

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HILTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hilton

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112703

Headteacher: Mr J Hilton

Lead inspector: Mr M Thompson

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 267026

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	600 plus 48 part-time nursery
School address:	Peacroft Lane Hilton Derby Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE65 5GH
Telephone number:	01283 732334
Fax number:	01283 735038
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Gallear
Date of previous inspection:	18 <sup>th</sup> January 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Hilton Primary is a very large village school situated in a dormitory village close to the outskirts of Derby. Most of its pupils are of white, British heritage, and there are none with English as an additional language. The school has more than doubled in size since its last inspection, and numbers are set to rise even further. Children are admitted into the Nursery class on a part-time basis in the term before their fourth birthday. However, because of the rapid growth of the village, a high proportion of pupils join the school in other year groups. Taken as a whole, the attainment of pupils at all points of entry is broadly average. However, the home circumstances of pupils are generally above average.

The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well below average, and of these pupils nine have a statement of special educational need. The nature of pupils' special needs includes social and emotional, behavioural, speech and communication, or autistic difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, some of the classes were taught in rather cramped conditions, and others were temporarily housed in a hall while work to finish the redevelopment of an old part of the premises was completed.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25372	Mike Thompson	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Information and communication technology
19557	Liz Halls	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
31319	Dot Hunter	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage curriculum Art and design Design and technology Music
22831	Clive Lewis	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science Geography Physical education
23658	Stephen Parker	<i>Team inspector</i>	English History
10668	David Walker	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special educational needs Mathematics Personal, social and health education and citizenship Religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Hilton Primary School is a **good and effective** school. Its success is built on the very effective leadership provided by the headteacher and governors, and by good teaching. Throughout a period of extremely rapid growth, the school has successfully retained an ethos in which all children are valued and treated as individuals, and has sustained its good record of academic success. Overall, the school gives very good value for money.

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

- Children are given a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Pupils achieve well, and standards are above average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher and governors provide very clear educational direction for the school.
- Subject co-ordinators need to improve their skills in monitoring and developing their areas of responsibility.
- Standards of pupils' personal development are very good. Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes towards learning. Relationships are very good at all levels.
- Systems for assessing pupils are satisfactory overall, but pupils are not sufficiently involved in considering and measuring how well they are getting on. In the non-core<sup>1</sup> subjects, information from teachers' assessments is not generally used well enough to help pupils improve.
- The curriculum is good and is enriched through a wide range of out-of-class activities.
- The school provides very good quality pastoral care for its pupils.
- The school has a good partnership with parents and is an important focus for the local community.

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in January 1999. The issues for improvement from that inspection have been dealt with satisfactorily. In addition, the good standards previously reported in the core subjects have been maintained, while standards of pupils' personal development have improved. Even though the number of teachers has increased significantly, teaching remains good. Systems for assessing pupils' progress have improved, although they now need to be refined further. The curriculum is better than it was, pupils are given higher quality care and guidance, and the school's partnership with parents has improved. Overall, the leadership of the school is significantly better than it was.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Standards have always been above or well above the national average for the past four years. The preliminary results of the most recent national tests for Year 6, which are yet to be confirmed, show that standards in 2005 are likely to be at a similar level to those of the previous year. Inspection findings are that from an average starting point, **pupils achieve well** and make good progress as they move through the school. In the Nursery, children are given a firm foundation for learning,

<sup>1</sup> The non-core subjects are subjects other than the 'core' of English, mathematics and science.

which is effectively built on during the Reception year. By the time that they move on to Year 1, children attain standards that are, overall, above average in relation to the national goals that they are expected to reach. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading and science, and average in writing and mathematics. By Year 6, standards are above average in all three core subjects. In both Years 2 and 6, standards are average in design and technology (DT), history, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education (PE). Standards in religious education (RE) are broadly in line with what is expected in the local Agreed Syllabus. Owing to the way in which the timetable was arranged, no judgements could be made in other subjects. In all year groups, pupils with special educational needs (SEN) receive good quality help from skilled teaching assistants and achieve well.

