

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GOLDENHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Stoke-on-Trent

Unique reference number: 123977

Headteacher: Mr N Wade

Lead inspector: Mrs D Bell

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> September 2004

Inspection number: 266877

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	193
School address:	Broadfield Road Goldenhill Stoke-on-Trent Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST6 4QE
Telephone number:	(01782) 235 790
Fax number:	(01782) 235 791
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr I Hodgkinson
Date of previous inspection:	22 <sup>nd</sup> March 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Goldenhill Primary School is smaller than most primary schools. It has 193 pupils on roll, 109 boys and 84 girls, all of whom are taught in single-age classes. Levels of mobility have stabilised after a period during which the number on roll fell considerably. Situated on the outskirts of Stoke-on-Trent, the school serves a very disadvantaged area of the city. Attainment on entry is below the expectation for children's ages, particularly so in communication and language skills, and increasingly so in personal, social and emotional development. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, although in one class this rises to 33 per cent. Most needs are to do with language and communication skills but a significant minority of pupils have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties that present a barrier to their learning. Using funding from the Excellence in Cities initiative, the school has just appointed a home/school link worker to assist these pupils and their parents. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, and no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school has come through a period of significant challenge since the last inspection. Considerable reductions and instability in staffing affected continuity of learning for pupils in the affected year groups. Nevertheless, in 2001, the school received a School Achievement Award for improved test results. The school is just beginning to recover from this under the leadership of the present headteacher who took up his post in September 2002.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16413	Mrs D Bell	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
9974	Mr D Singh	Lay inspector	
27677	Mrs D Davenport	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Religious education Special educational needs
30935	Mrs K McArthur	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Music Physical education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good and improving school.** The headteacher has very successfully dealt with budget constraints and instability in staffing in recent years. His very good leadership and management ensure that all pupils, whatever their gender or ability, are challenged to do their best. As a result, all pupils achieve well because they are taught well. The school provides **good value for money**.

**The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:**

- The school is very well led and managed.
- Provision is good in the Foundation Stage and gives children a good start in their education.
- Teaching is good overall. However, teachers do not always encourage pupils to write creatively or at length, particularly outside of English lessons.
- Assessment procedures are very good in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT), and good in other subjects.
- Pupils are very well cared for and very well prepared for life beyond school.
- Provision is good in information and communication technology (ICT) but minimal provision is made for learning in and through the creative arts subjects.
- The school works very hard to involve parents in its life and work but some parents do not support their children's learning well enough at home.

The school has very considerably improved since its previous inspection in 1999, having very successfully tackled the key and minor issues identified at that time. Standards, teaching and pupils' achievement are much better in Year 2, and improvements in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) have led to good provision in that age group. These improvements are the result of the rigorous systems the headteacher has introduced to check on the effectiveness of the school.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

**Throughout the school, all groups of pupils achieve equally well.** When children start school, their attainment is below that normally seen for their age. However, they make good progress and although standards are currently still slightly below the expectation for their age, the great majority of Reception children are on course to reach the goals they are expected to attain by the end of their Reception Year. In the present Year 2 and Year 6 groups, standards are in line with national expectations in all subjects inspected. In 2003, the national test results for pupils in Year 2 were at the national average in reading, well above in writing, and above in mathematics. The school's results were well above those of similar schools. The trend in results in this age group is above the national trend. In 2003, Year 6 pupils did very well in relation to their prior attainment in Year 2, even though, when compared with all schools, the results of the national tests were below the national average. The upward trend in the school's Year 6 results is in line with the national trend.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003

English	B	D	D	A
mathematics	C	E	D	B
science	B	E	D	A

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Early indications from the tests and assessments for 2004 are that the upward trend has continued in Year 2 and Year 6 and the school continues to add good value to pupils' learning. The school works very hard to reach the very challenging targets it sets but high levels of pupil movement, increases in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and instability in staffing in recent years have prevented it meeting its targets in the past two years. **The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to school and to learning. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education is good and the quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school.** English and mathematics are taught well, and literacy and numeracy skills are given good emphasis in other subjects. A major strength in teaching is how well the teachers assess and record pupils' progress and use the information to plan work that meets each pupil's learning needs. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Pupils know how well they are doing and what targets to aim for, and consequently they learn well. The proof lies in their improved achievement and the good value added to pupils' learning by the time they leave school. A well-structured curriculum, and very good care, support and guidance for the pupils ensure that all are given the same very good chance to succeed. The school is highly focused on ensuring the full inclusion of all pupils in all that it does. However, while it works very hard to strengthen further its good links with parents, only a few regularly help their children at home to give them an even better chance of doing well at school. Good links with the community and with other schools also contribute effectively to pupils' learning, and a good range of activities outside of the normal school day supports and promotes academic and personal development well.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Leadership and management are very good.** The headteacher leads and manages the school very well. He has created an ethos in which all staff with management roles are effective, and the whole school is pulling together to become even more successful at helping all pupils to achieve well. Governance is good, finances are very well managed and statutory requirements are fully and effectively met. This school knows where it is going and very effectively plans how it is going to get there.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils speak well of the school and are highly satisfied with what it does for them, although both voiced some concerns over behaviour. Inspectors found behaviour to be good and very well managed.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

Although overall effective, the most important things the school should do to improve further, and which are already in its development plan are:

- Provide more opportunities for creative and extended writing.
- Improve provision in the arts subjects and use arts subjects better to help pupils learn about different times, places and cultures.
- Continue the efforts to get parents more involved in helping their children to learn.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement is **good** throughout the school. Boys, girls and pupils with special educational needs do equally well and, in Year 2 and Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations in all subjects inspected, including English, mathematics and science.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development. They achieve well in all other areas of learning.
- All pupils achieve well and particularly so in mental mathematics and ICT.
- Handwriting, spelling, punctuation and the use of the correct grammar are very strong aspects of English. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their own imagination and creativity in extended pieces of writing.
- The strong emphasis placed on improving standards in English and mathematics is paying off by enabling pupils to achieve well in other subjects.

#### Commentary

1. Children start school in the Nursery with levels of attainment below those normally seen at their age. Their achievement is very good in personal and social development and good in all other areas of learning. At this very early stage of the year, the standards seen in the Reception children's work were still slightly below those expected for their age. However, the rate of progress they are making, and the often very good teaching in the Reception class, indicate that the great majority are on course to attain the goals expected for the end of the Reception Year.
2. Pupils in Year 2 did well in the national tests in 2003. The reading results matched the national average, while the writing skills were well above and the mathematics results above the national average. The results were well above those of similar schools. Early indications from the results of the national tests in 2004 are that the pupils have done even better in reading and writing, but not as well in mathematics. The overall trend in the school's results for this age group is above the national trend and more than addresses the concerns about Year 2, which were raised at the previous inspection.

#### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003*

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.8 (14.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.9 (14.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.0 (15.4)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. Standards were below the national average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 in 2003 but the pupils did very well in English and science in relation to their prior

attainment when they were in Year 2, and they performed well in mathematics. These overall very good results have been sustained over the past four years.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.2 (26.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.8 (25.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.4 (26.8)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. The trend in the results for this age group is broadly in line with the national trend. The school added good value to pupils' learning despite the considerable disruption caused by pupil mobility, frequent staff changes in earlier years and an increasing proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Early indications from the results for 2004 are that standards have improved further in English and mathematics. The school has worked very hard to reach its demanding targets for this group of pupils. It matched its targets for mathematics, but in English, although it exceeded the target it set for Level 5, it just missed its target for Level 4.
5. By bringing together the information gained from the recently established very good assessment procedures, and from the very effective monitoring of teaching and learning, the headteacher has very successfully improved teachers' planning and their approaches to target setting, and has placed the school in a good position to meet the demanding targets set for the current Year 6 pupils. This is evident, too, in the pupils' work from last year, and so far this year, and in the increased emphasis placed on developing and using literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. This is now done well. Through its very rigorous analysis of all test and assessment outcomes, the school very clearly identified the need to improve pupils' skills in mental mathematics, to promote writing, speaking and listening in all subjects, and to improve ICT provision, resources and skills. Effective action has been taken on all three counts, resulting in much improved overall achievement. However, in the drive to improve writing in different styles and for different purposes, there are few examples of pupils using their own imagination to write creatively and at length.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans because of the teachers' effective use of these in planning, and the flexible deployment of the limited number of support staff to the areas of greatest need. Although in the past there have been differences between the attainment of boys and girls in the tests, no significant differences were noted in their work during the inspection. Higher attaining pupils also achieve well because, again the work they are given to do is challenging and tests their ability to the full in the great majority of lessons. All of this is a result of the school's relentless drive to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunity to succeed, a drive that is led and managed very well by the headteacher, and fully supported by all staff and governors. Parents are very pleased with the standards their children reach in this school.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance is **satisfactory** and punctuality **good**. All of this represents very good improvement since the last inspection.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' good attitudes to school and to work have a positive impact on their achievement.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school is good and the school deals effectively with all forms of harassment.
- Relationships are very good throughout the school and pupils feel valued.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their personal qualities and they willingly take on responsibilities.
- Overall, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good but not enough is done to promote cultural development through the arts subjects.

## Commentary

7. There has been a significant improvement in attendance rates over the past two years and attendance now matches the national average. Punctuality is good. The school has effective systems in place to promote good attendance and punctuality and to monitor patterns of absence. Parents and carers are very appreciative of the school's efforts in this area and the majority ensure that their children attend regularly and arrive in school on time. The school has this year appointed an additional teaching assistant who will, as part of her duties, act as home/school liaison officer to assist in the drive to improve further the attendance of the few pupils who still give cause for concern.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.5	School data	0.4
National data	5.8	National data	0.4

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

8. Pupils enjoy school and their positive attitudes to learning contribute well to their personal development and their overall achievement. They work well together, listening respectfully to adults and to each other and they take great pride in the presentation of their work. Pupils with special educational needs have equally positive attitudes to learning and contribute well in lessons. They respond well to the very good support given to them by teachers and teaching assistants and are fully included in all that the school has to offer. From an early age, pupils take on responsibilities by performing small tasks in and around the classroom. As they get older, they act as playground buddies and 'peer mediators' where they help to settle disputes by listening and offering advice, which they have been trained to do. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the school council and readily accept the opportunities it offers them to be fully involved in the life of the school. Councillors take their responsibilities very seriously. They know their views are listened to, valued and acted upon whenever possible and are proud of their achievements, particularly the improvements to play facilities and pupil behaviour. They listen to the comments and suggestions of other pupils and show initiative by seeking and successfully bidding for sponsorship to realise their intentions.

9. Behaviour in and around school is good and has been much improved over the last two years. The very consistent application of the school's very good systems for managing behaviour, including the meticulous recording of all forms of unacceptable behaviour, have very successfully reduced the incidence of bullying and harassment, including racist comments, all of which are meticulously recorded. No oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection and pupils state confidently that if any does occur, it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils play well together, and they have a very good understanding of right and wrong because of the school's very clear guidelines and the teachers' very high expectations of their conduct. There have been two exclusions during the past year.

***Ethnic background of pupils***

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Asian or Asian British – Indian
No ethnic group recorded

***Exclusions in the last school year***

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
141	2	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0

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

10. Pupils and parents are very pleased with the improvements in behaviour and the positive impact it has on pupils' learning. Pupils are polite, friendly, well mannered and very willing to talk to visitors. Relationships throughout the school are very good and pupils have a good level of trust in the adults who work with them. Pupils feel personally valued. They gain in confidence and self-esteem as they move up through the school, and by the time they leave, they are caring, mature and responsible young people who have been well prepared for the next stage of their education.
11. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It is promoted well during assemblies, in lessons and through the very good personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) programme. All lessons have a PSHCE focus alongside the subject focus. Pupils' attention is drawn to this as part of the introduction to the lesson, and it is frequently reinforced during the lesson. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on a wide range of moral and social issues and personal qualities such as determination, perseverance and getting on with others. Fundraising activities for local and national charities promote pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than themselves, while care for the natural world is effectively developed through, for example, the sponsorship of a dolphin and a tiger. Good social skills and personal qualities of independence, team

building and fair play are effectively developed through group work in lessons, after-school clubs, sporting activities and residential experiences. Visits and visitors to the school effectively develop pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures. The study of different religious faiths in religious education lessons, and of different cultures in history and geography, promotes respect for the values and beliefs of others and develops a satisfactory understanding of the cultural diversity found in Britain today. The missing link in all of this at the present time is the development of cultural understanding through the arts, which the school has only just begun to address.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Effective teaching, very good assessment procedures, a well-structured curriculum, and very good care, support and guidance ensure that all pupils are given the same very good chance to succeed by being fully included in all that the school has to offer. Links with parents are good but only a few parents regularly help their children at home to give them the chance to do even better at school.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. It has improved considerably since the previous inspection. A very thorough programme of assessment and review is used consistently well in all subjects throughout the school, and the outcomes are used very effectively in planning.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' planning is particularly effective in matching learning to pupils' individual needs.
- Assessment, in which pupils are fully involved, is thorough, constructive and used very effectively in planning.
- There is a very strong focus on ensuring the full inclusion of all pupils in all activities.
- The flexible use of very well-briefed teaching assistants ensures that support is targeted where it is most needed.
- Time and resources are used well in most lessons, although occasionally, too much teacher talk cuts down the time for pupils to work independently.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	5 (17%)	18 (60%)	7 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. While teaching overall is good in the Foundation Stage, it is often very good in the Reception class. Very good leadership in the Foundation Stage means that all staff have a good understanding of how young children learn. They have very quickly used their very good assessment procedures to check where each child is up to. They have used the information very effectively to plan work that is imaginatively linked across all six areas of learning but has a strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development and literacy, the areas of greatest need.

