

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FINHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Coventry, West Midlands

LEA area: Coventry

Unique reference number: 103675

Headteacher: Mrs K Brown

Lead inspector: Mrs V Ward

Dates of inspection: 13 - 16 June 2005

Inspection number: 266821

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	449
School address:	Green Lane Finham Coventry
Postcode:	CV3 6EJ
Telephone number:	024 764 15425
Fax number:	024 764 16241
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Woodford
Date of previous inspection:	16/11/1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school is located on the southern edge of the city of Coventry. The pupils mainly live in the area around the school, with a few travelling from further afield. There are slightly more boys than girls on roll. Relatively high numbers of pupils either left or joined the school during the course of the previous school year. A large majority of the pupils are white British, with other pupils coming from Asian, African and Chinese backgrounds. A higher than average number of pupils is learning English as an additional language, with ten pupils being at the early stages. The school building is used for a breakfast club, a mother and toddler club and for after-school care. Children are admitted to the nursery in the September after their third birthday. The attainment on entry of the majority is above average. The socio-economic backgrounds of the pupils are mainly above average. The number of pupils with special educational needs is below average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has had two changes of headteacher and significant staffing issues in the past few years, but is now more settled. It has earned the Healthy Schools silver award and is working towards the gold award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19028	V Ward	Lead inspector	Science, Foundation Stage, geography, music
11575	C Fish	Lay inspector	
22397	S Fowler	Team inspector	English, history, physical education, religious education, special educational needs
31838	M Williams	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, English as an additional language, Personal, social and health education

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA

Herringston Barn  
Herringston  
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Dorset  
DT2 9PU

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>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>12</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>19</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>31</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an **effective and improving school**. The headteacher's very good leadership, supported very effectively by the deputy headteacher, has brought about significant improvements. The achievement of the pupils is good overall. Teaching and learning are good overall, with significant strengths in Years 3 to 6. The school has a caring ethos and the pupils enjoy coming to school and participating in all it has to offer. Most parents are very supportive of the school. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher and her deputy have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and a determination to bring about school improvement.
- Good achievement leads to standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) that are well above average by Year 6.
- Whilst teaching is good overall, there are inconsistencies among classes and this reduces the quality of learning for the pupils.
- The very good relationships among teachers and pupils foster positive attitudes and help to promote cultural harmony within the school.
- The classroom accommodation for Years 1, 2 and 3 is unsatisfactory and constrains learning for these pupils.
- The school takes good care of its pupils and enhances their learning through extra-curricular clubs and arts, sports and music activities.
- The assessment of pupils' progress is used well when planning how best to support pupils.
- The roles of some subject leaders need further development if they are to improve the teaching and learning, and thereby the standards, in their subjects.

Since it was last inspected in November 1999, the school has been through an unsettled period, which has hindered its progress. However, the school has maintained its strengths and has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses identified then. A particular focus on mathematics is raising standards, especially in Years 3 to 6. With greater stability, the pace of improvement is now increasing. Improvements have been made in several areas and these are making the school more effective; they include the recording and use made of assessment data and the level of curricular enrichment. Improvement has been good overall.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A\* - top 5%; 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.*

Overall, the pupils' **achievement is good**. However, in Years 1 and 2, it is satisfactory. Throughout the school, there is no significant variation among different groups of pupils. In 2004, the results in Year 6 fell from those of 2003. This was mainly because of the higher number of pupils with special educational needs within that year group. Even so, when the results for mathematics are compared with all schools and with similar schools, it is clear that the school added considerable value to the pupils' learning between Years 3 and 6. This was because of a recent focus on developing the subject. Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and ICT. In science, standards are above average and are improving. In Years 1 and 2, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. In the Foundation Stage, the majority of the children enter the nursery with skills which are above average. They achieve well and, by the end of the reception year, almost all the children are likely to exceed the goals expected and some are working well beyond these in some aspects of the areas of learning.

**The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good.** They show positive attitudes to school and their attendance is good. The pupils are motivated to learn and behave well.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall.** Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6, and is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. The best teaching is found in Years 5 and 6. Strengths in teaching include the teachers' subject knowledge and their management of the pupils. These factors keep the pupils interested and encourage them to learn. Weaknesses include a lack of suitable pace and challenge for pupils. Assessment procedures overall are good, and are very good in English and mathematics. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular and additional activities. This contributes to the pupils' positive attitudes. The open-plan and cramped conditions in some of the classrooms restrict the organisation of the curriculum. Procedures for ensuring the pupils' care, health and safety are very good, and they support the pupils' learning well. The pupils are actively involved in sharing in decision-making. The school has developed a good partnership with parents and this has a positive effect on learning. Links with other schools and the local community are used well to enhance the pupils' learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good overall.** The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy, has a strong sense of purpose in ensuring the school provides effective education. She has established successful leadership teams which are driving school improvement. The work of the governing body is satisfactory and governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met. Management, including that of the school's finances, is good. The roles of the subject leaders, whilst satisfactory overall, require further development in order to increase their effectiveness.

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

Most pupils speak positively about their school and feel that they are well cared for and valued. A large majority of parents express positive views about the school, and the inspection findings support these views. A few parents requested more information about the progress their children were making, but the inspection findings show that, overall, the school keeps them well informed.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Remove inconsistencies in teaching and raise the quality of teaching to that of the best.
- Improve the accommodation in the Years 1, 2 and 3 classrooms, so that it no longer constrains teaching and learning.
- Develop the roles of the subject leaders, particularly in subjects other than mathematics, science and ICT, so that they have greater influence over pupils' achievement.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

*Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capabilities into account.*

Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, and in Years 3 to 6 it is good. Throughout the school, there is no significant variation in the achievement of pupils according to their gender, ability, ethnicity or background. On entry to the nursery, the majority of children have standards which are above average. By the end of the reception year, almost all of the children are likely to exceed the expected goals in all areas of learning. In Year 2, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. In Year 6, they are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science.

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

- The pupils achieve well in the key subjects of English and mathematics.
- Competence in ICT is now good and has improved since the previous inspection.
- The pupils' skills in investigative science are good throughout the school, as a result of a whole-school focus.
- Standards in speaking and listening are not as high as those for reading and writing.

