

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DEVORAN SCHOOL**

Devoran, Truro

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111872

Acting Headteacher: Mrs Liz Aver

Lead inspector: Mr Graham R Sims

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2005

Inspection number: 266734

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	171
School address:	Devoran School Market Street Devoran Truro Cornwall
Postcode:	TR3 6QA
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Richard Williams
Date of previous inspection:	1 <sup>st</sup> February 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Devoran School is situated in the small village of Devoran, between Truro and Falmouth, in Cornwall. Some pupils live in the village, but many come from a wide area around it. There are 171 boys and girls in the school between the ages of 4 and 11. The school is smaller than most primary schools, but is popular with parents and is over-subscribed. Up to Year 2, pupils are taught in single-age groups. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught in mixed-age classes. Most pupils come from above average socio-economic backgrounds, and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. Almost all pupils are of white British ethnic origin and no pupil is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who join the school after the reception year or leave before the end of Year 6 is below the national average. One tenth of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is below average. Five pupils receive help from outside specialists for a range of needs, including dyslexia, communication difficulties and autism. Three of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Children are admitted into the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday, although parents may elect for their children to attend either full or part-time, in accordance with the LEA admissions policy. At the time of the inspection, all children were attending full-time. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class varies widely. Attainment of the current reception class was average on entry; the attainment of some older year groups was above average when they started school. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant turnover of staff. At the time of the inspection, the school had been without a substantive headteacher for four terms. Governors are preparing to appoint a new headteacher for September 2005, by which time the school will have been led for two years by the deputy headteacher in the capacity of acting headteacher. As part of a private finance initiative, the school will be relocating to a new site and new purpose-built premises in September 2007.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
28899	Mr G R Sims	Lead inspector	Art and design Design and technology Geography History Information and communication technology Music Physical education
09086	Mrs R Watkins	Lay inspector	
20230	Mrs J Clayphan	Team inspector	Mathematics Foundation Stage curriculum Special educational needs Personal, social and health education and citizenship English as an additional language
19302	Mrs C Perrett	Team inspector	English Religious education Science

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

**Devoran School is a good school.** Very well behaved pupils achieve well, reaching above average standards by the time they leave the school. The overall quality of the teaching is good. The acting headteacher has provided good leadership through a period of significant change, helping the school to maintain its very good ethos. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school's very good ethos is characterised by the pupils' very positive attitudes and the very friendly, caring atmosphere in which very good relationships are paramount.
- The acting headteacher, with good support from the governors, has enabled the school to tackle its most important priorities well during a period of change and staff turnover.
- Because of very good teaching, children in the reception class make rapid progress and achieve standards which are well above those expected.
- In Years 1 to 6, teachers provide good teaching which enables pupils to make good progress, and they are particularly successful in engaging pupils' interest through practical involvement.
- Staff have worked hard, and successfully, to rectify weaknesses highlighted by poor English results in 2004, but do not do enough to develop pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum.
- The marking of pupils' work in English is often detailed and helpful, but teachers do not provide enough critical feedback to show pupils how to improve their work in other subjects.
- Teaching assistants are very effective, working very closely with teachers, helping them to identify and meet the needs of individual pupils.
- The school provides a very good range of additional activities, but the planning of the formal curriculum lacks balance and does not allow some subjects to be taught in sufficient depth.
- There have been significant improvements in the provision for information and communication technology, but it is still not used enough as a tool for learning across the curriculum.
- Very good partnerships with parents, other schools and the local community contribute much to the pupils' education.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school has dealt effectively with the previously identified issues, although some of the improvements, such as the development of information and communication technology and a formalised system for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, teaching and learning, have only recently been instigated and have not had sufficient time to have a marked impact on pupils' attainment and progress. The quality of teaching for children in the reception class has improved significantly. Standards at the end of Year 2 have risen, particularly in reading, but standards in English at the end of Year 6 have fallen.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

Overall, standards are above average, and **pupils of all capabilities achieve well.**

The levels of skill shown by children when they start school vary considerably. The overall attainment of children in the current reception class was average at the start of the year. Children make very good progress and achieve very well, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development, and standards are likely to be well above average by the time they start Year 1.

The school's national test results at the end of Year 2 have improved since the last inspection at a similar rate to other schools in mathematics and writing, but much more markedly in reading. The results in 2004 were well above the national average in reading and just above average in writing and mathematics. Inspection findings indicate that standards are above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Overall, pupils are achieving well.

Since the last inspection, the school's national test results at the end of Year 6 have fallen significantly in English. They have improved in science and marginally in mathematics, but not as much as in other schools. The results in 2004 were well below the national average in English, average in mathematics and above average in science. When compared with similar schools, the results were well below average overall, and amongst the bottom five per cent of schools in

English (E\* in the table below). Inspection findings indicate that the school's actions to rectify weaknesses identified in the most recent tests have been effective and that standards are now above average in English, mathematics and science.

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

*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.*

Although still only at an average level, standards in information and communication technology are improving now that the school has resolved a series of difficulties with its resources. Standards in religious education are average. Pupils' investigative skills are a particular strength in science. Reading, speaking and listening skills are strong throughout the school, but pupils do not apply their writing skills well in subjects other than English. Good standards are achieved in aspects of physical education. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

**Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Very good foundations for children's personal development are laid in the reception class, and pupils' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school are very good. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. A friendly, respectful and joyful atmosphere pervades the school. The level of attendance is above average and punctuality is satisfactory.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The school provides a good quality of education. The overall quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good** and the quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. The teaching is very good for children in the reception class. The teaching in well over three-quarters of the lessons seen during the inspection was good or better. This is testimony to the school's efforts to improve the quality of the teaching following disappointing results in 2004 and to the way it has dealt with changes in staffing and managed the induction of a number of newly qualified teachers. The teachers are conscientious and hard working and prepare well for their lessons. They engage pupils' attention well and make learning interesting. However, the planning of the curriculum is not flexible or innovative enough. Timetabling arrangements allocate too much time to English-related activities and not enough time to developing work in depth in other subjects. Teachers also miss opportunities to relate work in one subject to what is being covered in another. This applies particularly to the development of pupils' writing and information technology skills. Whilst the teachers are making increasingly good use of new technology themselves, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use technology to help them with their learning. Teachers have been trying out new approaches to marking, but the current arrangements are not broad enough in their scope and do not give pupils a clear enough indication of what they need to improve or sufficient opportunity to revise their work. Little is done to improve the quality of pupils' writing in the context of other subjects, and this detracts from the good work done in English lessons. Well-trained and highly effective teaching assistants are deployed well, and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for less able pupils and those with special educational needs. The school provides a very good range of additional opportunities for learning beyond the formal curriculum, including extra-curricular activities, school trips and residential visits.

Overall, the school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Much care is taken over the way the buildings and classrooms are presented, and this creates an attractive learning environment. However, the school lacks outdoor facilities, there is no room for pupils to be taught outside the classroom, and the computer suite, although a significant improvement on what was previously available, is so cramped that it impedes effective learning. The problems should be solved when the school moves to new premises in September 2007.

The school has very good procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides them with good support, advice and guidance, and has good systems for seeking the views of the pupils. The school has very good links with parents, other schools and the local community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.** At the time of the inspection, the school had been without a substantive headteacher for a year and a half. During this time, however, the acting headteacher has provided good leadership, maintaining the very good ethos of the school and dealing well with the school's main priorities, such as improving the quality of pupils' writing. She has ensured that new and inexperienced staff have integrated quickly and well into an effective team. The leadership provided by other staff is satisfactory, mainly because many responsibilities have only recently been taken over and some subject areas have been without a designated coordinator because of changes in staffing. The management of the school is satisfactory, but improving after a period during which insufficient attention was given to monitoring the quality of the school's work. New procedures are now in place, but have not been in operation long enough to have had a significant impact on improving pupils' attainment and progress. Governance of the school is good. The governors have recently started to become much more involved in finding out what happens within the school and in holding the school to account, and now have a much clearer picture than before of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have shown good vision and been very active in negotiations and consultation over the school's impending move to new premises. The governing body ensures that the school fulfils statutory requirements.

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

The views expressed at the pre-inspection meeting for parents were very positive, and the results of the school's own questionnaire indicate that parents are generally very pleased with the education the school offers. A fifth of the parents would like to be better informed about how their children are getting on and a few parents expressed concern that there were some incidents of bullying. The inspection team did not share parents' concerns. Teachers are very willing to discuss pupils' progress with their parents and annual reports give detailed information about pupils' achievements. Behaviour and relationships within the school are very good and the pupils' own comments indicate that they feel safe within the school environment and have confidence that any issues will be dealt with quickly and fairly.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, and their positive attitudes to work and eager participation in extra-curricular activities indicate that they are very pleased with what the school offers them.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Provide and make better use of opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills through subjects other than English.
- Provide pupils with clearer feedback on how to improve their work and the quality of their writing in subjects other than English.
- Improve the balance and organisation of the curriculum to make better use of cross-curricular opportunities and ensure that teachers have time to teach all subjects in sufficient depth.
- Make better use of information and communication technology as a tool for learning across the curriculum.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, standards are above average and pupils of all capabilities achieve well throughout the school.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception class achieve very well and reach standards which are well above those expected for their age, a significant improvement since the last inspection.
- Standards have improved in Years 1 and 2, particularly in reading, and pupils make good progress overall.
- Standards in English at the end of Year 6 have fallen significantly since the last inspection, but are improving again as a result of recent initiatives.
- Pupils of all capabilities make good progress because their needs are identified and support is provided.

