

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ELKESLEY PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Elkesley, near Retford

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122640

Headteacher: Mrs Carol Sharpe

Deleted: ¶  
¶

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Lead inspector: Rajinder Harrison

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Inspection number: 266788

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 3 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll; 82

School address: Headland Avenue  
Elkesley  
Retford  
Nottinghamshire  
Postcode: DN22 8AQ

Telephone number: (01777) 838 615  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of Mrs Brenda Ransford  
governors:

Date of previous 4<sup>th</sup> May 1999  
inspection:

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Elkesley Primary and Nursery School is a mixed school for pupils aged 3 to 11. It is located in the former mining village of Elkesley in north Nottinghamshire. The village is isolated by poor access, which is restricted to a slip road off the A1. With 82 pupils, who are in the Foundation Unit and three other mixed age classes, it is small for a primary school. The village is a mix of traditional village and post-war private properties, a former National Coal Board estate and a small estate built by a housing association. Most pupils at the school come from the village with a few from outside the catchment area and a small number from the nearby traveller site. The socio-economic circumstances in the area are broadly average. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals (17.3 per cent) is in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (18 per cent) is broadly in line with the national average and no pupils have statements of special educational needs. The disabilities and difficulties for those with special educational needs include dyslexia, moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. All pupils are of White-British origin. There are no refugees or asylum seekers at the school but there are five children from traveller families. Last year one pupil joined the school and three left other than at the usual times, a mobility rate which is well below average.

Awards – School Achievement Award 2002.

Attainment on entry to the Foundation Unit is below the national average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18059	Rajinder Harrison	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Religious education Geography History Special educational needs
19361	Keith Ross	Lay inspector	
4350	Clive Whittington	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Music Physical education Personal, social and health education
5531	Janet Croft	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 5</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>6 - 9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>10 - 15</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>15 - 16</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>17 - 29</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>30</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an effective school.** Teaching and learning are good overall and as a result, pupils' overall achievement is good. Standards in most subjects are average. Pupils' personal development is good; they are well cared for, form very good relationships and are happy at school. Leadership, management and governance are good overall. The school gives good value for money.

### THE SCHOOL'S MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE:

- Teaching is good overall and pupils of all abilities achieve well.
- The headteacher's leadership and management are good.
- Standards of the work seen in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education are above expectations at the end of Year 6.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller families is good.
- Provision for the Foundation Stage is good.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good and their behaviour is good.
- Governors support the work of the school well.
- Whilst most subject leaders carry out their duties satisfactorily, their role is not developed well enough to bring about further improvements in their subjects.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory and this has a negative impact on pupils' learning.
- The school's library facilities are unsatisfactory.

The school has made good improvement in addressing the key issues since its last inspection. Curriculum provision is satisfactory and subjects are now planned in line with national guidelines. Assessment has improved and teachers use the information they gather to plan work to match pupils' needs more accurately. There are targets set in English, mathematics and science and tracking of pupils' achievements is good overall. Marking remains inconsistent but there is very good practice in some subjects and classes. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly but there is scope to develop the role of co-ordinators further. Attainment is in line with the national expectations in all the subjects inspected.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 6 results

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

*Key: A\* - in the top five per cent nationally; 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. Caution is needed in interpreting these data, as the number of pupils in the year group was small (11 pupils).*

Pupils make good gains in their learning and **overall achievement is good**. From the results of national tests and assessments in 2004, standards at the end of Year 6 were

exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science and far exceeded the school's targets. Standards have remained broadly average in English, mathematics and science for the last three years until 2004 when the school's overall results are in the top five per cent nationally. Standards compare extremely favourably with those of similar schools, but because year group sizes are very small comparisons are not very informative.

Children enter the Foundation Unit with below average attainment. As provision is good, they achieve well and most reach all the goals they are expected to by the end of the reception year. A small minority exceed these goals in their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller families make good progress throughout the school because planning is good and they receive good support. Achievement is satisfactory in the Year 1/2 class and it is good in the Years 3 to 6 classes where behaviour is generally good. For pupils in the current Year 2, standards are average in reading, writing, science and mathematics. For pupils in Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are average and they are above average in religious education and ICT. Improvement in ICT is largely due to the improved facilities and good training for staff. The work sampled in other subjects is in line with national expectations.

**Pupils' personal development is good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** Pupils enjoy school, form very good relationships and most have very positive attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is good. They are kind and caring towards each other and many older pupils take on responsibilities very sensibly. Attendance is unsatisfactory and this has a negative impact on pupils' learning. Pupils' absences are largely due to families taking holidays during term time. However, pupils' punctuality is good and most are very eager to come to school.

#### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. Teaching is good overall** and excellent teaching was seen in one class. Learning is good because teachers plan interesting lessons and work hard to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and teaching assistants are used well to support pupils' learning. Pupils from traveller families are also given good support, especially as they sometimes have considerable gaps in their learning. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged satisfactorily through additional work. Assessment procedures are good overall. Information about pupils' progress is generally used accurately to match work to pupils' needs in most lessons. The curriculum is satisfactory and opportunities to enrich provision through visits and visitors to the school are good. Personal, social and health education underpins many lessons and supports pupils' personal development satisfactorily. Whilst the accommodation is satisfactory overall and very good in the Foundation Unit, the school's library facilities are unsatisfactory.

The school takes good care of its pupils and promotes a positive ethos for learning. Links with parents and other schools are good. Links with the wider community are satisfactory.

#### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management overall are good. The work of the governing body is good.** Leadership by the headteacher is good. She promotes a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the school and is developing good teamwork. The leadership of key staff is satisfactory, but as the new management establishes itself, subject leaders are improving in their roles. Overall management in the school is good. Governors monitor the school's

performance, and are fully involved in the school's planning in order to set priorities for improvement. Governors work with the headteacher and her staff to ensure all statutory requirements are fully met.

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

**Parents** are very happy with the school. The information they receive about their children's work and provision to consult with them regarding school matters are good.

**Pupils** are also very happy with their school and are particularly positive about the relationships they form especially with their teachers. They feel they are well looked after and appreciated.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure subject co-ordinators have the support they need to develop their subjects in order to improve provision and thus raise standards.
- Improve pupils' attendance.
- Improve the accommodation with regard to the library facilities.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils' achievement overall is good. Children achieve well in the Foundation Unit and in Years 3 to 6 and achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2.

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

- The school did exceptionally well in English, mathematics and science in the end of Year 6 national tests in 2004 and exceeded all its targets. In the current Year 6, standards are broadly average.
- Achievement is good in the Foundation Unit and Years 3 and 6.
- Standards of the work seen in ICT and religious education are above expectations at the end of Year 6.
- Assessment procedures are being applied well to monitor pupils' progress more accurately.
- The overall trend for improvement in 2004 was above the national level.

### **Commentary**

#### **Foundation Stage**

1. Children enter the Foundation Stage with below average attainment in all areas of learning but most make good progress and almost all achieve most of the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. A minority of children achieves beyond this, successfully reaching parts of 'Level 1' in elements of the National Curriculum in literacy and numeracy. Teaching is good overall and often very good and as a consequence, the children make good gains in their learning. Those that require additional support are provided for well. Staff monitor children's achievements and ensure subsequent work matches each child's needs well.

## Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.8 (14.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.8 (13.8)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.4 (16.4)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. In the national tests and assessments in 2004, standards at the end of Year 2, against schools nationally, were above average in reading, average in writing, well above average in mathematics and very low in science. Standards were above average against schools with a similar free school meal number. The school's results indicate that the spread of ability is very wide and there is no pattern to the overall performances because year groups are very small and the attainment profile of each year group varies considerably from year to year. However, the trend for improvement overall over the last three years is below the national level. Differences in the attainment of boys and girls are not significant when balanced out over three years because the school ensures any differences in achievement are addressed well through careful planning. However, from these results it is evident that science is a priority for the school and it is in the current improvement plan as such.

## Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	31.4 (26.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	31.4 (26.1)	27.0 (26.8)
science	31.9 (27.0)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. The results from national tests and assessments in 2004 show that the standards at the end of Year 6 are very high overall when compared with schools nationally. The school's results place it in the top five per cent nationally. This is an exceptional improvement on the previous inspection and pupils' performances far exceeded the school's expectations, particularly at attaining the higher Level 5 in each of these subjects. The school's performance was also very high compared with similar schools and against the performance of these pupils when they were in Year 2. The 2004 Year 6 group was above average at the end of Year 2 but their achievement at the end of Year 6 was exceptional. With small numbers in each year group, each pupil counts for a high percentage when presenting data in this form. The overall trend for improvement over the last three years is above the national level.

4. In English, standards for pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average. The standards attained by pupils in Year 2 are below the findings of the previous inspection and in the national tests of 2004. In Year 6, standards are above those found in the last inspection and are thus an improvement since that time. Standards are average in all aspects of the English curriculum. The school has placed good emphasis on improving teaching and learning in English in the last two years, and attention is being given to developing pupils' speaking and thinking skills through discussions and dialogue in the classroom. Good attention is paid to developing pupils' comprehension skills and they use a satisfactory range of vocabulary to support their writing skills. However, opportunities for creative writing are limited to help raise standards further. Good teaching ensures pupils of all abilities achieve well, although achievement in Years 1 and 2 is only satisfactory, because there are a high number of pupils in these year groups who need additional help with their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller families make good progress overall because of the good support they receive. A good number of these of pupils attain average standards, depending on how much work they have missed over the years. Higher-attaining pupils are identified and given extra work to extend their skills further. Literacy skills are used satisfactorily across other subjects, which has the impact of giving pupils further opportunities to apply the skills they learn.
5. In the current Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are working at average standards in mathematics and pupils' overall achievement is good; it is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Whilst standards in Year 2 are the same as at the time of the last inspection, they are lower in Year 6. However, comparisons between such small year groups are not very reliable. Number skills are taught well and pupils' mental maths strategies are satisfactory. Teachers plan a satisfactory range of activities, including practical investigations, and ensure skills are developed step by step. Pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller families are given good individual support to ensure they make good progress, especially as the latter group often have considerable gaps in their learning. Pupils identified as gifted and talented are given additional tasks so that they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
6. Standards in science are average in the present Year 2 and Year 6 as was the case at the time of the last inspection and overall achievement is good. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but good in Years 3 to 6, where teaching is good. There is good emphasis on developing pupils' investigative and pupils of all abilities gain a satisfactory understanding of the principles of scientific enquiry. Pupils formulate their hypotheses and record their findings satisfactorily. They are expected to explain their findings to solve problems and thus gain confidence in their knowledge and understanding. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller families and this enables them to participate fully and achieve well.
7. Standards of the work seen in religious education and ICT are above expectations at the end of Year 6, and both have improved since the last inspection. In ICT, the facilities and hardware have been improved and staff are beginning to use ICT in lessons in other subjects well, recognising the need to develop this in order to raise standards further. Pupils learn with interest and enthusiasm, enjoy the subjects and achieve well. From the work sampled in other subjects, standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and overall achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils from traveller families and those with special educational needs achieve well because teachers are mindful of their specific needs and staff support these pupils well.

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

Pupils' personal development is good, their attitudes are **very good** and their behaviour is **good**. These strengths are enhanced by the overall **good** provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and respond well to the high expectations most teachers place on them for hard work and good behaviour.
- Most pupils are keen to please; they are confident and happy at school.
- Pupils form very good relationships, both with staff and each other.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social education is good.
- Pupils are confident and are willing to take responsibility.

### **Commentary**

8. Most teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour and most pupils respond well. Pupils generally enjoy school and have a very positive approach to learning. Older pupils develop mature attitudes to education and are confident and highly motivated learners. The attitudes of children in the Foundation Unit are very good and this makes a very positive contribution to their learning. They are happy to come to school and respond to the provision with obvious enjoyment, generally applying themselves sensibly to the tasks set for them. They have a growing thirst for knowledge and strive to do their best, especially when (as in many lessons seen) the teaching is exciting and challenging and they are trusted to explore and experiment independently. Pupils of all ages listen to teachers and each other and work well with others and are willing to co-operate and negotiate. In the older classes, pupils are eager to enter into discussions and many express their opinions confidently. Most pupils behave very sensibly in lessons and assemblies. Pupils are generally very polite, respectful and courteous and welcome visitors. Pupils know the rules for good behaviour and procedures to follow if they are bullied and are clear about how to deal with any unacceptable situations. Although some pupils mention incidents of bullying in the past, they said that this had improved this term and no incidents of bullying were noted during the inspection.
9. Relationships are very good throughout the school and pupils are given many opportunities for personal development, which they exercise as class monitors and members of the school council. The latter is still in the process of development. Pupils undertake these duties with pride and maturity. These experiences promote pupils' sense of community and citizenship, enable them to distinguish right from wrong and to serve their school and the wider community. The very good relationships help those pupils with special educational needs to gain in self-esteem. Pupils from traveller families are included fully and are highly valued for the different strengths and experiences they bring into the school. Pupils feel valued and, as a result, most work hard and make good progress.
10. High expectations are the norm in most classes and pupils participate enthusiastically in the various activities offered. A significant number of pupils attend extra-curricular activities, particularly sport. Pupils speak affectionately and very positively about their school, and particularly their teachers. They learn from the good examples set by

adults as to how to respect each other's needs and care for each other. For example, in many lessons they listen to each other's views and ideas and in some lessons teachers encourage them to constructively evaluate each other's achievements. Through a good range of social events and visits to places of interest, pupils learn to mix with different groups of people and thus develop confidence and self-esteem. Acts such as raising funds for charity also help them consider the needs of communities less fortunate than themselves and work towards being responsible and mature young people.

11. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. For example, acts of collective worship, work in religious education, and the closer study of poetry and other literature help pupils reflect on their own and other people's feelings and beliefs. The school recognises further similar opportunities need to be deliberately introduced into lessons to build on pupils' awareness and understanding of wider issues and their impact on their daily lives. The teaching of religious education covers a wide range of world faiths and pupils have a good understanding of how different faiths impact on people's everyday lives. The recognition of the vast contributions made by other cultures is satisfactory as pupils explore art and music from other cultures, and look at contrasting localities in aspects of geography. Pupils' understanding of the multicultural nature of the society in which they live is limited; however, attention is being given to improve opportunities through improvements across all areas of the curriculum.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003/4 (93.6%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.9	School data:	0.5
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

12. Attendance is unsatisfactory and, despite the school's best efforts, a few families continue to take holidays in term time. This does have a negative impact on the overall progress pupils make. Pupils' punctuality, however, is good and most pupils are very eager to arrive on time because they enjoy school.

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	82	1	0

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

13. The school had one fixed term exclusion last year as a result of behaviour issues that presented some problems in school.

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

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching, learning and assessment are **good** and the curriculum is **satisfactory**. Opportunities to enrich the curriculum are **good**. The school takes **good** care of its pupils and provides them with **satisfactory** guidance and support. Links with parents and local schools are **good**. Links with the community are **satisfactory**.

#### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching, learning and assessment are **good** overall and as a result, pupils of all abilities achieve well.

