

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FLEETVILLE NURSERY AND INFANT SCHOOL**

Fleetville

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117138

Headteacher: Ms. Androulla Peek

Lead inspector: Marianne Harris

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2005

Inspection number: 266831

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 3 - 7  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 305

School address: Royal Road  
St Albans  
Hertfordshire  
Postcode: AL1 4LX

Telephone number: 01727 851543  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Ms. Irma Mullins

Date of previous inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> March 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Fleetville Infant school is situated in suburban Hertfordshire and is bigger than the average primary school. When children join the school they are generally of above average ability and come from well above average social circumstances. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below the national average and the proportion who have special educational needs, including those with a statement of need, is also below average. These needs are for a variety of difficulties, but are mainly for moderate learning difficulties, autism and visual impairment. There are relatively high numbers of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, with many at an early stage of acquiring English. Most of the pupils stay at Fleetville until they are at the end of Year 2, and few move partway through their education. In 2004, the school gained the Investor in People award, and in 2003 they received a Schools Achievement Award for their test results.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23288	Marianne Harris	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Science
9271	Selwyn Ward	Lay inspector	
20877	David Pink	Team inspector	English History Geography Religious education English as an additional language
22330	Laurie Lewin	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs Citizenship

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Fleetville is a **very effective school** where standards are well above average and the outstanding leadership and management of the school has secured excellent improvement since the last inspection. Pupils make very good progress because teaching and learning are very good. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils of all abilities achieve very well because they are very keen to learn and lessons capture their imaginations.
- Children get off to a very good start in the Foundation Stage.
- Teachers have very high expectations of all pupils and, as a result, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils do not achieve as well in information and communication technology because the suite is too cramped for whole class teaching.
- The school is extremely well led and managed.
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to learn outside of normal lessons.
- Pupils are very well cared for and they know that their ideas and views will be listened to.
- There are very good partnerships between the school, parents and the local community, and this brings significant benefits to the pupils.

There has been excellent improvement since the school was last inspected in 1999. All of the issues that were identified then have been very successfully tackled and every aspect of the school's work has improved significantly. The most notable of these improvements has been in the standard of pupils' writing. At the last inspection standards were average, they are now well above average.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	A	A	A	A*
writing	A*	A	A	A*
mathematics	A	A	A	A*

*Key: A\* -very high; A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; Similar schools are those with similar percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Inspectors judge pupils' achievement by looking at the progress they make over their time in school, as well as how they do in lessons. Pupils' overall **achievement is very good**. This is true for pupils of all abilities, including those who are most able and those with special educational needs, and true for pupils learning English as an additional language. Children are generally above average when they join the school, and during their time in the nursery and reception classes they make very good progress. By the time they join Year 1, most are likely to reach the expected goals for children's learning and many are expected to exceed them. This very good progress continues throughout Years 1 and 2, so by the time

they leave to join the junior school, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. When the 2004 national test results are compared to schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards are very high. The trend in improvement over the recent years has been greater than that seen nationally. Standards in information and communication technology are above average and pupils achieve well. However, they do not achieve as well in this subject as they do in others because the facilities for teaching information and communication technology are too small to teach whole classes. When used for this pupils have to wait for a turn on the computer; time is wasted and they get fidgety.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.** Pupils are very enthusiastic about learning and settle to work quickly and without fuss. Behaviour is very good and pupils from all backgrounds get along very well with each other. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory because some parents are late in getting their children to school.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning are very good.** Teachers have very high expectations that all pupils will achieve very well, and lessons are very well planned so that they are interesting and capture the imaginations of the pupils. Teachers are very knowledgeable and know their pupils very well. Marking is very good and helps pupils to improve their work. All pupils are supported very well, whatever their ability. The curriculum is very rich with a very good range of opportunities for pupils to learn outside of normal lessons. Pupils are very well cared for and the arrangements for taking into account their views are good. The partnerships between the school, parents and the local community are very good and result in pupils transferring to the junior school with little concerns.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are excellent.** The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and is extremely well supported by governors and senior staff. There is clear direction for the school and everyone works together very well. The governors do an excellent job and fulfil their statutory duties extremely well.

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

Parents are very positive about the work of the school and are very supportive of its work. They are keen to support their children and know that the school will help them in this. They speak very highly of the improvements that have happened over the recent years. Pupils are equally as enthusiastic about school and enjoy coming. They know that their views will be listened to and feel comfortable sharing them with staff and others in their class.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the way the information and communication technology suite is used.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils reach standards that are well above average overall, and achieve very well, whatever their ability.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics and science.
- Although pupils achieve well in information and communication technology, they do not achieve as well as in English, mathematics and science.