#### Commentary

1. The attainment of children when they start their primary education at Devoran varies widely. In some year groups, the overall level of attainment when children started school was above average. In others, including the current reception class, it was average. There has been a significant improvement in the school's provision for its youngest children since the last inspection, and children are making much better progress and achieving higher standards than before. During their year in the reception class, children achieve very well, particularly in terms of their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards in these areas of learning are set to be well above average by the time children start Year 1, a further improvement on their attainment in previous years. Standards are not as high in terms of children's physical development, where lack of external facilities restricts the opportunities available for the development of children's gross motor skills<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless, there are good opportunities for children to develop their fine motor skills, and achievement in this aspect of their physical development and in their creative development is good. One of the key features of the reception class is the way children are integrated so quickly into school life and develop an enjoyment of school which lays very good foundations for their future learning.
2. Although they have fluctuated since the last inspection, the school's results at the end of Year 2 have improved as much as in other schools in mathematics and writing, but much more markedly in reading. Well-structured reading sessions, where teachers make very good use of their time and where teaching assistants are well deployed, contribute strongly to pupils' progress in reading, as does very good parental involvement with this aspect of pupils' learning. The school's national test results in 2004 were well above the national average in reading. The results were just above average in writing and mathematics, having fallen, over the last two years, from their high point in 2002, when results in reading, writing and mathematics were well above the national average. When compared with the results of similar schools, the results in 2004 were above average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. The great majority of the pupils achieved the minimum level expected in all three areas, and around a third exceeded the expected level in reading and mathematics.

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<sup>1</sup> **Motor skills** – A motor skill is an action that involves the movement of muscles in the body. Gross motor skills are larger movements involving the arm, leg, or feet muscles or the entire body; crawling, running, and jumping are gross motor skills. Fine motor skills are those smaller actions like picking things up between the thumb and finger or the lips and tongue to taste and feel objects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.3 (18.4)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.9 (15.4)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.7 (18.0)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. Inspection findings indicate that standards at the end of Year 2 are above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Reading continues to be the major strength in English, but standards in writing are improving as a result of the emphasis given to this aspect of pupils' work in recent months. Overall, pupils of all capabilities are achieving well.
4. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in mathematics and science have fluctuated considerably over the last five years, but were marginally better in mathematics in 2004 and markedly better in science than at the time of the last inspection. In mathematics, the results were just above the national average in 2004, whereas in science they were clearly above average. When compared with similar schools on the basis of pupils' prior attainment at the end of Year 2, the results were below average in mathematics and well below average in science. The picture in English is somewhat different, as there has been a dramatic decline in the school's results over the last five years. In 2004, the results were well below the national average and were amongst the bottom five per cent of schools whose pupils had achieved similar results at the end of Year 2. The school sets itself realistic targets which contain an appropriate level of challenge. It was successful in meeting its targets for the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 in mathematics in 2004, but fell well short of its targets in English. The school faced a number of difficulties in the year leading up to the 2004 tests which had a particular impact on pupils' achievement in Year 6. Not only was the school without a substantive headteacher for the whole of the year, but the Year 6 teacher left part-way through the school year, causing inevitable disruption to the pupils' preparations for their tests. There were, however, also some underlying problems in English, factors which the school has recognised and has worked hard to eradicate during the current year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.8 (26.8)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.4 (27.4)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.7 (29.0)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

5. Inspection findings show that standards in the current Year 6 are improving once again and are above average in English, mathematics and science. There has been particular improvement during the current year in English as a result of the measures taken by the school to improve the standard of pupils' writing. Pupils of all capabilities are achieving well in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' investigative skills are a particular strength in science, and their reading, speaking and listening skills are strong. Whilst pupils are developing much better

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<sup>2</sup> **Average point scores** are used as a way of comparing fairly the performance of pupils in one school with those in another. The level achieved by each pupil in the national tests is converted into a points score. The points achieved by all of the pupils are added together and divided by the number of pupils who took the test to arrive at an average point score. An average point score of 15 at the end of Year 2 is equivalent to a middle of the range Level 2, which is the standard expected of seven-year-old pupils. At the end of Year 6, an average point score of 27 is equivalent to Level 4, the national expectation for eleven-year-olds.

writing skills and produce some good quality work in English, they do not apply their skills well when writing for subjects such as history, geography, religious education and science.

6. The school has good procedures to ensure that all pupils are making progress. Teaching assistants play a crucial part in helping teachers to identify pupils who have not understood the main objectives for the lesson, and provide additional follow-up assistance when necessary. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress in the sessions where they are supported. Their individual education plans have appropriate targets so they are only given specialist help in those areas where their development is behind that of their peers. Therefore, while their attainment in some subjects may be below average for their class, in others they may perform at higher levels because they are given appropriate challenges. Over the last three years, girls have achieved markedly better results than boys in English at the end of Year 6, and have also achieved better results in mathematics and science. The school is aware of the differences and is now focusing on ensuring that the teaching meets the needs of all pupils through varying teaching styles and taking account of the fact that some pupils learn better through a kinaesthetic approach to teaching, rather than the more traditional visual and auditory approaches. Nothing of concern was noted during the inspection to suggest that one group is more favoured than another.
7. Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education and standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when there were gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding because aspects of the curriculum were not taught. Standards have also improved in information and communication technology, another of the main areas for development identified in the previous inspection report. The school has overcome many obstacles and pupils are currently achieving satisfactorily and reaching the levels expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education were not evaluated in depth. Whilst there is evidence of good work in all of these subjects, pupils do not develop the breadth of knowledge and understanding in some of them because the time allocated to them is limited. Indications are that high standards are achieved in several aspects of physical education.

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

The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good. Other aspects of their personal development are very good overall. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attitudes and behaviour of the youngest children have improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- Pupils of all ages behave very well and enjoy learning because of the good teaching they experience.
- Pupils are helped to gain a very good understanding of right and wrong, and this is very apparent in the consideration they show towards others' feelings and needs.

### **Commentary**

8. Parents are very happy with the way their children enjoy coming to school. The very good teaching children experience in the reception class captures their interest right from the start. They are very well behaved in response to the clear and consistent guidance of staff. They relate very pleasantly to each other and to adults. They follow classroom routines readily and engage with enjoyment in the range of activities organised for them. Firm foundations are established for their continued good attention to learning as they progress into other year groups. Behaviour of reception-aged children has improved considerably since the previous inspection, when weak teaching at times left them confused about what conduct was acceptable. Nearly all children are likely to exceed the expected goals for their personal, social and emotional development by the time they start Year 1.

9. Teachers skilfully uphold high expectations of behaviour in all the other classes as well, so that attitudes and behaviour remain very strong features of the school, as at the previous inspection. In lessons, pupils co-operate willingly with staff and their attention seldom wanders. They persevere well with their tasks, helping each other when this is part of the lesson. They mostly find it easy to conform because they understand well what is expected and the activities are calculated to capture their interest. Rarely, if a teacher's explanation is perhaps a bit lengthy, pupils may become a little restless. However, any small lapses are soon quietly corrected by the teacher or classroom assistant. Pupils with special educational needs work with as much enthusiasm as others, because their tasks and the level of support are matched to their needs. Parents are nearly all happy with standards of behaviour. There have been no exclusions at all in the past three years. A few parents mention concerns about bullying; however, this seldom arises. A few pupils occasionally become over-boisterous in their play, but staff capably resolve any incidents. Pupils can remember occasional instances of name calling. However, they know they can tell staff about such worries. They are very happy with the way staff will intervene to restore the usual very good relationships. In addition to its already very good response to any hint of bullying, the school is using the 'healthy schools' initiative to help it research any possible issues still more thoroughly.
10. An important factor in the very effective promotion of pupils' personal development is the way staff instil a sense of right and wrong. Pupils understand the rules that they themselves help to write. They readily follow them because they understand that misbehaviour is unfair to others. Friendliness towards each other is constantly encouraged. For instance, teachers often ask pupils to discuss some aspect of their work with a partner. This builds their ability to relate to others and to consider each other's feelings and points of view, as well as helping progress with learning. Care for others is very evident when older pupils help look after younger ones in the playground.
11. The school takes good steps to help pupils understand something of how people live in other parts of the world. For instance, there is a long-term project to fund a teacher in a Nepalese school. Pupils' sense of responsibility towards others is very evident in their enthusiastic approach towards such efforts to help those in need. They choose some projects themselves. Older pupils were eager to explain how pupils throughout the school were finding their own ways to raise funds for survivors of the tsunami disaster. Their sympathy for others' needs was very evident as they explained the contents of the shelter boxes that they were going to fund for people left homeless.
12. Pupils' spiritual understanding benefits considerably because of the sensitivity they are helped to develop for others' needs and feelings. It is fostered also in religious education and in assemblies, when they learn about Christianity and something of other world religions as well. They speak with good respect of cultures and beliefs that differ from their own, even though their understanding of the range of ethnicity and cultures contributing to life in their own country is a little shallow.
13. Attendance has improved somewhat since the previous inspection and is now above that seen in other schools. Parents recognise the importance of regular attendance. They generally show a very good commitment to making sure their children arrive each day in good time and do not stay away without good cause. However, a few pupils sometimes arrive a little late. Absences for term-time holidays have some impact on overall attendance levels.