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

- Good teaching occurs throughout the school and most pupils have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and pupils work together well.
- Teachers and support staff enrich learning effectively.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller families are helped to participate fully in all that the school has to offer.
- Procedures for assessment are good in English, mathematics, science and the Foundation Unit but not yet fully exploited in other subjects in order to raise standards further.
- Marking is very good in some subjects and in some classes but is inconsistent overall.
- In a small number of lessons, in Years 1 and 2, behaviour is not managed rigorously and work is not always accurately matched to pupils' needs.

#### **Commentary**

14. Teaching and learning are good overall as was the case at the time of the last inspection. Teaching is particularly strong in the Foundation Unit and in Years 3 to 6 and it is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. It is in this class that a few pupils present difficult behaviour, which is not always managed firmly or effectively. As a result, there are too many interruptions which slow down learning. Children make a good start to their learning in the Foundation Unit and leave the school with standards that are generally average.
15. The school promotes a keen interest in learning and most pupils respond very positively to the range of activities and experiences provided for them. In most lessons, planning is good with clear objectives and this ensures that pupils build on previous learning effectively. In most lessons teachers use the available assessment information well to match work to pupils' needs. This was a weakness highlighted in the last report, which has been largely addressed well. However, in a few weaker lessons, it is not always evident how teachers check pupils' previous achievements to ensure they build on these in subsequent lessons to challenge and extend learning, particularly in the foundation subjects. Teachers know their pupils well and the school's good assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science are to be implemented in other subjects in order to ensure pupils achieve well in all subjects. The headteacher and other staff have observed teaching and identified strategies that engage pupils more actively, for example in developing their investigation and enquiry skills, and pupils enjoy such activities and thus make good gains in their learning. But there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and creative skills through drama, role-play, debate and independent writing. The introduction of 'brain gym' and 'thinking skills' is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' ability to reflect and consider what they learn and thus become more confident learners.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	6	16	2	1	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

16. In the Foundation Unit, teaching and learning are consistently good and at times very good. Children work in a lively, well-structured environment made all the more attractive by the range of very good resources and displays of children's work. Good use is made of all the space to encourage children to explore and learn both through directed tasks and independently. The new outdoor area has not been fully completed but is already very popular with children in their independent play. Teachers successfully engage children's attention and build up their enthusiasm for learning through activities that are well thought through and informed by very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of this age group and good assessment procedures. Children's behaviour is generally well managed and their development of independence is well supported by clear routines and high expectations. The youngest children, who are generally part-time in their first year, are very effectively integrated as they work alongside their older friends. A significant number of children are hesitant in their speaking, listening and social skills and staff work hard to develop these skills. However, staff tend to tell children things rather than ask them to think about what is happening, thus they sometimes miss opportunities for children to explain what they already know, to express their own ideas and to learn to ask questions; this particularly affects the achievement of older children in speaking skills.
17. In the rest of the school, learning is good overall because teachers place high expectations on pupils to behave well and try hard. In the best lessons, explanations and instructions are clear, work is challenging and lessons run at a good pace. This ensures pupils are kept fully involved and teachers work hard to get the best from their pupils. They present a good range of 'hands-on' approaches, giving pupils good opportunities to learn more effectively through their experiences, for example in science and art and design. In the good and very good lessons, teachers ask probing questions to explore pupils' knowledge and understanding and prompting as necessary to draw explanations from them regarding their views or observations. For some pupils who lack confidence in articulating their ideas, this approach is very challenging but teachers, support staff and other pupils intervene sensitively to help everyone achieve success. Relationships are very good, and pupils model their responses on the very good examples set by the staff. They are encouraged to turn to each other for help if no adults are immediately available. Thinking skills and independence in learning are being fostered in the school although it is evident some of the older pupils have not grown up with such opportunities and in the Year 5 /6 class, a number have to be coaxed to get involved in discussions.
18. Resources are selected carefully to ensure they match the tasks, and support materials are generally carefully designed to match the needs of pupils of all abilities. The use of ICT to support teaching and learning has improved and pupils respond to

such opportunities enthusiastically. Visits and visitors enrich pupils' experiences further and pupils talk enthusiastically of such events.

19. Most pupils, but especially those in Years 3 to 6, manage themselves confidently and are prompt to settle to independent activities. They behave in a very sensible mature manner, recognising the need to get on with their work while staff help those who need extra attention. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged appropriately with additional tasks, although in some lessons the level of challenge could be extended, especially to develop their independent writing. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller families is good. In most lessons, teaching assistants give very effective and caring support to these pupils. Pupils' individual education plans are detailed and specific, with clear, achievable targets that are agreed with parents or carers. Pupils' progress is assessed carefully and the information is used to set further relevant targets. Targets are set for all pupils in English and pupils are made aware of these through the very good marking which tells them what they have achieved well and how they can improve their work further. However, this level of high quality marking is not consistent in all subjects in every class and occasionally work is not marked at all. Pupils work hard to present work that is generally neat and tidy, and where teachers' comments are constructive, pupils respond positively.
20. Occasionally, for example, in lessons in the Year 1/2 class, teaching lacks pace and the presentations are too long. As a result, although most pupils continue to listen attentively, for a few there is too much to take in and they become distracted, as was the case in a small number of the satisfactory lessons and the one unsatisfactory lesson observed. In these lessons, planning is not accurate enough to engage all pupils fully, and a few are unsure as to what was required of them in their independent work. This results in these pupils being slow in getting started, especially when additional staff are not available to support the learning.

### **The curriculum**

The overall quality of the curriculum throughout the school is **satisfactory**. Opportunities for curriculum enrichment through the range of extra-curricular activities is **good**. Overall the range and quality of resources and accommodation are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school places a high priority on meeting the needs of every pupil and therefore all pupils have good access to all that the school provides.
- Good provision is made for those pupils with special educational needs.
- Good provision is made to include children from Traveller families.
- The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- There is a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for all pupils, particularly sport, including suitable activities for the younger pupils.
- There is a good range of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum.
- There is no school library.

### **Commentary**

21. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced. The school has paid particular attention to developing English, mathematics, science and ICT over the last few years. As a consequence, a number of subjects, such as history and music, are underdeveloped and some opportunities for relevant cross-curricular work are missed. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements, including the provision for sex and drugs education and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
22. In the Foundation Unit, there is a good, well-balanced curriculum in place and children carry out a range of directed and free activities to support their learning in all six areas of the recommended curriculum. There is a good balance of topic work and specific teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Provision is enriched with visits to local places and regular visitors, such as the fire service and the police, who add to children's experiences. Recent developments through the 3-16 Project have made the curriculum broader and more effective.
23. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are identified early and every help is afforded to ensure they participate fully in all that is offered in the school. Support staff are generally deployed effectively, but in lessons where they are not available, a few of the lower-attaining pupils, especially in the Year 1/2 class who are not mature enough to organise their learning independently, struggle to remain fully on task. With such disparate ability ranges, work is not always accurately matched for each pupil to work well without individual help, which they often seek from their classmates. Pupils from traveller families are provided for well with very well thought through support and those who attend regularly make good gains in their learning.
24. The school's programme for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The school is highly inclusive in all its aspects and various strategies are used to develop pupils' pride, initiative and responsibilities. Older pupils are given a wide range of increasing responsibilities and they take all these seriously, keen to be helpful and useful. There is a school council and, although this is still fairly new, members feel they do have influence and are able to make a difference within the school, for example, regarding resources for playtimes and the arrangements for lunchtimes.
25. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of sporting, arts and other activities provided for the pupils. These include football, basketball, dance, recorders and a very lively cheerleading club. Suitable activities are also provided for the younger pupils at lunchtimes and older pupils regularly help with these activities. Where possible, visitors are invited in to enrich learning and visits are planned to broaden pupils' experiences outside school, including a residential visit for the older pupils.
26. Most teachers and learning support staff are experienced and generally work effectively together to support the pupils' development and contribute to their good achievement over time. With such wide ranging ability groups in the mixed age classes, the school recognises that additional support staff and help from volunteers would be invaluable. Staffing in the Foundation Unit is currently generous, but, as more children join next term, overall staffing is satisfactory.
27. The quantity and quality of resources are generally satisfactory, and these are used appropriately. Resources are good in the Foundation Unit and the new play area is a

welcome addition. The lack of a specially designated library limits opportunities for learning, especially for pupils to browse at leisure and carry out independent research.

