

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DENBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Denbury, Newton Abbot

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113197

Headteacher: Ms Tracey Hart

Lead inspector: Mr Peter Sandall

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> February – 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2005

Inspection number: 266728

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: 4-11

GENDER OF PUPILS: MIXED

NUMBER ON ROLL: 96

SCHOOL ADDRESS: WEST STREET  
DENBURY  
NEWTON ABBOT  
DEVON

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APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY: THE GOVERNING BODY

NAME OF CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: MRS PENNIE PARSONS

DATE OF PREVIOUS INSPECTION: 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Denbury Primary School is a small village school in a rural area of Devon, about four miles from the town of Newton Abbot. About half its pupils come from the village, while the rest are drawn from a wider area. A significant proportion joins the school after Year 2. All the pupils are white and of British descent, and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. There are 96 pupils attending full time, with slightly more girls than boys. While they come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, many have a good start in life, and the percentage of pupils entitled to a free school meal is well below average. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class is generally above average, although, as numbers are relatively small, this fluctuates from year to year. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average, but the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Numbers on

roll have declined slightly since the previous inspection. The school has recently been endorsed as 'Investor in Children' by the Centre for Research in Early Childhood, for the quality of its early learning provision in the Foundation Stage.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25771	Mr Peter Sandall	Lead inspector	Mathematics English Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Religious education English as an additional language
8971	Mrs Judith Hesslewood	Lay inspector	
19302	Mrs Chris Perrett	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Personal, social and health education Geography History Special educational needs The Foundation Stage curriculum

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Denbury is a very effective school** which gives very good value for money. The pupils achieve well and reach above average standards overall, due to good teaching in a very good climate for learning. Leadership and management are very good and have been instrumental in raising both standards and expectations in recent years.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school is led and managed very well by the headteacher.
- Teaching is good, overall, with a high proportion of very good teaching.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well, although their progress slows in Years 3 and 4.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are very good, and relationships are excellent.
- The school places a high priority on pupils' care and welfare and has very good systems of support.
- There are very good links with parents, the community and other schools.

The school has made good improvement overall. Standards since the previous inspection have been either maintained or improved. The issues that arose then, concerning the assessment of pupils' progress, have been dealt with effectively. There is now more good and very good teaching.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	D	A	A
Mathematics	D	B	A	A
Science	D	C	B	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. NB. The relatively small numbers of pupils in each year mean caution should be used when interpreting this data.*

**Pupils' achievement is good.** Children start the reception year with a range of abilities, but there is a significant number who are above average. The children are in line to meet the expected goals in all six areas of learning<sup>1</sup> by the end of the reception year, and to exceed them in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards in personal, social and emotional development are well above those expected. In Years 1 and 2, pupils currently reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, as they do by Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. However, pupils' rate of progress slows in Years 3 and 4 before accelerating in Years 5 and 6. This is because the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 is not as consistently good as it is in the rest of the school. Higher-attaining pupils do well in both Year 2 and Year 6, with many achieving the higher Level 3 and Level 5 respectively in the national tests. The school's trend of improvement, as measured by national tests, is good, being above average at both Year 2 and Year 6. While all pupils do well, pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Teaching is related carefully to their needs and they receive very good support from teaching assistants.

**Pupils display very good personal qualities, and their spiritual, moral, social and personal development is also very good.** They have very good attitudes to school and to each other, and their relationships with adults are excellent. Together with very good behaviour, these social

<sup>1</sup> The six areas of learning are: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; creative development.

strengths contribute to a very good ethos and environment for learning. While attendance is broadly average, the school makes good efforts to improve it, and punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides its pupils with a good education and the quality of teaching and learning is good overall.** Very good lessons were seen in all classes, with the children in the reception year and pupils in Years 5 and 6 being taught particularly well. Eighty-five per cent of the teaching seen was at least good, with almost half of this being very good. While satisfactory, the overall quality of teaching is not as strong for pupils in Years 3 and 4, and, as a result, their progress slows. Some of the lessons in these classes are not as well planned, and expectations of what they can achieve are not consistently high enough. The strengths in the teaching include encouragement and involvement of pupils in their learning, and high expectations of response and behaviour. Because pupils respond to this and enjoy their learning, most lessons have a positive working atmosphere and time is used well. Good use is made of specific targets and constructive marking in English and mathematics, so all pupils know how to improve. Skilled support staff are used very well, and make a strong contribution to the progress of lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment data, key issues from the previous inspection, are now embedded well in practice.

A good and interesting curriculum is enriched by a very good programme of visits and visitors, with plenty of opportunity for pupils to participate in activities outside the school day, which also contribute to very good links with the community. There is a very good partnership with parents and carers. Pupils are cared for very well and have ready access to very good support and guidance.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** The headteacher's excellent vision and sense of purpose ensure that good practice is valued and built on. Her motivation, enthusiasm, example and influence are fundamental to the school's success. She has developed a very strong sense of teamwork which involves everyone connected with the school. Excellent systems for evaluating the school's progress ensure that the next steps are readily identified. Management is very effective. There are clear roles and responsibilities which involve all stakeholders. All staff have access to very good professional development which is part of the effective system for performance management. All the school's procedures are directed at raising pupils' achievements in all aspects of their education. Governors have a good and improving understanding of the school's needs and are becoming increasingly adept at asking the right questions. Governors are well organised and self evaluative and are fully involved in decisions that seek best value. All statutory requirements are met. Financial management is very good and is closely linked to the school's priorities.

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

The pupils and their parents are very happy with their school. Positive responses to the pre-inspection parents' questionnaire were endorsed by a very well attended parents' meeting. Parents are made welcome, kept well informed, and encouraged to be partners in their children's education. They believe, and inspectors agree, that their children are receiving a good education, both academically and socially. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy their lessons and that they are cared for very well by all the adults in the school. This is also supported by inspection evidence.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Use the examples of high-quality teaching in the school to improve teaching overall and ensure that all pupils make consistent progress over time.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement is good. It is good overall in the Foundation Stage<sup>2</sup>, and good in Years 1 and 2, where pupils attain above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement continues to be good by Year 6, where standards in the core subjects<sup>3</sup> are above average.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well over their time in school.
- Recent test results at Year 2 and Year 6 compare very favourably with similar schools.
- The trend in standards in test results is above the national average at both Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress.
- The rate of progress slows in Years 3 and 4.

#### Commentary

1. Children in the Foundation Stage enter school with a range of ability, but in most years the majority have above average attainment when they start. All the children have benefited from some pre-school education. The strongest areas are their personal and social development and their speaking and listening skills, with a good proportion of the children coming from homes where these are promoted and encouraged. The school builds on these strengths very effectively, so that the children grow in confidence and enthusiasm and, as a result, make good progress and achieve well. They are on course to achieve the expected standards in all six areas of learning, and to exceed them in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. By the end of the reception year, the children should be well above the expected standard in personal, social and emotional development.
2. The school's results in the most recent national tests at Year 2 were well above the national average for reading, and above average in writing and mathematics. This was an improvement on the previous year, when pupils attained average standards in all three areas. As the number of pupils taking the tests each year is relatively small, fluctuations are to be expected. However, the trend over the past five years shows that results have improved at a greater rate than those for schools nationally, with particular improvement over the last three years, and pupils achieve well. Pupils in the current Year 2 are attaining above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, and teachers' assessments also indicates that standards in science are above average, with a number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3. This is an improvement, as previously few, if any, pupils were assessed as reaching this level of understanding.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.1 (16.2)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.4 (15.0)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.0 (16.8)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

<sup>2</sup> The Foundation Stage caters for children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

<sup>3</sup> The core subjects are English, mathematics and science.