13. English and mathematics are well taught throughout the school and teachers successfully promote literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects. However, in the drive to improve writing skills, teachers do not always give pupils enough opportunities to use their own imagination to write creatively and at length. The very good lessons stood out from the others because of the teachers' lively, engaging manner, very good relationships with the pupils, and the combination of ways in which they encouraged and cajoled the pupils to give of their best. In each case, the teacher constantly assessed and adjusted pupils' learning during the lesson and almost imperceptibly led the pupils back to checking whether the learning outcomes had indeed met the learning objectives. The practice of asking pupils to assess and mark their own work prior to teachers marking it is consistent throughout the school. Teachers' marking is constructive, and any differences between what the pupils think and what the teacher thinks are fully discussed. Although there are some weaknesses in marking in science and religious education, the teachers' overall approach to marking is particularly successful in helping the pupils to understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.
14. Pupils speak highly of their teachers and how well they help each pupil to learn. Pupils are very proud of their involvement in assessing and marking their work and readily explained to inspectors how they checked their work against the learning objectives that the teachers share with them at the start of a lesson. Pupils are clear about their targets and those of the group and class because they know why they have been set, and how they will improve learning. The targets are also shared with parents. Whole-class sessions at the ends of lessons are used at least well to provide pupils with further opportunities to consolidate learning and correct errors. In English, mathematics, science and ICT, records of assessment are very detailed, giving a full picture of each pupil's development in each aspect of each subject. In other subjects, teachers use the 'assessment by exception' system well, recording those individuals who do not meet, or who exceed the learning objectives. This information too is used very well in planning and, in the lessons seen, higher, average and lower attainers were all given suitably demanding work to do in all subjects. This very much supports the school's determination to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils, and the full inclusion of all pupils in all parts of lessons, and in their own learning.
15. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. Teachers make very good use of the targets in their individual education plans, including them in their planning, so that these pupils may make the progress of which they are capable. Well-briefed support staff contribute in good measure to the pupils' overall achievement. The school makes very good use of this limited resource, moving them around to target the areas of greatest need.
16. Carefully targeted questioning, based on the teachers' good subject knowledge, is used to good effect in most lessons and involves pupils of all levels of capability. Even at this early stage in the year, teachers know their pupils very well. They are skilled at building on pupils' prior knowledge and gently but firmly helping pupils to think for themselves and to make good use of the wide range of good resources at their disposal, for example, information books, CD-ROMs and the Internet. The use of ICT is very carefully planned into all subjects and classrooms and wireless laptop computers are used very effectively in class, enabling pupils to use, consolidate and sometimes extend the skills they have learned in lessons in the ICT suite. Time and resources are usually used well in lessons, resulting in pupils working at a good pace and producing a good amount of work during

lessons. Occasionally, however, the teacher talks for too long and this limits the amount of work pupils can do in a lesson. A good amount and range of homework is set regularly. It effectively supports learning in class and further encourages pupils to take some responsibility for their own learning by finding some things out for themselves.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides all pupils with a **good** curriculum that is broad, well balanced and meets all statutory requirements well. Opportunities for enrichment are good, as are the accommodation and resources available to the school.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is very well planned to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities.
- Opportunities for personal and social development are included in all lessons.
- The curriculum is enriched through specialists, visits and visitors and after-school clubs.
- The accommodation and resources are good but the number of support staff is relatively limited.

## **Commentary**

17. The school teaches all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, and the time allocated to each is appropriate. There has been good improvement overall since the previous inspection, and very good improvement in the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. Parents are pleased with the curriculum the school offers, and pupils, too, praise the range of learning opportunities presented to them. National and local guidance is very effectively adapted to the school's needs and the school is constantly seeking ways to improve the curriculum and link all subjects to make learning a continuous and enjoyable process for all. Equality of opportunity features very high on the school's agenda. It is promoted very well throughout the school through the full inclusion of all pupils in all activities through very carefully planned activities, and through good support for learning. This successfully implements the school's mission statement '*Everyone Counts*'. The school's very good programme for PSHCE is very well supported throughout the curriculum and in all lessons. For example, in a physical education lesson, one aim was to help pupils in Year 6 know what makes them feel positive about life. This approach makes a very strong contribution to pupils' personal development and prepares them well for life beyond school. Good transition arrangements ensure pupils move to their next stage of education with confidence.
18. Visiting specialists, visits and other visitors and after-school clubs provide good enrichment opportunities for the pupils. Sports specialists work with pupils and staff to provide good quality coaching in football, cricket, rugby and gymnastics. Participation in sports is good, and there are several well-attended after-school clubs. A skilled specialist music teacher took up post at the beginning of the term, supplementing music provision and helping the school to meet its stated intention of improving provision in the arts. Currently this is weaker than provision in other subjects. A reasonable number of pupils already receive instrumental tuition, and one aim in the current action plan for music is to provide every pupil with an opportunity to learn to play an instrument. Visits by theatre and music groups are welcomed, and a residential visit further broadens pupils' experiences and extends their learning across a range of subjects. There are good links with local schools for sports, ICT, science and design and technology.

19. Accommodation and resources are good overall, and support learning effectively in all subjects. The school is bright and attractive, clean, well cared for and well maintained. The main outdoor area beside the Nursery has been improved significantly and provides stimulating learning experiences for the children. Children from the Reception class do not have direct access to this area, although they use it at playtimes. The Reception classroom does not have toilet facilities, and the children have to walk some distance to use the infant toilets. Support staff are used well to work with younger pupils or those who have special needs. However, there are occasions when older classes need additional help, for example, in practical lessons.

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

The school **very effectively** ensures the care, welfare, health and safety of all pupils. It provides **very good** support and guidance for all pupils, based on the very effective monitoring of their personal and academic development. Pupils are very much involved in the life of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A very good induction programme ensures that young children settle quickly into school life.
- Pupils are respected and valued as individuals; their views are regularly sought and acted upon and the school promotes their interests very well, whatever their circumstances.
- The school is a very safe and secure place for the pupils, and they are very involved in helping it to improve.
- The consistently very effective implementation of the school's policies underpin the very good support and guidance the pupils receive.

### **Commentary**

20. The quality of care, guidance and support has improved since the previous inspection. It is now very good, and pleases parents because their children learn in a very safe and very caring school where they are highly valued. Child protection procedures are good. They are implemented effectively, staff training takes place regularly and all staff have are up to date with such issues.
21. Concerns about safety raised at the previous inspection have been addressed very well. The security zones inside the school ensure that visitors have very limited access to the building. There are good procedures for evacuation and dealing with accidents, all of which are meticulously recorded, and every attempt is made to ensure that pupils move around the school safely. The school meals staff ensure that pupils are very much encouraged to observe a healthy diet, and all equipment throughout the school is regularly checked and maintained. Through its Internet safety policy, which is shared with parents, the school ensures that pupils are very well supervised when using computers, and all Internet access is safe and secure. The school grounds have been greatly improved since the previous inspection, largely through consultation with the school council, which gives the pupils a strong voice in the day-to-day running of the school and how it might be improved for them. Initiatives such as the purchase of equipment for the playground, ideas of how to make best use of wet playtimes, and exploring ideas of how



to conserve the local environment and make use of the nature area, support pupils' personal development and enable them to share resources, make democratic decisions and value and respect themselves, each other and the environment.