#### **Commentary**

*The tables shown in this commentary give average points scores for pupils. Each level in the national curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term, so if a school's scores are one point above the national, their pupils are typically, a term ahead.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.0 (16.6)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	16.7 (15.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.9 (17.4)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.2 (30.3)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.3 (29.2)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.0 (30.5)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. Since the previous inspection, results have fluctuated in the national tests, but the school's results in Year 2 have been above the national trend. In Year 2, the results in 2004 improved in reading and writing and remained the same in mathematics. There had previously been a downward trend in mathematics, but current work indicates that this has been halted because of the school's focus on raising achievement in mathematics. Pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards which are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science, and their achievement is satisfactory, in keeping with satisfactory teaching.
2. In Year 6, the trend in results has been similar to the national trend. In 2004, the national test results for Year 6 fell significantly. This was caused in part by the higher number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group, and partly because of some disruption to their learning due to staffing difficulties through Years 3 to 6. The attainment of the current pupils in Year 6 is well above average in English and mathematics, and test results this year are expected to increase significantly. This is because of the good teaching through Years 3 to 6 and the often very good teaching in Years 5 and 6, combined with effective intervention to meet individual pupils' needs. The school's focus on improving teaching and learning in mathematics has been successful in raising attainment.
3. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets set for them. Their progress is tracked carefully and provision is tailored to their needs. As a result, most achieve average standards by the time they leave the school. The effective support which is provided for pupils who are learning English as an additional language enables them to achieve as well as their classmates.
4. The skills of the majority of the children entering the nursery are above those expected of three-year-olds. The good teaching and attention paid to individual needs enable them to achieve well, and a greater number exceed the expected goals in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year. The highest attaining children and those learning English as an additional language, achieve particularly well. This good provision gives the children a strong start to their education.
5. The subject leader for ICT has put much effort into improving provision and supporting teachers. As a result, the skills of all staff have been improved and the status of the subject has been successfully raised. This has resulted in the pupils gaining good levels of competency. In Year 6, their attainment is now well above average. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.
6. Following analysis of test results in 2004, the school identified weaknesses in the pupils' investigative skills in science. Training was provided for teachers and the status of the subject was increased. Investigative skills are now good throughout the school, because of better teaching and an improved curriculum.
7. In Years 1 to 6, standards in speaking are not as good as those for reading and writing. In Year 2 they are average, and above average in Year 6. The pupils express themselves well in conversation with another child or adult, but are less confident when speaking to a larger audience. The school has correctly identified this as an area for development.

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

Pupils have good attitudes to school and they behave well. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Both attendance and punctuality are good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very strong and mutually supportive relationships develop, making the school a good and purposeful place to be.
- The pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to all it has to offer.
- Good attendance levels have been maintained.
- Very good cultural development remains a strength of the school.

### Commentary

8. Very good relationships are encouraged from the time the children start in the Foundation Stage. Children and pupils quickly learn to show care, concern and support for each other in and out of the classroom, and this is seen throughout the school. At break times, they really enjoy playing together and in lessons they work very well in pairs, groups or as a whole class, supporting each other in their learning. Pupils are prepared to take risks in learning, because they know ‘getting the answer wrong’ is just part of the learning process and they will not be ridiculed. The teachers often use such answers as good learning opportunities. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who are learning English as an additional language, enjoy good relationships with their support assistants and work effectively as individuals or in small groups. Most pupils say there is an adult in school to whom they can turn and every pupil who was spoken with was full of thanks, especially to their teachers. The very good relationships across all the different ethnic backgrounds are a real strength of the school, where tolerance and understanding are the norm.
9. Pupils come into school eagerly at the start of the day. They look forward to what they are going to do and especially enjoy the very wide range of extra-curricular activities which support their learning and broaden their experiences. In lessons, they show good levels of interest, listen carefully and are keen to do well. They talk of learning new things in most lessons and can recall work they have done in previous years, showing their involvement and interest in their school lives. The school is a pleasant place to be because the pupils are friendly, polite and respectful, as well as being full of energy and enthusiasm. The school sets high expectations of behaviour and the pupils strive hard to meet them. There were no exclusions from school last year. No bullying was seen during the inspection, although the pupils agree that it does occur. They say they know what they have to do and that matters are usually quickly resolved.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.1
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.*

10. Attendance has been above the national average for several years, and this is being maintained because the school has good systems in place to ascertain the reason for a pupil’s absence and to

promote good attendance. When necessary, the school involves the educational welfare officer. Most pupils arrive at school on time; lessons start promptly throughout the day.

11. Personal development is fostered well. It is given appropriately high priority in the Foundation Stage, and by the end of the reception year, almost all of the children exceed the expected goals in their personal, social and emotional development. They behave well, are confident in their learning and display good levels of independence.
12. Spiritual awareness is supported by assemblies. One seen, for older pupils, was the story of ‘The Good Neighbour’, acted by members of the local church, which illustrated well the point of caring for everyone. The pupils are encouraged always to listen to each other and to think about the effect on others of their actions. In class, they are confident to talk about any issues and concerns that worry them, which results in good tolerance and respect for others. The Year 6 pupils, about to move to their secondary schools, gave candid views on their fears about the move in the secure knowledge of support from their peers. Moral and social development is promoted well through personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons and the opportunities to take responsibility for themselves and others. Pupils show concern for others, including those in other countries, through the charities they support, such as building a well in Nigeria. With such a rich diversity of ethnic background amongst the pupils, cultural development remains very good. It is helped by links with the different religions in the community and within the parent population and is threaded through the life of the school. For example, banners in the hall, produced by pupils with a visiting artist, depict the continents represented by the backgrounds of the pupils. To celebrate the culture of the majority of pupils for whom English is an additional language, the school has introduced ‘taster’ lessons of Punjabi for some of its pupils.

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

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The teaching is good overall. The curriculum is good. It is enriched by a very good range of additional activities. The school cares very well for its pupils and works effectively with their parents, the community and other schools and colleges.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good overall, although there are inconsistencies across the school. Assessment procedures are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 and pupils achieve well.
- Some lessons in Years 1 and 2 lack pace and challenge.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this effectively to promote learning.
- Assessment procedures are good overall and very good in English, mathematics and the Foundation Stage.