Overall, pupils' **personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good**. Their attitudes towards learning are very good. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Attendance is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good** throughout the school. Teachers are skilled at encouraging their pupils and ensuring that everyone is included in lessons. They manage pupils' behaviour very well, and create a good climate for learning in their lessons. Assessment is satisfactory overall. In the Nursery and Reception classes it is very good. In most lessons, teachers are good at assessing their pupils through their observations and questions. However, in English and mathematics, teachers' marking of pupils' work generally lacks impact, while in science the assessments made by teachers in Year 6 considerably understate pupils' actual performance. In RE, assessment is unsatisfactory, and in some other subjects, such as ICT, co-ordinators are not analysing assessment data as part of their monitoring role. In Year 6, the challenging targets set for higher-attaining pupils in English, which are based on assessment data, are not met because planning does not reflect these expectations.

Overall, the curriculum is good, and it is enriched by a good range of additional activities. However, the shortage of teaching assistants has meant that a nationally recommended programme to develop pupils' skills in literacy has not taken place. The school places a strong emphasis on providing a very good quality of care for its pupils and works closely with parents to achieve this aim. Links with local schools and the community are very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall, the **leadership and management of the school are good**. Governance is very good, as is the leadership provided by the headteacher. The leadership skills of senior members of the teaching staff are good, but the skills of co-ordinators need to be improved, particularly in relation to monitoring provision in the non-core subjects. Management is good, but there is no cohesive management of education support staff. All legal requirements are properly met, with the exception of some minor omissions in the governors' annual report to parents.

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

Parents and pupils hold their school in very high regard. Their views are fully justified.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure that co-ordinators become more effective in monitoring their areas of responsibility, particularly with regard to the non-core subjects.
- Improve assessment procedures in English, science and the non-core subjects.

In addition, governors need to:

- Ensure that the annual report to parents contains all of the required information.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school. Boys and girls generally achieve equally well, and pupils with SEN achieve well in all age groups. Taken as a whole, standards in Reception are above average in relation to the goals expected of children of this age. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in science and average in English and mathematics. In Year 6, standards are above average in the three core subjects.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make very good progress in developing personal and social skills.
- Pupils in Year 6 continue to attain good standards in the core subjects, even though many have only been at the school for a few years or less.
- Higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in reading and writing.

#### Commentary

1. Over the past four years, the school's performance in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 has always been above or well above the national average in the core subjects. The results of the 2005 tests, which are yet to be validated, show that this pattern is likely to continue.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.1 (29.0)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.4 (28.9)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.0 (31.4)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 67 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. The number on roll has been growing rapidly for a number of years, and the school has done well to ensure that its academic performance has not been affected significantly during this period. This has been achieved through well-established systems for inducting new pupils, together with good staff appointments, which have ensured that the standard of teaching has been sustained. Particularly noteworthy is the way in which the school has managed to retain a 'family' atmosphere, in which all pupils feel welcome and valued. The good climate for learning, which is evident throughout the school, is based on high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and is an important factor in the successful integration of so many new pupils.

3. Owing to the very high numbers of pupils joining the school, year-on-year comparisons of the performance of year groups, and measurements of progress made by year groups, are unreliable. However, the school's effectiveness is shown through an analysis of the performance of different groups of pupils. In Year 6, for example, the attainment of pupils who have been at the school since Year 2 is, in most cases, significantly higher than that of the pupils who have arrived since then.

4. Inspection findings broadly reflect the results of the 2005 national tests for pupils in Year 6. In these tests, over three-quarters of the pupils attained the nationally expected level in English, mathematics and science, and almost half of the pupils exceeded national expectations in mathematics and science. The results for the higher-attaining pupils were not as good in English,

and are broadly the same as in 2004, with about a quarter of pupils reaching Level 5. This is significantly less than the school's target for performance in this subject. The reasons for this under-performance stem from a lack of suitable levels of challenge for these pupils in reading and writing tasks.

5. The good quality of provision in the Nursery and Reception classes ensures that children are given a good start to their education. On entry to the school, children's attainment is about average. They make good progress and achieve well because their individual needs are quickly identified, and because they receive good quality teaching and help. By the time that they move to Year 1, many children are likely to exceed the nationally recommended targets for this age group. Children's good progress is securely underpinned by the priority placed on developing their social skills and independence as learners. The good standards of personal development achieved provide the basis for the good behaviour and very good relationships between pupils evident throughout the school.

6. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6 because they too are well taught. The system of grouping pupils by ability for teaching in mathematics works particularly well, and ensures that tasks are consistently challenging. The good progress made by pupils is also underpinned by the regular opportunities provided for them to practise skills in reading, for example, or measuring in subjects such as science, history or DT. Similarly, good use is made of the capabilities of computers to help pupils develop skills in structuring a story or research a topic in geography. The very good attitudes which pupils show towards their work, underpinned by the good support given by their parents, also have a positive impact on their achievement.

7. Pupils with SEN make good progress overall. Teachers are very well aware of their needs and prepare work appropriate to their capabilities. Pupils with complex special educational needs, who have the benefit of a teaching assistant, make very good progress.

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

Pupils' very good attitudes, good behaviour, very good relationships and good personal development contribute significantly to their achievements. Standards in each of these aspects have been maintained or improved since the previous inspection. Attendance is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are keen to learn and work very hard in lessons.
- The school is very good at developing pupils' confidence and self-awareness.
- Pupils' personal qualities are well developed; their social and moral development is very good and their cultural awareness is good.
- Pupils are effectively involved in school development and the smooth running of the school.

### **Commentary**

8. Most pupils like school and are keen to attend. They feel secure and are most enthusiastic about lessons and school life. They show a great deal of interest in their work and involve themselves fully in the wide range of activities provided. On starting school, children settle quickly in the Nursery class and go on to make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.

9. Most pupils respond well to the staff's very high expectations of their behaviour. There is a positive approach to behaviour management, and any incident involving potential bullying or racial harassment is investigated thoroughly and dealt with effectively. Where behaviour is less appropriate it is quickly dealt with, and pupils' learning is rarely disrupted. However, in some lessons, the behaviour of some of the oldest children was unsatisfactory and was less effectively managed. No pupils have been excluded from the school.

10. Relationships are very supportive and harmonious. Pupils' confidence increases as they move up the school. Their view of themselves and others develops very well because staff value them,

make time to listen, and praise effort and achievement by giving rewards. The pupils show very good self-control, become more self-assured, and listen to others very well. Pupils' very good social development is evident in their contributions to the day-to-day organisation of the school. They respond very well to the range of responsibilities given to them and carry them out willingly and with pride. The playground 'buddies' system is particularly effective, and the school council provides a very good forum for pupils to influence the life of the school. Pupils clearly relish being part of the school community.

11. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. They develop reasonable self-awareness and gain a satisfactory understanding of the world and their own place in it. Pupils' moral development is very good. They understand and discuss school rules, clearly distinguish right from wrong and understand the consequences of their actions. Pupils have an emerging understanding of feelings and emotions and their likely effects on others, while showing concern and compassion. Most staff and pupils conscientiously uphold the school's code of conduct and positive vision statement. Pupils' good cultural development is underpinned by learning about different faiths and cultures, and by the additional activities and learning opportunities that help them understand and value the diverse nature of society in this country. A good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' awareness of their own cultural traditions, for example through their work in history.

### Attendance

#### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (94.6%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.4%	School data	0.1%
National data	5.1%	National data	0.4%

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

12. Attendance and punctuality are very good and pupils are keen to come to school. Procedures for ensuring regular and prompt attendance are good. Parents understand the importance of regular attendance, and bring their children punctually to school each day.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are good, and the pupils benefit from a well-balanced curriculum. The staff are very caring and there are good links between the school and parents.

#### Teaching and learning

The school is good at meeting the needs of pupils through its teaching.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers ensure that all their pupils take a full part in lessons; they are generally good at encouraging their pupils, and making their lessons interesting.
- Although the assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory overall, there are weaknesses in this area which need to be addressed.
- Teachers create a good working atmosphere in their lessons.
- Pupils with SEN learn well because their needs are carefully assessed and they are given good quality help.

#### Commentary

13. Teaching is similar in quality to that seen at the time of the previous inspection.

14. The teaching provided for children in the Nursery is a significant strength of the school. The teacher and nursery nurse work very closely together to provide consistently high-quality learning

opportunities for the children. In the Nursery and Reception classes as a whole, eight in every ten lessons are good or better. The teachers generally have a very good knowledge of the development of young children, and very good expertise in the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals<sup>2</sup>. Activities are securely based on very good assessment of each child and, as a result, children are keenly interested in their work and have an appetite for learning.