#### Commentary

1. When they join the school the children are of generally above average ability. During their time in the nursery and reception classes they make very good progress, so that, by the time they enter Year 1, most are likely to meet the expected goals for children's learning and about half are expected to exceed them. They continue to make very good progress in Years 1 and 2, so that, by the time they leave school pupils reach standards that are well above average and achieve very well.
2. The table below shows that the national test results in 2004, in reading, writing and mathematics were well above the national figures and had improved since the previous year. Standards of work seen during the inspection confirm these results and pupils of all abilities make very good progress. Particular strengths are the richness of the curriculum and the emphasis teachers put on encouraging all pupils to fully participate in lessons.
3. There are no tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 in science. Teacher assessments show that all pupils achieve very well and reach standards that are well above average, and the work seen confirms this. All pupils are encouraged to explore scientific ideas and find out for themselves.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.6 (18.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	17.2 (16.9)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.1 (17.8)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 90 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well as a result of the strong support they are given. The school is very good at targeting support at pupils' individual needs. Some individuals with very complex needs have shown excellent achievement as they have progressed through the school. Pupils learning English as an additional language achieve very well because the school gives them very good support and meets their needs very well. Higher attaining pupils achieve very well because work is matched to their ability effectively.



- Standards in information and communication technology are above average and pupils achieve well in this subject. However, they could achieve more. The newly established information and communication technology suite is small and cramped and the school is currently expecting whole classes to use these facilities. This is not the best use of time or the limited space available and results in pupils not doing as much as they could. Pupils achieve well in religious education and learn much about other religions.

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

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils behave very well and are very keen to learn. Attendance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are enthusiastic in lessons and they settle to work without fuss.
- Behaviour is very good, both in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils from all backgrounds get on very well with each other and with the adults in the school.

### **Commentary**

- Behaviour and attitudes, good in the last inspection, have further improved so that they are now very good throughout the school. Even the youngest children quickly learn the school's orderly routines so that, even in the nursery, children settle to work quickly and without fuss. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other and are keen to volunteer answers to their teachers' questions and to take part actively in lessons.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils get on very well with one another and with their teachers and the many adults in the school. Pupils from different social and ethnic backgrounds work and play harmoniously. They collaborate very effectively together when asked to work in pairs or small groups, and they readily share tasks fairly. Older pupils show a sense of responsibility for the children in the Reception year – conscious of the need to *"show them a good example"* in assembly, although, as one Year 2 girl put it, *"They hardly need it because they sit so beautifully"*. Pupils behave very well, both in lessons and at play. There have been no exclusions.
- Very clear strategies have been established to help pupils with special educational needs benefit fully from their lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants work particularly well with pupils who have behavioural difficulties. As a result these pupils participate fully and mostly behave well. Pupils with English as an additional language are very well supported in the school; as a result their personal and social attitudes are very well developed so that they play a full part in the life of the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. There are opportunities for quiet reflection in assemblies and in the moments of calming meditation at the end of physical education lessons. Pupils have a strongly developed sense of right and wrong. Though they enjoy and respond very well to the various rewards on offer and the opportunities to earn "golden time" (extra playtime once a week), they mostly behave well because they know it is the right thing to do, and pupils have a very good appreciation of the school's "golden rules" which encourage mutual respect and kindness. Pupils are helped to develop a growing confidence and self-esteem. They have a good understanding of and, in turn, value, their own and others' cultures. Work in art has introduced children to a rich range of different cultural

traditions, including aborigine, African and Central American art, as well as to the work of an unusually wide range of prominent Western artists.

10. Attendance is good because it is better than the average for primary schools. Punctuality is satisfactory. Although the vast majority of pupils arrive at school on time, a number of parents bring their children into school late – some regularly so. The school has satisfactory systems for promoting attendance.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	School data	0.3
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

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

The school provides a very good standard of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are very good and the curriculum is rich and varied. Accommodation and resources are good. The very good partnerships the school has built with parents and the local community enable pupils to benefit from a wide variety of activities outside of normal lessons. The staff take very good care of the pupils and consequently pupils know that their ideas are listened to and they enjoy being at school.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are very good, as is assessment.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have very high expectations of all pupils achieving very well.
- Lessons are interesting and fun.
- Pupils of all abilities are supported very well.
- Pupils know what they are meant to be learning and teachers help them to improve their work.

### **Commentary**

11. Teaching and learning are very good across the school. Teachers plan very interesting lessons so that pupils are keen to learn and achieve very well. They have very high expectations and lessons move at a cracking pace so that pupils get a lot done. In one particularly effective mathematics lesson in Year 2, pupils learn much about solving money problems because the teacher challenged the class to solve various problems using all of their skills and knowledge. The pupils responded positively and quickly learnt how to check their answers to see if they were correct.
12. In most lessons, learning is fun. Teachers use resources very well, especially the interactive white boards, so that all pupils can be involved in lessons. Pupils are immediately drawn into the lesson and want to work. They learn how to work together effectively and how to record their work in a variety of styles. Learning slows only when pupils have to wait to use computers in the suite.
13. Teachers mark pupils' work very well. Comments are both congratulatory and developmental. They make suggestions as to how pupils could improve their work and this results in high standards. During lessons, teachers make sure that pupils have understood what they are meant to be learning and correct any mistakes quickly and sensitively. At the end of lesson many teachers check what pupils have learnt and expect them to contribute to class discussions at the end of lessons.

14. Teachers cater very effectively for pupils with special educational needs. Lessons are carefully prepared to encapsulate, where appropriate, the targets identified in pupils' individual education plans. Teaching assistants are very well deployed and work very effectively in supporting pupils with special educational needs. As a result of these factors pupils progress very well with their learning.
15. The quality of teaching and learning of pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. Specialist help is available both to pupils and their teachers and the concentration of teachers on using spoken language as an introduction to writing meets the needs of these pupils very well. The achievements of pupils are carefully monitored.