### **Commentary**

*Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 59 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
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0	6 (10%)	40 (68%)	13 (22%)	0	0	0
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*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

13. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6 and, consequently, pupils achieve well. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons observed, usually being good, and often very good. This is a similar judgement to that made at the previous inspection. Teaching is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6, where a number of very good lessons were observed, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching in Year 6 was satisfactory. The skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are taught effectively across the curriculum, so that the pupils have good opportunities to develop and use them in a range of subjects. Careful consideration is given to ensuring that all pupils, including higher attaining pupils, those learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, can learn effectively.
14. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers provide a good balance between teacher-directed and child-selected activities, which supports the children's learning well. The teaching assistants are suitably involved in planning and are deployed very effectively. This successfully increases the opportunities for adult input to the children's learning.
15. Although teaching in Years 1 and 2 has particular strengths, lessons sometimes lack pace and challenge. Teaching and learning in these classes are satisfactory overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan collaboratively to ensure equality of opportunity and make good use of their teaching assistants. However, lesson introductions are often too long and, as a result, pupils become restless and disinterested. Teachers make insufficient use of assessment information, so that the tasks that they set for group activities are sometimes insufficiently challenging, thus limiting their achievement.
16. In almost all lessons in Years 3 to 6, teachers show good subject knowledge, their planning is detailed and they manage the pupils very effectively. Teachers have high expectations and set challenging and stimulating tasks for their pupils. They insist on high standards of behaviour and pupils respond well in lessons. As a result, lessons have good pace and are rarely disrupted by inappropriate behaviour. Enthusiasm is a particular characteristic of the teaching in the school, and in very good lessons teachers carry pupils along with their own energy and enjoyment, enabling them to learn very well. An excellent atmosphere is established in these lessons, so that the pupils are totally involved in their work and do their best to succeed. This was evident when pupils in Year 5 set out to debate whether a circus should be allowed to open on the school playing field. In this lesson, pupils co-operated maturely, developed their arguments thoughtfully and used a video camera and tape recorder to record and improve their performance skills. They listened respectfully to both sides of the argument, and one pupil said that he had changed his original viewpoint as a result of one very persuasive speech.
17. Assessment procedures are good overall and very good in English, mathematics and the Foundation Stage. The assessment co-ordinator provides very good leadership and has worked hard to raise the profile of assessment within the school. Her systematic analysis of data enables her to set targets for improvement for groups of pupils and for individuals, and to identify when these targets are not being met. At the time of the last inspection, assessment procedures were not developed in subjects other than English and mathematics, but this is no longer the case. Assessment information is used effectively in all subjects and that information feeds into annual pupil reports. Most pupils are aware of their targets for reading and writing, and teachers refer to them in lessons. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are regularly given information about their national curriculum levels and what they need to do to achieve improvement. In one Year 4 class, the

teacher routinely amends her planning as a result of day-to-day assessment, but this does not happen consistently throughout the school. Teachers' marking of work is variable. In the best cases, particularly in Year 5 and Year 6, teachers indicate clearly how well pupils have achieved, and what they need to do to improve. However, in some instances, whilst marking is evaluative and supportive but it does not focus sufficiently on how pupils can improve their work. Although the co-ordinator uses assessment information very effectively, she is aware of the need to work closely with subject co-ordinators so that they can take greater responsibility for monitoring the progress of pupils within their own curricular area.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good. Opportunities for enrichment are very good. Staffing and resources are good, but accommodation is unsatisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is broad and well balanced; ICT has been much improved.
- The accommodation in Years 1, 2, and 3 constrains teaching and learning.
- Extra-curricular provision extends learning very well, contributing to rising standards.
- Planning for pupils' personal development is good.
- Links between subjects are not consistently well developed.

## **Commentary**

18. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is planned very well and is much improved since the previous inspection. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 enables all groups of pupils to achieve well, especially in English and mathematics, by the time they leave the school. It is organised effectively to meet statutory requirements and to provide equality of opportunity. The curriculum needs for pupils for whom English is an additional language are met effectively because of well-focused language support from specialist staff. This enables those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English to make good gains in all aspects of learning. The curriculum for those with special educational needs is satisfactory and is similar to that found at the previous inspection. Pupils' individual educational plans are generally of good quality, although they are not used as working documents and specialist support staff are not invited to all of the meetings when the targets in the plans are being reviewed. All pupils with special educational needs are involved in the full range of school activities.
19. The previous inspection's key issue regarding ICT provision has been addressed effectively: there are now two networked computers in each classroom, and a well-equipped computer suite now benefits all pupils. The adoption of a good published scheme of work is contributing well to the good achievement and improved standards now being attained. The school's new website helps provide good resources to enhance all areas of learning and helps both pupils and teachers to develop their skills.
20. Teachers frequently make constructive links between teaching and learning in different subjects. The school recognises that this is not, however, planned systematically and is an area identified for development.
21. Extra-curricular provision is very closely linked to the main curriculum and the vast majority of activities provide a stimulus to support more than one subject. The curriculum is considerably enriched through residential trips, educational visits and visitors, and initiatives such as themed

days and weeks. Outside specialists help develop pupils' skills in sports and modern foreign languages. Although not part of the national pilot programme, the school offers modern language teaching in Year 3. For Years 5 and 6, weekly enrichment afternoons include French, German, Spanish and Punjabi. These "tasters" provide a useful springboard for secondary school work. Clubs held at lunchtimes and after school offer sporting, artistic, practical and academic activities, and these are very popular with pupils. At present, these activities are more for pupils in Years 3 to 6, but the school plans to extend them to Years 1 and 2.

22. Assemblies comply with statutory requirements and make a positive contribution to pupils' development. The school meets statutory requirements in respect of sex, relationships and drugs education. Discrete personal, social and health education lessons are a regular and effective feature of the timetable. In addition to gaining the Healthy Schools silver award in 2004, the school is involved in conservation and recycling initiatives which give pupils a good understanding of environmental issues and sustainable development.
23. Resources are of good quality and are well organised. Most teachers and teaching assistants make good use of them to support pupils' learning. The many strengths in the attractive classrooms and well-kept grounds are, however, seriously compromised by the open-plan nature of the accommodation in Years 1, 2 and 3. Intrusive noise and movement from one class distracts another and slows down learning. The use of space that is available has to be rigidly co-ordinated. Teachers are therefore denied the flexibility to alter plans and activities to meet the immediate needs of their pupils. The school clearly recognises that this is a matter requiring urgent attention, but, whilst plans to alter the accommodation have been prepared, final approval for the work to proceed has yet to be given.

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

The school has very good procedures and policies to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pupils. They are provided with good quality support, advice and guidance. Good systems are now in place to give the pupils a voice in the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils' well-being is of paramount importance.
- Staff know the pupils very well and want to help them do their best.
- Pupils settle into school life well.
- The views of the pupils are now welcomed well by the school.