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

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good** overall. The school provides **good** support, advice and guidance. Involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is a warm and welcoming place and pupils feel safe and well cared for.
- A high priority is given to health and safety matters.
- The school is very successful in ensuring that pupils develop trusting relationships with adults within the school.
- Good induction arrangements give children an easy start to school and these arrangements are appreciated highly by parents.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is good.

### **Commentary**

28. The headteacher and staff are very approachable, caring and totally committed to the pupils in their charge. They have created a friendly and welcoming environment where pupils are encouraged to learn. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school is very good. This helps to ensure there is an adult to turn to if any child feels the need to seek help and guidance on any matter that worries or concerns them.
29. The school's documentation shows a full and accurate awareness of any potential risks to pupils' safety. Teachers carry out risk assessment for all visits and generic risk assessment has been completed for the whole school. The governing body takes its health and safety responsibilities seriously and governors are actively involved in this aspect of the school's work.
30. Children joining the Foundation Unit benefit from an intake that is staggered so that a few pupils at a time are gently introduced to the school environment. A welcoming induction package informs parents as to what to expect from the school and this ensures children settle in smoothly and feel they belong from the outset. Additionally, older pupils support younger children well during this early settling-in period and right through to them joining the main school. For example, they look after younger children at lunchtimes and they assist staff in setting up play equipment in the Foundation Unit. Parents say they are very impressed with the way older pupils care for the younger ones. The care, guidance and support provided for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are good and as a result pupils are secure and happy in their learning, and as a consequence achieve well. Staff show high concern for pupils' good development and welfare and are well versed in what to do if they observe anything untoward. The school also fosters very positive relationships with a range of outside agencies that effectively help support the pupils' educational, social and medical needs should this be necessary.

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

The school's link with its parents and other schools and colleges are **good**. Links with the community are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships with parents are good.
- Parents receive good quality information about the school and its work.
- Very few parents support children's learning by assisting in classrooms.
- Very good links with the high school ensure pupils' smooth transition at the end of Year 6.
- Good links with schools and colleges benefit pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

31. The majority of parents express very positive views about the school and are generally very satisfied with all aspects of the school's provision. They support their children's learning satisfactorily overall. However, despite the school's best efforts, very few parents help in classes. The school recognises the need to try harder to encourage more such support from parents. The local 'Mother and Toddler' group meets in the school's spare classroom and this is beneficial for building up the partnership. The vast majority of parents feel that the school is approachable and deals well with any concerns they may raise.
32. A nicely presented and informative prospectus, together with frequent 'eye-catching' newsletters, gives parents a clear overview of the school. An issue at the previous inspection was the quality of pupils' annual reports. Reports are now more consistent in quality and give parents good information about their children's progress. They also give clear and useful information on how well children are performing, when compared with national criteria.
33. An active Parent Teacher Friends Association (PTFA) supports the school well by organising events and raising money. Children's education benefits from the additional resources purchased and the Association's input into such projects as the new 'Foundation' playground. A few members of the local community contribute well to pupils' learning, for example, in visits to local farms and the soft drinks factory, but the school hopes to develop more such links to further enrich pupils' experiences as they move through the school.
34. There are good links established with the main feeder high school, which enrich the curriculum and smooth pupils' transition, such as help with the school's Information Communication Technology (ICT) plan and assistance with setting up computers. Also, a co-ordinator from the high school gives coaching to teachers in physical education. The very good transition arrangements include a technology day, meeting new teachers, various visits and a ready exchange of information about individual pupils. The school is also a member of a thriving 'family' of schools. These and other schools' links provide effective opportunities for improving teaching and learning.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the headteacher are **good**. The leadership of other key staff is **satisfactory**. Governance is **good**, with governors ensuring that all statutory requirements are met. Overall management is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and governors are fully committed to continuing improvement and they provide good leadership and management.
- The headteacher has a clear vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations for the school.
- The governing body has a good appreciation of the school's strengths and areas for development and governors are wholly involved in strategic management.
- Finances are managed efficiently and good use is made of all the school's resources.
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Unit, science, religious education and special educational needs are good.

## Commentary

35. The headteacher provides good leadership. She is perceptive and caring and shows a strong commitment to raising standards in all areas of the school's work, with a clear-sighted sense of purpose. She has high expectations of all who contribute to the work of the school and leads by example to bring about a culture that promotes learning. She places a high emphasis on meeting the needs of all pupils so that all are fully included in everything the school has to offer. The overall management by the subject leaders is mixed: although the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage, science, religious education and special educational needs are good, other subjects are less well developed. With some staff carrying a number of important responsibilities in a school of such a small size, the school recognises that they have not all had the time required to carry out all the monitoring and developments they identify as being needed to improve provision and thus raise standards. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective. The co-ordinator (SENCo) is very enthusiastic, highly committed and well organised. Pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller families are identified early and this has a very positive effect on their progress. Pupils who are gifted or talented also make good progress. All adults in the school are given opportunities to contribute to all aspects of the school's work and are supported effectively. The performance management and professional development of staff is given a high priority and is managed carefully.
36. The school takes time to evaluate its performance and meetings with staff and governors take place regularly. Efficient systems exist for identifying areas for development, taking action and then monitoring and assessing the effect of these actions. The school improvement plan is an effective working document created after wide-ranging discussion and consultation. The result of this has been good improvement in the school's effectiveness since the headteacher's appointment. The headteacher has been very well supported by the governors over the last two years. This effective working partnership has allowed the school to carry out essential improvements to the fabric of the building, recruit new staff and begin work on improving the curriculum and thus raise standards in all areas of the curriculum.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
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Total income	321,412
Total expenditure	314,609
Expenditure per pupil	3,243

Balance from previous year	40,228
Balance carried forward to the next year	47,031

37. Governors are an important part of the management team. They play an appropriate part in the school's strategic development and the management of its finances because they have a good appreciation of the school's strengths and potential for development. They are fully aware of the need to ensure the best value for their money, and have, for example, invested sensibly in refurbishing the Foundation Unit in order to encourage local families to register their children in the school. Governors ensure that the school complies with all legal requirements.
38. This effective leadership and management enables pupils to achieve well across the school. This, together with the very good quality of the care that pupils receive and the good teaching that they enjoy in the Foundation Unit and Years 3 and 6, indicates that the school is effective and gives good value for money.

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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children enter the Foundation Unit at the beginning of the term after their third birthday and attend for half-day sessions until the term in which they are five years old. For the majority of children, attainment on entry is below the national average, but most make good progress and almost all achieve most of the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. A minority of children achieve beyond this, successfully reaching parts of Level 1 in elements of the National Curriculum in literacy and numeracy.

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Children's good progress is the result of well-organised and well-managed provision. In some elements of early literacy and numeracy, provision is very good. Teaching that is informed by careful assessment ensures that tasks are well matched to children's capabilities and extends their skills and understanding. Activities that are well thought through, and informed by very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of this age group, capture and maintain children's interest. Children's behaviour is generally well managed and their development of independence is supported well by clear organised systems that they learn to follow quickly. However, staff tend to tell children things rather than ask, and they sometimes miss opportunities for children to explain what they already know, to express their own ideas and to learn to ask questions. This particularly affects the achievement of older children in promoting their speaking skills.