22. Staff are very good role models. Their consistent approach to promoting good standards of behaviour, discipline and care for others encourages and achieves mutual respect, good communication and mostly good levels of co-operation and self-discipline in the pupils. This very effectively promotes and supports the very good relationships seen throughout the school. Teachers ensure that every child has equal access to the learning opportunities on offer, and that they are fully included in all that the school has to offer, whatever their circumstances.
23. The systems and procedures for settling new pupils into the school are very effective. Parents are very pleased with these arrangements and the way in which their children very quickly adapt to school routines because they are so well supported by staff and other pupils, who act as 'buddies' to show them the ropes. Pupils know who to turn to if they have problems, and form very trusting relationships with the staff. All assessment information, academic and personal, is used very effectively to guide and support them through their life at this school while preparing them for the next stage of their education and life beyond school.

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

The school has **good** links with parents, with other schools and with the community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents receive very good information about the school, its work and their children's progress.
- The school regularly seeks parents' views and works very hard to involve them in their children's learning. However, it struggles to get more than a few involved, despite its best efforts.
- Good links with other schools and with the wider community contribute to pupils' learning and personal development.

### **Commentary**

24. Parents have positive views of the school and the vast majority have nothing but praise for what it does for their children and how it has improved in recent years. A small number of parents who responded to the questionnaire said they felt they did not get enough information about how well their children were doing. However, they, others responding to the questionnaire and parents who attended the meeting, praised the openness and approachability of the school. Inspectors found that information to parents has greatly improved since the previous inspection. Parents are well informed about the school and its work, and very well informed about their children's progress. The school regularly seeks their views and opinions, values them and, where possible, acts on them. Regular opportunities are provided for parents to increase their understanding of what is taught through classroom displays and curriculum information, newsletters, parents' evenings and workshops. The pupils' annual reports give parents a very good overview of how well their children have done and what they need to do to improve further. Reviews for pupils with special educational needs are held at regular intervals and parents are always

invited to attend. Consultation evenings and the openness and approachability of the school, which parents praised, ensure that parents have every opportunity to be as well informed as they can be about their children's learning and progress. The school also provides parents with good guidance as to how they might best help their children at home. This partnership effectively supports parents' rights and seeks their active participation in their children's learning.

25. Parents are frequently encouraged to come into school to help in the classroom or around the school. A small number have been involved in developing learning materials for pupils to use at home, for example, the 'story sacks' and mathematics games library, thus making a significant contribution to pupils' achievements. However, very few parents take up the opportunity to help in class and a sizeable proportion of pupils have little help at home with, for example, reading and writing, or other general homework. Members of the community are making a very good contribution to the learning environment in the Foundation Stage by painting attractive, eye-catching murals with contributions from the Reception children.
26. The school's purposeful and constructive work with its partner schools and the wider community contributes effectively to the pupils' learning and personal development. Regular exchanges of information and good links between the school and its main secondary schools support pupils' move to their new learning environment. The wider community also plays an active part in the learning and social development of pupils, for example, through the good range of visits and visitors. The good links with local businesses and other organisations, some of which were the result of the work of the school council, have resulted in funding for some of the improvements in the outdoor environment. These experiences considerably enhance teaching and learning opportunities, and contribute effectively to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The school is **very well** led and managed. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are in place. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is very effective and very good management systems support learning very well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides the school with a very strong sense of direction and purpose that is very effectively focused on improving pupils' achievement.
- The feeling of teamwork amongst the staff is very strong and staff lead and manage their subjects and aspects very well.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They support and challenge the headteacher effectively.
- Very good management systems have led to rigorous self-review and evaluation, the outcomes of which are used very effectively to improve learning.

### **Commentary**

27. Since his appointment two years ago, the headteacher's very good leadership and management have been the major driving forces in bringing about stability in staffing, in pupil numbers, and in balancing the budget. Staff and governors operate as a very

effective team, very strongly focused on raising pupils' achievement. The headteacher has fostered in them a very good understanding of how to do so by making best use of all of the information available to the school about pupils' performance, and about the quality of teaching and learning. All such information is thoroughly analysed and used to review and adapt teaching, learning and the curriculum to suit pupils' individual learning needs. The outcomes of the school's rigorous self-evaluation, which includes well-focused monitoring of teaching and learning, are used very effectively to set the priorities in the school improvement plan and the performance management objectives for the headteacher and the staff. All of these processes and procedures are very neatly brought together to help the school achieve its aims and its overall goal of ensuring that 'everyone counts'. All staff are very committed to ensuring the school does its best for every one of its pupils regardless of their levels of capability or their backgrounds.

28. Subject leaders are very good role models for other teachers, inspiring, motivating and supporting them in their work. In line with the school's stated priorities, they have time allocated to them to carry out their roles, which includes reviewing planning, observing teaching and learning, and analysing pupils' work. The well-thought-out action plans show their good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and how best to improve them. The camaraderie and open exchange of information amongst the staff ensure pupils' learning is continuous and progressive throughout the school. The provision for special educational needs is very well managed. All statutory requirements are met. The funding made available to the school is considerably enhanced from the school's own budget to provide as much learning support as possible to help the pupils meet the targets in their individual education plans. The headteacher, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the governor with responsibility for special educational needs meet regularly to monitor and improve the provision wherever possible.
29. Governors fulfil their roles well and all statutory requirements are met. They know and monitor the work of the school well through their good links to individual subjects and their involvement in school improvement and financial planning. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and, although they do not yet help to shape the direction of the school, they have a very clear vision of where they want it to be and how it might get there, which is highly focused on the principles of full inclusion and equality of opportunity. Governors have emerged stronger from some of the tough financial decisions that had to be made in the past two years, and have a good understanding of how to obtain best value from all of their spending. They listen to, and question, the school management team effectively to clarify their thinking and to ensure that the school's priorities match the pupils' learning needs. Financial management and planning are very good. The surplus accrued at the end of the last financial year has been used wisely to increase the hours of the support staff and to provide some part-time music teaching to make up for a lack of expertise on the staff. The school provides good value for money.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	511,346
Total expenditure	531,290
Expenditure per pupil	2,767

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	28,384
Balance carried forward to the next year	8,440