### **Commentary**

24. Great care is taken to ensure the pupils' health, safety and welfare. First aid is undertaken sympathetically, records are kept meticulously and accidents are monitored and analysed to identify any areas where action is needed. Alarms, appliances and equipment are all tested at the correct times. All trips have consent forms which also request health and contact information. Child protection, risk assessment and health and safety are all very well covered by policies and procedures which are fully supported by the governing body. The school has a strict and well-used policy on internet access, plus stringent procedures to ensure the safety of its own web site.
25. Very good relationships underpin the work of the school and help staff to pinpoint what advice and support pupils need. Although personal development is not formally assessed and recorded,

the annual reports to parents on their children's progress indicate that teachers know the pupils well and can offer constructive help. Academic support through the use of teaching assistants is very good in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, where there are fewer teaching assistants, there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement. Older pupils are aware of what levels they are working at in their lesson groups and how to do better, but younger pupils are less aware of how well they are doing. Clear records are kept of the progress of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. The information gained is used to provide appropriately challenging work for individual pupils.

26. The good induction system used well in Foundation Stage ensures that the children settle quickly into the routines of the nursery and reception classes. Pupils who start school mid-year, or other than in the Foundation Stage, are given the opportunity to spend half a day with their class before starting, and this helps them settle more easily.
27. Currently the school council includes only older pupils, although the councillors talk to the younger pupils about topics under discussion and then report back to the council. This enables all pupils to be involved. Other groups, such as the environmental group and eco team, all have a say in what the school does. The pupils, particularly in Year 6, very much appreciate the headteacher's open door and listening ear. In lessons, teachers are willing to listen to pupils' suggestions and to use them to support learning.

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

The school's partnership with parents is good. It makes good use of the wider community. Links with other schools are also good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The information provided for parents is very good.
- Parents are very active in seeking ways to support the school for the benefit of their children.
- The community is used well to add enrichment to the pupils' learning.
- The transfer of pupils to their next school is smooth and well organised.

### **Commentary**

28. Parents are supportive of the school. They are pleased with the values it promotes and with the all-round development of their children. The returned parents' questionnaires were positive in nearly every respect, and this was reflected at the pre-inspection meeting with them. Although there were some concerns about the clarity of the information presented in the annual reports, it was widely acknowledged that their many strengths include the very good details of what pupils know, understand and can do given in English, mathematics and science, and to a lesser degree in ICT. Details in other subjects are satisfactory. Further written information, especially that relating to what the pupils will be learning and how parents can help, is of a very high quality and very effectively supplemented by the school's website. The school receives good support from parents of those pupils with special educational needs, and they regularly attend review meetings to contribute to their children's learning.



29. The parents provide active support through Parent Teacher Association events and through seeking other ways to support the school. One particularly valuable link, involving a bank, provides the school this year with matched funding for the annual 'Fun Day', the proceeds being used to improve the school's outdoor environment. This is supported further by a pool of volunteers from the same bank who are helping this initiative by clearing the pond area, planting hedging and laying a trail through a stand of trees planted ten years ago by previous pupils. This involvement, and the development of previous initiatives, creates a sense of continuity that makes the school a community.
30. The pupils' learning is enriched by the community visits, trips and visitors which they enjoy. These are as wide-ranging as visits to country parks to inspect animal habitats, the local farm to observe animals, and museums to study history topics. A visit by pupils in Year 3 to the 'Mayor Making' ceremony supports the development of citizenship very well. Links with the local church add an interesting dimension to assemblies on a regular basis, and this is very much appreciated by the pupils. With the rich variety of faiths represented in the school, it rightly aims to involve other religions in its development of collective worship.
31. Most pupils from Year 6 transfer to the local secondary school. The recent teaching of transition units in several subjects, together with visits from teachers and visits to the new school, have helped to ease some pupils' natural apprehension about the move. Good links are being developed with other primary schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The headteacher and her deputy provide both very good leadership and a strong sense of purpose in moving the school forward. The leadership of other key staff is satisfactory. Management is good, and the governance of the school is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher and her deputy have a very good understanding of areas in which the school needs to improve and of the strategies required to bring this about.
- The creation of teams led by senior managers is effective in driving school improvement.
- The leadership and management in the Foundation Stage provide the children with a good start to their learning.
- The subject leaders need to develop their influence over teaching, learning, standards and achievement in their subjects.

### **Commentary**

32. Since the previous inspection, the school has had serious staffing issues, including two changes of headteacher. The current headteacher has been in post for almost two years and the staffing issues are now resolved. Since her appointment, the headteacher has analysed the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has started to bring about significant improvements. The headteacher and deputy head make a strong team and together they are moving the school forward. Teaching is monitored regularly and support is provided to remedy weaknesses. Assessment of the pupils' progress is thorough and is used very effectively to ensure that the differing needs of all groups of pupils are met. School improvement planning is comprehensive and describes the means by which change can be achieved.

33. The headteacher has established a system of teams, led by senior managers across different year groups in the school. This is proving effective in developing a team approach to addressing whole-school issues. Various aspects of curricular development have been successfully implemented through the leadership of these phase leaders. These include initiatives to develop a more innovative curriculum, to raise standards in English, mathematics and science, and to improve behaviour across the school. The phase leaders also make a significant contribution to monitoring many aspects of school development, and provide support to teachers as needed.
34. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very effective and provide the children with a good start to their education. The organisation of the space for different activities within the reception classroom, and the deployment of the staff, are both efficient and effective and contribute to the good and often very good learning of the children.
35. Whilst the leadership of some subjects is effective, in the majority of cases the monitoring roles of subject leaders are not as influential as they should be. Most subject leaders need to acquire greater knowledge of standards, achievement, teaching and learning across the school in their subjects and to play a greater part in bringing about improvement, such as in disseminating best practice in teaching.
36. The governance of the school is satisfactory and statutory requirements are met. The governors are very keen to support the school and consequently their meetings are well attended. They are kept very well informed about the school's priorities through information supplied by the headteacher. Some thorough monitoring activities are carried out, such as those regarding finance and health and safety. The governors' understanding of the pupils' achievement over time, and of the school's strengths and weaknesses, is less secure.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1224289	Balance from previous year	67404
Total expenditure	1201203	Balance carried forward to the next	90490
Expenditure per pupil	2461		

37. Financial procedures are robust and the budget is closely monitored. The governors' understanding and use of the principles of best value are satisfactory. The current underspend is appropriately planned to be used for developing the outdoor areas and the school's library.