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The curriculum includes all the areas of learning and there is a good balance of topic work and specific teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Work directed by teachers and self-selection of activities by children are also well balanced. The curriculum is enriched with visits and visitors. Recent developments through the 3-16 Project have made the curriculum broader and more effective. Staffing is generous at this time of the school year when numbers are low and the accommodation and resources are good. Leadership and management of the Foundation Unit are good. The co-ordinator is well qualified and experienced in teaching this age group. She promotes good teamwork and is a very good role model. Policy and procedure documents need developing to ensure that the quality of the provision is maintained in the absence of the current staff.

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### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The attractive and well-organised environment stimulates children's interest and motivates them to learn.
- The care and support they receive enables children to develop independence and adapt to school life well.
- At times, inappropriate behaviour is not sufficiently well corrected.

#### Commentary

39. Teaching and learning are good overall. Children achieve well and are in line with national expectations by the end of the reception year. They are happy to come to school and show enjoyment in many activities. The majority listen to instructions and do as they are told. They often get engrossed in what they are doing and maintain interest for considerable lengths of time. Most children are sufficiently confident to try out new activities and speak in front of the group. They learn to play and work with others successfully. Generally, correction of behaviour is clear and children gain a good understanding of what is right and wrong. Group and class activities, such as making class pictures, enjoying snacks and drinks and singing together, foster feelings of being part of a community. Helping with things like tidying up, giving out and taking registers to the office successfully develops attitudes of responsibility. At times, inappropriate behaviour is not sufficiently well corrected; for example, an attention-seeking child was brought to the front of the class where he was able to disrupt the other children more easily. On another occasion, a child was told what the consequences of his actions would be, rather than being asked to think about this. Putting hands up to answer is not sufficiently encouraged.

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## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**. In some elements of literacy, provision is very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Early reading and writing skills are very well taught.
- Staff tend to tell rather than ask and they miss opportunities for children to explain what they already know, to express their own ideas and to learn to ask questions.

### Commentary

40. The majority of children enter the Foundation Unit with below average attainment in speaking and listening skills and, as a result of good teaching, they reach standards in line with expectations at the end of the reception year. Overall achievement is good. Teachers focus their work with the youngest children on getting them to respond and increase their vocabulary and they have considerable success in this. For older children, opportunities to explain what they already know, express their own ideas and ask questions are less good. Staff tend to tell rather than ask and they do not sufficiently exploit opportunities for children to learn to ask questions. For example, in 'show and tell' time, staff asked questions rather than inviting children to 'tell about' and children were not invited, or helped, to ask questions. Early reading and writing skills are very well taught. Children enjoy books, they retell stories well and read a few familiar words and short sentences. Staff involve parents by encouraging them to help with their children's reading and this involvement is very valued. Linking sounds and letters is taught well and very good opportunities for children to attempt writing are provided. Children use the writing area spontaneously, pretending to write notes, letters, lists and messages. They draw pictures and write short captions about these, using their knowledge of sounds and letters well and thus develop a clear understanding of the purpose of such activities in order to communicate with others.

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## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**. In some elements of numeracy, it is very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children benefit from regular and systematic practice in counting, recognising numerals and making simple calculations.
- Activities across the curriculum are used well to develop children's understanding of space, shape and measures.

### Commentary

41. By the end of the reception year, most children reach standards expected at this age, with a minority reaching a good standard in numeracy. Teaching and learning are good and result in this good achievement. Staff maximise opportunities to practise counting, for example in taking registers and organising drinks at 'snack time'. Children develop their early mathematical skills and understanding in many practical activities. For example, they practise 'touch and count' as they play; they are encouraged to practise adding and taking away in action songs like, '10 Little Men in a Flying Saucer'. Older children are helped to learn to read and write numbers and a few record simple sums after practical work to ensure understanding. Mathematical ideas about shape and space are well developed in various craft activities, such as making models with different shaped boxes and assembling pictures using pre-cut 2D shapes. Well thought out activities provide opportunities for children to develop their understanding of measures. For example, in role-playing a railway station ticket office, children bought and sold tickets, used a toy cash register and decided whether parcels were 'heavier' or 'lighter' than a set weight. Adult interventions are frequent, helping children to think about what they are doing through a colourful range of experiences.

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## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good use of topic work reinforces learning in many areas.
- Some opportunities are missed to develop children's skills in asking why things happen and how things work.

### Commentary

42. Achievement is good in this area and by the end of the reception year, children reach standards that are in line with expectations for this age. During activities such as feeding the birds and weeding their garden, children are shown how to observe changes in the seasons and learn to name and identify some features of living things. They use various materials to build and construct, for example, plastic and wooden bricks and discarded materials, and they use paper, card and textiles to make models,

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usually related to their topic work. Such activities are organised so that children select and make considered choices about what they use. On the computer, they successfully operate the mouse and move icons on the screen. Their understanding of the past and other places is developed well as they examine such things as old-fashioned toys and make visits to a local farm and post office. They learn about the customs and beliefs of others, for example Chinese New Year and Divali and begin to learn about differences between people from other communities. Although teaching and learning are good overall, opportunities to ask questions about why things happen and how things work are insufficiently exploited.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Various activities provide good opportunities for children to develop their control and co-ordination skills.
- 'Brain Gym' is a very successful innovation.

### Commentary

43. Children achieve in line with national standards in this area and their progress is good through the Foundation Unit. Teaching and learning are good and children enjoy the interesting range of activities offered. Short and regular sessions of 'Brain Gym' help them to increase control of their movements and improve co-ordination. In the hall, they climb and balance well and outdoors they use such equipment as hoops, balls and 'push and pedal' toys successfully. Staff provide good opportunities for children to use tools, such as pencils, paintbrushes, scissors and glue spreaders, and children increase their control of these well. They successfully assemble, interlock and shape with their hands. At 'snack time' and in preparation for physical activities, they learn about their bodies and how to keep healthy.

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## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children sing tunefully and memorise a good number of songs.
- Staff provide good opportunities for children to use and develop their imaginations.

### Commentary

44. Children enjoy a good range of activities in this area and they reach standards expected at the end of the reception year. Staff provide appropriate opportunities for children to explore colour, texture and shape, for example painting, collage and clay work, and children respond well and produce some attractive work. Various simple percussion instruments enable children to explore sounds and accompany songs and they sing tunefully, remembering a good number of songs and often accompanying

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these with lively actions. In activities such as 'Role-play' and 'Small World', children use their imaginations well, acting out experiences or making up stories, at times talking or singing to themselves as they do this. Much of the children's work in this area expresses well their thoughts and feelings about aspects of their lives and experiences. The good teaching and learning that goes on results in children achieving well and gleefully enjoying all that is provided for them.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well throughout the school because teaching is good.
- Assessment and target setting procedures are good and promote good achievement.
- Marking is very good and helps pupils identify what they have done well and how they can improve their work further.
- Formal writing skills are developed well throughout the school.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop creativity in their writing and speaking skills are limited.
- Library facilities are unsatisfactory.

#### Commentary

45. Results in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 2 were above average in reading and average in writing and when compared with all schools and with similar schools. In relation to their prior attainment these pupils achieved well. At the end of Year 6, results in the tests were very high by any comparison, being in the top five per cent nationally. These results are exceptional and much higher than at the previous inspection. The school's information suggests that this was an able year group that performed even better than anticipated. However, year group sizes are very small and results vary from year to year depending on the attainment profiles of each year group. The school places great emphasis on literacy and it is taught well throughout the school. Improvement has been good since the last inspection.

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46. Overall, in the current Year 2, standards are in line with those expected. Almost all pupils have reached the expected level for their age, although a small number are working at a higher level. Nevertheless, average levels of attainment represent good achievement for these pupils as most of them entered the Foundation Unit with language skills below national expectations. Standards in the current Year 6 are also broadly average, and based on pupils' prior attainment, overall achievement is good. This is much the same as reported in the last inspection.