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	14	10	3	0	0	0

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

**The curriculum**

The school's curriculum and extra-curricular activities are very good. The school's accommodation and resources are good overall.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is excellent at ensuring that all groups of pupils are provided with a full range of opportunities to succeed.
- There are very many opportunities for pupils to learn outside of normal lessons.
- The current strategy of teaching whole class lessons in the computer suite is not working well.
- Pupils cover work in very good depth and detail.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Staff work in an innovative way to ensure that work is planned to cater for pupils' different learning styles.

**Commentary**

16. The school's curricular provision has been very effectively strengthened since the last inspection. The school now provides a very wide-ranging programme of work for children in the Foundation Stage as well as for pupils in Years 1 and 2. This means that in all subjects work is covered in much depth and detail. Work samples show that pupils cover a lot of work in all subjects across the year and this means that all groups of pupils have the opportunity to not only reach high standards, but also to achieve a broad based understanding in the work that they do. In addition, much very good emphasis is placed on developing links between subjects. Staff make very good use of opportunities, for example, to extend pupils' writing skills in other subjects or to boost pupils' mathematical skills through graph work covered in science, ICT or design and technology projects. The school is also very good at using topical projects to extend pupils' skills in a wide range of areas. For instance, a project undertaken to improve

the playground generated a wide range of tasks that linked into and enriched many subject areas.

17. A wide range of visits and visitors to the school ensures that the curriculum is very well enriched. For example, artists, musicians and dancers coming to work with the pupils help to make the curriculum lively and interesting. Wherever possible, the school draws on all of the expertise available to it locally to enhance activities, as well as creating very good opportunities for parents to come in and work alongside pupils. The very strong emphasis placed upon approaching work in a practical way wherever appropriate also serves to boost pupils' interest and motivation. Linked with this approach, teachers focus very precisely on catering for pupils' different learning styles within their curriculum planning. Practical work, use of discussion and explanation as well as presenting ideas in a visual way are all carefully balanced within planning to help all groups of pupils learn as effectively as possible. In this way the school has an outstanding approach towards ensuring that all groups of pupils are fully included in all activities. The breadth and coherence of the curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils for whom English is an additional language to use and expand their use of the English language.
18. The extra curricular activities programme, which includes such activities as French, recorders and choir club is very good compared to most other schools of this type and size.
19. The school has very thorough systems for supporting pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' difficulties are identified at a very early stage and very precise support is targeted at helping them. Individual education plans are of exemplary quality, with very finely tuned and succinct targets, which are reviewed on a regular basis or more often as required. Support staff work very effectively with individual pupils. As a result of the high quality provision, pupils with special educational needs benefit fully from all classroom activities – this is another strand of the school's excellent practice with ensuring the inclusion of all pupils. The school is equally vigilant in carefully identifying pupils who are gifted and talented and ensuring that specific opportunities are provided to extend their. For example, the school's use of an artist to come and work with the pupils has been a valuable approach in helping boost the performance of one pupil identified as being talented with artwork.
20. The school's good accommodation is generally used very effectively to promote learning. Staff are especially skilled at displaying pupils' work in a way that both celebrates achievement and makes the whole school an interesting, exciting and stimulating place in which to learn. Artwork displays in particular are a strong feature that make the school bright and attractive.
21. Resources for learning are good and generally well used. The school has invested wisely in upgrading its computer facilities. The new computer suite and interactive whiteboards, all recently installed, give the school very good scope for developing ICT work in the future. However, the current strategy of teaching whole class lessons in the computer suite presents many difficulties for staff. Insufficient space and poor ventilation mean that the atmosphere is stuffy and unpleasant and not conducive to good teaching and learning. Also sharing computers between pupils slows down overall progress. Staff have identified rightly that the next step in developing the use of this new facility will be by bringing smaller groups to work there and by improving the ventilation.

22. The school is well staffed, and teachers and all support staff are fully and effectively trained for their roles.

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

Pupils' welfare, health and safety are catered for very well. Pupils benefit from very good support and guidance. There are good arrangements for taking account of pupils' views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good use is made of targets that help pupils focus on what they need to do in order to improve their work.
- There are very good arrangements for dealing with first aid and minor medical problems.
- Pupils feel their views are valued.

### **Commentary**

23. In the last inspection, the arrangements for care and welfare were good and the procedures for keeping track of pupils' progress were judged to be satisfactory. Since that time, there has been very good improvement so that the welfare arrangements and those for tracking pupils' progress are now very good. Pupils are made to feel secure at school and there are very effective systems in place for, for example, ensuring the safety of pupils at risk because of serious allergies. Child protection arrangements are very strong. All staff are very familiar with child protection procedures and training for staff is kept up to date.
24. Teachers and other staff know the pupils very well and this helps ensure that pupils' individual needs are met. Pupils have learning targets in their books for English and mathematics, and reports to parents also include an individual target relating to the child's personal development. These give very good guidance to pupils about what they need to focus on in order to improve their work, and they help parents in providing support at home for their children's education. Parents of pupils new to the school benefit from this, and there are very good induction procedures for pupils when they first join the school. Children are visited at home by staff before they start school.
25. The school makes very effective use of all external agencies to promote the learning and progress of pupils with special educational needs. External specialist help for pupils is sought promptly where this is found necessary.
26. Although the school council – involving children from Reception to Year 2 – is very new (it had only been launched three weeks before the inspection), pupils feel their views are valued by the school and point to previous opportunities that they have had to have their views taken into account, including the development of the playground following a substantial award received from Woolworth.