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

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

38. Children are admitted to the nursery in the September following their third birthday and attend either mornings or afternoons. The majority have skills at a higher level than those usually expected of three-year-olds. In the nursery, they are taught by two part-time teachers and a teaching assistant. Children in the reception class attend full-time and are taught by two full-time teachers and two teaching assistants.
39. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage has been reorganised this year and is having a positive impact on learning. The children's achievement is good and, by the end of the reception year, almost all of the children are likely to exceed the expected goals in all areas of learning, with a significant proportion doing so already. The higher attaining children show very good achievement in reading, writing, understanding and using numbers and in their personal development. The children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are effectively supported and, as a consequence, they achieve well, often reaching many of the expected goals.
40. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The Foundation Stage leader has a good understanding of the needs of young children and provides an imaginative curriculum which gives the children a good start to their education. The planning for the curriculum is now good, showing an improvement since the previous inspection. The staff work together very effectively and the positive relationships between the adults set a good example to the children.
41. There are very good arrangements for checking what the children know, understand and can do, and the resulting information is used well to plan the next steps the children need to take in their learning. This process contributes significantly to the good achievement of individual children, including those with special educational needs, the higher attaining children and those learning English as an additional language.

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

The provision for personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

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

- The children develop a good understanding of school routines and know what is expected of them.
- The good teaching enables the children to achieve well.

#### **Commentary**

42. Achievement, teaching and learning are good. By the end of the reception year, almost all the children, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, are likely to exceed the expected goals. The children settle quickly and happily on their arrival each day in the nursery and reception classes. Routines are well established and provide the children with a feeling of security. In the nursery and reception classes, the children tidy away toys and equipment efficiently. They hang up their coats on their

pegs and wash their hands without needing assistance. The teachers make their expectations of behaviour clear, and this helps the children to feel secure and learn well. In the nursery, the teacher discussed the need to share and take turns when using the wheeled toys. In the reception class, the teacher pointed out that she would provide an opportunity to speak for those children who raised their hand. This successfully reminded the children of how they should behave. The children in the nursery are helped to develop confidence by being given opportunities to sing to the class, either alone or with a friend. The children speak confidently to adults and to each other. The teachers provide good opportunities for the children to reflect on the effect of their actions on others, as when working together in pairs.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

The provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The staff develop the children's speaking skills very effectively.
- The valuing of the children's first attempts at writing boosts their confidence.

### **Commentary**

43. Achievement, teaching and learning are good. By the end of the reception year, almost all the children should exceed the expected goals. A few children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language should come close to reaching the expected goals, because of the good support they are given. The higher attaining children achieve very well in reading and writing. In the nursery and reception classes, the staff encourage the children to speak and listen by intervening successfully in their play and in engaging them in conversation. This gives the children the confidence to speak and helps to increase their vocabulary. A nursery child was very confident when asking, "When will the ducklings hatch?" Good opportunities are provided for the children to write, such as in the role-play areas in both nursery and reception classes. The children in reception wrote about holidays in the travel agent's shop. The children are taught systematically and successfully to form letters correctly and this helps to give confidence and accuracy in writing. Reading is promoted well by the staff and the children enjoy books. Children in the nursery liked looking at books connected with frogs, after they had been studying them. By the end of the nursery year, all of the children recognise their name and its initial letter sound. This learning is built upon well, and by the end of the reception year, a significant proportion of children read simple books fluently.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teachers provide good opportunities to develop the children's understanding of mathematics.
- The learning is made interesting by the use of a wide range of resources.

### **Commentary**

44. Achievement, teaching and learning are good. By the end of the reception year, almost all the children are likely to exceed the expected goals, the highest attainers showing very good skills in understanding and calculating numbers. The teachers take advantage of the children's natural enthusiasm for counting and using numbers to help them learn basic numeracy skills. Counting during registration is used well in both year groups. Encouraging the children to count how many of them are present when they stand in line and to say who is first, second or third helps to increase their knowledge. The constant use and explanation of mathematical language, such as *zero*, *beside*, and *double*, enhances the children's understanding. The teachers make mathematical learning fun by using colourful and interesting resources. Children in the nursery enjoyed counting how many colourful frogs were sitting on the paper log beside the pretend pond. In the reception class, puppets were used successfully to stimulate the children's interest. The concept of symmetry was developed well through painting, making patterns on peg boards and by means of an art program on the computer.

### **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

The provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

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

- The children achieve well because the staff plan interesting learning activities.
- They make good progress in learning to use computers.

#### **Commentary**

45. Achievement is good. By the end of the reception year, almost all the children are on course to exceed the expected goals. Teaching and learning are good. The teachers ensure that all the strands of this area of learning are taught and that the children benefit from a wide range of experiences. Through regular play, such as experimenting with wet and dry sand, and through teacher-directed activities such as making fruit salad, the children learn about the world around them. Children in the nursery learned about the life-cycle of the frog, by means of direct observation, discussion with their teacher and looking at books and models. In reception, the children used their senses of touch, sight and smell as they learned about fruits which were new to them. The teacher helped to extend their vocabulary and understanding by discussing the pips and stones and what would happen if they were planted. A storybook relating to Africa and the appropriate use of a globe helped increase the children's understanding of far away places. The interactive computer whiteboard is used very well to demonstrate computer skills to the children. Following one such demonstration, the children were able to choose colours and shapes and drag them across the computer screen to make symmetrical patterns on a butterfly.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The provision for physical development is **good**.

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

- The children have good opportunities to develop both fine and large movement skills through a good range of activities.
- The outdoor provision is good.

#### **Commentary**

46. Achievement is good. By the end of the reception year, almost all the children are likely to exceed the expected goals, with a significant proportion of children showing very good skill levels. The good teaching enables the children to achieve well. Opportunities to mould clay, paint with a range of materials and use scissors and crayons help to promote good skills of manipulation. These are built on successfully in the reception classes. Children using construction kits persevered to fit pieces together, and children making fruit salad concentrated hard as they used plastic knives to chop up the fruit. The regular use of the outside area, with adult supervision, enhances the opportunities for physical development. In the nursery, the children pedal and push the wheeled toys confidently, remembering to follow the marked track in the correct direction to avoid a collision. The teacher monitors their choices to ensure that all children take a turn. In reception, the children move around the hall with good awareness of space and of each other. They balance and climb on the apparatus outdoors, showing increasing confidence and skill.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

The provision for creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The resources and equipment are well prepared and provide a good range of activities.
- The children achieve well because of the imaginative teaching they receive.

### **Commentary**

47. Achievement, teaching and learning are good. By the end of the reception year, almost all the children should exceed the expected goals, and a significant number of higher attaining children show very well developed skills. The children have good opportunities to use a wide range of media: sand, water and role-play materials are available on a regular basis. Adult support in both the inside and outside areas promotes creative development well. Children who had heard a story about life in Africa put on African dress in order to act out the story. During a lesson in the hall, the teacher demonstrated to the children how to lift a heavy water jar on to their heads. This helped to stimulate the children's imaginations and encourage their participation. Regular creative work in the nursery, organised by visiting specialists, enriches the children's learning in both role-play and art. In the reception classes, children developed their painting skills as they made patterns on cloth. The children sing tunefully and with enjoyment, the reception children showing that they have developed greater confidence and skill in maintaining the beat.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES ONE AND TWO**

### **ENGLISH**

The provision for English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good in Years 3 and 4 and very good in Years 5 and 6.
- Assessment information is used effectively to improve achievement.
- Some lessons in Years 1 and 2 lack pace and challenge.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills through drama.

