 6 who were ready first, jogged around the gym while waiting for their classmates. Teachers discussed health issues during lessons and made sure all were aware of the importance of the warm-up and cool-down. Older pupils were clear about the impact these activities have on muscles. In Year 6 teachers used music in an inspirational way to teach dance. Pupils moved with sustained energy, sometimes alone, sometimes partnered for long periods of time, showing pleasure and pride in their achievements. Both girls and boys willingly volunteered to perform for others and pupils analysed their work in terms of physical quality. Similar strategies were used in Year 4 where pupils observed

others and improved balance and concentration when moving symmetrically with a partner.

88. The school offers pupils a good range of popular seasonal sports clubs, which are run after school. These include a broad range of sporting activities such as tag rugby, football, cheerleading, gymnastics, dance, basketball, and girls' and boys' football. The school invites local coaches to work with pupils so that the profile of physical education remains high in the school. The school benefits from a gymnasium with a sprung floor and the use of local facilities, including an all-weather pitch. The school is involved in a range of sporting tournaments, some of which are linked to the secondary school.
89. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The school makes good use of the scheme of work in place, but the co-ordinator is aware that plans need to be reviewed. Assessment systems are not yet in place to help teachers consider and plan extension activities for pupils who are more able in physical terms.

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

*This area of the curriculum was sampled.*

90. The school takes the time and trouble to look after the emotional and other personal needs of pupils because it is aware of the impact that this can have on learning. In particular, the learning mentor spends dedicated time with identified pupils but is available to any pupil who wants to talk with her. This input contributes positively to pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Throughout the school, all adults promote good personal and social qualities and are very good role models for pupils. They foster self-esteem and motivate the pupils through awards and celebration of good attitudes to their work and to their peers.
91. Arrangements to encourage pupils to take on responsibility and show initiative have recently begun in the school. The new co-ordinator for personal, social and health education has begun to develop a curriculum and to find where elements of it are already being taught. For example, in science lessons pupils learn about healthy lifestyles. 'Circle time' is being used to highlight emerging issues, both on personal and social levels.

## 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	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>4</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
<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	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