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

There is a very good partnership with parents and other schools. Community links are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very supportive of their children's education, and this contributes to the pupils' very good achievement.
- Parents benefit from very good information about children's work and about the progress they are making.
- The curriculum is enhanced through constructive links with other schools and with the wider community.

## **Commentary**

27. Parents express very favourable views of the school and their views are actively sought through an annual survey, the results of which are circulated to all parents. Although some parents would like more information about how well their children are doing – including information on their child's performance relative to others in the class – inspectors judged the information provided to parents as being very good.. Parents are given an information leaflet each term that summarises upcoming topics – helping parents to help their children through related learning at home. Reports are mostly personal to each child and contain detailed information on pupils' progress, including precise individual targets in English, mathematics and personal development.
28. The support that parents give their children at home contributes strongly to pupils' very good achievement. In addition, many parents come in to school to help in class – where, again, they are provided with detailed guidance on the school's expectations. Other helpers are drawn from the wider community, and include people who help listening to readers and who assist children using computers. The school has benefited from some productive links with local businesses. It won a substantial award from Woolworth to fund improvements to the playground and its arrangement with a local supermarket over parking has helped to relieve some of the traffic problems at the start and end of the day. Parents whose children have been identified as having special educational needs are kept fully informed and involved in the processes of target setting and review.
29. There are strong ties with the junior school to which most pupils transfer at the start of Year 3, including some shared ventures such as the after school club. These help to ease the transition for pupils, so that those in the current Year 2 are now looking forward to their new school with eager enthusiasm rather than any sense of trepidation. Productive partnerships have also been developed with local secondary schools, with older students joining Fleetville Infant & Nursery as part of their work experience and, for example, as part of their child development coursework. Pupils talk fondly of working with the older students to write stories.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are excellent. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and she is very well supported by senior staff. The outstanding governance also contributes to the success of this school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher enables subject leaders to maintain high standards of teaching and achievement in the school.

- The governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and strive for constant improvement.
- The leadership in the Foundation Stage enables pupils to achieve high standards from an early age.

## Commentary

30. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership that is focused on teachers ensuring that pupils achieve the highest standards possible. The consistency of the high standard of achievement, over the years, is a marked feature of the success of this school. The key issue identified by the inspection team has already been identified by the school and there are clear plans to address this issue. The support given to the headteacher by senior teachers and subject leaders in English, mathematics and science and the foundation stage also make a marked contribution to pupils' very good achievement. There is a very strong sense of teamwork amongst all staff, teaching and non-teaching, in the school. Provision for special educational needs is led and managed excellently. Comprehensive records are maintained and there is close liaison with all parties to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are supported very effectively. All pupils are fully involved in the life of the school and there is a clear drive to include everyone.
31. The governors share this teamwork approach and use their expertise to very good effect. They are very much aware of the qualities of the school and have been very supportive in provision and management of the recent building works. They challenge to work of the senior staff in a sensitive way and are very supportive of the work of the school. They visit regularly and help with trips and special occasions.
32. The very effective professional development of staff is clearly focused on helping subject leaders, teachers, learning assistants and other staff to raise the achievement of pupils both socially and in their subject learning. All staff work very well together and as a result there is a quiet, friendly, ordered and yet challenging atmosphere in the school. The very effective monitoring of pupils' performance data ensures that their needs are very well met. The school is very effective in mentoring students in training.
33. Spending decisions are closely linked to the raising of standards. The headteacher has been very successful in raising significant sums of money from local, national and business sources. This is evident in the newly completed computer suite and the stimulating nature of the playground provision. The school has a larger than usual carry forward because they received money for the work in the playground. There are clear plans for spending the carry forward.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	806,126
Total expenditure	877,454
Expenditure per pupil	2,876

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	130,312
Balance carried forward to the next	58,984



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

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

34. Teaching and learning are very good in all areas of learning, in both the nursery and reception classes. Work is very well planned and teachers very well organised so that they can all work together as an effective team. This results in children having access to a wide range of activities, covering all areas of learning that maintains a good balance between those that the children choose for themselves, and those that adults lead in order to teach new skills and knowledge. By the time they join Year 1, most pupils are likely to achieve the expected goals for children's learning, and about half will exceed them. This represents very good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage, with all children achieving very well. Planning is very good; careful assessments are made of how much progress each child makes, so that work can be planned to meet the needs of each child. Children with special educational needs, and those who are at an early stage of learning English, make very good progress because work is matched to their needs. Staff take very good care of the children and ensure that they are welcomed into the school and feel safe. There are very good induction procedures, both into the nursery and the reception classes. These ensure that children settle quickly into school and soon become used to the routines. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed and has secured very good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen and teachers all work very effectively together to provide very good opportunities for children to learn very well.