- Pupils have a good range of opportunities to develop their language and literacy skills in other subjects.

## Commentary

- Standards in English in the Year 6 national tests for 2004 were below average and well below those achieved in similar schools. This significant dip in standards occurred because there was an unusually high number of pupils with learning difficulties within the year group. Standards for the current pupils in Year 6 are well above average and this represents good achievement over their time in the school, as most entered school with above average literacy skills. In Year 2, standards are above average in reading and writing and average in speaking and listening, which represents satisfactory achievement. These standards are similar to those found at the previous inspection. By Year 6, most pupils read fluently and expressively, can discuss the work of a range of authors and can explain the reasons for their own reading preferences. They have developed a wide vocabulary, a good understanding of grammatical structure and can write at length for a range of different purposes and audiences.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. During the inspection, some very good teaching was observed in Years 5 and 6. One strong feature of teaching is that teachers accurately plan work for pupils of different abilities. Learning objectives are made clear at the beginning of each lesson and are usually reviewed at the end of the lesson to enable pupils to identify the progress that they have made. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress because of the appropriate support that they receive. In very good lessons, teachers have high expectations, provide challenging activities and maintain pace by setting time limits for the completion of work. Questioning is used effectively to promote learning, particularly when teachers develop an initial response by asking a further question. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and respond positively to the good or very good teaching.
- The school has developed very effective assessment procedures for English. Data analysis is thorough and enables the assessment co-ordinator to develop suitable targets for pupils, monitor progress and predict the likely performance of pupils in future national assessment tests. The progress of individual pupils is monitored closely and support programmes are targeted effectively. Pupils are very aware of their reading and writing targets and older pupils know their national curriculum levels and what they need to do in order to bring about improvement. There are occasions, such as in reception, when teaching assistants obtain valuable assessment information whilst observing whole-class introductions to lessons, but this effective strategy is not used consistently across the school.
- In Year 2, most pupils show good attitudes to reading and are beginning to develop knowledge of authors and genres. They read with expression, discuss characters and events and are beginning to develop comprehension skills. They write clearly using a range of styles; their handwriting is legible and they use a varied vocabulary. They are provided with opportunities to develop extended stories and clearly enjoy the opportunities to write at length. However, some lessons in Years 1 and 2 do not develop reading and writing skills sufficiently because they lack pace and appropriate challenge. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class became restless and disinterested when the introduction to their lesson was too lengthy. In another lesson, above average pupils in Year 1 were given too short a time to complete their writing task. There are also occasions when the need to have two classes in the same teaching area impacts adversely upon teaching and learning.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are less well developed than skills in reading and writing, being average in Year 2 and just above average in Year 6. Most pupils listen carefully and make suitable responses during lesson. For example, a pupil in Year 3 knew that "a butterfly sucks up sugary liquid called nectar from a flower", whilst another pupil gave a lengthy explanation of the function of a synopsis. However, whilst most pupils have a good vocabulary and answer questions well, fewer are confident to speak in front of a wider audience. The school has identified a need to raise standards in

this area and all adults, including teachers and non-teaching staff, are making a deliberate effort to contribute to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Most teachers make good use of paired discussion between pupils. In a very good lesson in Year 5, pupils were given good opportunities to deliver their persuasive arguments to the whole class, but such opportunities are rare. The curriculum for English currently contains insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to develop their confidence in speaking and listening, through activities such as drama, for example.

53. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator for English has been in post for only two terms and so has had limited opportunity to influence the curriculum. She has good subject knowledge and has already audited resources, monitored planning and carried out some observations of teaching within the school. However, she has yet to gain a full appreciation of standards of teaching and learning throughout the school.

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

54. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects. For example, in Year 1, pupils have written raps about Finham Green as part of their work in geography; pupils in Year 3 have written descriptions of Viking ships as part of their historical studies; and pupils in Year 4 have developed "Healthy Eating" contracts as part of their personal, social and health education. Pupils have well-developed research skills and, in Year 6, they have developed very powerful arguments for the preservation of rainforests as a result of internet research. Although research skills are good, the school library is too small to enable complete classes to use it as a base for research.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is effective in Years 3 to 6, but is less so in Years 1 and 2.
- Assessment is used to better effect with the older pupils.
- Standards are rising because of an improved focus on problem solving.
- Numeracy is used well in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

55. Standards in Year 6 are well above average and achievement is good. This is an improvement on the above average standards reached in the 2004 national tests. In Year 2, standards are above average and achievement is satisfactory. In recent years, there has been a downward trend in the results for Year 2, but the present outcomes indicate that this decline has been halted. Recent efforts to raise achievement in mathematics are proving successful.
56. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. In Years 3 to 6, it is sometimes very good. Teachers have high expectations, plan thoroughly to meet the needs of all groups of pupils, and use their subject knowledge well. Teaching is less effective in Years 1 and 2 than in the older year groups because the challenge and pace of lessons are not so well matched to pupils' capabilities. The classrooms for Years 1, 2 and 3 are small and have to be shared by two classes, which restricts what can be taught. Also, sometimes the working noise from one class disturbs the other and this reduces the quality of learning.



57. In mathematics, systems to enable teachers to identify those pupils who need additional support, and those who need to be challenged further, are very good. They include individual learning targets for pupils. The information gathered is used more effectively in Years 3 to 6, since learning targets are more sharply defined than in earlier years and the work set is more challenging.
58. Following the national trend, girls do better than boys. By Year 6, all pupils are developing their skills well to prepare for their transition to secondary school. The continuing focus on investigative mathematics has helped pupils apply their knowledge well. They regularly explain their reasoning when tackling relatively complex calculations and consistently check whether their results are sensible. By Year 2, the vast majority of pupils solve one-step problems competently. The highest attainers tackle sums involving larger numbers, but more pupils ought to be doing so, given their prior attainment.
59. Good management of the subject and a review of teaching and learning have led to more opportunities for pupils to use their skills in real-life contexts. Emphasis on reasoning, explaining and applying mathematics has helped raise standards. The subject leader is working closely with the local education authority and partners in other schools to provide ongoing staff development to help raise the quality of all teaching and learning to the level of the best in the school.
60. Improvement has been good since the last inspection because the pupils now do at least as well as pupils in similar schools by the time they leave. What was a key issue for development has been addressed successfully.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects. They learn to measure and draw accurately, for example, to support work in design and technology. Studies in symmetry enhance pattern work in art, and vice versa. Pupils regularly measure and calculate in a variety of contexts in science. Good links with ICT provide a range of opportunities, including using spreadsheets and developing understanding of angles of turn when controlling movement or creating shapes.