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

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, which is enriched by a very good variety of activities outside the normal curriculum. The staff provide a very good level of care for the pupils. The school's links with parents, other schools and the local community are very good.

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' work are satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of the teaching for children in the reception class is very good.
- There is a very good ethos for learning throughout the school; teachers provide interesting activities and pupils are keen to learn.
- There is a good emphasis on learning through practical experience.
- The teaching of writing in English lessons is effective, but teachers do not reinforce pupils' writing skills sufficiently in other contexts.
- Teachers make good use of information and communication technology themselves, but do not provide enough opportunity for pupils to use technology themselves.
- Good support is provided for pupils who need additional help.
- The marking of pupils' written work in English is good, but the marking of other work does not give pupils clear enough indication of how to improve.

### Commentary

14. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Most of the teaching staff have changed since the last inspection, but the school has re-established most of the good features of the teaching that were noticed during the last inspection. Crucially, however, there has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching for the school's youngest children, and there has also been good improvement in the teaching of information and communication technology. One of the most notable features of the teaching in this inspection was the consistently good quality of the teaching throughout the school. Over three-quarters of the lessons observed were good or better. There are no major weaknesses and no subjects in which the teaching is unsatisfactory.

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0)	6 (18)	22 (67)	5 (15)	0 (0)	0 (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.*

15. Children in the reception class receive a very good start to their education. The quality of the teaching for these children is very good. The foundation for this very good teaching is the excellent rapport which the teacher has established with the children. Lessons are vibrant and alive, and a sense of fun and good humour are never absent. Lessons are planned very well, with careful consideration given to the role played by teaching assistants and other adult helpers, all of whom make a very positive contribution to the children's learning. Short, whole-class teaching sessions are balanced well with focused group activities and opportunities for children to choose their own activities. Throughout the day, there is very good interaction between children and adults, who seize every opportunity to ask relevant questions and to extend children's learning. The only aspect, in which the teaching fell short of the high standards observed for most of the time, was the development of children's gross motor skills. Lack of outdoor facilities impede development in this area of learning, and the physical education lesson observed in the hall, whilst satisfactory, was not as imaginative or challenging as other lessons observed. The classroom provides a bright, attractive learning environment, where very good displays give evidence of a great deal of interesting and imaginative work. The children are very well prepared for the start of their more formal education in Year 1, particularly with regard to their personal, social and emotional development and the very good attitudes and behaviour which they have developed.

16. Teachers build well on these foundations, as the ethos for learning continues to be very good throughout the school. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well, but in an unobtrusive way. The keys are the very good relationships which exist between pupils and adults and the ways in which teachers manage to engage pupils' interest through their teaching. The teachers are aware that not all children learn well through visual and auditory means, and build into their teaching many practical experiences. This is particularly evident in science, where much of the children's learning comes through practical investigation. The teachers also build in practical activities to their teaching of subjects like geography and history, and a good range of visits, special events such as arts week, and visitors to the school help to bring alive pupils' learning. The classrooms are stimulating places to be, with attractive and interesting displays which provide very good visual reminders of previous learning and occasional challenges which consolidate learning. In the class for pupils in Years 4 and 5, for example, pupils are challenged to get from one side of an ingeniously devised mathematical grid to the other using the four different operations. The pupils' initial choice of number determines the level of difficulty. Because they are interested, the children's positive attitudes also make a major contribution to their learning. They listen well, are cooperative and collaborate well with each other when working in pairs or small groups.
17. The teachers are conscientious and hard working and prepare well for their lessons. Lessons are structured well. Teachers give clear explanations for the pupils at the start of the lesson as to what they will be aiming to achieve, provide a good variety of whole-class, group and individual activities to consolidate learning, and make good use of the finishing session to draw conclusions and summarise what has been learnt. Reading sessions for pupils in Year 2 are organised well and contribute to the high standard of reading. These sessions are not as purposeful in Years 3 to 6. Recent initiatives to improve pupils' writing skills have been successful, resulting in a marked improvement in the quality of pupils' writing in English lessons. However, the teachers do not apply the same rigour to pupils' writing in other subjects, such as science, geography, history and religious education, where the quality of pupils' recorded work does not reflect the extent of their knowledge and understanding or the range of work which has been taught. The teachers are making increasingly good use of new technology themselves. Interactive whiteboards<sup>3</sup> installed in the classes for pupils in Years 2 and 6 are used well, and other teachers make good use of the newly acquired digital projectors to present information in an interesting way. However, pupils still do not have enough opportunity to use new technology themselves to help them to find things out or to communicate and present their recorded work. The teaching of information technology skills is improving, but the planning for these lessons does not yet relate the skills being taught to work being undertaken in other subjects.
18. The teachers ensure that their planning reflects the differing needs of their pupils, providing work at different levels. On one day a week, pupils in Years 3 to 6 move from their mixed-age classes into year groups for teaching in English and mathematics which is targeted specifically at needs which have been identified during the week. Pupils with special educational needs are known well by their teachers. The teachers produce individual education plans for these pupils with appropriate targets to help them in the lessons when they receive specialist teaching. Teachers' planning often includes tasks related to pupils' targets, which are often ticked, dated and annotated as pupils make progress. Well-trained and highly effective teaching assistants are well briefed by the teachers and provide valuable support for groups of pupils or individuals, enabling these pupils to keep up with the main gist of teaching in whole-class situations and to work at their tasks with good levels of understanding. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs learn as well as their peers.
19. Arrangements to assess pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. There are some strengths in the school's procedures, but also some areas for improvement. The school now analyses the results of pupils' tests to identify strengths and weaknesses in their performance, and teaching is now tailored to correct any identified weaknesses. Teachers

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<sup>3</sup> Large touch-sensitive screen on which images are displayed by a projector linked to a computer, as an alternative to a conventional monitor. By touching the screen, teacher or pupils can control events instead of using a keyboard or mouse.

have been trying out new approaches to marking pupils' work. One very good feature is the way that they identify which pupils have not understood the main objectives of a piece of work and then provide additional support, usually through teaching assistants, to help them to understand. Teaching assistants also provide very helpful feedback to teachers at other times regarding pupils who may be struggling or where a pupil has made particularly good progress. The marking of pupils' written work in English lessons is also good and is helping pupils to make good progress in this aspect of their work. Most pieces of work in other subjects are marked according to whether pupils have met the learning intention for that piece of work. Rarely, however, do teachers indicate where pupils have made mistakes or what pupils need to do in order to improve their work. As a result, pupils are often unaware when their work is incorrect, and this applies particularly to the quality of their writing for subjects other than English, where opportunities are missed to reinforce the good work undertaken in English lessons.

20. Teachers have a copy of pupils' annual progress in English, mathematics and science as they pass through the school but as yet there is no standard prediction of pupils' attainment for the end of each year. This makes it harder for teachers to be aware of how much challenge to present to groups within their class. Nor is there any consistent system to record individual pupils' performance in any subject during the year. This would enable teachers to see clearly the progress which their pupils are making, communicate it to them and bring a consistent approach to using assessment usefully. There is no use of individual or group targets in each core subject to refine challenge and heighten pupils' awareness of their own learning and progress more clearly. The assessment of pupils' attainment and achievement is not fully developed in foundation subjects. The school is aware that assessment is an area needing further development and has appointed an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who is working to strengthen it.

## **The curriculum**

Curricular provision is satisfactory, and a very good range of additional activities enhances pupils' learning. The accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The Foundation Stage curriculum is good.
- There are many extra-curricular activities, visits and events to enrich pupils' learning.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills throughout the curriculum.
- The arrangement of the timetable results in insufficient time being allocated for subjects other than mathematics and English.
- The accommodation is very cramped.