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

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

The overall quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

30. The quality of teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching in the Reception class. Children's personal and social development is promoted very well. Children start school in the Nursery with levels of attainment below those normally seen at their age. Their achievement is very good in personal and social development and good in all other areas of learning. At this very early stage of the year, the standards seen in the Reception children's work were still slightly below those expected for their age. However, the rate of progress they are making, combined with the very good teaching they receive in the Reception class, indicate that the great majority are on course to attain the goals expected for the end of the Reception Year. Well-planned curricular experiences are imaginatively linked across all areas of learning. Children with special needs are very well supported and included in all activities so they too achieve well. There has been good improvement in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection.
31. Induction procedures and levels of care are very good and ensure the children and their parents are very well prepared for starting school. Parents receive very good information about what is going on in school together with suggestions as to how they might support their children's learning at home. The openness of the staff and the regular daily contact between staff and parents help to allay parents' fears and promote good working relationships with the school. The skill, knowledge and commitment of the co-ordinator have resulted in the very good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage, and a strong team of staff who have a very good understanding of how young children learn. The children's progress is monitored, checked and recorded very well and the information is used very effectively to plan their work and to set their individual targets. Parents are kept very well informed about the targets and about their children's progress towards them.
32. Accommodation and resources are of good quality and are used well to support learning. However, the Nursery and Reception rooms are a long way apart and this prevents ongoing contact between the Foundation Stage manager and the Nursery. Nevertheless, the staff meet regularly to review and improve practice and overall provision. Reception children use the timber trail outside their classroom for outdoor learning but have no direct access to the recently much-improved main outdoor learning area outside the Nursery. Arrangements for sharing the area at playtimes are good and Nursery and Reception children mix happily together. Reception children have to walk some distance to the infant toilets because there are no toilet facilities attached to their classroom. Although they are proud of the opportunity to use the internal security passes, this was a cause of concern for some of the Reception children during the inspection as they negotiated heavy doors and were sometimes not totally sure about which toilets to use.

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

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching, learning and children's achievement are very good.
- Children enjoy their learning and behave well.
- Very good relationships ensure the children are secure and happy.

## **Commentary**

33. The staff work very closely as a team to create a calm, warm and very caring atmosphere. They are very good role models for the children, joining in all practical activities and ensuring that the children feel secure and valued. During the inspection, the Nursery children had only attended for a matter of days, and for most this was the first time they had been away from home. The very friendly welcome they received quickly gained their trust and ensured that they settled very well and were soon happily exploring the interesting activities planned for them. Opportunities to increase confidence and independence are planned into all activities. For example, Nursery children decide for themselves when to have their drink and fruit, and Reception children 'self-register' each morning and put their equipment away when they hear the 'tidying up' music. These activities promote good self-discipline as the children become increasingly aware of themselves and their surroundings. Reception children work well in pairs, taking turns and happily sharing equipment. The children enjoy learning and respond with good attitudes and behaviour to their teacher's high expectations of them. Parents attend assemblies and enjoy sharing the children's success when they receive rewards. Children make very good progress in personal development and are well on course to reach the goals expected for the end of the Reception Year.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching, learning and achievement are good.
- Resources are used well to support a variety of enjoyable activities.
- Many children have a limited range of vocabulary.

## **Commentary**

34. Good teaching provides a varied range of meaningful and enjoyable activities that ensure the children's good progress towards the goals expected for the end of the Reception Year. A strong focus is placed on language work in response to assessments showing that many children have limited language skills when they come into the Nursery. Most children have a limited vocabulary and do not speak confidently or clearly. The staff take every opportunity to interact with the children to extend their language skills and knowledge of words, for example encouraging them to describe items they discover in the 'Feely Box' or the texture of the 'slime' and the pastry ingredients. Each room has a well-equipped writing area where the children make marks and write. Labels are used well to familiarise children with print. Only a few Reception children are writing independently at this early stage in the year, but all recognise and most can write their

own name. The more-able children are making good attempts to group letters together into recognisable words. Each classroom has an inviting reading area where the children enjoy sharing books and listening to stories. Reception children know that print is read from left to right, many know the sound of the first letter in a word and most use clues in the pictures to help them. One child was thrilled to recognise the rhyme in her reading book, and the children enjoyed the rhythm of their class poem 'The Queen of Hearts'.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching, learning and achievement are good.
- The children meet the early learning goal at the end of their time in Reception.
- There is a strong emphasis on learning through investigation.

### **Commentary**

35. Good teaching with a strong emphasis on practical activities provides the children with a wide variety of well-planned opportunities to investigate mathematical ideas and concepts. The mathematics areas in each class are well resourced for counting, matching, sorting and recognising numbers, values and shapes. By using mathematical vocabulary, the staff encourage children to learn and use the correct words for each process. Reception children discovered several ways to 'partition' the number five in a game based on the 'The Queen of Hearts' rhyme. They successfully learned to measure and count the ingredients for jam tarts. Most children in Reception count to five accurately and several count well beyond ten. Their ability to write number digits in the correct order is developing well and the majority are on course to achieve the goals expected for the end of the Reception Year in this area of learning.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and children achieve well.
- A varied range of activities makes learning interesting and exciting.
- The outside area has been considerably improved and is used well to promote learning.
- The Reception class does not have direct access to the main outside learning area.

### **Commentary**

36. Good teaching provides exciting and worthwhile activities for the children to widen their knowledge and understanding of the world. In the Nursery, the children enjoyed learning about the planets and spaceships. They made 'passports' to take on journeys abroad, and used the 'making tables' to design and build models. The children are eager to use the computers, and do so with increasing skill. Reception children manipulate the mouse with satisfactory control and follow on-screen instructions accurately to create a menu of

their favourite foods and to create colourful designs. They were enthralled by the experience of mixing and rolling out pastry for jam tarts, an activity in which the teacher skilfully linked science, language and mathematical development. Regular activities in the outdoor area broaden the Nursery children's experience of the world around them as they observe growing plants and changing weather conditions. However, the Reception class has no direct access to this area although they do use it at playtime. This limits opportunities for them to carry on their learning outdoors. Nevertheless, the majority are on course to meet the goals expected for the end of Reception in this area of learning.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and the children learn well.
- The children manipulate tools and equipment safely.
- The outdoor learning area has good facilities for challenging physical activities, but Reception children do not have direct access to it.

### **Commentary**

37. Regular, well-planned physical activities help the children develop good control and co-ordination. Nursery children rode wheeled toys round a track outside, and showed increasing control of their vehicles as they stopped and started at the zebra crossing. Reception children increased their hand-eye co-ordination by throwing and catching a bean bag with a partner. They are developing an increased awareness of space when moving around the large hall. The children use small tools, pencils and equipment with good regard for safety, and most Nursery children are beginning to manipulate scissors. The outside area is well equipped for a variety of challenging physical activities. The Reception children balance well as they use the 'timber trail' but they do not have regular access to the outside area at all times to ensure that such provision is continuous throughout the day. The majority of children are on course to meet the goals expected for the end of Reception in this area of learning.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Children express their imaginative ideas using a wide range of materials.
- Role play is used well to enrich all activities.