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

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

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

- Children are very confident and keen to learn.
- They play together very well.
- There is a very good balance of activities that children can choose for themselves and those that adults lead.

#### **Commentary**

35. When they join the school in the nursery, children settle very quickly because they already know the staff and have visited the building. They soon make friends and learn to play together very well. By the time they reach the reception classes they are confident and keen to learn. When choosing activities they want to pursue, children are quick at deciding and concentrate for long periods of time. They behave very well. Children who are learning English as an additional language are welcomed into the school and given very good support so that they can soon become used to the school routines, and pick up English very quickly. Pupils with special educational needs are also very well supported so that they can fully participate in all lessons. All are valued. The teaching staff provide a very good mix of activities that are led by adults so that children can learn vital skills and knowledge, and activities that children choose for themselves. Children in the nursery are excited about learning and this enthusiasm

continues throughout their school life and contributes to the very good progress they make in school. Achievement is very good.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Early reading and writing skills are promoted very well.
- Teachers have very high expectations of children at an early stage of learning English making very good progress.

## **Commentary**

36. Children's communication, language and literacy skills are promoted very well, and children achieve very well, whatever their ability. From early in the nursery, teachers read stories and rhymes to the children so that they become familiar with books. They talk excitedly about the stories and can identify their favourite ones. By the time they get into the reception class they are keen to read for themselves and teachers encourage this very well by hearing them read regularly and expecting them to take books home to share with parents and siblings. Early writing skills are taught very well. The marks children make on paper are valued and they quickly develop the confidence to write their own name. By the time they leave the reception classes most children can write their name. They form their letters correctly and know the sounds that letter make. This helps them with their reading. Teachers encourage speaking and listening skills very well. They listen to what the children have to say, model standard English and encourage children to speak confidently. This is especially supportive to children who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Specialist teaching assistants support the children well and can communicate with them in their home language. Children soon become confident and chat with their friends in an easy manner. Children with special educational needs are very well supported. Their work is valued and they soon make very good progress so that they can begin to write sentences with a little help from teaching staff.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most children can count beyond ten.
- Mathematical vocabulary is encouraged.
- Children begin to add and subtract confidently.

## **Commentary**

37. Children achieve very well in their mathematical development because they are very well taught. Most children count to ten and beyond and are confident when matching one to one. They learn through singing songs and rhymes and enjoy mathematical activities. In the reception classes most children are confident estimating how many objects there are in a sock or a bag and can make sensible guesses. They all record their work very well, learning how to form numbers correctly. Children learn to add and subtract and count in 2's and 5's. In the nursery, teachers introduce the children to mathematical ideas, such as full and empty, and by the time they reach the end of the reception class, pupils can compare objects to see which is the biggest or the heaviest. Most children know the basic shapes of squares, circles, triangle and rectangles and confidently identify these in objects they see around them.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Many visitors enrich the children's learning.
- Teachers plan many interesting activities.
- Children enjoy using information and communication technology.

### **Commentary**

38. Achievement is very good because of the high quality teaching and the breadth of the curriculum. The children talk very excitedly about all of the visitors that come into school. Children in the nursery act out what it must be like to be a fireman after they had a visit from firefighters and an engine. Through very good use of the outside area, children learn what plants need to grow and how they can be looked after. Early geographical skills are encouraged as children in the reception class navigate their way around a track, identifying things like a petrol station and a crossing. Children are very enthusiastic about using the very good computer resources. They are confident when using them without adult help and can access a wide variety of programs, including counting, letter recognition and drawing programs. When asked, they can explain what they did and are beginning to understand about printing out their work and saving it. There are many good resources to promote designing and building skills. Children enjoy talking about their models and sharing them with their friends. The reception topic of "The Beach" has given the children good opportunities to look at and discuss a locality that is different to their own.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The outside area is used very well to encourage children to be active.
- Children use a wide variety of tools with confidence and complete control.

### **Commentary**

39. Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve very well in their physical development. They are very active. When playing outside, they are encouraged to use a variety of wheeled toys and steer them safely and with increasing control. They use balls and bean bags so that they learn to throw and catch, and begin to learn to play together well. When using scissors and other tools, teachers encourage them to be safe at all times and to hold them properly. Children soon learn to cut accurately and to hold their pencil correctly so that they can write legibly and with an easy style. Children learn to eat healthily and are encouraged to eat fruit and drink plenty of water, especially in hot weather.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are many opportunities for children to paint and draw.
- Children have access to many role play areas.
- Children enjoy learning.

## **Commentary**

40. The children achieve very well because of the wide variety of activities and the very good teaching. Children in the nursery delight in painting activities and work really well together. One group of children were painting a hue box in order to make a fire engine. They talked excitedly about what they were going to put on it and why they were doing it. Other children concentrate very hard on activities such as moulding dough to form animals, and in making castles in the same. There are many resources for the children to choose and they really enjoy experimenting with feathers, sequins and other materials to make pictures and models. There are many role-play areas offered to the children. This means that they can act out their own experiences and make up their own stories. This has a very positive impact on their story writing as they are encouraged to use their imaginations when playing together. In large groups activities the children sing enthusiastically and many hum to themselves when concentrating on activities.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision for English is **very good**.