- The picture by Year 6 is similar to that found at Year 2. Pupils in Year 6 last year did exceptionally well, attaining standards which were well above the national average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. When compared to the standards they attained at Year 2, four years previously, their progress was very good in all three subjects. Small numbers mean that one year's results are not necessarily representative, but the trend of improvement over the last five years is, again, above that found nationally. The pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining above average standards in all three core subjects and are achieving well.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.3 (26.2)	26.9 (26.8 )
Mathematics	28.9 (27.8)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.6 (29.1)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- The quality of education which leads to these standards being achieved is closely linked to the quality of the headteacher's leadership and drive for improvement. She has a heavy teaching commitment, mainly in the Foundation Stage but also in Years 5 and 6. Her own teaching is of a high standard and is a good model for her colleagues. She has high expectations which are shared with parents, teachers, support staff and pupils, generally to very good effect. Curriculum innovations, such as those in the Foundation Stage or concerning daily exercise, are thoughtful and effective. New staff appointments have added strength to teaching, as has the management and use of support staff and parents in school.
- The relatively weaker achievement of pupils in Years 3 and 4 is recognised by the management of the school. A study of the pupils' books indicates that, currently, both the quality and quantity of work produced, while satisfactory, does not match that produced by pupils in other year groups.
- Standards in information and communication technology are satisfactory at Year 2 and above average by Year 6. While this appears to be a weaker position than that found by the previous inspection, there are clear improvements in both the delivery of the subject and the quantity and quality of resources. Coverage of all aspects of the curriculum for information and communication technology is now assured, where it was not before. Very good systems of assessment are now used well to check pupils' progress; the lack of this was a key issue at the last inspection.
- Standards in the games aspect of physical education were satisfactory in the lessons seen, although the school's successes in sporting competitions, often against larger schools, suggest that standards are good overall. Other subjects were not a focus for the inspection, but evidence suggests that standards are similar to those found nationally. In art and design, the quality of work in pupils' sketchbooks, as well as on the walls and in the one lesson seen, together with discussions with pupils in Year 6, indicate that above average standards are being attained, and that pupils' skills are developed progressively and well.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, and they achieve very well in relation to their earlier attainment. Pupils are identified early, and targets are set to address their specific needs. They work hard to achieve these individual targets, and make very good progress. The school provides a range of additional help for these pupils, including extra help within the class, and additional support in smaller groups from a learning support assistant. This support is planned well and teachers and support assistants work closely together in both planning and evaluating pupils' progress.
- The school has identified some pupils as gifted and talented and ensures that they are given suitably challenging tasks to extend their thinking. Their progress is monitored and they achieve as well as their classmates.

10. A number of pupils join the school after the normal starting point, often in Key Stage 2<sup>4</sup>. The parents spoken to were very happy with their children's progress, often comparing it favourably to that made at their previous school. Tracking documentation bears this out, suggesting that these pupils settle quickly into the school and are imbued with the same enthusiasm for learning shown by their classmates.
11. While there are some differences between the attainment of boys and girls in different subjects at both key stages, the numbers are too small for these to be statistically significant, and relate more to the abilities of boys and girls in different year groups. The school has analysed them but has found no recurring pattern.

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

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are very good. Personal qualities are developed well. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good, while that for their cultural and spiritual development is good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' relationships with each other and with staff are excellent.
- The school stimulates pupils effectively and encourages in them the desire to learn.
- Pupils articulate their knowledge and views confidently.
- The social skills and moral framework necessary for living harmoniously in a community are reinforced constantly and consistently.
- Pupils behave very well, are polite and show respect for the feelings of others.

### **Commentary**

12. Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. Relationships between all members of the school community are excellent, because a nurturing family ethos is actively encouraged and developed well by all adults. Older and younger children learn, play and eat together happily. Regular breaks for exercise for all and high-quality play equipment for use during breaks influence pupils; social, moral and cultural development positively. The high priority placed on developing personal and social skills starts at the very beginning with the children in the Foundation Stage. The 'café' time, which they share each day with pupils from Years 1 and 2, provides a very good start to their social education and also helps pupils from different age groups to mix happily together, something which is apparent throughout the school.
13. Pupils are eager to increase their knowledge, and their attitudes to school and to learning are very good. In lessons, pupils are attentive, keen to answer questions and settle quickly to their work. They enjoy recording answers on individual whiteboards, a technique which rapidly switches pupils into active participants in the lesson while enabling the adults to monitor and assess learning and provide suitable support. In the best lessons, pupils are very productive and work well together in pairs and groups in all classes.
14. The wide range of themed activities across different areas of the curriculum encourages an enthusiastic response, because they make learning relevant and interesting. Pupils look forward to participating in all the activities provided. For example, learning about the Celts and Romans included research, report and newspaper writing, and creating different mosaics as a group and individually. The school's secure and caring environment, active parental support and teachers' use of open questions requiring explanatory answers, all combine to encourage positive attitudes. It produces pupils with good self-esteem who are confident to express their knowledge and views in lessons and in conversation with adults.

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<sup>4</sup> Key Stage 2, sometimes referred to as the juniors, caters for pupils aged between 7 and 11 and refers to pupils who are in Years 3 to 6.

15. Pupils with special educational needs have the same very good attitudes to learning as their classmates and are included in all aspects of school life. This is one of the reasons for their very good progress, as their confidence is encouraged by the positive attitudes of those around them.
16. Because all staff collaborate well to uphold the consistent, positive approach to school routines and behaviour management, pupils' behaviour throughout the school day is very good. Clear, consistent day-to-day classroom routines, high expectations of sensible movement from place to place, good use of praise to highlight self-disciplined attitudes and good behaviour, all contribute well to developing the high levels of responsible social skills and attitudes displayed by pupils. Pupils are very polite and courteous. They gain a clear understanding of their own and other people's lives and feelings, particularly through their assemblies and by the staff using every opportunity to reinforce core principles. Spiritual awareness is successfully encouraged in assemblies and religious education by focusing thought with the use of candles. A lesson on Christian symbols and their meaning, for example, very successfully linked factual knowledge with an appreciation of the importance these symbols have for some people and the importance of respecting this.
17. Attendance is within the average range for primary schools. However, absence due to holidays taken during term time, although actively discouraged by the school, adversely affects the school's attendance rate. Absence is monitored closely and early contact is made with parents if their children are absent without explanation. Pupils are punctual and settle quickly in the classroom. There were no exclusions from the school during the previous year.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.4	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

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

The school provides a good education for all its pupils. Teaching is good. Learning is supported by a very good ethos, a shared commitment to improvement and very good leadership and management. There are very good levels of support and guidance and an interesting curriculum with very good opportunities for enrichment. There are very good links with parents, the wider community and other schools.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good overall. They are very good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6. Assessment procedures are very good, and are used very effectively to promote pupils' learning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good overall, with very good teaching occurring in all classes.
- Children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught very well.
- Learning slows in Years 3 and 4 because the quality of teaching varies.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Very good assessment procedures support the learning of pupils of all abilities.
- Very good tracking systems give a clear view of the progress of each pupil over time.
- Target setting is used effectively in English and mathematics.