### **Commentary**

38. Good teaching and well-linked activities support the development of the children's creative and imaginative skills. Plenty of materials are available and the children express their ideas in many ways using, for example, paint, paper, chalk and colours boldly and



confidently. One Nursery child covered her paper with yellow paint, then added blue and knew that she had made green. The children enjoy using the computer to create bright colourful designs and they readily experiment with the range of musical instruments to create different sounds. They dressed up as the Queen or the Knave of Hearts to retell the poem 'The Queen of Hearts' and busily baked batches of tarts. They relate well to each other during these co-operative activities. Staff participate fully, taking on different roles as part of the children's play, extending their language and supporting their creative development. The majority of Reception children are on course to reach the goals expected for the end of their Reception Year.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- All groups of pupils achieve well and standards are improving as a result of the school's hard work.
- Pupils' handwriting is consistently very good throughout the school but opportunities for extended creative writing are limited.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and teachers make very good use of assessment information to track pupils' progress, plan their work and set targets for them.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

#### **Commentary**

39. Standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing are as expected nationally for pupils' ages in Year 2 and Year 6. They have improved considerably in Year 2 since the previous inspection and overall improvement in English has been good. A high proportion of the pupils currently in Year 6 have special educational needs. Throughout the school, all such pupils achieve well because teachers plan their work carefully and well-briefed support assistants provide the extra support they need to reach the targets in their individual education plans.
40. The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school. As a result, pupils throughout the school develop and use an appropriate range of vocabulary, though they do not always use grammar accurately when they speak. For example, in a discussion with one of the older year groups, one pupil offered that the teacher checks if 'you've understood', when explaining how the school's very good assessment procedures worked. Pupils are introduced to and read a satisfactory range of fiction and non-fiction, successfully encouraged by the school to use its well-stocked library to supplement the reading schemes. Pupils enjoy reading. They read with understanding and from an early age, they re-tell stories accurately, discussing character and plot.
41. Handwriting, spelling, sentence structure and the use of punctuation are particularly well taught from an early age. Pupils' achievement is very good and standards are above the national expectations in these aspects of English in Year 2 and Year 6. For example, the

work of the higher attaining pupils in Year 2 extends to the accurate use of speech marks and their writing includes simple connecting words to join sentences in extended pieces of writing. Lower attaining pupils accurately structure what they want to say into sequences of simple sentences although they do not use always punctuate the sentences correctly. Teachers focus well on writing for purpose. As a result, pupils in Year 6 have a sound understanding of the many different styles and forms of writing in use today. However, there are few examples of pupils writing extended stories fired by their own imagination and creativity. Nevertheless, higher attaining pupils organise their writing in paragraphs, sustaining and developing ideas using an appropriate range of vocabulary.

42. In most lessons, lively, engaging teaching motivates the pupils and results in high levels of productivity. This was especially noted in the lessons observed in Year 5 and Year 6. High-quality discussions took place in each lesson as Year 5 pupils examined different ways of starting a story and Year 6 pupils compared the opening chapter of 'Matilda' with the opening sequences in the film based on the book. All pupils were fully engaged at the level of which they were capable because of their teachers' very effectively targeted questioning. This ensured that they were all fully included in all parts of each lesson, confident in the knowledge that their ideas were respected and valued. All staff work very hard to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all literacy work and, though covering the same topics, pupils' work is very effectively matched to their different stages of learning.
43. Very good assessment procedures promote equality of opportunity very well for all pupils because the information gained from them is used very effectively in planning and in target setting. Pupils' work is very carefully and constructively marked and pupils are very effectively involved in the process. Each pupil talked to knew exactly what they needed to do to improve their literacy work. Teachers' planning also clearly identifies opportunities to promote PSHCE development within literacy. This contributes in great measure to the pupils' good attitudes to their work and the pride they take in it, and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is also successfully promoted in English through carefully chosen texts and discussions. A good range of homework is set regularly and successfully consolidates and extends pupils' learning in class.
44. The subject is very well led and managed. Though the co-ordinator has only recently taken it over, she has audited provision very perceptively and prepared a very good plan of action clearly aimed at improving standards further. Teaching and learning are regularly checked by the headteacher and the co-ordinator, and pupils' learning has benefited in the past year from the effective support the school has received from the local education authority's literacy consultants. Resources for literacy are good and they are used effectively to promote learning.

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

45. Pupils use their language and literacy skills well in other subjects although, as the co-ordinator has already identified, ICT skills could be used better for drafting and editing writing. Pupils undertake meaningful research across a range of subjects, using books (including dictionaries), CD-ROMs and the Internet, quickly finding information by applying their sound knowledge of the alphabet. They are successfully encouraged to record the information found in their own words. The school's drive to improve literacy includes the very effective use of ICT to support spelling and word work. Speaking and listening skills are not as effectively promoted as reading and writing skills throughout the

school. However, the school has secure plans to address this in the coming year through introducing more opportunities for drama and debate.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well, standards are at the national expectation in Year 2 and Year 6 and, as a result of recent initiatives, they are improving.
- Assessment systems are very good and information gathered is used very well to track pupils' progress, to set targets and to inform teachers' planning.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Teaching is consistently good and pupils apply their mathematical skills well to other subjects.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work.

### **Commentary**

46. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection, especially in Year 2, due to the high priority given to mathematics in the last two years. Staff training, the development of mental strategies and the application of mathematical skills in other subjects have contributed well to this improvement.
47. Teaching is consistently good throughout the school and the teachers' effectively build on pupils' previous learning. They use their good subject knowledge to plan a wide range of activities that meet the needs of all pupils. Strong emphasis is placed on the teaching of basic number skills and the development of mental strategies, and pupils respond well to the quick-fire mental and oral questioning and number games at the beginning of each session. Pupils enjoy their work and are well motivated by the effectively planned practical and real-life problem solving activities and by the good use of resources, as seen in the Year 2 shopping activities. The good use of number lines, number squares and whiteboards helps pupils improve their pace, understanding, accuracy and confidence levels and enable teachers to assess pupils' understanding of the work being covered. Teachers are skilled at drawing all pupils into the whole-class sessions by adapting questions to suit their individual needs. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all parts of the lesson. They achieve well because they are very effectively supported by well-briefed teaching assistants who clarify instructions, develop thinking skills and keep pupils on task, thus helping them to make good progress in the lessons.
48. Teachers' clear explanations and effective demonstrations ensure that all pupils see and understand different methods of calculation, as for example, the partitioning and re-combining of numbers in addition work in Year 3. Time is managed well and the teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work rate result in good pace and productivity in lessons. Very occasionally, pupils become restless when the teacher talks for too long or work lacks appropriate challenge. Pupils are very effectively involved in their own learning as they assess and record their levels of understanding at the end of each lesson and discuss with the teacher how they might improve. Teachers and teaching assistants use praise and encouragement well to reward pupils' effort and

promote confidence and self-esteem. This has developed in the pupils good attitudes to learning and good levels of pride in their work, and has a positive impact on their learning. A good range and amount of homework reinforces and extends learning beyond the school day.