## SCIENCE

The provision for science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and are rising.
- The pupils' understanding of scientific investigation is good.
- The analysis of the pupils' progress is used well to focus teaching and learning on aspects of science where it is most needed.

### Commentary

62. The school is again achieving the above average standards in Years 2 and 6 it attained at the previous inspection. However, during the intervening period, standards have fluctuated and have been below average at times in Year 6. Across the school as a whole, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory, but is improving in Years 3 to 6; the current work of these pupils indicates that achievement is good and that standards are rising. No differences in achievement were observed among the various groups of pupils. However, the achievement of the pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 is sometimes constrained by the cramped classrooms, which have to be shared by two classes.
63. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 has improved since the previous inspection. The teachers have good subject knowledge throughout the school and they adapt this well to the age groups they are teaching. In a lesson in Year 5, the teacher used skilful questioning to help the pupils understand the factors which can affect rates of evaporation. Where the academic challenge is good, achievement is often very good, such as in a lesson in Year 6, where pupils were challenged to construct conclusions when supplied with increasing amounts of evidence, some of which caused them to amend their previous conclusion. In all the lessons seen, there was a good emphasis on the correct use of scientific vocabulary, which enhanced the pupils' knowledge.
64. A recent focus on teaching the skills of scientific investigation and experimentation is proving successful across the school. Discussion with pupils and analysis of their work indicate that they have carried out considerable investigative work in recent months. Pupils in Year 6 confidently describe how to set up experiments to separate different substances, such as clean water from muddy water, and to investigate changes of state when materials are heated.
65. The assessment of each pupil's achievement is closely monitored and reliably recorded. This information is used well to identify gaps in pupils' learning and provide any necessary

additional support. This is proving very effective for the older pupils, whose achievement is improving.

66. The leadership of the subject is good. The subject leader is developing her role well and her influence over developments in the subject is increasing. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and of what the next developments should be. Together with the senior managers, she has successfully raised the profile of science in the school through science-focused days, a science week, demonstrations of science activities for parents and training for the school staff. She is aware that she needs to observe more teaching.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

The provision for ICT is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good curriculum planning and better resources have helped raise standards.
- Teaching and learning are improving because of good subject leadership.
- ICT is used well in other subjects; the school website is a significant asset.

### **Commentary**

67. At the previous inspection, raising standards and improving provision were key issues for development. They have been addressed effectively. Achievement is now satisfactory through Years 1 and 2 and standards are above average. By Year 6, the pupils' achievement is good and standards are well above average.
68. A major factor in raising achievement has been the introduction of a new scheme of work, in which all strands of the subject are addressed in a systematic and balanced way. This has provided a secure framework for teaching and learning, and is gradually being tailored to fit the needs of all groups of pupils more precisely. A computer suite was installed after the last inspection, but its hardware was found to be unreliable. New, more up-to-date equipment is now in use both in the suite and throughout the school. These facilities enable teachers and pupils to work with greater confidence and consistency. The regular services of an experienced technician help keep problems to a minimum.
69. Throughout the school, teaching and learning are good, being better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2, where pupils are not challenged so well. Variations in teaching are partly explained because, whilst all teachers have received relevant training, some are already taking their skills further by working towards the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL). Their colleagues will begin next term. Teaching assistants are also undertaking the course to help them give better support, especially to pupils with special needs. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the subject leader's role and his good understanding of what needs to be done to continue to raise standards. The priority given to developing teaching and learning skills has meant that the detailed assessment system to complement the new scheme of work will not be fully operational until next term. The current system is satisfactory, but the new one is more precise in showing how well individual pupils are doing, thereby facilitating the matching of tasks to ability.

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

70. With networked computers in all classrooms and interactive whiteboards in several, teachers are able to enhance learning for pupils in all subjects. Appropriate software helps boost their skills in literacy and numeracy, and is especially helpful for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils in Year 5 are already using ICT to measure external data in science, their ICT competence suggesting that they will reach high standards by Year 6. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 create music CDs and multi-media presentations for different audiences, this enhancing the learning of a wide range of subjects. The highest attainers are currently preparing a DVD of their visit to an outdoor education centre: planned, costed and produced as a means both of celebrating aspects of the school curriculum, and practically raising funds. The school website is more than a publicity tool: it has become an integrated source of learning and assessment material for all subjects and a vehicle for communication and exploration both within and beyond the school. Staff and pupils use it in safety because of rigorous monitoring and filtering. All groups of pupils have opportunities to contribute to it and to develop pages.

## HUMANITIES

*Religious education was sampled, as it was only possible to observe lessons in Years 3 to 6. Geography and history were also sampled.*

71. In Year 6, standards in **religious education** are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus, and achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
72. Curriculum provision is appropriately based on the locally agreed syllabus. It is balanced and covers a range of Christian and non-Christian faiths, including Sikhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity. Pupils learn about other religious beliefs and how to apply principles to their own lives. Religious education is often linked to other subjects and frequently contributes to standards in writing. In Year 3, for example, pupils wrote postcards from an imaginary pilgrimage to Mecca, whilst pupils in Year 5 proposed questions, which they would then answer through internet research. There is increasing use of ICT in religious education, particularly in respect of independent research. In a good lesson in Year 5, for example, pupils examined a wide range of religious artefacts and then set out to discover more about them through access to a range of websites.
73. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, behaviour management is good and teachers develop pupils' speaking and listening skills through regular opportunities for paired and group discussions. Teachers plan collaboratively, and make sure they provide equality of opportunity. In Year 6, for instance, pupils worked cooperatively in pairs to discuss and comment on pictorial representations of Jesus by artists such as El Greco, Botticelli and Duccio. One very strong feature of the teaching is the way that teachers use pupils' knowledge of their own faiths within lessons. Individual pupils in Year 5, for example, welcomed the opportunity to explain the relevance of their religious artefacts to their peers. Such opportunities raise pupils' self-esteem, contribute to spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and help foster the good attitudes seen throughout the school.
74. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader has good subject knowledge and has encouraged teachers to make use of the expertise of the school's own pupils. She has implemented assessment procedures since the last inspection and has developed resource packs to support the various units of study. She has a suitable action plan for future development that identifies the need to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school and increase curricular enrichment through a planned programme of visits and visitors.