### **Commentary**

18. Teaching at Denbury is good overall and, because of this, pupils make good progress. It has improved since the previous inspection, with twice as many lessons being rated as very good. While these very good lessons occur in all classes, they are more frequent for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Year 5 and 6.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 20 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	8	9	3	0	0	0

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

19. Children in the Foundation Stage are very fortunate as they are taught very well in the mornings by the headteacher, supported by a teaching assistant. As there are only twelve children in the group, they receive plenty of individual attention. The teaching is stimulating and exciting, with very good use made of opportunities to broaden children's understanding, whenever and however they arise. There is excellent use of questioning techniques, with the children being constantly encouraged to work things out for themselves, rather than being given information. The daily 'café' time, when these children join the pupils from Years 1 and 2 for a drink and a snack, is used very effectively to encourage social skills and increase pupils' independence and sense of responsibility.
20. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 also benefit from being taught as a group in the morning, mainly for the core subjects of English and mathematics, as this gives a class size of around 20, so that these pupils are also supported well. Teaching is good, overall, in these sessions, and pupils are challenged effectively at their own level through appropriate tasks. Because there are fewer pupils, those who have difficulties are quickly apparent and receive a good level of support and encouragement. In the afternoons, pupils in Years 1 and 2 join with the reception-age children. Despite the size of the group, and the range of ability and maturity, the good teaching and a good level of support ensure that all of the group make good progress and expectations are matched carefully to each pupil's developmental stage. However, this is less apparent in science, where there is insufficient challenge for the higher-attaining pupils in Year 2. The work in the books for pupils in Years 1 and 2 indicates that they are covering an appropriate curriculum for their age in all subjects.
21. Progress slows for pupils in Years 3 and 4, particularly in the core subjects. This is evident in pupils' books, where both the quantity and the quality of work are no more than satisfactory. There are indications of recent improvements, but these will need to be sustained over time if higher-attaining pupils, in particular, are to make the progress of which their results when they were in Year 2 suggest they are capable. The organisation of teachers to make the best use of individual strengths is under active consideration. The introduction of targets in English and mathematics, for both groups and individuals, is also being used to monitor and encourage progress and to raise expectations. These pupils do benefit from some good and very good teaching, but it is inconsistent. In some lessons, there is a lack of clarity in both the teacher's intentions and in the methods used to achieve them, and expectations are not high enough to bring the best out of the pupils. Here, pupils with special educational needs tend to make better progress, because they are well supported and are, therefore, more aware of what they needed to do to succeed.
22. Pupils are making very good progress in Years 5 and 6, due to the very good standard of teaching they are currently receiving. Despite being a large class, which also contains some pupils from Year 4, pupils achieve very well because both the planning and delivery of lessons is very well focused on the needs of the different ability groups. Very good use is made of a highly qualified support assistant so that at times, for example, in information and communication technology, the class is set into two ability groups. While this allows the teacher to teach information and communication technology at an appropriate level, the other group works very effectively on spellings, which they take from their own mistakes, and which have been corrected in their books. This focused spelling work also features in Years 3 and 4.

23. The quality of marking is always satisfactory, but is of a very high standard in the older pupils' books. Here, comments are clear and helpful, and constantly help pupils both to understand where they go wrong and set targets for future improvement. As well as class targets for English and mathematics, individual targets in these subjects are set for pupils throughout the school at open evenings, when both pupils and their parents are present. This is very good practice, ensuring that parents are fully aware of where improvements are needed and involving both pupil and parent in future learning.
24. All pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans or provision maps that contain clear practical targets. Teachers know their pupils well, and ensure that they make maximum gains in their learning, by setting tasks that are within the pupils' capabilities, and that also offer appropriate challenges to develop learning. Learning support assistants are trained well to meet the needs of the pupils they support and have a considerable and positive impact on their learning. There is an effective balance between supporting pupils in class tasks and teaching them in separate groups, for example, to master specific skills.
25. Very good assessment procedures are used very effectively to check pupils' progress and set the next steps for learning. This is a distinct improvement on the position at the previous inspection, when assessment was at the heart of all the key issues. There is evidence of teachers using on-going assessment to change their planning in the light of pupils' responses, as well as regular half-termly assessments against key objectives. As well as 'progress books', three pupils of varying abilities, from each year group, are tracked carefully to define the progress being made by different groups. The school uses non-statutory government tests annually and the results are used to track individual progress and set challenging targets for eventual attainment. This tracking shows that pupils of all abilities make good, and in some cases very good, progress when compared to their results in the national tests at Year 2.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a good and broad range of curricular opportunities with very good opportunities for enrichment. The quality of accommodation is good overall, and the range of learning resources in most areas of the curriculum is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school enhances the curriculum.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Very good attention is given to equality of opportunity and all pupils are equally valued.
- The hall is small, limiting opportunities for physical education.

### **Commentary**

26. A very good curriculum is planned for children in the reception class because staff have a clear understanding of the learning needs of children of this age. It covers all the areas of learning. Children are given a wide range of opportunities to explore, through structured play activities, both inside and outside the classroom. There is a good balance between activities directed by the adults, and those where children can choose what to do and develop their independent learning skills. The school recognises the importance of play activities, and these opportunities are available for pupils in Years 1 and 2 as well as the reception-age children.
27. Throughout the rest of the school, there is a broad, balanced, coherent and effectively planned curriculum, using a two-year rolling programme to take account of the mixed-age classes. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements, including provision for religious education and collective worship, and provides very effective personal, social and health education, including, where appropriate, sex and drugs awareness education. French is taught to pupils in Years 5 and 6, and all pupils, including the very youngest, have swimming lessons on a regular basis. There is a very good level of equality of opportunity for all pupils.

All staff know the pupils very well and, as a result, the pupils feel they are treated fairly and encouraged to be successful in all areas of the curriculum.

28. Appropriate amounts of time are given to the teaching of literacy and mathematics, but more emphasis could be given to producing extended pieces of writing to support other subjects. There is ample evidence of the school's willingness to adopt new strategies, and to seek and accept guidance on reforming the curriculum in order to make improvements. The headteacher manages the curriculum very well, and ensures that all classes have a daily physical activity session to enable both minds and bodies to be alert. This helps to make up for the limited indoor facilities for physical education.
29. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils are supported very well by committed, well-trained assistants. The very positive atmosphere of the school promotes the very effective inclusion of pupils with special educational needs into every aspect of the school's life, and the school is particularly successful in including pupils arriving from other schools with a history of behavioural problems.
30. The school provides pupils with a very good range of interesting, relevant and well-attended extra-curricular activities, including sporting, musical and reading clubs. Many of these are run by parents, cementing the very good links which parents have with the school. The school regularly enters teams into competitive sporting events and does very well, especially as most of the schools competed against have more pupils to choose from. Sporting and cultural visits linked to the curriculum are organised to extend pupils' experiences, including a residential visit for the older pupils. There is a good range of visitors who work in the school during the year, bringing expertise and variety with them.
31. There is a good match of teachers to the curriculum, and a very good match of well-qualified and hard-working support staff. The headteacher manages the fact that many of the teaching staff are part-time very well, so that their particular expertise is used to the best advantage. The school's accommodation is good, overall, and much work has been done recently to enhance the accommodation for the younger pupils, which is now very good. Classrooms are of a reasonable size and there is a computer suite big enough to house half a class of pupils, which is used effectively. There is also a separate library and pupils are familiar with the systems and use it regularly. The outside accommodation includes a large field, a wooded area and a pond, all used well to support environmental studies. The hard-surfaced area is somewhat small, but this poses no problems as the pupils play so well together. The small hall, however, does affect the organisation of the teaching of physical education, as it is not large enough for a whole class group to be taught together.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The school provides very well for the health, safety, care and welfare of pupils. Very good support, advice and guidance are given, based on the monitoring of achievements and personal development. The involvement of pupils in the school, through seeking, valuing and acting on their views, is very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The nurturing care, support and attention paid by all staff to the welfare and individual needs of all pupils are very good.
- Exercise and healthy eating are promoted very well.
- Consistent methods are used for monitoring achievements and personal development.
- Democratic principles are actively promoted when seeking pupils' views.

## **Commentary**

32. Provision for the health, safety, care and welfare of pupils is much improved since the previous inspection. The school provides a very nurturing, supportive environment in which pupils can learn and develop well. Each child is valued for who they are and what they can

contribute to the school. Staff have a very good understanding of the background and personal needs of individual pupils. Parents and pupils are in agreement that staff treat pupils fairly.