49. As at the last inspection, leadership and management are very good. Teaching and learning are rigorously monitored and evaluated and curricular-planning adapted as necessary to meet the needs of all pupils. The school has very rigorous assessment systems and the information gained from these is used very effectively to set targets, track pupils' progress and inform teachers' planning. Teachers' marking is used very effectively to inform pupils about how well they are doing and to identify the next steps in learning. Pupils are very effectively involved in this process and know what they need to do to improve. Resources are good and they are used well to support learning. Overall, there has been good improvement since the last inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

50. Pupils use and consolidate their mathematical skills well in other subjects. For example, they use tally charts and make block graphs of favourite holiday destinations in geography, interpret time lines and family trees in history and use shape and measurements in art and design and design technology. Information and communication technology is used very well to support and enhance teaching and learning, especially in mental mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good and, as a result, pupils achieve well.
- A well-planned curriculum places very strong emphasis on pupils learning through investigation.
- The marking of pupils' work does not often show them how to improve.
- Older classes have no extra support assistance during practical activities.
- Very good leadership and management have helped to raise standards.

### **Commentary**

51. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are at the levels expected nationally for pupils' ages. A high proportion of the current Year 6 pupils have special educational needs, but for pupils whose attainment was below average on entry to the school, achievement is good in all aspects of science. This is the result of effective teaching, pupils' hard work and their very good involvement in their learning. The school has high aspirations for pupils' achievement and sets challenging targets to improve their performance. Throughout the school, pupils who have special educational needs also achieve well because teachers carefully plan work to meet their individual needs.
52. Teachers use their good subject knowledge well to plan varied and meaningful lessons based on well-prepared practical work. For example, instead of asking Year 2 pupils to make an electrical circuit, the teacher challenged them to build a spare light to help the

lighthouse keeper in the story 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch'. This demonstrates the very strong emphasis on learning scientific concepts and acquiring knowledge through practical investigations. Pupils showed good recall of their Year 1 work on electricity when testing different ways to light up the bulb. Year 6 pupils investigated how different conditions affect the growth of a plant. Again, they showed very good recall of previous learning and used this to think widely about their work. When considering the effect on plants of too much sun, a more-able pupil asked thoughtfully 'How does this apply to a cactus?'

53. Pupils present their work very well. They draw diagrams neatly and with care, and are successfully encouraged to record investigations in a variety of ways. They make good use of literacy skills to write reports with a range of adjectives and to make predictions of what they think will happen. Occasionally, work is copied from the blackboard. This limits pupils' ability to express their own ideas and to draw conclusions from their findings. Work on sound variation is linked well to pitch in music. The laptop computers are used effectively for research. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but although the work is always discussed with the pupils, the marking does not always remind pupils of how they might improve their work. Pupils with special needs are well supported by carefully planned work. However, there is often no additional classroom assistance during practical activities, particularly in the older classes. This sometimes slows the pace of learning as the teacher makes sure that all pupils understand fully what they are doing.
54. The leadership and management of science are very good, and have been instrumental in achieving the overall good improvement in provision and standards since the previous inspection. Very good knowledge of the science curriculum has led to innovative developments, in particular the very strong basis of practical investigations, well matched to the age and capability of the pupils. Opportunities to promote pupils' personal development are shown in teachers' lesson plans. They result in good co-operation and an excitement about scientific discoveries, and contribute effectively to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assessment procedures are very good and the information gained from them is used very effectively to plan learning activities and to set targets for individual and group improvement. Resources are good and they are used effectively to promote learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well because they are taught well.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Resources for ICT are very good and are used very effectively to promote learning in all subjects.

### **Commentary**

55. There has been very good improvement in ICT since the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve equally well because ICT skills are taught effectively in the computer suite and very effectively consolidated in class. This is able to happen because resources for the subject have been greatly improved in the

past year. Although pupils share a computer with another pupil when they are in the computer suite, they have regular access to desktop and laptop computers in class to consolidate and extend what they have learned in the suite. The teachers' careful planning ensures that all pupils have equal access to the computers throughout the week and ensures their full inclusion in all ICT learning.

56. All aspects of the ICT programme of study are covered at least adequately and standards are in line with the national expectation in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate good mouse control and a good understanding of how to use the tools available to them on the computer to draw and colour pictures. They work very well together, taking turns and helping each other. Following the teacher's step-by-step demonstration, they played a game of 'hangman', showing their developing knowledge of the keyboard as they find the letters on it and use the 'enter' key to register their choices. Good teaching ensures that pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop satisfactory word-processing skills that include a good understanding of how to change the size and colour of the different fonts available to them. This was already happening in a Year 3 design and technology lesson as pupils searched and found the different fonts used on cereal packets, and in a Year 4 PSHCE lesson where they used their prior knowledge to display their class rules in order of priority.
57. Very good leadership and management and the very effective use of external funding for ICT have resulted in a very well-planned curriculum that meets the school's needs and those of the pupils. The information gained from the very detailed audit of provision and the school's very good assessment procedures has been used very effectively to close gaps in learning. Teachers' confidence has grown as a result of the good training they have received and the actions taken to improve learning are helping pupils to develop the skills that they missed out on previously when resources were more limited. For example, pupils in Year 6 were successfully using control technology as they confidently programmed a floor robot to follow a sequence of directions. Very good teaching ensured they knew the basics of what to do but had the opportunity to find out more for themselves. As a result, they quickly developed a good understanding of the need to give precise, single instructions in the correct sequence to enable the robot to proceed correctly. An analysis of the previous Year 6 pupils' work shows that, by the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of how to use digital photography and incorporate it into multimedia presentations, adding sound and video clips.

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

58. Pupils' achievement is improving rapidly because teachers make very good use of the wide range of very good ICT resources available to them to promote learning across the curriculum. A very good range of carefully selected software enables them to do this. During the inspection, computers were seen being used very effectively to promote learning in almost all subjects. For example, in addition to their good use of ICT in design and technology, pupils in Year 3 accessed the BBC weather website to support their work in geography; in addition to their control technology work in mathematics, Year 6 pupils used their word-processing skills to support their work in literacy, as did pupils in Year 2, who also used ICT to support their work in art and design. Throughout the school, in line with school priorities, ICT has been used particularly well to improve word work, spelling and mental mathematics.

## **HUMANITIES**

59. Only one lesson was seen in each of **history** and **geography**. However, the available evidence shows that standards in history are in line with the national expectation in Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well in that subject. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in geography in Year 2 but achievement is good and standards are in line with the national expectation in Year 6.
60. Both subjects are led and managed satisfactorily, and effective planning ensures that the full range of learning required by the National Curriculum programme of study is covered. Assessment procedures are good and are used well in planning, and teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated satisfactorily. In history, Year 2 pupils have a secure understanding of events and people in the past and make comparisons between everyday life then and now. Pupils in Year 6 have a sound knowledge of different periods of history and develop a good understanding of citizenship as, for example, they compare democracy in Ancient Greece to the school's system for electing school councillors. Pupils in Year 6 have a satisfactory understanding of the water cycle and river systems. They have a good grasp of geographical vocabulary and write convincingly about environmental issues such as pollution. In the good lesson seen, Year 3 pupils were well motivated as they linked current events (the hurricane in America) with their developing knowledge of what causes weather changes. As a result they developed a good understanding of the effects that different climates have on people's lives. Pupils take pride in the presentation of their work which is recorded in a range of interesting formats, and developed further through art and design, design technology and the good use of ICT. Visits and visitors to the school enhance and enrich the curriculum and both subjects make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are too few opportunities for pupils to record their learning in writing in Year 2. However, by Year 6, pupils use their language and literacy skills well to do so.
- Links to personal, social and health education and citizenship are good and the subject makes a very positive contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **Commentary**