### **Commentary**

21. The curriculum is sufficiently broad, and statutory requirements are fully met. All National Curriculum subjects and religious knowledge are taught. Religious education follows the locally agreed syllabus, and now an increased amount of time is given to the subject, which is an improvement since the last inspection when provision was deemed to be unsatisfactory. Large amounts of time have been allocated to English as this has been a focus for the school's development, and significant improvement in the quality of pupils' writing has resulted. However, the knock-on effect has been insufficient time being given to other subjects, such as history, geography, art and design, and design and technology, resulting in superficial coverage of the curriculum. At present, the school is in a state of flux while a new headteacher is appointed, and little time has been devoted to curriculum development beyond the school's most important priority of improving the quality of pupils' writing.
22. Although there has been an emphasis on the teaching of writing, pupils' literacy skills are not developed as well as they could be through learning in other subjects. For example, in

religious education there are few opportunities for pupils to write at length, and most recording is in a pictorial format. Sound use is made of pupils' mathematical skills to support their work across the curriculum. Information technology skills are developed well in information communication technology lessons, but insufficient opportunities are given for pupils to use these skills sufficiently or effectively in other subjects.

23. The school provides a good personal, social and health education programme which permeates all aspects of school life. Before they leave the school, pupils experience programmes which ensure that they are fully aware of issues related to sex education, alcohol and drug misuse.
24. There are very good opportunities for curricular enrichment. There is a very wide range of after-school clubs, and the school participates in a variety of competitive sports. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 have the opportunity to participate in a residential visit each year, and many visits and visitors to school bring the curriculum alive. Good use is made of the local leisure centre to enable pupils throughout the school to go swimming, resulting in high standards.
25. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers plan activities at appropriate levels, often with targets in individual education plans in mind. Pupils are increasingly involved in setting their own targets and agreeing when they have been attained. They are included well in all class activities.
26. The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory. Although it is safe, attractive and well maintained, and some classrooms are roomy, the overall accommodation is very cramped. No extra space is available for teaching groups of pupils outside the classroom. The specialist computer suite is extremely small, and the available space is not suitable for the large class sizes, and this impairs access for all pupils. There is no room for a designated library, but the school makes the most of the landing spaces between floors to display books. The school has no field, but effective use is made of the local village field to enable pupils to participate in sporting activities. The hard-surface area is also small for the number of pupils, and it is only because the pupils are so well behaved that more accidents don't happen. A new school building is planned for opening in September 2007, when these deficiencies should be rectified. There are sufficient staff, and the school benefits particularly from a strong team of teaching assistants. Three out of the six class teachers are recently qualified, but their professionalism and natural talent more than make up for their lack of experience. The job-share arrangements in Year 2 work very well, with the two teachers complementing each other well.

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

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare and personal well-being are very good. Educational guidance and support are good. Good consideration is given to pupils' views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff provide very good care and personal support so that pupils feel secure and grow in confidence.
- Pupils know that staff listen to their views and will act on them.
- Very good attention is given to health and safety.

### **Commentary**

27. Support and guidance remain strong, as at the previous inspection. Parents are mostly very happy with the way that the school cares for pupils. When children first start in the reception class, staff quickly help them to get used to routines and to enjoy learning activities. Older pupils who transfer from other schools also soon feel part of the friendly community. The headteacher and other staff have a very good understanding of pupils' diverse personalities and pastoral needs. They give well-judged support to each individual. Parents' involvement is welcomed; staff listen to any worries parents may have about their children and strive to work in partnership with them to overcome any difficulty. Throughout the school, staff



encourage hard work and good behaviour by their expectations and by their well-judged use of praise, as in the weekly awards assembly. All this helps each individual to be a happy, hard-working member of the school community. Pupils are prompted to grow in responsibility for their own progress, for instance by making New Year learning resolutions. They are sometimes asked to tell the teacher how well they feel they have achieved a lesson's learning aims, and teachers take account of this in planning further learning. Pupils with special educational needs are very well cared for by adults who know them well, and their classmates are also kind and thoughtful towards them.

28. Staff are open to pupils' views in other ways. For instance, the headteacher makes sure the school council operates effectively. Pupils have a chance to comment on matters such as the plans for a new school building and their views are respected. Governors gave selected pupils a part in the recent interviews for a new headteacher, and pupils agreed with the decision reached not to make an appointment on that occasion.
29. Staff are alert to provide for pupils' health and safety across the range of school activities. Issues that caused concern at the previous inspection were quickly resolved. As a result of the school's recent entry into a private finance initiative, extra attention has been given to ensuring all the required formal procedures for risk assessment are in place. The headteacher is aware of possible hazards associated with the present old buildings. She ensures sufficient attention is given to their maintenance, pending the move to the planned new premises. However, one aspect of care is not covered in the short term; it is judged impracticable to improve the present buildings to give full access for wheelchair users. First aid procedures are properly managed. The headteacher makes sure that appropriate child protection procedures are fully in place and these are followed if any concern arises. Parents contribute to safety measures; they play a key part in the walking bus introduced to improve safety on the way to and from school.

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

Partnership with parents is very good. Partnership with other schools and with the community is also very good.

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

- Parents are keen to support their children's learning, and the school works hard to foster their involvement.
- Partnership developed with other schools enables a range of supportive initiatives that aid pupils' achievements.
- Links with the local community are developed very effectively to add to the breadth of pupils' experience.

#### **Commentary**

30. The strong sense of partnership established with parents is an important factor in pupils' achievements. Parents are keen to support their children and teachers welcome their interest. Last summer, the school offered a course to guide parents in helping their children's learning, and a good number attended this. Annual reports give parents much helpful detail about what pupils have learnt. In addition, pupils' records of achievement are always accessible so it is easy for parents to look at the assessments included in them. Parents are encouraged to look at these records with their children during the open afternoon each term. There is a good length consultation each year as well for parents to discuss their children's progress and targets with the teacher. Teachers are careful to arrange alternative appointments with the few parents who do not come on the usual evening. An extra consultation is arranged in the reception class soon after children start, as well as one later on for parents to discuss progress. Parents of pupils with special educational needs take full advantage of the very good opportunities to comment on and be involved in the writing of their children's plans.

31. All staff are friendly and welcoming, so that parents find it easy to pursue any query or problem. In addition, questionnaires and consultations are used to find parents' views. Staff are alert to follow up any criticism and to make any workable improvement. A few parents recently said they would like a better flow of information. As a result, the headteacher plans to establish a regular timetable for newsletters, so that parents know which day to watch out for their arrival.
32. Very good benefits result from liaison with other schools because of links developed with others, both primary and secondary, within a local learning community. This enables valuable collaboration over common priorities. Mutual support in exploring ways to release teachers from their classrooms, as time becomes due to them for planning, preparation and assessment, is currently important. Shared organisation of special events proves very worthwhile as well. In one recent initiative, every class experienced specialist input from an African dance company. A performance on the community sports field rounded off a week of activities. Very supportive links with the receiving secondary school include help with after-school sports from several secondary students and their teacher. This widens pupils' access to team games, while the students gain useful experience towards the junior sports leader award. Similarly, students from a local college contribute to creative and performing arts provision.
33. The school plays a full part in its local community. Pupils join in a range of community events, such as the spring flower show. The skills of local artists are used; several helped pupils develop new skills during an art week funded by the very supportive parents' association. Local police contribute to the personal, social and health education programme and through cricket coaching. Links with the two local churches help pupils' learning and their personal development, through a minister's regular visits to take assembly, for instance. Pupils benefit from their shared use of the community sports field; the school does not have any grassed playing field of its own.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Governance and the leadership provided by the acting headteacher are good. The leadership provided by other staff and the management of the school are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership roles have been affected by changes in staffing and a period without a substantive headteacher and staff have had little time to make an impact as subject leaders.
- Good leadership by the acting headteacher has ensured new staff have integrated quickly, developed good teamwork and maintained the school's very good ethos.
- Good leadership of English and information and communication technology has resulted in improvements in these subjects.
- Governors are becoming much more effective in holding the school to account for the standards achieved, and have played a pivotal role in negotiations for the school's impending move.

### **Commentary**

34. The school has undergone significant changes in its leadership since the last inspection, when the previous headteacher's leadership was judged to be very good. At the time of the current inspection, the school had been without a substantive headteacher for a year and a half, the situation having arisen initially because of the secondment of the headteacher to another school, and then continuing because of her resignation to take up another post. The governors' initial attempt to appoint a new headteacher did not succeed because of a lack of suitable applicants. They hope, however, to appoint a new headteacher for the start of the next school year. During this time, the school has been led by the deputy headteacher, with another teacher acting as deputy headteacher. There has also been a significant turnover of teachers during this period. At the start of the current school year, half of the teachers were newly qualified and not in a position to take on the responsibility of becoming a subject

leader. As a result, a number of subjects were being looked after in a temporary capacity by the acting headteacher, and other staff had only recently taken up their subject leadership responsibilities. All of these factors have affected the overall quality of leadership and management within the school.