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47. Pupils with special educational needs as well as those from traveller families achieve well because they are well supported and a significant proportion reach the expected level for their age. Occasionally, some of the pupils from traveller families do not reach expected levels because they have too many gaps in their learning, despite the good support they receive both from staff in the school and specialist help from the local authority. However, assessment and tracking procedures are good in literacy, especially in the Years 3 and 6 classes, and

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pupils of all abilities have individual targets that they are reminded of regularly as they settle to tasks. This level of attention to assessment ensures pupils build on prior learning, and any areas in which they need guidance are identified early. Higher-attaining pupils are set more complex tasks to complete independently but expectations could be higher in all classes. Although there were differences in the attainment of boys and girls in the 2004 national tests, there was no evidence of this during the inspection.

48. The quality of teaching and learning is good. One of the strongest features is the very good relationships teachers have with their pupils, enabling them to manage behaviour and avoid interruptions to the teaching and learning. There is good use of any additional adults in the classroom, whether teachers or support assistants. Occasionally, in mixed age classes, where ability ranges are quite wide, more support for less confident pupils, and those who find it difficult to manage their behaviour when working independently, mainly in the Year 1/2 class, would help pupils achieve more. Most classrooms have a variety of printed materials on display, which encourages pupils to read and introduces them well to a variety of writing styles. Teachers model the reading and writing processes in a way that enables pupils to learn well. There is a satisfactory range of reading material in the school, and teachers work hard to introduce pupils to a wide range of books, both fiction and non-fiction. The school has recently purchased new reading material for Years 1 and 2, and parents are encouraged to help pupils practise their reading regularly at home. However, a number of pupils, particularly in the upper age groups, indicate that they do not enjoy reading, and the lack of any library facilities does not help when considering strategies to promote the enjoyment of reading for pleasure. The school has ideas about how it might address this in the immediate future so that pupils have opportunities to use reference materials and browse through books when carrying out research. Pupils have access to reference books in their classrooms and also regularly use good ICT programs to support their literacy skills. They enjoy such opportunities because they like working on computers. Formal writing skills are taught well, and pupils have a good grasp of how to structure and organise their work so that it makes sense to the reader. Presentations are generally clear and the very well-constructed marking helps pupils identify their strengths and areas for improvement. In discussions, teachers ask good questions that challenge pupils to think more deeply and to infer answers by referring to the text.

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49. The main factor preventing standards being higher is the insufficient time given to develop pupils' creative thinking, both in their speaking activities and in their writing. Because standards in reading are only average, a significant number of pupils have a limited range of vocabulary, their spelling skills are weak, and as a result, their independent writing lacks fluency and creativity. Whilst overall standards in writing and speaking and listening are average across the school, the school recognises that more needs to be done to help pupils explore language more enthusiastically and become more confident in their oral and written accounts. For example, opportunities for drama, role-play, discussion and debates are limited, and pupils do not apply their reading skills well, for example, when researching texts and drawing inferences from what they read. Although many teachers provide practice in listening and speaking, they miss opportunities to check how effective their provision is. For example, in most classes, teachers ask pupils to discuss with a 'talking partner', but rarely ask a pupil to report the partner's responses.

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50. No discussion took place with the co-ordinator, as she was not present during the inspection. From the information available, leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has extensive experience of leading the subject in the junior years but the information presented indicates that the overview across the school with regards to monitoring of teaching and learning is limited, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Teacher assessments are made each year and targets are set for each pupil, but the review of these targets is not rigorous enough to make adjustments as the year progresses in order to check pupils are on line to achieve well. In addition these assessments are not always accurate enough. For example, the targets set for last year's Year 6 fell well short of the results they actually achieved.

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## LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

51. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to apply literacy skills in other subjects. For example, in the Year 5/6 class, pupils explored history texts to find out about warfare in Ancient Greece and became very animated in their debate about the building of a motorway in their locality. Question-and-answer sessions are frequent in many lessons, but the opportunities for more creative and independent writing are limited.

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## MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and, as a result, achievement is generally good.
- The pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behaviour is good.
- The quality of assessment is good in some classes and this is used effectively to plan suitable work for all pupils.
- Targets are set in some classes and here pupils know what they must do to improve.

### Commentary

52. At the end of Year 6, the 2004 tests showed pupils' standards of attainment to be well above the national average. However, the standards in previous years show that this was an exception and, because of small year-group sizes, results do fluctuate from year to year. Because the year groups are very small, one or two pupils can have a significant impact on the overall results. In 2004, boys attained standards considerably higher than girls did. For current pupils, the difference is not significant. Overall standards for pupils in the current Year 2 and in Year 6 are generally in line with the national average. Achievement for pupils in the Year 1/2 is satisfactory, although there is insufficient recorded work in this class for pupils to refer back to when moving on to new learning. Achievement is good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller families achieve well, and some reach the expected levels because they have regular practice in their everyday lives in applying numeracy skills. There has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection, with teaching having improved and the impact of the numeracy strategy now being more evident.

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53. Teaching and learning are generally good and as a result, pupils achieve well overall. Teaching is satisfactory in the Year 1/2 class. Here there are a few very young and low-attaining pupils who find it difficult to settle to work and listen carefully and, as a consequence, they sometimes produce little work. Occasionally, behaviour management becomes an issue and disruptions impact on the learning and progress of the whole class. In Years 3 to 6 classes pupils are managed more effectively and lessons run at a brisk pace so that pupils have little time to become distracted. In these classes, pupils, including those with special educational needs and the gifted and talented, are given work that is well matched to their needs to ensure good progress in their learning. Pupils from traveller families receive very good individual support and they are included fully during lessons. Where support staff are available, pupils seek their help and classmates around them are also keen to provide assistance. Every effort is made to praise and motivate pupils throughout the school, and most respond well in lessons. Pupils enjoy working on their number skills, and 'mental maths', when conducted briskly, captures their interest well. Higher-attaining pupils are set suitable challenges and are encouraged to apply their 'thinking skills' when working on problem solving. There is a satisfactory emphasis on other aspects of the curriculum including investigative skills.

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54. Assessment procedures are generally good and all teachers know what pupils have achieved and what they need to do next. However, last year's predictions for the national tests and assessments for Year 6 showed that lower standards were expected, indicating that there were some inaccuracies in the teacher assessments. The quality of marking in the Year 3/4 class is particularly good. Here, the pupils respond to what the teacher has written in their books, ensuring that they learn from questions and comments relating to the work done, so that the teacher can assess more accurately what has been understood. The pupils know what their targets are in this class, so that they understand what they must do to improve. However, marking of this level is not evident in all books and although younger pupils receive feedback during lessons, it is not always clear if they have responded to this advice in subsequent work and pupils are not always aware of the targets they are working to.

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55. Pupils' attitudes are generally very good. Because of the effective teaching, they are interested in the subject and most try hard. Relationships are very good and pupils grow in confidence when they recognise their efforts are valued. Pupils co-operate and work constructively together, and opportunities are provided in most lessons for them to share ideas and learn from each other.

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56. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and the co-ordinator is working to improve standards across the school. The quality and quantity of resources are satisfactory.

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## MATHEMATICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

57. Numeracy is developing appropriately in other subjects. For example, pupils record data on spreadsheets in ICT and draw graphs of results from their science investigations.

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## SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good** overall.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standard of teaching is good, and one lesson seen was excellent.
- There is a good emphasis on pupils learning from practical tasks.
- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good, they enjoy their lessons and behave well.
- Assessment, and the use of this, is good, although it has yet to be fully embedded in all classes.
- The leadership and management by the co-ordinator are good.