33. A warm, welcoming and stimulating learning environment has been created, and the space is used imaginatively to enhance learning experiences for pupils of all ages. Health and safety policy and procedures are regularly evaluated and monitored by the governing body. Child protection procedures follow the recommendations of the Area Child Protection Committee. The headteacher is the designated responsible person and brings considerable experience to this role. All staff and parent volunteers receive training in the school's child protection procedures. Good attention is paid to fire drills, personal hygiene, pupils' medical needs and first aid.
34. Regular exercise and healthy habits are extensively promoted. The 'café', run everyday for and by children in the reception class and pupils in Years 1 and 2, is an excellent innovation. Pupils choose a seat at tables already set and are served a drink, fruit and toast prepared and cleared away by teams of their classmates. Not only are they eating a healthy snack, but they are also learning manners and co-operative and social skills in a real-life environment. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are able to buy similar healthy snacks at break time. Pupils have access to drinking water throughout the day. Regular daily breaks for structured exercise are part of each class timetable. All the adults working with the class also participate, thereby, setting a good example. These regular activity breaks have a beneficial effect on pupils' concentration. Provision at lunchtime includes a variety of nutritious meals, lots of space, quality climbing apparatus and a wide variety of large and small play equipment. These, together with seating and shady areas, provide stimulating and varied activities leading to a happy, harmonious break from lessons.
35. Systems for tracking the progress of individual pupils are used very effectively to monitor progress, set targets and plan appropriate work. The consistent documentation of merits gained for 'good work' creating a 'ladder' for gaining certificates, is a good feature which pupils and parents value. In addition, the school's positive behaviour management system is integral to supporting and monitoring pupils' personal development. Pupils try very hard to 'earn another marble' and thereby contribute towards the class's reward.
36. The headteacher and staff know the pupils very well, and respond sympathetically to their needs. There is a caring ethos within the school, where disadvantaged pupils are valued and are made to feel wanted and cared for. Pupils' academic attainment and personal development are monitored well by the special needs co-ordinator and class teachers. Assessments are carried out regularly to track the progress that pupils with special educational needs make against their own targets. These targets are reviewed regularly and new targets set when appropriate, to ensure the pupils' learning develops continuously.
37. The school maintains good links with the secondary schools to which pupils transfer, and in-depth discussions take place with these receiving schools to ensure that the needs of specific pupils are recognised and met in the future.
38. Pupils' views and suggestions are actively sought and acted upon, particularly by the headteacher. Voting is regularly used as a system for group decision making in the Foundation Stage classroom. In addition, a demonstration of the democratic process was seen during an assembly, when pupils were told their headteacher was very happy and proud of them and wanted to reward them. They were to suggest ideas for the reward and then everyone would vote and the winning suggestion would be implemented. This resulted in the headteacher agreeing to organise a 'treasure hunt'. Other methods are also used to ascertain pupils' views and ideas, both through the school council and a class suggestion box. The purchase of a wide-screen television and games and markings on the playground resulted from the work of the school council.

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



The school has maintained very good links with parents. There are also very good links with the community and with other schools and colleges.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is strong parental support for the school, based on an appreciation of what it does.
- Parents make a significant contribution to their children's learning at home and by helping in school.
- Parents receive regular good-quality written information.
- The 'Right from the Start' project has brought substantial benefits to the school.
- Links with the local community benefit pupils' learning and personal development.

### **Commentary**

39. The school has maintained very good links with parents and the community. Parents are actively and effectively encouraged to support their children's education. Their views are regularly sought and action taken, an example being the recent consultation on homework. Parents are very supportive of the school's aims and feel staff make them welcome. An effective induction programme, followed by invitations to a regular book-sharing session, effectively nurtures a partnership approach with the parents of the youngest pupils.
40. Where parents help at home or in school, pupils' learning is effectively enhanced. Parents help at home with reading, spellings, numeracy and project homework. They understand and support the targets for pupils in Years 3 to 6, having attended a consultation meeting accompanied by their children. They share books with their own children and other pupils during the weekly session and help supervise in the 'café'. They help in the classroom by assisting with group work and by sharing their expertise, for example, working with pupils in Years 3 and 4 to teach them about mosaic techniques. Other parents help coach after-school clubs and assist with travel arrangements. This growing team of parent helpers undergo the national checks and have training sessions with the headteacher and the teachers they assist. The strong parent-teacher association holds well-supported social and fundraising events for parents and pupils and contributes substantial financial resources, which benefit pupils' learning.
41. Parents are happy with the provision that the school provides for the pupils who have a special educational need. They are involved at every stage of the Code of Practice. They are fully informed of the school's practice, and invited to attend meetings where the pupil's progress is discussed, and new targets for improvement are agreed. Some parents who have moved their children from other schools believe their children now make much better progress and are much happier and more settled, a tribute to the importance the school places on inclusion.
42. Clear, useful written information is provided in the prospectus, a good example being the paragraph on how mathematics is now taught in primary schools. The governors' report to parents includes reports from the parent-teacher association, and school staff, making it an inclusive document which gives an overall view of the life and work of the school. Weekly newsletters are very informative, written in an open informal style. All manner of school, parent-teacher association and community news, views, and financial matters, are included. These documents exemplify the school's partnership approach. Pupils' reports, however, provide only satisfactory information on yearly progress. They explain, often at length, the aspects of the curriculum that pupils have covered and what they know and they also indicate targets for improvement. However, there is no objective indication of progress, for example, of the level at which the pupil is working in English, mathematics and science. In addition, there is no opportunity for pupils to write an evaluative comment on their progress or achievement of targets.
43. The 'café' time sessions for the children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2, developed in collaboration with four other schools through the 'Right from the Start' project, are very effective in improving pupils' social and personal development. Academic links with

the local playgroup and receiving secondary schools through the Academic Council effectively support and enhance pupils' learning experiences.

44. Very good links with the local community widen pupils' learning and personal development. Local artists, in particular a potter, share their knowledge and expertise with pupils and staff. Members of the local community are invited to share celebrations and performances with the school. The village hall and church are both used to accommodate these events. The pupils take an active part in the village May Day celebrations. The common and recreation grounds are often used as a resource for school activities. However, links with the wider community, for example, through email or school exchanges, which could enhance cultural provision, are underdeveloped.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are very good. The very good leadership and management of the headteacher are central to the school's improvement in recent years. Other staff provide good leadership overall. Governance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher leads the school with an excellent clarity of vision and sense of purpose.
- There is a total commitment to equality and helping every individual to achieve.
- The school continually evaluates its effectiveness and works to improve it.
- Very good teamwork involves all members of the school community.
- Very good management systems support all aspects of the school's work.
- Governors are actively involved and have a good understanding of the school.
- Finances are used very effectively to support pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

45. In the three years since her appointment, the headteacher has made a major contribution to the school's development as a very effective place of learning. She leads by personal example in her teaching, where she has a demanding commitment which she fulfils very well. With the governors, she has made very effective teaching appointments which underpin an improving level of challenge for the pupils, and an expectation that all will achieve to the best of their ability. Her excellent vision and sense of purpose ensure that good practice is valued and built on.
46. The headteacher's enthusiasm and upbeat attitude motivate both staff and pupils very successfully, and, as a result, the school has an extremely positive atmosphere. Teaching and support staff work as a team and pupils are confident and secure, aware that they are valued and that they are expected to do well. There is a real concern for the needs of individual pupils and their progress is carefully monitored both formally and informally. Newly appointed subject co-ordinators, who have been in post six months, have appropriate and focused action plans and have already begun to assess the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects through classroom observation and the scrutiny of pupils' work.
47. The recent introduction of innovative practice has been supported very effectively by everyone concerned. Examples, such as the 'café' time for younger pupils, and the brief daily physical exercise sessions for all pupils (and staff!) are having a positive impact on both social and life skills. The school's involvement in the Effective Early Learning programme is making a real contribution to children's achievement in the Foundation Stage, and creating good attitudes to learning which will benefit pupils throughout their education. The school's involvement of parents in their children's education is targeted effectively through a variety of approaches, and parents themselves are very pleased with the way the school encourages their participation.
48. There are excellent systems through which the school evaluates its progress, and which ensure that it is in a position to identify the next steps to improve the quality of education

offered to the pupils. Pupils' achievement is continuously tracked and used to amend teaching in the short term. Progress over time is carefully monitored, both through testing and half-termly assessment tasks. Development planning is closely linked to raising standards and the effectiveness of new strategies is regularly evaluated. The relatively small number of staff is fully involved in decision making, for example, sharing the leadership of the non-core subjects between all teachers. Very good professional development opportunities are available to all staff and are linked effectively to both the school's needs and personal development.