35. During this period of change, the acting headteacher has provided good leadership and an important element of stability, with the most important result being that the very good ethos of the school has been maintained. A crucial element in this has been the way in which she has dealt with changes in staffing and managed the induction of new staff, including a number of newly qualified teachers. Her leadership has resulted in a genuine sense of teamwork and a real desire to bring improvement. At the same time, she has dealt well with the school's main priorities, foremost amongst which was the need to improve the quality of pupils' writing, following the disappointing results in English in 2004 and the significant decline in standards since the last inspection. She has worked closely with the local authority's advisers and the recently appointed English co-ordinator and implemented a programme which has been successful in improving the quality of teaching and raising standards.
36. The leadership of other staff is satisfactory, largely because few have had their responsibilities for long enough to have had an impact on their subject areas. The most significant areas in which leadership has been effective are English and information and communication technology, both of which have been a major focus for school development involving not only the leadership of the subject co-ordinator, but the cooperation and participation of all members of staff. Recent initiatives to raise staff awareness of the expectations for subject leaders have been effective, and staff are now keen to fulfil their roles. The opportunity for most to exercise leadership, however, has not yet been forthcoming as the school has, rightly, concentrated on its main priorities for development. Good arrangements have been made for newly qualified staff to take on a subject responsibility once their induction period is finished. This has allowed them to familiarise themselves with the intended subject area without yet taking on full responsibility.
37. Although a number of aspects of management, including the need to develop a detailed management plan and to introduce systems for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, teaching and learning, were highlighted as areas for development in the previous inspection, progress in these areas has been slow and has also been affected by the changes in staffing and leadership. A plan to review all subjects on a regular basis and to provide opportunities for subject-specific developments, monitoring and evaluation has now been implemented, but most subjects are awaiting their turn within the management cycle. As a result, staff are not yet experienced in the management of their subjects, and few have had the opportunity to identify areas for improvement through monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The financial management of the school is good. The school has clear procedures, experienced staff to ensure they are carried out, and good oversight by governors.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	409,358
Total expenditure	418,376
Expenditure per pupil	2,404

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	25,257
Balance carried forward to the next	16,239

38. The governing body ensures that the school fulfils all of its statutory requirements. Governance has improved since the last inspection as governors have become more fully aware of their roles and responsibilities during the period without a substantive headteacher. Many governors show significant commitment and provide much support for the school. They have a good awareness of the school's strengths and a growing appreciation of the areas in need of development and the need to hold the school to account for the standards it

achieves. Individual governors are now linked to subject areas and a number of useful visits have been carried out to review progress and provision within a subject area. Good guidelines have been drawn up for when governors visit lessons or liaise with subject coordinators. An area which is likely to have a major impact on the school in the future, is the involvement with a privately funded initiative to relocate the school on another site. Governors have been heavily involved in promoting this initiative and in consulting and liaising with the local community. The initiative heralds an exciting time for the school and one which should help the school to solve the shortcomings of its current accommodation.

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

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

39. There has been very good improvement in the school's provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. Provision was previously judged to be unsatisfactory, but it is now very good. The reception class has been taught by a number of different teachers since the last inspection, but the underlying problems highlighted in the previous inspection report have been tackled well. The provision is currently being managed very well by a recently appointed teacher, who is keen and skilled and ensures that staff form a close-knit, supportive and effective team.
40. Children's attainment when they enter the reception class varies considerably, but has been above average in most year groups. This year standards were average on entry. The overall quality of the teaching is very good, as is children's overall achievement. The teaching is usually vibrant and alive so that children are enthused and learn very well. Children with special educational needs are provided for well and are fully involved in all activities. Outside provision remains limited because there is no room for an area dedicated to young children's activities. The main playground, although walled and gated, has a tarmac surface and a considerable slope. This limits the number and quality of activities that children can pursue out of doors. Assessment procedures are good and ensure that adults are fully aware of the stage 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 reception.
- Very good daily routines and very good teaching by all adults help children to be self-confident, thoughtful and to achieve very well.

#### **Commentary**

41. Teaching in this area of learning is very good and relationships are outstandingly good. There is a very pleasant, focused atmosphere in the class and adults are very good role models who children respect, love and strive to emulate. All adults have high expectations of good behaviour at all times which help children remain calm and thoughtful, both in their work and towards others in the class. Thorough planning ensures that children are engaged in a rich variety of activities. This enables children to move purposefully from one task to another without becoming bored. They work well in unsupervised groups in literacy and numeracy, behaving sensibly, discussing what they are doing and taking turns. They also co-operate very well in groups. For example, while one child was the narrator, several others re-enacted the story of 'Can't You Sleep Little Bear' using small toys and developing impromptu speech very well. Children change independently for physical education sessions and offer help to each other if needed. Children are achieving very well and by the end of reception all will attain the level expected for their age and most will attain well beyond.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

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

- Opportunities are used very well throughout the day to develop children's literacy skills.
- Lessons are stimulating and are taught very well which ensures that children achieve very well.

## Commentary

42. The teacher and her assistants understand the needs of young children very well. Interesting and appropriate activities are planned that motivate and intrigue the children. The teacher constantly uses a mixture of stimulating questions and remarks containing deliberate mistakes that extend and fascinate the children so that they listen hard and are alert for opportunities to show what they know. This ensures that children's listening and speaking skills develop well so that by the end of reception many children will attain well above the expected level.
43. Many children are at the stage of using emergent writing which only they understand. There were examples of children's work around the room and in their books which demonstrated that they write for a variety of purposes and have a clear idea that writing carries meaning. Some children are starting to use their growing knowledge of phonics<sup>4</sup> to write words correctly, and a group had great fun discovering how to write short very simple words like 'man' and 'pet' independently. Most children will attain the expected level and some will work well beyond by the end of the year.
44. Early reading skills are taught very thoroughly. The most frequently used words in their reading books are practised regularly and added to so that everyone has a fast-growing range of words that they recognise with ease. Children are encouraged to look at pictures carefully and to use their knowledge of phonics to read new words. They start to understand the functions of 'title' and 'author' and to know whether a book contains fictional stories or information. Many children will attain beyond the expected goals by the end of reception.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning covers an exciting variety of appropriate tasks.
- Teaching is very good and all adults are fully involved.

## Commentary

45. Very good teaching makes learning fun, and children respond with delight and concentration. Activities are interesting. For example, in one lesson the most able children made pictures using and identifying different shapes, while children of average ability estimated how many beads or toys were in a string or group. The least able children counted objects to ten with increasing accuracy, and large numbers made of different textures were used very well to reinforce how numbers are written. These early mathematical skills are developed well through impromptu opportunities to count, add and subtract, as are the concepts of size, shape and pattern. By the end of reception, most children will attain the expected level for children of their age and several will attain well beyond.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good and imaginative planning ensures that children are developing enquiring minds.

## Commentary

46. Children enjoy a wide range of experiences which help them investigate and understand many aspects of this wide area of learning. There is good early emphasis on children

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<sup>4</sup> Phonics is a teaching programme aimed at developing an awareness of sounds in the spoken and written word. Pupils learn to read and pronounce words by linking the sounds they hear spoken with the letters, letter groups and syllables they see written.

discovering facts for themselves. In a very good lesson, children worked in pairs looking at a variety of large toys and deciding what made them move and how it happened. They then made model vehicles to carry Teddy which showed good new learning and understanding of the principles of construction for a purpose. A hailstorm during the lesson caused great excitement and interest, and children applied recently acquired knowledge of melting ice to predict what would happen to the hail that they gathered and brought indoors. Children show average skills in their independent use of the computer. By the end of the year, children will attain beyond the expected level and have unusually good ability to investigate and to apply their knowledge independently.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Activities are well planned to help children to develop good hand control.
- The present school site limits children's opportunities to play, climb and explore what their bodies can do out of doors.
- Opportunities for children to develop their gross motor skills during physical education sessions do not challenge all children adequately.

### **Commentary**

47. The teacher plans interesting and appropriate activities which ensure that children show good levels of control when using small tools such as paint and glue brushes, scissors and pencils, and their writing is becoming clear and legibly formed. The large majority attain at the expected level or beyond for their age now. Children's gross motor skills are developing more slowly, partly because of the unavoidable lack of opportunities for them to use equipment regularly outside. Children showed good awareness of space and of others around them during a physical education session in the hall, but the teaching in this lesson lacked imagination which resulted in restricted opportunities for children to experiment when moving and balancing on apparatus. Several children attain below the expected levels for their age in this aspect of their physical development.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good range of activities provides children with good opportunities to explore and experiment.