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

- Standards are very high because of the very effective and consistent teaching.
- Reading is monitored effectively so that pupils encounter a wide range of different kinds of texts.
- Planned links with other subjects broaden the experience of pupils and offer very good opportunities for extending the use of pupils' literacy skills.

## **Commentary**

41. Standards in reading and writing in the national tests in 2004 were well above average. Almost twice the average number of pupils reached the higher level. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve very well. Evidence from the inspection confirms that standards are high. This is a direct result of the consistently very good teaching in the school. Emphasis is placed on the development of writing and as a result improvement since the last inspection is very good.
42. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. In a Year 2 class the teacher questioned pupils very effectively so that they became confident in tackling more difficult work. Pupils speak well and listen very carefully to the teachers and to each other. Reading is monitored very effectively and as a result pupils engage with, and are confident with, a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books.
43. Pupils write very well because they have a wide range of opportunities and because speaking is used very effectively to develop writing. Pupils are confident in the use of simple grammatical constructions and are encouraged to explore more complex writing. Pupils in year 2 are challenged to draft words before actually using them in their writing. Because writing is so well integrated into other subject areas the pupils are able to be adventurous in their use of written words because they have a wide vocabulary.

44. Pupils' reading habits are carefully monitored by the teachers. As a result of this pupils are confident in selecting and using non-fiction texts as well as enjoying fiction. Pupils' learning is assessed simply and effectively so that pupils know what they are achieving and are aware of what they need to do to improve.
45. The leadership and management of the subject are outstanding. The involvement of the co-ordinator in the "Primary Leadership Programme" has meant that all staff have been very effectively supported so that standards have risen. There is a consistent approach to teach to very high standards and the need to challenge pupils of all abilities. Learning support assistants are very effectively managed to support pupils with special educational needs. These assistants ensure that pupils take a full part in the lesson and because of this those pupils achieve well both socially and in their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language are very well supported and most of those with initially basic skills in English improve rapidly.

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

46. Writing across the curriculum is a very strong feature of the school and is one of the major reasons why standards in writing are so high. Pupils encounter and use a variety of writing styles across their subjects. Pupils can and are expected to read a wide range of texts associated with subjects; as a result pupils are confident in finding information from non-fiction texts. Speaking is encouraged very effectively as a way of developing the writing. In a Year 2 science lesson pupils extend their range of spoken language as the teacher concentrates on terms for prediction and comparison. Pupils are then expected to use those terms in their written accounts of the investigation.
47. Also in Year 2 pupils begin to use the language associated with Victorian England when they start to describe activities involved in a seaside holiday. In religious education pupils write reflectively expressing their own thoughts and feelings. They also develop their writing of stories when they recount the creation stories from different cultures. In geography pupils begin to describe and then explain how climate and physical features can influence the way in which people live in different parts of the world.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

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

- Very good teaching ensures pupils achieve high standards.
- Very effective support ensures all pupils progress well.
- The strong emphasis on using a practical approach helps pupils gain a full understanding of mathematical concepts.

#### **Commentary**

48. Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2 are well above the national average and pupils achieve very well. This is confirmed both by the school's national test results and by the work seen in pupils' books and the work they do in lessons. Most pupils show rapid recall of number facts to 20 and beyond and use this good knowledge confidently in solving problems. Many articulate their mathematical thinking

clearly during classroom discussions and most are becoming good at devising their own approaches to solving problems. Books scrutinised showed a wide range of work has been covered across the year in all aspects of mathematics. Teachers lay strong emphasis on getting pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge in a practical context and this is giving pupils much confidence, and in all sessions seen, pupils worked enthusiastically, with very good levels of motivation and achieved very well.

49. High quality teaching enables pupils to progress at a very good rate with their learning. Planning is very effective, with 'pin point' precision in ensuring that pupils of all attainment levels are catered for fully. Teachers show a very confident approach and they explain mathematical concepts succinctly and clearly. As a result, pupils get on rapidly with the tasks provided and complete a lot of work during lessons. Teaching assistants are very well briefed and show much skill in supporting individuals and groups. This very effective all round support means that while pupils with special educational needs progress very well and are helped to cover the same range of work as their classmates, higher attaining pupils are also very effectively extended by the work provided.
50. Leadership and management of mathematics is excellent. The involvement of the co-ordinator in the 'Primary Leadership Programme' training strategy gives her much expertise in helping staff to develop the curriculum and raise standards in a very precise way. She has a full knowledge of standards across the school and makes comprehensive use of the very good assessment systems to help staff modify and refine their planning. This clear cut approach and the excellent liaison established between staff is the main touchstone of success through which the school is managing to maintain high standards.
51. The improvements made in the overall provision and standards since the last inspection are very good.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

52. Teachers are very good at seizing opportunities in other subjects to extend pupils' mathematical skills. For example, frequent examples are seen of pupils carrying out data collection, measuring and producing different sorts of graphs to support their work in subjects such as science and design and technology.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All pupils achieve very well because teachers have very high expectations.
- Lessons are very well planned so pupils are keen to learn.
- Very good leadership and management has secured very good improvement since the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

53. There are no national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, and teachers assess how well the pupils have done in science. These assessments show that pupils reach standards that are well above average and make very good progress during their time in the school. The work

seen during the inspection reflects these results. Pupils learn all aspects of science and are particularly good at carrying out their own investigation. Pupils in Year 2 found out if there was any link between the size of children's feet and their height. The whole class enjoyed the session and learnt relevant scientific vocabulary, as well as practising their skills of recording and analysing what they had found out.

54. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers plan lessons that build on what the pupils already know. So, in a Year 2 lesson on plants, the pupils already knew the main parts of a plant and went on to learn about the similarities and differences between a range of plants and flowers. Lessons move at a brisk pace and keep pupils interested. Resources are very well used so that all pupils, whatever their ability, can participate fully in the lessons. A particularly strong feature of teaching in science is phrasing the learning objective as a question. This means that, by the end of the session, pupils know if they have achieved the purpose of the lesson as they can either answer the question or not. Coupled with this, teachers mark pupils work very well so that they know how to improve and reach higher standards. All of this contributes to pupils' very good achievement, whatever their ability.
55. Science is very well led and managed in the school. This has resulted in very good improvement since the time of the last inspection. Standards have risen because weaknesses have been identified and effective steps taken to ensure that all pupils achieve very well. Resources are good and the coverage of all aspects of science means that pupils learn a lot during their time in school.



## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has made very good improvements in this area.
- Good teaching enables pupils to reach above average standards.
- Pupils enjoy ICT and work enthusiastically.
- Effective use is made of ICT to enhance work in other subjects.
- Teaching whole class lessons in the computer suite is not conducive to good teaching and learning.

### **Commentary**

56. Pupils reach above average standards by the end of Year 2 and achieve well. For example, Year 2 pupils have a confident understanding of logging on to the network and navigating their way around the programs in use. With guidance, they look for information on the Internet and understand 'cut and paste' techniques for importing research information into their work. They show an appropriate understanding of how to save, retrieve and print out their work. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make effective use of ICT to enhance their written work produced as computer text, by using different font styles and attractive title designs using 'Wordart' facilities.
57. Overall, teaching and learning are good with teachers ensuring that good opportunities are planned into the curriculum to make use of ICT and build up pupils' skills. In lessons seen, teachers showed confident subject knowledge. They explain ideas clearly and succinctly and give good demonstrations that help pupils rapidly understand how to use the facilities within different programs. Teachers show a strong commitment to making full use of the newly installed interactive white boards and newly established computer suite. Intensive training is underway to upgrade the skills of all staff in using this equipment. Teachers rightly recognise that the current strategy of teaching a whole class in the computer suite does not work as effectively as they would like. Space is too restricted for a whole class and the poor ventilation means that the atmosphere quickly becomes hot, stuffy and unpleasant. In the lessons seen, this resulted in teachers having to work very hard to maintain pupils concentration. Also, the need for pupils to share computers slowed down the pace of learning as one of the partners mainly became a spectator.
58. The leadership and management of ICT are very good. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the quality of work and provision across the school and has worked very well with the headteacher and staff in moving the school forward with developing the best possible resources for ICT. The new facilities mean the school has great potential to improve ICT standards to a high level in the near future. The co-ordinator rightly recognises that the priority areas for development are in ensuring the best use is made of all the new resources and the in further developing the newly established assessment systems.
59. The improvements made in the overall provision and standards since the last inspection are very good – particularly in terms of improved resources and facilities

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

60. Good use is made of ICT to enhance work in other areas of the curriculum. Particularly good work is done with using art programs to help pupils experiment with colour designs and using digital cameras to take photographs of 'abstract images'. Effective use is also made of computers for word processing and in producing surveys and graphs.

## HUMANITIES

*Religious education was inspected in full and is reported below. History and geography were sampled.*

61. From evidence of pupils' work and teachers' planning **history** contributes a greatly to the breadth of the curriculum offered. Pupils examine objects and photographs as the means to find out about the past. In their study of the Great Fire of London pupils explore the narrative of events as well as looking at personal diaries. They assess the contributions made by Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale in the development of care and nursing. The opportunities found for extending the range of pupils reading and writing is a strong feature of this provision.
62. In the good **geography** lesson seen pupils were challenged to be curious about the lives of others. The teacher encouraged pupils to ask questions based on the photographs of Masai tribesmen and in doing so extended the spoken skills of the pupils. Effective group working allowed the pupils to discuss their ideas before compiling their joint written accounts. Pupils began to realise that climate and physical environment effects the way people live.

### Religious Education

The provision for religious education is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average because pupils are challenged and supported well by their teachers.
- Pupils, from different religious backgrounds, are encouraged to share their experiences and so better understand themselves and others.