49. Governors identify strongly with the school and have a good knowledge of both its strengths and areas where development is needed next. The headteacher provides them with a very good level of information and committee structures have been changed to better reflect responsibilities. Governors all have specific links which involve visiting the school and looking at the way the school improvement plan is working in practice. Statutory requirements are met fully.
50. The headteacher manages the special needs provision very well. All staff work together ensuring very good provision for the pupils. All documentation is meticulously ordered, and the staff have a very clear picture of all individual needs. Pupils with special educational needs receive well beyond the extra resources that are their entitlement, which is evidence of the school's commitment to their support.
51. Good attention has been paid to improving the quality and use of the accommodation to support learning. The Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 area has been revamped and extended and offers very good space, inside and out, together with a very useful covered veranda. Classrooms have been altered and extended, and a central library and separate computer suite provided. Outside areas have been thoughtfully laid out to give the pupils a variety of spaces for both active and quiet pursuits. These improvements are a good example of very effective management planning to make the best educational use of the site.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	288,445	Balance from previous year	17,243
Total expenditure	293,779	Balance carried forward to the next	11,909
Expenditure per pupil	3,029		

52. Governors have a clear picture of the school's financial position and plan carefully for future eventualities. There is a good awareness of the need to apply best value principles when balancing the needs of staffing, accommodation and resources. Governors play an effective role as critical friends, questioning the school's performance and comparing it with schools elsewhere. They know the importance of obtaining best value when purchasing resources and services and have good procedures to ensure this. The school's administrative staff are friendly and efficient, making a significant contribution to the running of the school. A recent audit gave financial systems a positive judgement.
53. The school makes very good use of the financial resources available to it. Despite the relatively small numbers, spending per pupil is only slightly above the average for all primary schools. The headteacher is very aware of financial constraints and uses her expertise to bring additional funds into the school. Over the past three years, the school has turned a deficit budget into one with a slight surplus, against a background of a reducing number on roll, while at the same time maintaining, and in some areas, raising standards. The school gives very good value for money.

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

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

54. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good** and there has been good improvement since the last inspection. As a result of involvement with the Effective Early Learning project, the space for the Foundation Stage has been greatly improved, providing the children with very good accommodation suited to their needs. Teaching methods have improved to ensure that the children experience practical activities, and have many opportunities to learn through play. Reception-age children are taught in the mornings in a separate group, but in the afternoons are part of a family group with the pupils in Years 1 and 2, where they all know each other well and are secure and very happy.
55. The children enter school in either September or January, shortly before they are five, after a good induction programme which includes home visits. The provision is currently being managed very well by the headteacher, a keen and a skilled practitioner who ensures that staff form a close-knit, supportive and effective team. Children benefit from a curriculum which is matched well to their learning needs and which covers all the relevant areas of learning.
56. Children's attainment when they enter the reception class varies, but this year, as in most years, standards were above average. The overall quality of the teaching is very good, with some considerable strengths in the morning sessions. Children achieve well and demonstrate good overall standards when they start in Year 1. Their personal and social skills are particularly well developed for their age. Assessment procedures are good and ensure that adults are fully aware of the attainment and progress of each child on a daily basis.

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

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

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

- Most children attain well above the standards expected for their age by the end of the reception year.
- Children feel secure and because of this achieve very well.
- Relationships are excellent.
- The organisation of the classrooms and daily routines encourage independence.

#### **Commentary**

57. By establishing excellent relationships and regular routines, staff bring a sense of purpose to children's experience of school. There is a very pleasant, focused atmosphere in the class, where adults provide very good role models and children respect, love and admire them. All adults have high expectations of good behaviour at all times, which helps the children to remain calm and thoughtful, both in their work and in their relationships with others in the class. Children's social skills are developed very effectively so that children are consistently polite, respond well, listen to adults and to each other carefully, and interact in a kind and constructive way. For example, when playing in the 'clinic', children co-operate, take turns and play well together. In their work and play, children have already established very good relationships with others.
58. Children's developing independence is shown by their confidence in choosing activities and the way they settle and work without the need for frequent adult intervention. They move around the class in a considerate way, accessing and sharing equipment. A highlight of the day is 'café' time, when reception-age children join with pupils in Years 1 and 2 for their snacks. This is a lovely family occasion where all the children sit together to enjoy fruit and toast prepared by the children. Good manners are apparent, with children readily saying

'please' and 'thank you' without needing to be reminded. Overall, very effective teaching is enabling children to achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development. As a result, their standards are well above expectations for their age by the end of the reception year.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's speaking and listening skills are developed particularly well.
- As a result of very good teaching, children achieve very well and attain above-average standards.
- Opportunities to develop children's literacy skills are used very well throughout the day.

### **Commentary**

59. *The teacher and the learning support assistant understand the needs of young children very well. Interesting and appropriate activities are planned that motivate and intrigue them. The teacher's infectious enthusiasm stimulates the children to want to learn. Adults show a genuine interest in what children have to say, and promote valuable conversation through posing stimulating questions. As a result of the many opportunities they are given to interact with adults, with their classmates, and with older pupils, the children make very good progress in speaking and listening. They are keen to talk and are alert for opportunities to show what they know. By the end of the reception year, many children attain well above the expected level.*
60. *Most children can form some letters correctly, and all can write their names. They all have a clear idea that writing carries meaning. Some children are starting to use their growing knowledge of letter sounds to help them to write words correctly. Children place events in the correct sequence to tell a story, and the higher-attaining children recognise rhyming words. Every opportunity is grasped to extend the children's literacy skills throughout all activities, so that most children will attain the expected level and some will work beyond this by the end of the year.*
61. Early reading skills are taught very thoroughly. The school places great emphasis on learning to read, and children take books home to share from the beginning. Children enjoy books and appreciate the humour in a story. The most able children read simple texts accurately and predict events sensibly. The lower-attaining children handle books correctly, know the conventions of reading and enjoy retelling the story from the pictures. The pleasure obtained from books is obvious when the children join with pupils in Years 1 and 2 to share books together. Standards are above those expected at this age.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children benefit from very good teaching and the many opportunities given to develop mathematical understanding.

## Commentary

62. A very good range of activities is provided to promote children's mathematical development. Overall achievement is good, and standards are above the expected levels when children leave the reception class. Children count to ten and beyond, and match and recognise numbers easily. The teacher is very enthusiastic, and uses praise very well to inspire and motivate her class. Children spot 'the odd one out', giving well-reasoned arguments for their decisions. This shows that analytical thinking is being developed well. The teaching assistant supports her groups well, encouraging children to make their own choices when, for example, they sort baby clothes and then arrange them on the washing line in a chosen pattern. Teaching and learning are very good.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils benefit from an exciting range of interesting activities.
- Teaching is very good, enabling children to achieve well.