## Commentary

58. Standards in science are average for pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6. At the end of Year 6, the 2004 national tests showed standards of attainment to be very high compared with the national average. However, the standards in previous years show that this was an exception, largely dependent on the attainment profile of relatively small year groups. Pupils' achievement is good overall, and it is very good in the Year 3 /4 class. Pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller families achieve well, but invariably due to extensive gaps in their learning, some of these pupils do not reach expected levels despite good support. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

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59. The overall quality of teaching is good, and one lesson observed was excellent. Most lessons give pupils opportunities to predict and test and pupils enjoy their practical work, are eager to participate and invariably behave very sensibly. As a result, learning is good overall. In a good lesson in the Year 1/2 class, pupils considered the effects of sucking and blowing when investigating forces and air pressure and most understood that air pressure is a vital force they need to be aware of. Similarly, in a good lesson in the Year 5/6 class, pupils explored light sources and reflections, and higher-attaining pupils were able to articulate some very detailed observations. Relationships are very good and pupils are continually encouraged to do their best and think about what they are doing. The introduction of 'thinking skills' in the timetable has started to have an impact on pupils' awareness of what they are learning and how well they achieve, especially in Years 3 and 6. Pupils in all classes co-operate very well, helping and supporting each other and they are encouraged to talk to each other in order to extend their learning.

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60. Pupils have very positive attitudes and they enjoy the 'learning by doing' strategies teachers offer in many lessons. Planning is careful and ensures pupils of all abilities participate either in supported groups or within mixed ability arrangements. Teachers ask probing questions to challenge pupils and come up with their views and ideas as to what they think will happen in the investigation. Higher-attaining pupils often work more independently and are encouraged to lead in mixed ability groupings thus being challenged in the way they carry out their activities. All have good confidence because they know that their contributions are valued and those that need support are helped sensitively by friends and staff. Regularly, opportunities to discuss their observations and findings help pupils clarify their thinking and gain confidence in presenting work in front of others. Assessment procedures are developing very effectively, due to the initiative of the subject co-ordinator who is working hard to promote the subject, in light of the pupils' poor performance in the teacher assessments of 2004. Relevant

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targets are set, so that pupils know what they must do to improve. Teachers make very good use of displays, for example on health in the Year 3/4 class and 'Ourselves' in the Year 1/2 class, to effectively reinforce the science covered and remind pupils of previous learning when linking it to other subjects such as PSHE and physical education.

61. The subject is led and managed effectively. The co-ordinator has produced target cards for scientific enquiry to help pupils focus on what they need to improve further and high emphasis is placed on pupils' organising their learning in order to meet their targets. This practice is not yet fully embedded in all classes but provides teachers and pupils with clear guidance as to what needs to be done to achieve high standards. The quality and quantity of resources are satisfactory.

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### Example of outstanding practice

**In the excellent science lesson seen in the Years 3/4 class, pupils discussed different types of teeth. The high quality interaction and strong, supportive relationships between everyone in the class meant that the pupils were confident, interested and enthusiastic.** The teacher used a very wide range of strategies that included probing questioning, 'talking partners' and good resources to illustrate the key points. She encouraged pupils to think about and formulate ideas as to why different teeth served different functions and how they could tell by looking at the teeth which function they carried out. The lesson ran at an energetic pace, involved pupils of all abilities and everyone had something worthwhile to contribute, knowing that their comments would be valued. Because the learning was fun and well illustrated by the effective use of resources that pupils could handle and explore, achievement was very good. The teacher's excellent marking of pupils' previous work gave them sufficient confidence to produce work that was extremely well presented with good levels of detail.

### INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

No direct teaching of **ICT** was seen during the inspection in the Year 1/2 class and only one lesson with a small group was seen in the Year 5/6 class, so no judgements are made about the quality of teaching, learning and overall provision.

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62. From the work seen, standards at the end of Year 2 are average and they are above average at the end of Year 6. Standards since the previous inspection have improved in Years 3 and 6 as a result of the improved quality of hardware and software to support teaching in many subjects. Pupils of all abilities achieve well, including those from traveller families who sometimes have lengthy gaps in their learning. Overall, improvement has been good.

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63. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good use of the computer to write words, develop word building skills using sounds and compose short pieces of work. They practise keyboard skills and develop good co-ordination in mouse control. They use correct ICT language and understand the terminology well and this helps to develop their confidence in applying a range of tools and techniques to improve their work. All strands of the curriculum are covered and there are strong links with other areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 progress to using different styles of letters and combine text with graphics created through the very good use of programs used on the 'Apple' computers. The school has also purchased a number of new computers

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that can be linked to Internet providers but as yet, because insufficient numbers of these are networked, the use of the Internet for carrying out independent research using search engines is restricted. As pupils gain expertise, they explore more sophisticated techniques, including the use of graphical displays to identify anomalies in databases. Pupils in the Year 5/6 class, following a visit to a nearby soft drinks factory, used their video footage from the visit to produce a multi-media documentary. This process incorporated sound and voice-overs, showing pupils' very good grasp of how to import and modify images and annotate them with eye-catching captions to interest the viewer.

64. Pupils have very positive attitudes when using computers, and they work very well to help each other resolve technical hitches and show remarkable perseverance when machines do not respond immediately. For example, pupils in the Year 5/6 class working on setting up a program to make their lighthouse flash spent considerable time looking closely at the commands they typed in to clarify computer-friendly instructions. Those that were successful were very willing to point out errors to their friends so they too could succeed. Pupils of all ages enjoy the tasks and use their knowledge well to meet the challenges offered. Pupils join discussions very sensibly and are prepared to listen to the views of others. The younger pupils, in particular, enjoy the excitement and wonder of the world of technology.

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65. Resources are satisfactory. The recent purchase of PCs, in anticipation of the purchase of interactive screens to develop greater use of ICT in day-to-day teaching and more opportunities to use the Internet for independent research to support learning, is a good step forward. The subject co-ordinator was not available during the inspection, but it is evident there has been good development since the last inspection. However there is no evidence of any monitoring of teaching and learning, or any information to show how pupils' achievements are assessed and what progress pupils make with regard to different elements of the ICT curriculum.

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### Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. Throughout the school pupils have good opportunities to develop their ICT skills. The school has a good supply of programs to support learning in many subjects, and pupils regularly use computers during lessons in literacy and numeracy, for example to practise spellings or number work. Pupils work independently using word processing facilities to write simple stories and poems. Data collected from surveys pupils have carried out, for example temperatures and rainfall, are translated into block graphs for them to identify and explain patterns in the information they present. Links with art and design appear in pictures pupils have produced in the style of Mondrian and Van Gogh and they have generated interesting variations on Joseph's technicolour coat for their work in design and technology. They compare their ICT-generated images with those they produce using a range of other media, recognising that the computer produces results more quickly and often more effectively than their efforts using crayons and paints.

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### HUMANITIES

There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about provision, standards or teaching and learning in **geography** as only one lesson was seen. In this very good lesson in the

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Year 5/6 class, the teacher fired up pupils' ideas by encouraging them to explore the pros and cons of a motorway development in their locality. Although at first pupils were reticent to voice their opinions, the teacher, playing 'devil's advocate', skilfully questioned and probed, interjecting with thought provoking statements. Pupils quickly gained momentum in their arguments as the lobby grew for either side of the debate. From their level of understanding in this lesson, it is evident pupils have a good awareness of issues to do with planning and the impact such changes have on people's day to day lives. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures, for example through studies of communities in other parts of this country and abroad. The educational opportunities are enriched well by visits, such as to the local area and a local soft drinks factory.