61. Only two lessons were observed, one in Year 2 and one in Year 6. Teaching and learning were good in both lessons and pupils were working at the levels expected for their age as shown in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. There was, however, insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about teaching throughout the school or about achievement in Years 1 and 2. Pupils' work shows that they achieve well in Years 3 to 6.
62. The recently revised scheme of work supports teachers well as they plan an appropriate range of topics that ensure pupils' learning is continuous throughout the school. The scheme is closely linked to the PSHCE curriculum, with good emphasis on the teaching of major world faiths in each year group through themes such as special books, places of

worship, responsibility, care and respect for the values and beliefs of others. Pupils in Year 2 are developing a good appreciation of the natural world and its resources as they share their thoughts about harvest time and write prayers of thanks. However, although there are examples of pupils in Year 2 completing or colouring in worksheets, as at the last inspection there are too few opportunities for them to record their own thoughts and feelings in writing. Precise questioning by the teacher developed in Year 6 pupils a good understanding of the importance of special occasions and different religious customs, as they learned about the Jewish Bar Mitzvah ceremony. Pupils clearly related the feelings expressed by Jewish children to the special occasions they had experienced in their own lives. This developed a good sense of spirituality as they reflected on the meaning behind the different customs and showed good levels of respect for the values and beliefs of others. Year 6 pupils use their literacy skills well to record their findings and the presentation of their work is good. This has a positive impact on their overall achievement.

63. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader has worked hard on formulating the new policy, devising a new scheme of work in consultation with all staff and improving resources, which are now good. Her role in monitoring teaching and learning is as yet minimal although she sees teachers' planning and gives good support and guidance. Assessment procedures are good. Teachers clearly identify how well pupils have learned and use the information in their planning. However, there are few written comments on pupils' work to remind them of what they need to do to improve. Assemblies, visits and visitors to the school effectively enhance pupils' learning. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and overall improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

64. One lesson was observed in each of **art and design** and **design and technology**. Two **music** lessons and three **physical education** lessons were also observed. In all four subjects, teachers plan their work using nationally recognised schemes. Their planning and the very limited amount of work available at this time of the year show that pupils' learning is continuous throughout the school. Work on display shows appropriate coverage of all aspects of art and design but, except for physical education, there is insufficient evidence in these subjects to make an overall judgement about standards or the quality of teaching. Good links are made between art and design and design and technology. Statutory requirements are met in all four subjects, and they are at least satisfactorily led and managed. The co-ordinators check teachers' planning and pupils' work and their role is set to be further developed into monitoring teaching in the classroom in the coming year when the arts have a higher priority in the school improvement plan. Accurate assessments are made about pupils' learning and progress but there are as yet no collated samples of pupils' work to guide new or less-confident teachers in this process. All four subjects make an overall good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development although opportunities are missed to develop pupils' understanding of art and design and music from different places and cultures.
65. In the aspects of **music** observed, pupils were working at the standards expected for their age. Their learning is continuous throughout the school and their achievement is satisfactory. They experience all aspects of the curriculum and the subject makes a good



contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, while they listen quietly to music before assembly, they have few opportunities to listen to and appreciate music from different times, places and cultures. Recognising the need to increase the breadth of music provision, the school has this term employed a part-time specialist teacher who taught his first lesson during the inspection. The quality of teaching in this lesson was very good. The teacher used his very good knowledge of the subject to convey his enthusiasm for it to the pupils. They responded very well, quickly learning a new clapping song and showing a good understanding of pitch. In this lesson, pupils' learning and progress were very good. Pupils sing well using appropriate expression, and keep time to different rhythms with reasonable accuracy. This was particularly evident in an assembly when they sang a hymn tunefully without any musical accompaniment. Peripatetic instrumental teachers provide lessons for a small number of pupils but as part of its total commitment to equality of opportunity and inclusion, the school aims to provide the opportunity for all pupils to learn to play an instrument. It has already received some external sponsorship that has helped to improve overall music provision. Resources are good and pupils speak very enthusiastically about the school productions which give them the experience of performing in front of an audience.

## **Physical education**

The quality of provision in physical education is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good overall and by Year 6, achievement is good.
- The curriculum provides a wide range of experiences, including swimming and specialist coaching, in which pupils enthusiastically participate.

## **Commentary**

66. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Standards are as expected for pupils' ages in Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement accelerates in Years 5 and 6 because older pupils are taught well. All pupils enjoy physical education lessons and behave well, participating eagerly in all activities, in and out of doors. Every pupil is fully included in all activities, and those with special needs achieve well because they are supported well.
67. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Lessons are planned and structured well to challenge pupils to improve their control and co-ordination and develop a wide range of skills. Teachers ensure pupils understand that they must warm up and cool down to protect their muscles. Catching, throwing and dribbling skills are taught well through small games in pairs or teams. Pupils are often asked to demonstrate their skills to help others. This makes a good contribution to their personal and social development. They respond well by co-operating with each other and sharing equipment, and they have a good understanding of the importance of exercise for health. All aspects of physical education are covered well, including a good programme of swimming lessons. Several visiting specialist sports coaches enrich the physical education curriculum. They bring particular skills that effectively increase the knowledge of both pupils and teachers. This was observed when a talented gymnast worked with Year 2 pupils on balancing and floor work. Other visiting specialists include cricket, football and rugby coaches. The school hosts cross-country events, and many older pupils stay after school to participate in the

regular sports clubs. Some challenging outdoor activities are included in the Year 6 residential visit to an outdoor education centre.

68. The subject is led and managed well. Evaluation of the range of provision resulted in the use of specialists to widen pupils' experiences and provide two hours' good quality physical education activities each week. The good achievement by older pupils demonstrates the appropriateness and success of this policy. Resources are good, including plenty of space for outdoor activities. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

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

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- PSHCE development permeates the work of the school.
- Pupils became caring, mature and responsible young people by the time they leave the school.

### **Commentary**

69. A very well-planned programme of work provides for the continuous development of pupils' awareness of citizenship, healthy and safe lifestyles, personal growth and relationships. It is promoted very well in all subjects and through assemblies, designated PSHCE sessions, the good range of sporting activities, after-school clubs and residential experiences, together with visits, visitors to the school and fundraising events for charity. Learning objectives for PSHCE are part of every lesson. Teachers frequently refer to them, ensuring that pupils understand how their positive attitudes to learning and to each other help their overall achievement. Pupils have very good opportunities to discuss and resolve matters of importance or concern to them and through the school council they have a real say in school improvement. The school highly values what they have to say, and develops their understanding of the responsibility of citizenship very well. As a result, relationships are very good throughout the school, pupils' self esteem is significantly enhanced, and they become caring, mature and responsible young people who are well prepared for the next stage of their education. This aspect of the school's work contributes very effectively to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
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	4
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	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	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>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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