## Commentary

63. The teacher uses every opportunity to develop children's understanding of the world around them. In one lesson observed, the children watched a new-born baby have his first bath. This was a very special occasion and was a real spiritual experience. This demonstrated the quality of parental partnership with the school, in that a parent had the confidence and trust to let such a young baby be bathed so publicly. The children were totally entranced by the helplessness of the baby and the care that the midwife took when handling him. They then handled their dolls with the same care when washing and bathing them later in the day.
64. Children also went on a local walk to collect some fresh eggs which they later scrambled. The children noticed the changes that took place as they whisked and then cooked the eggs. During this session, the teaching assistant used questioning very well to extend the children's vocabulary, and their physical skills were enhanced as they learnt to crack open the eggs with great care. Although there was some evidence of children's use of information and communication technology in a display in the classroom, no child was observed using a computer during the inspection. The children use the computer suite, where they learn to control the mouse and draw and paint pictures, encountering appropriate experiences for their age. Overall, evidence suggests that children's knowledge and understanding of the world are good, and that the majority will exceed the expected standards at the end of their reception year.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children benefit from a daily period of physical exercise.

## Commentary

65. The children have regular access to an attractive outside area where they can run, and kick and throw balls. They use the school playground or hall for lessons and ride large sit-on wheeled toys. Teaching was good in the one session observed, where children learnt to throw and catch balls, working well in pairs. Children obey commands promptly and are becoming very aware of the space around them. They recognise the effect exercise has on their bodies and that exercise is good for them.

66. All the reception-age children, as do other pupils in the school, have a brief daily exercise session, held outdoors whenever possible and led by teachers and support staff. As well as benefiting the children's health, this helps to improve their concentration and focus when they return to class. Children are also made aware of the importance of regular daily exercise as part of their physical development.
67. The children are generally well co-ordinated and are developing skills well. Children experience a range of small tools, such as scissors, glue sticks, pencils and brushes, which they handle with increasing dexterity. However, a few children find pencil control difficult and this adversely affects their writing. Overall, children will attain the expected goals by the end of the reception year.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

68. Insufficient evidence was available to judge the overall provision for children's creative development. It is apparent from displays that children experience a variety of media when making pictures, including paint, crayon and a range of collage materials. They sing songs and rhymes enthusiastically. Children's imaginations are developed through opportunities for role-play, with the areas being planned by the children, who make their own choices about what goes in them and how they want it presented. This is a good example of the importance the school places on encouraging even the youngest children to be independent. From this evidence, it appears that children will achieve the expected standards in their creative development by the end of the reception class.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Pupils attain above average standards at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 and achieve well.
- Teaching is good, overall, but is not consistent for all pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.
- The assessment and tracking of pupils' progress is very good.

#### **Commentary**

69. Results of the national tests in 2004 at Year 2 show above average attainment in writing and well above average attainment in reading. Attainment over time, as measured by national tests, shows steady improvement since 2002. This is a more reliable measure of attainment than the results of a single year, in view of the relatively small numbers in each year group. Pupils in Year 2 read well and have a good understanding of library skills for their age. Their written work is also above average, and in both of these areas all the pupils are attaining at least average standards, suggesting that lower-attaining pupils are also achieving well. Overall, pupils in Year 2 are in line to attain above average standards, representing good achievement.
70. In the national tests in English in 2004 for pupils in Year 6, attainment was well above average, and also well above average when compared with schools whose pupils attained similar standards at the end of Year 2. Pupils attained results that were well above average at both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5, indicating that pupils of all abilities achieved very well. From the evidence of lesson observations and a study of pupils' work, pupils currently in Year 6 are on course to achieve standards above the national average. Attainment over time has fluctuated considerably, due to the abilities of different year groups, but has

been at or above the national average in all but one of the last five years. Standards at both Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those found by the previous inspection, overall, although they have improved in speaking and listening, where they are now well above average.

71. Pupils of all abilities are articulate and express themselves well, using a wide vocabulary. The frequent use of discussion partners in many lessons, in other subjects as well as English, gives pupils plenty of opportunity to convey their ideas and opinions. The frequent use of open-ended questions by teachers and support assistants encourages pupils to give thoughtful and reasoned answers, as they have to explain and justify their responses. Pupils also have a very good ability to listen, both to adults and to each other, and treat each other's opinions with courtesy. All the inspectors enjoyed their various conversations with pupils of all ages, both formal and informal, and remarked on their confidence in expressing themselves and the range of their vocabulary.
72. Visible progress in writing is evident in the books of pupils of all abilities in Years 1 and 2. This work is very well annotated and frequently levelled by the class teacher, so that there is a good focus on what pupils can do and on what they need to do next. The lesson seen for this age group was very well taught. Time was used very productively and the pupils responded well to the teacher's challenges. The teacher showed a good understanding of both the pupils' learning needs and their capabilities. Basic skills, such as understanding letter sounds, were very effectively linked to spelling rules, and pupils were encouraged to think about the correct use of punctuation while developing their ability to write rhyming couplets.
73. Progress between Year 3 and Year 6, while good overall, fluctuates considerably. A scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 3 and 4 indicates that many pupils have made limited progress since their national tests in Year 2. While, at times, there is a good focus on writing sentences, for example, in their 'busy books', and this is supported by good and constructive marking, there is little evidence of longer pieces of extended writing. Good use is made of 'target ladders' to encourage improvement, but otherwise marking consists mainly of general praise, with little interaction to suggest ways forward. The lesson observed, while satisfactory, lacked clarity in both intention and practice. Pupils worked hard and made some progress, but only the pupils with special educational needs achieved well, because here the teacher provided a clear structure for the support to be provided by the learning assistant and this was delivered effectively.
74. Both the quantity and range of work are better in the books of pupils in Years 5 and 6, although here, as in Years 3 and 4, the presentation and handwriting sometimes suffer. What does stand out is the quality of the marking, which is always relevant and full of good suggestions and targets for improvement. Pupils' 'progress books' demonstrate good achievement over time for individual pupils, and standards are above average. In a very good lesson, work was targeted very effectively at pupils of all ability levels. Drama was used very well to help pupils to empathise with the emotions felt by different characters in a story. Short, well-focused activities, lots of pace, and high expectations of pupils' response, all contributed to very good learning taking place. Very good planning and very effective support from the teaching assistant helped lower-attaining pupils to achieve very well.
75. Standards in reading are above average across the school. It is not just that the able pupils read well, with fluency and understanding, but also that lower-attaining pupils read with confidence and show enjoyment in their reading. The sessions of 'book share' in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 make good use of parents and encourage a love of books from the earliest stages. A 'guided reading' session seen in Years 3 and 4 was well prepared and productive. Well-organised systems ensure pupils' progress is carefully monitored. Pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 are enthusiastic about reading and demonstrate a good understanding of library skills.
76. Pupils' work is assessed on a regular basis and action taken as a result which ensures that future work is related to areas in which individual pupils need to improve. Together with very effective tracking systems, this provides the school with a very good picture of individual progress in both the short and long term.



77. Leadership and management of the subject have changed very recently, but the co-ordinator has made a good start in planning for the future. The improvements in assessment procedures mean that much better quality information is available about the progress of both individuals and groups of pupils, and this is being used to analyse the areas needing further attention.

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

78. Overall, there is good use of language skills across the curriculum. The pupils are given frequent opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills in other subjects, with strong features of teaching being the use of open-ended questions and the encouragement of pupils to discuss key points with each other. Debates in Years 5 and 6 show that pupils are able to support an argument by using effective examples. Pupils use their literacy skills effectively in other subjects, for example, through persuasive writing in geography. However, although technical vocabulary is used in mathematics and science, poor spelling of these key words is not always corrected.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.
- Teaching and learning are good, overall, because teachers have high expectations and pupils respond to this.
- Assessment and tracking procedures are very good and used very effectively.