## History

67. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection, so no judgements are made regarding overall provision, including teaching, learning and achievement. But as history was chosen as a focus for the inspection, a good range of evidence was gathered. Standards of the work seen are in line with expectations in Year 2 and Year 6, as was the picture at the time of the last inspection.

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68. Pupils in Years 3 and 6 have good opportunities to write independently and occasionally carry out research into topics they are studying. In the good lesson seen in Year 6, dealing with warfare in Ancient Greece, pupils were encouraged to explore a wide range of texts to seek information to support their observations about land and sea battles. Similarly in the Year 1/2 class, very good use was made of a video to introduce the work on important people, in this instance Grace Darling. Because pupils had some visual prompts to focus on, they related well to the idea of how hard it had been for Grace Darling to achieve what she did. With a good emphasis in both these lessons on pupils looking at information and forming their ideas and views, pupils achieved well. Lower-attaining pupils and those from traveller families were supported sensitively and worked in mixed-ability groups. Teachers ensured they had tasks and resources that were well matched to their needs. Good use is made of support staff when they are available, however, not all lessons have this additional support.

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69. Planning is in line with recommended guidelines. Because all classes are in mixed year groups, pupils follow a two-year cycle and in this there is a clear development of knowledge and enquiry skills. However, the greater emphasis is on information rather than developing pupils' enquiry skills whereby they can explore topics more independently and transfer such skills to new work more confidently. In the Year 5/6 class, far too much is given information, which is in fact very detailed and interesting, but opportunities to research independently are limited. Good use is made of visits, for example to places of historical interest and museums, and actors have been invited in to re-enact visiting the seaside in Victorian days. Such experiences add to pupils' enjoyment of the subject. In order to enrich the range of resources available in the school, the co-ordinator has built up a good supply of old/new photographs of the local area and resources for specific topics are borrowed as required from other schools and sources in the area. Teachers are beginning to gain confidence in encouraging pupils to use the Internet as a valuable resource. Good use is made of literacy skills to encourage pupils to express their thoughts both during class and

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group discussions and in written work that is consistently of an average standard, and for higher attainers it is sometimes above average especially in the level of detail they present.

70. Leadership and management are satisfactory, and the subject leader is keen to develop provision further. She has ensured that the subject is well resourced. However, as yet she has had no opportunity to observe teaching and learning and her monitoring is currently limited to reviewing pupils' work on displays and checking planning. Assessments ensure topics are covered to the required depth. However, there is no recording of how well pupils achieve or how individual pupils might improve their work further.

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## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

71. No lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6 and only one lesson was seen in the Year 1/2 class, so no judgements are made about overall provision for the subject, including teaching, learning and achievement. From the work seen, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally-agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and above expectations at the end of Year 6. This is an improvement on the findings in the last inspection.

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72. From the work seen in pupils' books, there is satisfactory coverage of the curriculum throughout the school. The level of detail which teachers present in lessons is high, indicating secure subject knowledge and from pupils' writing it is evident they listen well and record information accurately. Good attention is given to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills through useful discussions regarding the subject matter and this helps pupils gain confidence in expressing their thoughts and ideas in front of others. However, opportunities are missed for pupils to reflect on what they learn and express their views and ideas in more independent writing. Planning is thorough and activities engage pupils' interest and encourage them to think about aspects such as the impact of other people on their lives and how they need to consider the needs of others and respect differing views. They study a very broad range of religions and look at similarities and differences between these. Through discussions with teachers and each other, pupils develop a good sense of moral and cultural values and beliefs. There are good links to aspects of the school's PHSE programme and all these experiences support pupils' personal development well. Assessment procedures are not yet in place because the new syllabus has only just been introduced and the school is awaiting guidance on assessments that match the provision. Pupils show very good attitudes to the subject and the work produced by most pupils is always well presented, with careful attention to detail.

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73. The co-ordination of the subject is good and overall development of the subject since the previous inspection is good. The subject leader, the headteacher, has ensured the satisfactory integration of the new syllabus. Resources have been built up over the last year to meet the requirements of the syllabus and some monitoring of teaching has taken place. The co-ordinator is very clear about the improvements required to raise standards further.

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## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

74. Only one lesson and a small amount of pupils' work and teachers' plans were seen in **art and design** and this was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about overall provision and standards, or teaching and learning. Standards in the work seen were in line with expectations at both key stages. Pupils' skills in pencil drawing and painting develop progressively and by the end of Year 6, they use these skills to represent what they see, illustrate their work and communicate their ideas. For example, in a display of portraits by children from the Foundation Unit to Year 6, there was satisfactory evidence of increasing attention to detail, the development of skills in mixing skin tones in paint and, in some examples, the ability to convey character. There was a little evidence of satisfactory work in clay, printing and textiles and of pupils learning about the roles and purposes of artists, designers and craftspeople working in different times and cultures. However, the range of activities is narrow, particularly for Years 3 and 6 pupils, and this was a criticism in the previous two inspections.

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75. **Design and technology** was not inspected and there was very little evidence to draw on, so no judgements are made regarding the quality of provision or the standards of teaching and learning.

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76. Only one lesson in **physical education** was seen, so no judgement is made on provision, standards or the quality of teaching and learning. The quality of the lesson seen was excellent and pupils enjoyed the activities they undertook through a very well-constructed dance lesson. The music was very skilfully chosen to captivate pupils' interest and encourage them to interpret the tempo and rhythm to match the movements they rehearsed. Excellent modelling by the teachers gave even the most hesitant confidence to have a go and enjoy themselves.

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## Music

77. The subject was selected as a focus by the school. However, with only three lessons seen, demonstrating a limited range of pupils' skills and knowledge and understanding, no judgements are made regarding overall provision, including teaching and learning. From the lessons seen, standards of the work seen were generally in line with what is expected, as was the case at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities participate in what the school offers. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 are offered tuition from their class teacher in playing the recorder, and violin tuition is available to older pupils. The subject makes a good contribution to spiritual, moral and social education when pupils talk positively and supportively about each other's work and discuss strengths and areas for improvement. Music does not currently feature on the school improvement plan, so it has a low profile within the school. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

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78. Pupils are given practical opportunities to compose music and to review and improve what they have done, and, in this aspect, they achieve well. In the lessons seen, pupils demonstrated very positive attitudes to the subject and behaviour was very good. They work very well in groups, sharing and co-operating appropriately and they listen carefully to instructions and advice so that they can improve their work. Pupils use resources effectively and in the lessons in Years 3 and 6, pupils made good progress in learning to combine the sounds they created using different instruments. In a good lesson in the Year 5/6 class, for example, pupils listened to different pieces of music, identifying patterns and how these fit together. Later, they worked very well together, making suitable music linked to their dance lessons to illustrate different moods. A less effective lesson in the Year 1/2 class began very well, with pupils identifying long and short notes. They then sang the same song five or six times while three instruments were shared around the class. Many pupils had no opportunity

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to accompany the song, and made no progress during this activity in trying to match the sound of the instrument accurately to the rhythm and tempo of the song.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

| 79. No lessons were seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements are made about overall provision, although the subject features satisfactorily across the curriculum.

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| 80. The school promotes a caring ethos that supports pupils' personal development well. There is a satisfactory programme of activities, including work on healthy eating, health awareness, sex, drugs, bullying and personal safety. Teachers make good use of discussion and reflection activities through, for example, religious education, 'circle time', and 'thinking skills', to help pupils learn to explore and share their feelings and to discuss a wide range of different topics. In addition, teachers explore opportunities, for example through work in science and physical education, to help pupils become aware of how to take care of their bodies and develop a healthy lifestyle. Visitors are invited in to extend pupils' experiences of working with and relating to others. For example, visitors from the emergency services help promote pupils' awareness of the work they do and how pupils can take some responsibility in the care of others.

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## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<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	3
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</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3

Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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