#### Commentary

63. Standards are above those required by the locally agreed syllabus. This is good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities are challenged in their thinking about the religious practices and beliefs of others. Pupils in Year 1 begin to understand the symbolism of "light and dark" in religious belief. They further explore this through the use of candles in the Passover celebrations in Judaism. The pupils are expected to share their own experiences associated with Christmas and Eid. Pupils in Year 2 compare creation stories from different religions
64. The quality and teaching and learning is good because teaching is both challenging and sensitive to the needs and beliefs of pupils; consequently pupils achieve well. Pupils are encouraged to explain and share their thoughts orally while others listen with respect. The extensive opportunities for writing help pupils to be confident in both expressing their ideas and using language adventurously.
65. The leadership and management by the subject co-ordinator are good. There is a consistent approach across the school which, together with reinforcement in assemblies, contributes to the calm, considerate, yet enquiring atmosphere in the school. Effective links are maintained with the local Christian church and parents often visit classes and share religious artefacts with classes.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

*Art and design was inspected in full and is reported below. The other subjects have been sampled.*

66. In **design and technology** pupils are provided with a full range of learning opportunities as they move through the school. Interesting activities are undertaken and some attractive finished articles were seen. Work samples indicate that pupils produce clear labelled designs. This was also noted in the Year 2 lesson observed where pupils kept closely to their designs and very carefully cut out and stitched together pieces for the glove puppets being made. The lesson was very well taught with particularly effective use made of adult support to monitor and guide the progress of different groups. As part of a competition, the school successfully planned a project to improve the school grounds in and subsequently won a substantial amount of funding from a national company to complete this project. Pupils were heavily involved in surveying and completing designs for the improvements that were eventually made. From the limited amount of work sampled, there are strong indications that pupils reach at least good standards in this subject.
67. Although no **music** lessons were seen during the inspection evidence from teachers' planning and interviews with staff indicate that improvement since the last inspection is very good. This is due to the effective leadership and management of the specialist subject leader. The scheme of work includes, appropriately, the disciplines of rhythm and pulse, the ensemble skills of performance, notation and descriptive responses to music. Pupils' learning is effectively monitored and there is a very good range of extra activities. Each year group, from reception, presents a regular performance. There is a large choir which meets weekly, a recorder group and a weekly singing assembly. Local music groups also regularly visit the school.
68. Pupils have a full range of opportunities in **physical education**. One satisfactory lesson seen for Year 2 showed pupils gaining sound skills in developing sequences of movements for dance. They listened very carefully to a piece of music as a stimulus for creating imaginative ideas about how different animals move. This work linked well to other work currently underway studying Africa. The lesson was well planned with careful attention given to supporting pupils with co-ordination difficulties.

## ART AND DESIGN

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and standards are well above average.
- Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their skills.
- Artwork is very effectively displayed around the school.

### Commentary

69. The school has made very substantial improvement in this area of its provision since the last inspection. Great emphasis is placed upon developing pupils' art and design skills and, as a result, they achieve very well and reach high standards. Pupils learn to

produce paintings in the style of many different famous painters and displays around the school show work based on Kadinsky, Picasso, Mondrian and Van Gogh. Pupils work in a wide range of different media including crayon, clay and paint. Their finished works show a sophistication in detail and creativity that is well beyond what would normally be expected for Year 1 and 2 age groups. The work is very attractive and shows much care being taken. For example, pupils' versions of Aboriginal designs make very good use of colour and fine detailed work to produce the desired effect. Work in three dimensions is similarly very well promoted. For instance, pupils have produced a very effective three-dimensional collage representation of one of L.S. Lowry's famous paintings. Also, pupils have shown much creativity in their clay designs made in the style of Henry Moore's work. Pupils also experience the use of photography in art and have produced very effective abstract images from photographing unusual close up aspects of everyday objects.

70. Pupils are very well taught. The school strengthens the teaching and learning provision very effectively by inviting artists to come into school and work with the pupils. Work produced in this way gives pupils a very interesting insight into how to work creatively. For example, 'The Bigger Picture' project, very successfully involved all pupils in producing a large collage together using their own mini collages of favourite small items collected to form part of the whole picture. In a very good lesson seen at Year 1, the teacher made very effective use of the interactive whiteboard to accelerate pupils' understanding – giving them a clear visual representation of the way in which their weaving designs could be achieved. As a result, pupils worked enthusiastically and achieved very well in the weaving session that ensued.
71. The subject is very well led and managed, with the co-ordinator very enthusiastically involving staff in different projects to maintain the strong emphasis on artwork. She maintains a clear overview of the quality of work across the school through keeping photographic records of the work produced. She also ensures that the school makes full use of visits and visitors to the school to enhance pupils' learning.
72. Staff take much trouble to present pupils artwork in an attractive way. The high quality work displayed helps to make the school a bright and attractive place and inspires and encourages pupils through the way their achievements are so clearly celebrated.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)**

*PSHCE was sampled.*

73. Systems for promoting PSHCE are firmly established in the whole of the way in which the school operates, and pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their understanding in these areas. A major input into this area comes from assemblies where themes are considered to promote pupils' immediate and wider understanding of PSHCE issues. For example, a very good assembly seen taken by the headteacher, promoted the current national/worldwide theme of 'Make Poverty History' and reference was made to the recent Live 8 Concerts in London and other parts of the world. The strategy of getting pupils to form a 'friendship chain' – picking someone different from themselves to join hands with – gave pupils a very simple yet stark understanding of the need for all the different citizens around the world to join together in helping those in genuine need.

74. The school is now establishing a school council to help pupils share views. Many of the projects undertaken around the school also encapsulate a strong emphasis on pupils socialising and collaborating effectively with one another.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	1
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>1</b>
The governance of the school	1
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	1

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