### **Commentary**

79. Standards in mathematics are above average by Year 2, an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when they were judged to be average. The national tests in 2004 also indicated above average standards, with all pupils in the year group attaining the expected Level 2, and more attaining the higher Level 3 than pupils nationally. Standards have risen steadily since 2001. In the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 6, pupils attained standards that were well above average, and their achievement, when compared to their prior attainment in the Year 2 tests, was also very good. The percentage attaining both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 were both well above the national average. Inspection evidence, as well as that from the school's own tracking system, indicates that pupils currently in Year 6 will not quite achieve such high standards, but attainment is still above average, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Attainment in the national tests has improved markedly since 2000, and the trend of improvement in national tests is better than the national trend at both Year 2 and Year 6.
80. The quality of work seen in pupils' books did not always reflect the quality of teaching seen during the inspection, which was good overall. A very good lesson was seen in the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4, where pupils classified and described three-dimensional shapes according to their properties. Planning was very good and made full use of the teaching assistant and a helping parent. As a result of well-chosen activities and very effective questioning, pupils of all abilities made very good progress, growing visibly in confidence and eager to share their findings. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work showed a less positive picture and contrasted unfavourably with the books of the pupils in Years 5 and 6, where expectations appear to be higher and the quality of marking much better. These older pupils are being encouraged to think mathematically and apply their skills to practical situations in solving 'real-life' problems.
81. A good lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 on creating pictograms helped pupils to achieve well because activities were well chosen and at a suitably challenging level of difficulty and, partly,

because numbers are small, all pupils were well supported. The higher-attaining pupils, in fact, worked very well with little direct support, indicating good expectations of pupils taking responsibility for their own learning. A good lesson with pupils in Years 5 and 6 involved finding the area of compound shapes made from rectangles. Again, there was a good focus on pupils discovering for themselves. A very positive feature of teaching here was that the teacher quickly identified the issues which stopped pupils making very good progress, and immediately adapted her next day's planning to take account of this. Very good use of an able and highly qualified support assistant ensures that all ability groups learn well, because both work and expectations are carefully targeted.

82. Very good tracking and assessment procedures give teachers a clear view of pupils' progress, over time, and the setting of both individual and class targets helps pupils to know what they need to do to improve. The results of tests are analysed carefully to identify areas where pupils are less confident and teaching is adapted accordingly. Pupils enjoy mathematics and are keen to show off their knowledge and skills. The co-ordinator has only been in post six months, but has already undertaken a five-day training course and has produced a relevant action plan which is clearly focused on raising the overall standard of teaching and learning. Both the leadership and management of mathematics are good.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

83. The use of mathematics in other subjects is satisfactory. In information and communication technology, for example, older pupils confidently use spreadsheets and formulae, understanding why this makes their calculations easier, and, in science, pupils use graphs to display their findings. The planning of opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects is a focus for the co-ordinator. While satisfactory, this aspect would benefit from further attention.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and standards are above average.
- The teaching of science is good overall because pupils are challenged effectively.
- There is a good emphasis on the investigative aspects of science.

### **Commentary**

84. Standards in science are above average in Years 2 and 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection. These standards represent good achievement and all pupils, including the most capable and those with special educational needs, are doing well. Results of the national tests at Year 6 in 2004 show pupils attaining above-average standards for both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. Results over time have fluctuated, but have improved over the last two years.
85. Inspection findings are more favourable than the statutory teachers' assessments in Year 2 in 2004, which were below the national average in relation to the percentage of pupils exceeding the expected standard. Assessment procedures are now more thorough, and give a more accurate picture of pupils' attainment. Indications are that some pupils will attain the higher Level 3 this year. The size of the group taking the tests fluctuates from year to year, which influences overall attainment figures, but there has been an upward trend. No lessons were seen in Years 5 and 6, but a study of pupils' work indicates that many are working at the higher Level 5, and standards will again be above average. These good standards are a result of the emphasis given to the investigative strand of the subject. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to plan and carry out their own investigations, and learn from their results. By Year 6, pupils confidently carry out fair tests, record their results using charts and graphs, where appropriate, and draw conclusions.

86. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, although there are areas for development. Particular strengths include the use of questions by both teachers and support assistants. Pupils are encouraged to think things out for themselves, and this makes a significant contribution to their learning, as it develops understanding as well as knowledge. Activities are very well organised and planned, giving pupils plenty of opportunities to find out through experimentation. As in other subjects, pupils discuss their findings, both during activities and, more formally, at the end of the lesson. Their very good speaking and listening skills ensure that this effectively reinforces the learning taking place.
87. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught in a mixed-age class with reception-age children. They are given good opportunities to learn from practical experiences, but there is not always sufficient challenge for the most able, older pupils. For example, in the one lesson seen, all the pupils were set the same tasks, such as identifying sounds around the school, which was appropriate for the youngest children, but too easy for the oldest. In another lesson in Years 3 and 4, there were missed opportunities to ensure that pupils understood whether or not their tests were fair. In Years 3 to 6, there does not appear to be a whole-school approach to recording. The presentation of pupils' work could be better, and marking is not always used to extend learning. Key scientific words are sometimes spelt incorrectly and not altered, so limiting learning. Learning support assistants are deployed well and make a considerable contribution to pupils' learning throughout the school.
88. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and management in science. She has a good overview of the subject and produces a detailed annual action plan for its development. She has done some monitoring of teaching and scrutinises pupils' work. The curriculum is planned to take account of the mixed-age classes, and to ensure that all elements are covered. Assessment procedures ensure that teachers are aware of the level of attainment of their pupils. However, no detailed analysis of statutory test results was carried out last year to highlight any strengths or weaknesses to inform future work. Pupils are not always sure of what they need to do to improve, as they have no personal targets. Good use is made of teaching expertise within the school, with the co-ordinator teaching pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 which allows her to monitor standards at the end of both key stages.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is effective leadership and management of the subject.
- There has been a strong impetus for improvement in recent years.
- Resources are good and used well.
- Information communication technology is used well to support other subjects.

### **Commentary**

89. At the time of the last inspection, standards were reported to be well above the national average. It is difficult to make direct comparisons with current findings, as expectations in the subject have changed dramatically in six years. Standards are now as expected in Year 2, but above average by the time pupils leave school. These findings represent satisfactory achievement by Year 2 and good achievement by Year 6 for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
90. There have been many improvements since the last inspection. All the hardware has been updated, and the pupils enjoy the amenities of a well-equipped computer suite. Changes to the curriculum and improvements to resources mean that all elements of the subject are covered, which was not the case at the previous inspection. Assessment procedures are now in place so that teachers are aware of exactly what pupils can do and understand. This was a key issue at the time of the last report and has been addressed well. Since the last inspection,

the confidence and expertise of staff have been developed through appropriate training. The acquisition of a digital projector and the establishment of a network throughout the school, allowing Internet access and whole-class teaching, have enabled teachers to teach key skills more effectively. As a result, pupils' skills are used to support their work across the curriculum.

91. The quality of teaching is good overall, and it is particularly good in the class for pupils in Years 5 and 6, which is taught by the co-ordinator. In the one lesson seen in the computer suite, the teacher demonstrated very good subject knowledge, when providing clear explanations and demonstrations using the digital projector. Tasks were appropriately matched to the differing abilities within the class, and these posed a fair degree of challenge. Good use of questioning maximised pupils' input, and a brisk pace to the learning meant that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieved well. The pupils quickly and accurately created spreadsheets and used different formulae to help solve problems concerning area and perimeter. Pupils worked well in pairs, supporting each other and learning from their mistakes. In this way, pupils' independence and personal and social skills were developed effectively, alongside their information and communication technology skills.
92. In a second lesson, younger pupils were learning how to make a programmable robot travel along a given route. Good questioning revised pupils' previous work on routes and ensured understanding. Explanations were very clear and, as a result, all pupils successfully completed the task.
93. The co-ordinator, although new, has a good overview of the subject, and provides good leadership and management. She has a clear vision for the future, and recognises exactly what has to be done to improve provision even further, as seen by her detailed action plan. She has very good personal expertise, leading by example, and demonstrates effective leadership in the subject. Planning is good, and ensures that skills are developed progressively. Rigorous assessment procedures are used throughout the school. These are securely linked to National Curriculum requirements, so that teachers have a clear picture of the standards pupils have attained. Pupils do not have personal targets for improvement, although most are aware of what they have to do to improve.