### **Commentary**

48. During the inspection, good teaching ensured that children had varied opportunities to use and develop their imaginations well. They chose shapes to cut from magazines to form collages and were very interested to see the range of patterns and colours they could create by printing with toy rakes and potato mashers. Children took turns to act out a story using small toys, and quite complicated play in the home corner involved mothers and children who were being 'difficult'! Children are encouraged to observe very closely and they have made silhouettes of themselves for others to identify. They have also painted vivid self-portraits, using colours appropriately. Activities often involve negotiating and taking turns, as when children constructed a number of buildings around a train set. Children are achieving well and many will attain beyond the expected level by the end of reception in this area of learning.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- The quality of teaching is good and pupils are achieving well in lessons.
- The school makes good use of assessment data to set clear targets for improvement for all pupils.
- Standards in reading are above average throughout the school.
- There are too few opportunities to develop writing skills across the curriculum.

#### **Commentary**

49. In the national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2004, the school's results were well above the national average in reading and average in writing. Although these results were lower than those achieved in the previous two years, the school has successfully improved standards since the last inspection, and in the case of reading, much more than in most schools. These improvements have arisen because of consistently good teaching. The inspection findings indicate that standards are above average in English and pupils are achieving well.
50. The picture in Year 6 is very different. The school's results have fallen dramatically since the last inspection, and the 2004 test results were well below the national average. Pupils achieved well in the reading section of the test but poorly in the writing part. Teachers have worked hard and successfully to address this by placing greater emphasis on the improvement of writing skills. Effective strategies have been put in place to hone pupils' writing skills, and there are now detailed assessments after each piece of work. Thus, pupils are very aware of what they have to do to improve. Consequently, good standards in reading have been maintained, while the quality of writing is steadily improving. Standards overall are now above average, and pupils' achievement is good. Pupils are achieving well in individual lessons and the quality of work seen in Year 5, along with forecasts provided by the school, suggests that standards will continue to rise. The good quality of support provided by teaching assistants for pupils with special educational needs is enabling these pupils to achieve just as well as their classmates.
51. Standards in speaking and listening are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Most pupils are confident, expressive and articulate in their speech from a young age. By Year 2, they listen closely to what others are saying and express their own ideas clearly and confidently. They have a varied vocabulary and the more confident speakers answer fluently and at length, using words such as 'stagger', 'hobbles', 'exhausted', reflecting above average standards for their age, while only a small minority at this stage use single-word answers and need regular support, which is below expectations. By Year 6, the great majority of pupils listen and reflect carefully when asked questions, and their replies are measured, mature and articulate. During an assembly held during the inspection, for example, pupils read their contributions for the annual poetry festival giving poised, confident and polished performances. All pupils have well-developed listening skills, reflecting the interest they have in school activities, and the respect they show for the efforts of other members of the school. Very few lack the confidence to contribute in question-and-answer sessions.
52. The very good standard of reading is a strength of the subject. Good provision for pupils' reading development includes a strong reading partnership with parents, secure teaching of reading strategies, and the use of high-quality texts. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to understand and respond to texts of different kinds, to learn from them about the craft of writing, and to practise the art of reading aloud, and silently to themselves. Dedicated reading sessions in Years 1 and 2 are used very effectively to enhance reading skills, so that pupils read with expression, predict forthcoming events sensibly, and use a range of strategies to ensure they fully comprehend the text they are reading. These productive



sessions have done much to raise standards in reading by the time pupils reach the end of Year 2. This is an improvement since the last report. By the end of Year 6, almost all identify and discuss the structure, content and impact on the reader of a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts, and have developed healthy attitudes towards reading.

53. Standards in writing are currently above average in Year 2 and Year 6. This marks a significant improvement this year in the quality of pupils' writing because of the school's concerted efforts to develop more effective strategies for the teaching of writing. Most pupils in Year 2 identify adjectives to improve their writing, and write sentences with correct punctuation. More able pupils regularly use speech marks with accuracy. A small minority, on the other hand, need regular reminders from teaching assistants or their teachers to space words correctly and build sentences. By Year 6, most pupils write stories independently, organising their work into paragraphs, and are familiar with writing for different audiences through book reviews, persuasive letter writing or play scripts. They use complex sentences with ease, and are very aware of the choice of vocabulary to enhance interesting writing. The pupils with special educational needs are very well supported, enabling them to achieve well.
54. Standards of spelling vary across the school. Most pupils are capable of spelling difficult words accurately, but spell more frequently used words incorrectly. Teachers do not always insist that spellings are correctly done in other subjects such as science, so for example, pupils write 'hight' for height and 'distince' instead of distance. This is an example of where writing skills are not promoted well enough in other subjects.
55. The teaching of English is good, enabling pupils of all abilities to make good overall progress in their learning. The teachers' feedback to pupils about writing, both in lessons and through the marking of work, is thorough and ensures that pupils know what they have to do to improve. Teachers are very clear about what they want their pupils to learn, and sessions are very structured. This results in good learning in lessons, but sometimes the most able pupils are not allowed to progress at a faster rate so, for these pupils, time is not always used in the most effective way. When the progress of these groups is not checked and when they are not continuously challenged, their concentration and the quality of work tend to tail off. Sessions are often very long and, particularly for the younger pupils, this results in attention waning when they are required to sit for such long periods of time.
56. The subject has been led and managed well in recent months. The subject leader has only just taken on responsibility for English, but has worked conscientiously and effectively to develop provision for writing. There have been no opportunities for him to monitor teaching and learning, but he has benefited from the strong support of the local education authority's literacy consultant. As a result, he has a good overview of what needs to be addressed. Overall, assessment procedures are good and pupils' progress is tracked carefully so that additional help can be given according to need, for example, through booster groups and special educational needs provision.

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

57. Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to develop and use their literacy skills across the curriculum. The strategies being developed in English lessons are not being applied to writing elsewhere, so there are missed opportunities for pupils to hone their skills further. Few opportunities are given to use information communication technology to develop literacy skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching and learning is improving, and is good at Key Stage 2.
- The focus on developing mental techniques is bearing fruit.

- Analysis of test results is being used well to correct areas of weakness.
- The teachers' marking does not always highlight or correct erroneous answers.

### **Commentary**

58. The national test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 were slightly above the national average in 2004. Results have fallen over the last two years, but the most recent results were still markedly better than those at the time of the last inspection, indicating an overall improvement trend similar to that seen in most schools. The inspection findings indicate that standards are average at the end of Year 2 and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Standards are, however, improving and are above average in Year 1.
59. The test results at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were very close to the national average. Although the results reached high points in 2000 and 2002, the overall improvement since the last inspection has been marginal and less than in most schools. However, the inspection findings indicate that standards are improving once again. They are now above average in Year 6 and pupils are achieving well.
60. As a result of the fluctuations in the results over the past few years, the school has started to put strategies in place in order to raise standards. Test results are analysed and weak areas are being strengthened. For example, the recent focus on developing pupils' mental agility is starting to bear fruit. Lesson observations and analysis of work confirm that standards are starting to rise and that due emphasis is given to each area of mathematical learning. In most classes, tasks are modified appropriately to suit pupils of different abilities. The school is working well towards reinstating the standard of provision found at the time of the previous inspection.
61. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Teachers show good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and adapt it well to their pupils' needs. They use whole class-sessions well at the start of lessons to check pupils' knowledge and then extend their understanding by the use of a mixture of questions and information which help pupils to think and to reason for themselves. Teaching assistants give less able pupils good support, which enables them to remain confident and well focused. All teachers expect their pupils to behave well and pay attention and this creates an atmosphere where pupils are ready and able to learn. The concluding session for each lesson is usually used well and pupils are often asked how confident they feel that learning intentions have been achieved. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in class. Tasks are usually well adapted for their needs and are often related to the targets on their education plans. This ensures that they achieve as well as their classmates. Resources are usually used well to help pupils understand new concepts. During the inspection many tasks were interesting and pupils were engrossed.
62. Analysis of pupils' work across the school indicates that some teachers rely heavily on worksheets and workbooks which, while satisfactory, are not exciting. The degree of challenge introduced by teachers varies. This is partly because formal assessment does not yet predict what pupils' attainment should be at the end of each year throughout the school and pupils do not have group or individual targets to work towards. Also, while teachers' marking indicates whether they feel a learning intention has been attained, some teachers do not show where errors have occurred and, in a few cases, marking is slipshod. There are few examples in books of teachers giving forward challenge to inspire pupils to improve.
63. The co-ordinator has been appointed recently and while enthusiastic and having well-defined intentions, has several other responsibilities with the result that the quality of leadership and management are only satisfactory at present.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

64. The development and use of pupils' mathematical skills across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils record scientific findings in chart and graph form and they are aware of dates in history but, at present, mathematical knowledge and development of skills tend to be useful adjuncts to other subjects rather than being planned for regularly.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in their scientific learning as a result of the good development of scientific skills.
- The quality of teaching is good and pupils learn well through direct experience.