75. The one lesson observed in **geography** was good. An imaginative introduction, in which the pupils were taken on a pretend flight to St Lucia, stimulated their interest. The pupils worked well and collaboratively to find information from books and photographs. The teacher intervened effectively to stimulate the pupils' research skills and to help them decide whether the information they found, such as about life in schools there, was similar to or different from the equivalent situation in England. Discussion with pupils indicates that the coverage of the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils from Year 2 were able to explain how they had used a plan of the school and could talk about similarities and differences between life in Coventry and India. Pupils in Year 6 were well informed about life in the Amazon rain forests and were able to make informed comparisons with life in England and discuss relevant issues of conservation. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader has analysed pupils' work, but her leadership role is not yet fully developed and she has at present insufficient influence over achievement and standards in the subject.
76. In the one **history** lesson observed, teaching and learning were good. ICT was used effectively, research skills were encouraged and pupils were given good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. The pupils increased their knowledge and understanding of local history through research into the legend of Lady Godiva and, by the end of the lesson, they were beginning to appreciate how factual information, legend and opinion can become confused. The lesson culminated in a good opportunity for pupils to take on the roles of the principal characters from the legend and to attempt to answer questions posed by their peers. Such good opportunities for role-play encourage the development of speaking and listening skills. Standards in Year 6 are average. Pupils in Year 6 have secure subject knowledge and are aware of an appropriate range of past periods in history. They talked enthusiastically about visits that they had made as part of their historical studies and clearly appreciated these opportunities for curriculum enrichment. The pupils are often given opportunities to develop their writing skills in history lessons, as when pupils in Year 6 wrote accounts of factory accidents in Victorian Britain, in the form of entries in a diary. At the time of the last inspection, assessment was mainly carried out orally, but there are now effective written assessments that feed into pupil reports for parents. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject leader has worked hard to provide suitable resources and has monitored some lesson planning. Her influence over teaching and learning and standards in the subject now needs to develop further.

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

*Music was inspected in detail and is reported below. Art and design, physical education and design and technology were sampled.*

77. In **art and design**, younger pupils' models of zoo animals demonstrate a clear sense of shape and proportion. Cross-curricular work includes good links to ICT through the use of painting and drawing programs, and, in Year 2, for example, the study of symmetry helps develop pupils' numeracy skills. Artistically talented pupils have benefited from the inspiration of visiting artists and, thanks to their expertise, have created colourful banners which now decorate the school hall. A visit to the Heritage Motor Centre has inspired pupils in Year 6 to design a range of prototype cars for different purposes, using specific design briefs. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory and the subject leader is developing her role well. She is aware that this needs to develop further. Her contribution to developing the school's involvement with Creative Partnerships is particularly successful.
78. In **design and technology**, younger pupils have made illustrations of hand puppets and prepared a "Healthy Lunch Box". Year 3 pupils understand the need to plan carefully and evaluate how good their finished products are, giving particular attention to hygiene when preparing food. Their notes show that, when making model chariots, they have thought how their initial designs for axles could be improved as they went along. The leadership of the

subject is satisfactory. The subject leader is relatively new to this responsibility and is developing her role.

79. In **physical education**, two games lessons were observed. Both were good because teachers had good subject knowledge, managed the behaviour of pupils effectively and paid appropriate attention to health and safety issues. In the lesson in Year 6, the teacher invited two more able pupils to lead the warm up with a series of stretching exercises. They performed very well and the remaining pupils were attentive, respectful and fully committed to participation. Resources for physical education are good and pupils have access to a large, carpeted school hall, a playground and a spacious playing field. At the time of the previous inspection, there were only a few additional clubs, and curriculum enrichment was limited. This area is now very strong and there are a wide range of sporting clubs, including those for football, rounders, netball and cricket. In addition, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to participate in a residential experience based on outdoor pursuits. Visiting specialists come into school to lead lessons, and school teams compete against other schools in a range of sporting activities. The additional clubs are open to both girls and boys and involve pupils from Year 3 to Year 6. Pupils clearly appreciate the provision of these additional activities.
80. Records show that swimming standards are above average. Pupils from Year 4 have access to the local swimming baths throughout the year and, by the time they leave the school, almost all pupils achieve the national standard of swimming twenty-five metres unaided, with many going on to achieve additional swimming awards.

## Music

The provision for music is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Extra-curricular provision is good.
- The pupils' knowledge of famous composers is unsatisfactory.

### Commentary

81. Standards in music are average overall and achievement is satisfactory, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6, where achievement is improving. The teachers plan lessons conscientiously. A strength in the teaching is the good use of pupils' evaluation of each other's work. In a lesson in Year 5, where pupils were adding percussion sounds to accompany the words of a poem, the pupils listened attentively to each other's performances and were perceptive and sensible in their comments. Good subject knowledge and the use of correct terminology are other features in good lessons. The pupils in Year 6 were clearly familiar with words such as 'tempo' and 'dynamics'. In a lesson in Year 4, the teacher showed good knowledge of the pentatonic scale and this helped the pupils to achieve well.
82. Compared with the situation at the time of the previous inspection, there is now a greater range of opportunities for pupils to learn to play an instrument and to take part in school performances. A significant proportion of pupils receive instrument tuition. Listening to and appraising music is a feature of some lessons within the school's scheme. However, discussion with pupils indicates a lack of knowledge of famous composers and difficulty in discussing the music of the composers they have listened to.

83. Subject leadership is good. The leader has played a significant role in recent developments in the subject and, as changes are implemented, provision and achievement are improving. She has supported teachers and observed lessons, and has a good understanding of how the subject needs to be developed.

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

*This area was sampled.*

84. In lessons observed in Years 3 and 6, younger pupils discussed the need to feel safe, and also spoke about what it was like to feel unsafe. Older pupils explored their feelings as they prepared for the big step of transition to secondary school. All groups of pupils were fully involved in the discussions because of the good relationships which had been built up between adults and pupils and between pupils themselves. In consequence, everyone listened to each other with consideration and respect for the different views expressed. This area is well planned and coordinated. A good programme for all year groups helps pupils learn about themselves as they grow up, their place in the school and local community, and their wider responsibilities in the world. There is an appropriate programme of sex, relationships and drugs education agreed by the governing body. The school encourages an understanding of conservation and sustainable development and promotes healthy lifestyles. It already holds the Healthy Schools silver award and is working towards the gold award.

## **PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	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 (ethos)</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3

Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).*