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

94. Overall, good use is made of information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum. Pupils use their information and communication technology skills well to edit their writing in English, use spreadsheets to support their work in mathematics, and use the Internet and CD-ROMs for research in history and geography. Links with other subjects are used well in lessons, making pupils realise the usefulness of information and communication technology. For example, in the lesson seen, pupils were very aware of how quickly calculations could be made using the spreadsheet, compared with using a pencil and paper. In history lessons, pupils use the Internet to research facts about Vikings and the Romans. Word-processing skills are used widely to present written work in attractive ways by changing colours and fonts. In all lessons, pupils' very good attitudes have a very positive impact on their learning, and many pupils support their school work through use of computers at home.

## HUMANITIES

**History and geography** were not inspected in depth, therefore, no judgement is made on the quality of provision. The organisation of the timetable during the week of the inspection meant only one lesson could be seen in **religious education**, and there is, therefore, no judgement on the quality of provision in this subject.

95. *Planning for **history and geography** has improved since the last inspection and effective, structured guidelines are used to plan topics on a two-year rolling programme to ensure that all the elements of the curriculum are covered, without pupils visiting the same topic twice. There is an appropriate emphasis on the development of historical and geographical skills. Examination of the co-ordinator's file shows that assessment procedures are in place and that many links are made with other subjects. Good use is made of information and communication technology to research into topics such as the Romans. Indications are that the good aspects commented on in the previous inspection continue to form part of pupils' experiences. Teachers use practical methods to engage pupils' interest, for example, through visiting local places of interest which help to bring the subjects alive.*
96. In **religious education**, one lesson was seen in Years 3 and 4 on the significance of symbols, leading to a better understanding of the place and importance of religious symbolism. This lesson was taught very well, with resources used very well to extend pupils' understanding. Pupils were very interested, and enjoyed sharing their own existing knowledge with the class; for example, that Denbury church when viewed from above is in the shape of a cross. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 indicate a sound general understanding of world religions, with a good knowledge of the Christian tradition. Pupils' books also show that they cover the subject in appropriate detail, with some particularly wide-ranging work in Years 3 and 4.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

**Art and design, design and technology** and **music** were not inspected in depth, therefore, no judgement is made on the quality of provision.

97. In **art and design**, one lesson was seen involving pupils in Years 5 and 6. This was a good lesson, well planned and resourced, and effectively linked to pupils' historical studies. Pupils researched the art of the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, through both reference books and the Internet, and chose parts of designs to record in their sketchbooks before using them to create their own designs. Pupils showed good observational skills and were very impressed by the quality of the original work they discovered.
98. Pupils make good use of their sketchbooks to record ideas and try out different techniques and media. Work around the school shows variety and is displayed effectively, often being used to link with another subject. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 indicates that they cover a range of techniques and materials, including firing their pottery in the school kiln. During the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were producing clay artefacts in the style of the Vikings, helped by a local potter; a good example of the school's links with the community. However, such a good resource could gainfully be used with greater frequency; currently, pupils have the experience only two or three times during their time in school. Leadership and management in art and design are satisfactory.
99. No lessons were seen in **design and technology**, but planning indicates that coverage is assured. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with an action plan which includes lesson observations, an evaluation of subject knowledge and links to other subjects. Pupils in Year 6 have learned to use a broad range of materials and have developed satisfactory skills, and are aware of the importance of planning their products and evaluating their effectiveness.
100. The one **music** lesson seen, with pupils in Years 3 and 4, was very good. It was taken by the co-ordinator, although not with her own class, a good example of the school's efforts to make

the best use of staff expertise. Pupils successfully composed and sang a melody for a 'dragon' song using the pentatonic scale, enthusiastically supporting each other's efforts and beginning to evaluate their own. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 indicate they have a good range of experiences and good knowledge. For example, everyone in the school takes part in either a choir or a choral speaking group on a weekly basis. There are two weekly recorder clubs, and pupils have the opportunity for instrumental tuition.

101. Leadership and management are very good, despite the co-ordinator only being in post for six months. An information and communication technology program has been introduced to support pupils' compositions. Clear and very thorough assessment systems have been introduced. Resources have been audited and improved. The co-ordinator's file contains a wealth of useful documentation, including evaluations of school activities, such as concerts and singing assemblies.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are good in swimming and pupils achieve well.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to engage in competitive sport.

### **Commentary**

102. Standards are similar to those found by the previous inspection, when pupils were judged to make good progress overall. The two lessons seen, one with pupils in Years 1 and 2, and one with Years 5 and 6, both focused on games skills, as well as general fitness for the pupils in Years 5 and 6 through circuit training. The latter was well organised and run by a parent helper, giving the pupils ten different stations where they completed various exercises in pairs. Pupils showed good levels of cooperation and clearly enjoyed the activities. Pupils' success in competitive games against other schools, in which most older pupils take part, indicate good achievement in this area of the physical education curriculum.
103. While teaching in the two lessons was satisfactory, and pupils made sound progress, there were missed opportunities to accelerate learning. The lesson with the younger pupils included both cooperative and competitive skills, which tended to confuse some pupils. While resources were well organised and there was plenty for pupils to do, the activities were not all well chosen to develop specific skills, and there was an emphasis on instruction at the expense of working with the pupils to set targets for improvement. The older pupils practised football skills. Again, there was plenty of activity, but insufficient focus on skills development for pupils to get an idea of how they were improving.
104. The school makes good provision for swimming, with everyone getting a term's swimming every year. As a result, standards are high, with virtually every pupil attaining the national target of swimming 25 metres unaided, and many achieving well beyond this standard. It is not possible to comment on standards in gymnastics or dance, as no lessons were seen, but detailed planning is in place for these aspects of the curriculum.
105. For a relatively small school, there is very good provision for sporting activity outside lessons, through after-school clubs, and many pupils take advantage of this. The school enters teams in a variety of competitions and enjoys a good level of success, adding to the pupils' social as well as physical development. Both staff and parents give freely of their time to support the pupils in these activities.
106. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject and an action plan which addresses key issues for the subject, particularly the need for staff training in the teaching of skills. She has recently joined the 'school sports co-ordinator' programme which is supporting the improvement of standards. The introduction of a daily slot

for physical exercise for every class in the school is playing its part in developing a good attitude towards a healthy lifestyle.

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

*No lessons were observed in **personal, social and health education and citizenship** during the inspection, therefore, no judgement is made about the quality of provision.*

107. *There is a scheme of work for this area of the curriculum that permeates all aspects of school life. The principles and values of good citizenship, implicit in the life and work of the school, would indicate that provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good. This is seen clearly in the excellent relationships that exist and the good role models that adults present. The school finds many ways to help pupils develop confidence and responsibility, and to draw on their own resources for the common good. For example, pupils of all ages undertake routine classroom duties. They also learn to work in harmony with other pupils, for example through membership of the school council or when working as monitors around the school. Pupils are aware of the need for rules to enable a society to function smoothly.*
108. *Pupils are encouraged to express opinions and to consider the views of others, and they have a lively sense of responsibility towards others and to the community. The school promotes a healthy life style, through healthy eating and exercise. This starts with an academic council-based initiative, for which the headteacher wrote the bid and manages the grant for a group of schools. It is both innovative and well-planned, involving parents and their children in developing a healthy lifestyle from their first contact with the school, and continues throughout their time at Denbury. Overall, pupils have a good understanding of the values and responsibilities involved in citizenship and are developing a sensitive appreciation of the feelings and respect that make up good personal and community relationships.*

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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