### Commentary

65. The high standards in science seen at the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Current standards in Year 2 broadly reflect the results of the statutory teachers' assessments in science in 2004, which were above average. The national test results for pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were above the national average and have improved at a similar rate to most schools since the last inspection. Inspection findings indicate that standards are above average. Pupils with special educational needs do well in all years because of the effective support they receive.
66. The good standards attained by pupils are as a result of the emphasis placed on the development of scientific skills through many opportunities for pupils to learn through direct experience. Throughout the school, pupils are given many opportunities to plan investigations and engage in practical work. During the inspection, for example, pupils In Year 1 used their own categories to sort a range of materials according to their observable properties and their knowledge of Venn diagrams to help them classify the groups. Pupils in Class 5 were aware of the need for tests to be fair, and recognised the deficiencies of the investigation they carried out on insulating materials. By Year 6, pupils record their observations using graphs, and are beginning to draw general conclusions from their observations.
67. The teaching is good, and teachers have secure subject knowledge and the confidence to allow pupils to experiment. Pupils are encouraged to predict what will happen and then learn from their observations, rather than be told the answers. In Class 5, this was done particularly well when pupils thought that the best insulator would allow the ice to melt the quickest, and then they discovered the opposite. After clear discussion, they appreciated that the function of an insulator was not just to keep things warm. In this lesson, there was good learning through direct observation, making pupils adjust their initial hypotheses. Pupils are very familiar with correct scientific language as teachers use it well. Pupils are encouraged to think about what they are doing in a scientific way, so they can explain what they have discovered. This very good emphasis on the development of scientific skills has a positive impact on pupils' learning in the subject and the standards they achieve. However, there are weaknesses in the recording of experiments, and the good strategies in place in English lessons to improve the quality of writing are not transferred to science.
68. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject is not a priority for development at present, so there have been no recent initiatives. The acting headteacher is subject leader and currently has a very heavy workload. However, she is very aware of standards in the subject, and does a careful analysis of test results to check where weaknesses lie. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, and the subject leader tracks pupils' progress and overall trends for the subject. There is some use of information communication technology to support learning in the subject, for example, when Class 6 use sensors to monitor temperature change. However, this isn't a regular occurrence. Mathematical skills of recording using charts and graphs are used well, and pupils learn to read scales such as those on a thermometer.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management at various levels has enabled the school to overcome setbacks and improve its provision for information and communication technology.
- Teachers provide good models for the pupils as they are skilled in using new technology and make effective use of it as a teaching aid in many lessons.
- Although the teachers manage their lessons very well and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, the cramped conditions of the computer room impede pupils' learning.
- The new scheme of work provides a good structure for the teaching of information technology skills, but does not relate sufficiently to work being undertaken in other subjects.
- Pupils do not yet have enough opportunity to develop and apply their skills in information and communication technology across the curriculum.

### Commentary

69. The school has made significant efforts to improve its provision for information and communication technology since the last inspection. The overall improvement has been good, but it has been hard won, and the school recognises that it still has more to do in order to make the overall provision in this subject good.
70. Pupils are reaching standards which are commensurate with those expected for their age by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and their achievement throughout the school is satisfactory. There is a satisfactory balance to the curriculum, all aspects of which are now being taught. Pupils show greatest confidence in exchanging and sharing information, for example through presenting information using a word processor or page layout program, and in finding things out, for example through the Internet. Skills are developed satisfactorily as the pupils move through the school. Pupils in Year 6, for example, show better ability to set out text in an attractive way for different audiences than pupils in Years 3 and 4. Their chequered past experiences, which have included times when the school has been without the use of computers, have resulted in slower development of the pupils' abilities to develop ideas, and to review, modify and evaluate work as it progresses. The restricted availability of computers also makes it difficult for pupils to spend much time on a specific project, or to modify successive drafts of a piece of work.
71. The quality of the teaching varies from good to satisfactory. It is satisfactory overall. A well-organised programme of training has helped teachers to improve their skills. All of the teachers show good personal competence in using information and communication technology, and are conversant with the software available for the pupils. Teachers manage their lessons very well in the cramped computer room, ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the computers and that standards of behaviour are good. They ensure that pupils of different abilities are given tasks of differing complexity. All staff use a commercial Internet-based scheme for their lesson planning. Whilst this has its strengths, in that it ensures systematic development of skills and provides a means for assessing pupils' levels of competence in the subject, it also introduces inherent weaknesses into the teaching. Many of the skills-based tasks have little relevance to work being undertaken in other subjects, resulting in missed opportunities for pupils to enhance their learning in other areas. Lessons are also highly structured, allowing little opportunity for more able pupils to extend their learning or for given topics to be followed up at a later date. Teachers now have a mechanism for assessing pupils' attainment within the subject, but some of the assessment tasks are superficial and teachers' assessments over-optimistic.
72. Pupils' learning and achievement are both satisfactory, but are impeded by the confines of the computer room, which make it difficult for pupils to develop work of any great complexity because they have to take turns in sharing the computers and have so little time at the keyboard. That they make progress at all under such conditions is due to the very good

attitudes and behaviour shown by almost all pupils. They are very cooperative, listen well, take turns at using the keyboard, and collaborate very well with each other.

73. Leadership and management of the subject have been good. The co-ordinator, headteacher and governor with responsibility for information and communication technology have not let adversity defeat them. They have dealt with many frustrations along the way, including one provider which went out of business, another that was unable to fulfil the school's requirements, and several occasions when all of the information held on the computers disappeared. The school's resources have improved to an acceptable level, and the computer room, despite its inadequacy in terms of size and layout, is a significant improvement on what was previously available and the best the school can arrange within the current accommodation. Training has been provided, the curriculum improved, and a sensible and viable plan for the future drawn up. There is also good involvement of the governing body, with the subject link governor monitoring the school's situation closely. The good use of the laptop computers provided for each teacher, the two recently installed interactive whiteboards, and the newly acquired digital projectors for other classrooms have all helped to broaden pupils' awareness of how information and communication technology can be used as a tool for learning. A well-trained teaching assistant provides good support for teachers each afternoon, ensuring the right programs are available, providing assistance during lessons, and sorting out the many glitches which still occur with the equipment.

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

74. The development of pupils' skills and use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is satisfactory, but remains an area for further development. The teachers themselves are making increasingly good use of new technology within lessons, through use of either the interactive whiteboards or the digital projectors. In this way, they raise pupils' awareness of how a wide variety of computer programs or information from the Internet can enhance their learning in many subjects. In a geography lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5, for example, the Internet was used effectively to research up-to-date information on the weather. The weaknesses lie in the lack of access which pupils have to computers and the fact that information technology skills are rarely taught within a context which relates to work being undertaken in other subjects. Although each class has the opportunity to use the computer room in the mornings, in addition to their weekly session for skills teaching in the afternoon, the morning sessions are not often used because of the cramped working conditions. Pupils have very little opportunity to produce extended pieces of work using computers or to choose to use computers to present their work, if they feel this to be appropriate. The potential for improving the quality of pupils' writing, for example, by producing successive drafts on a word processor and using tools such as the spellcheck facility to improve the accuracy of their spelling, is not exploited sufficiently. Subject co-ordinators are rightly expected to identify how information and communication technology should be used within their own subject areas, but little progress has been made with this new expectation, which features as an area for development within the current school development plan.

## **HUMANITIES**

The organisation of the timetable during the week of the inspection provided little opportunity to observe direct teaching in either **geography** or **history** and no judgement has been made about the overall provision in these subjects. Pupils' books, work on display and evidence in the co-ordinator's file were scrutinised, and discussions were held with staff and pupils. Brief visits were made to two geography lessons.

75. It is evident that interesting work takes place in both **geography** and **history**, and there are indications that 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, getting pupils to form a human timeline to illustrate the concept of chronology in history or making use of the outside environment to investigate work in geography. Fieldwork activities within the local environment are planned for pupils throughout the school, and pupils in Years 3 to 6 also have the opportunity to enrich their geographical understanding on residential trips. Displays in classrooms indicate that much has been learnt about the ancient

Egyptians, and pupils delight in recalling some of the gory details of how to mummify a body. Teachers make good use of local circumstances to develop pupils' awareness of the need for sustainable development and stewardship of the earth's resources. A large, attractive display in the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, contains pupils' thoughtful designs for an environmentally friendly school, a topical subject given the school's impending move to a new site. Resources for geography have improved since the last inspection, with a central resource area containing resources for all topics.

76. The quality and quantity of the recorded work in pupils' exercise books is somewhat disappointing and does not provide a full reflection of all the pupils have learnt or their and their teachers' enthusiasm for the subjects. In Key Stage 2, for example, pupils' books contain only five pieces of work on ancient Egypt, representing their recorded output for one term. The marking of pupils' work does not reflect the good standard of marking in English and gives little indication of what pupils need to do to improve. Very little attention is given to the quality of pupils' writing, which is significantly inferior to the quality produced in English lessons. These weaknesses reflect the fact that not enough thought has gone into developing cross-curricular links with other subjects, particularly English and information and communication technology, resulting in insufficient time being devoted to them for pupils to have the chance to produce work of high quality.
77. Recent awareness of the need to develop the role of subject co-ordinator has resulted in a clearer understanding of what is expected in terms of leadership and management. The co-ordinator is well organised, and documentary evidence shows an awareness of how both subjects can be developed. Time has been scheduled, as part of a two-year cycle of monitoring and evaluation, for the co-ordinator to scrutinise pupils' work and teachers' planning and to observe teaching in other classes but, because the cycle has only recently been introduced, none of these activities have taken place. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory at present, but shows potential for improvement.

## Religious education

Provision in religious knowledge is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The allocation of time for the subject has improved and is now sufficient to meet the demands of the locally agreed syllabus.
- Teachers provide pupils with a good variety of learning experiences and make good use of visits and visitors to promote pupils' learning.
- Assessment procedures are not fully developed.

### Commentary

78. Since the last inspection, more time has been allocated for religious knowledge, and teachers are confident to teach the subject. Standards of attainment now meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, and pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. Pupils learn about the major world faiths, and consider the similarities and differences between the religions. By Year 2, pupils are familiar with Christian and Hindu stories. Pupils know that religions have different types of buildings for worship, and books that are special to them. By Year 6, pupils are suitably informed about a number of world religions, successfully understanding many aspects of the Christian, Sikh, and Jewish faiths. Pupils know that all religions have distinctive traditions and life-styles and, for example, pupils in Year 5 can identify the important features of a synagogue, while pupils in Year 3 appreciate the main features of a church. Pupils in Year 6 are increasingly aware of the various texts that are important to different peoples, and they recognise the importance of the Bible to Christians and the Torah to Jews. Pupils are aware of the need for love and understanding in their dealings with others, and they recognise in particular the importance of the need for tolerance of differences within their own community. Pupils in Class 4 appreciated the spiritual nature of the church as they entered it in silence and sat quietly experiencing the peace of their surroundings.

79. The teaching is satisfactory, enabling pupils to make sound progress. Teachers arouse the pupils' interest through a variety of learning experiences, such as making use of religious artefacts and visits to the local church. Pupils learn facts about different religions and begin to identify the similarities and differences between them. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to explore the deeper meanings behind the religions. There are limited opportunities to use the writing skills developed in English lessons, as recording tasks do not involve writing at length.
80. Leadership and management of the subject are currently satisfactory. The subject leader is away from school at present, and the headteacher is maintaining an overview of the subject. It is evident that a lot of hard work has gone into ensuring that all teachers teach the requirements of the syllabus to ensure that standards have risen. However, assessment procedures are yet to be fully developed. Good use is made of visits and visitors to the school, and when it is not possible to visit different places of worship, effective use is made of information and communication technology through 'virtual tours' of religious buildings.

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

The organisation of the timetable during the week of the inspection provided little opportunity to observe direct teaching in any of the subjects in this curriculum area and no judgement has been made about the overall provision in these subjects. Discussions were held with pupils and staff, the limited amount of available work was scrutinised and brief visits were made to one art and design lesson and two physical education lessons.

81. There are indications that some of the good features mentioned in the previous inspection report regarding the school's provision for **art and design** and **design and technology** continue. Pupils talked enthusiastically about their last art project week, an annual event funded by the parent-teacher association, during which six artists visited the school and worked with the pupils in their lessons. Pupils in Year 3, for example, completed screen paintings of the church. Stimulating art displays in the classes for pupils in Years 4 and 5 provide evidence of some good-quality work in the style of Picasso. The displays also demonstrate how effective discriminating use of a digital camera can be in celebrating pupils' work and providing pleasing and helpful reminders of what pupils have been studying. A well-presented display of work by pupils in Year 2 provides a good example of how work in different subjects can be combined successfully to enhance pupils' learning. A project to design and make stick puppets not only developed pupils' skills of planning, designing and making in design and technology, but provided a useful context for writing instructions in English, and presenting information using information and communication technology. However, more could be done to provide more cross-curricular planning centred around these two subjects. The brief visit to an art lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 revealed a group of interested pupils absorbed by an imaginative exploration of the art of Andy Warhol and further indication of the teachers' good personal expertise in information and communication technology. Pupils were, however, unable to follow up the exploration of transforming digital images in any depth, as the only available computer for the whole class to use was the teacher's own laptop.
82. There are, however, indications that the time allocated to these two subjects adversely affects pupils' overall achievement. The teachers' timetables indicate that 45 minutes a week is allocated to art and design in Years 1 and 2 and an hour in Years 3 to 6. This time allocation, however, alternates on a half-termly basis with design and technology. Discussions with pupils indicate a hesitant and sketchy knowledge of famous and local artists. Pupils' sketchbooks contain little evidence of the breadth or depth of work envisaged in the programmes of study of the National Curriculum, and opportunities for pupils to produce three-dimensional and larger-scale work are rare. Whilst there is clearly some good-quality teaching in both subjects and pupils are producing some good-quality work, there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to develop a wide range of skills and a real depth of knowledge and understanding. Both subjects have been without a full-time co-ordinator for some time because of changes in staffing. However, appropriate plans have been made for teachers to take over the leadership of both subjects, and a useful induction period is being served before they can take over full responsibility.

83. **Music** also suffers from a shortage of teaching time, with music lessons for pupils in Years 3 to 6 alternating each week with swimming lessons. There are, however, good opportunities for pupils to gain additional experience in music. Instrumental tuition is available during the week, and pupils who play instruments, whether learning at home or at school, perform in front of parents and pupils in Year 2 before the end of the school year, to help these pupils decide whether or not they wish to start learning an instrument in Year 3. Occasional concerts, participation in workshops and whole-school musical productions provide good enrichment of the formal curriculum. Pupils have a singing practice each week, and the standard of singing observed during the inspection in assemblies was good, with very good participation of pupils throughout the school.
84. All of the indications are that the school continues to provide many good opportunities for pupils in **physical education**, despite the limitations of the school not having its own school playing field. The subject is led and managed well by an enthusiastic and dedicated co-ordinator, who brings significant additional expertise to the school with his previous experience of teaching outdoor and adventurous activities. The school endeavours to provide two hours of physical education per week for the pupils, in line with the government's recommendations. The teaching programme covers all aspects of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum, and a strong emphasis is given to swimming, achieved with the helpful cooperation of parents and staff, as pupils who go swimming each week arrive back at school an hour after the normal school finishing time. The school's records for swimming indicate that pupils reach high standards in this discipline, comfortably exceeding the national expectations. Photographic displays of pupils in Years 4 and 5 performing balances indicate that pupils achieve above average standards in this aspect. The school has also enabled a few pupils to participate in an incentive scheme for gifted and talented pupils.
85. Brief observations made at the start of a dance lesson in Year 2 and the end of a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 revealed some very good features in the teaching. Whilst pupils in Year 2 were changing for their dance lesson, the teacher projected images of the pupils taken during the previous week's lesson, and then used these pictures to discuss features of the previous week's performance and what she was looking for in the coming lesson. This not only motivated the pupils, who were delighted at seeing the pictures, but provided a very effective start to the lesson. The key feature of the lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 was the excellent discipline as pupils responded immediately to the teacher's instructions and performed their sequences with studied concentration. The lesson then finished with a cooling down session, expertly led by one of the pupils, with all of the other pupils following her crystal-clear instructions.
86. The school runs a very good programme of extra-curricular sporting activities, with large numbers of pupils, at times over a third of those in Years 3 to 6, coming to school early on two mornings a week for cross-country running and staying behind two nights a week for team sports such as rugby, football, cricket and netball. Occasionally, opportunities are provided for pupils to participate in activities such as climbing and ice-skating. There is excellent commitment from some staff towards these activities, as well as very good involvement of parents. The enthusiasm generated by these events percolates through the school, having a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes. The school participates in tournaments, such as a summer kwick-cricket festival, and sporting fixtures against other schools. A very good partnership with the local secondary school also brings the involvement of students in Year 10, who help out with the after-school clubs on one evening a week. Participation in an African Dance workshop has contributed to pupils' achievements in dance and enhanced their cultural development. Residential visits also provide pupils with the opportunity to participate in outdoor and adventurous activities.

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

87. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is largely informal at present, but the principles and values of good citizenship are implicit in the life and work of the school. They are seen clearly in the very good relationships that exist and the good role models that adults present. Pupils are given increasing responsibility in this process. They formally exchange views through representatives on the school council and are consulted on



important issues such as the appointment of a new headteacher. There is a growing understanding of democracy and why society operates within a system of rules and laws.

88. 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. No circle times were observed and there is no set programme, but pupils have a well-developed sense of their own worth and a good understanding of how their actions affect others. An interesting experiment in Class 5 trains pupils to consider problems from a philosophical point of view, and this develops clear and logical thinking about issues such as the fact that we feel more strongly about the fate of people we know and love than about those we have not met.
89. 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>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
<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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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>4</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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