15. In Years 1 to 6, seven in every ten lessons are good or better. Where teaching is at its best, teachers make their lessons interesting through their clear explanations and the crisp pace of their dialogue with pupils. Another important feature of this quality of teaching is the way in which the challenge presented to pupils is carefully ‘layered’ and is gradually increased as each lesson develops. In most lessons, teachers plan thoroughly and are good at ensuring that the wide range of pupils’ needs is met. In almost all lessons, teachers manage their pupils very well and create a good climate for learning. The good learning that takes place is also due to the good behaviour of the great majority of pupils, and the high quality of the relationships between teachers and pupils. This occurs because the teachers provide good role models, command the respect of their pupils, and know them very well. Throughout the school, teachers are generally good at including all pupils in lessons. They do this by targeting individual pupils with questions to keep them alert.

16. On the infrequent occasions during the inspection when teaching proved to be ineffective in helping pupils to achieve to their potential, teachers’ expectations were not high enough, and there were weaknesses in managing pupils’ behaviour.

17. Through their planning, teachers take account of the individual programmes for learning devised for each pupil with SEN. They ensure that pupils can understand their tasks in all subjects and, as a result, these pupils achieve well. The teaching assistants, who effectively help these pupils, are committed, well trained, and form an integral part of the school team.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 64 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (5%)	18 (28%)	26 (41%)	15 (23%)	2 (3%)	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.*

18. Overall, the assessment of pupils’ progress is satisfactory. Teachers’ day-to-day assessment of their pupils through observations and questioning in lessons is good. Pupils’ work is regularly marked but, in English and mathematics in particular, teachers’ marking is not generally used as a tool for improving pupils’ work through, for example, providing clear information about precisely what should be done next, or requiring that corrections are made. Overall, pupils are not involved enough in assessing and monitoring their own achievement. This in turn impacts on their spiritual development, since pupils are not informed enough about their own progress to be able to reflect on how well they are getting on.

19. In the core subjects, data from assessments such as periodic testing is used well to help group pupils by ability for lessons in literacy and numeracy. However, it is not used sufficiently to raise the level of challenge for the higher-attainers in English. The result is seen in the school’s continued lack of success in meeting its performance targets for these pupils. In the non-core subjects,

<sup>2</sup> The Early Learning Goals are standards for each of the six areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. Most children are expected to have achieved these by the time they start Year 1.

assessment is generally satisfactory in that the requirement for teachers to make an annual judgement about pupils' attainment is met. However, the amount and quality of information from assessment which underpins these judgements is variable.

20. The identification and assessment procedures for pupils with SEN are good. Clear targets are identified to help these pupils make progress, and they are fully included in all class and school activities. Careful planning has gone into the assessment of pupils with SEN to ensure that they are given appropriate help in lessons.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is very good for children in the Nursery and Reception classes, and is good for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Out-of-class activities make a good contribution to learning. The accommodation is good, and resources are satisfactory overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are provided with stimulating activities.
- Topics are well chosen for their high interest level.
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good.
- The school has too few teaching assistants to support learning.
- The library is inadequate.

### **Commentary**

21. The Foundation Stage curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. It is based on the recommended Early Learning Goals, the small steps leading to the achievement of these goals, and the six areas of learning. It links smoothly with the early stages of the National Curriculum programmes of study, and prepares children well for transition to Year 1. It is very effectively planned to provide a wealth of imaginative and interesting activities, and very well matched to both Nursery and Reception children's needs.

22. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 meets official requirements, and planning for all subjects is well founded on nationally recommended guidelines. As a result, pupils make good progress and are well prepared to move on to secondary school. The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection. There is now a satisfactory scheme of work for art, and sufficient time is allowed for coverage of the locally Agreed Syllabus for RE. The school has developed a good scheme of work for personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop skills in reading, writing and number through other subjects. The use of ICT is well integrated into planning in a wide range of subjects.

23. The emphasis on practical experiences is a successful feature of all subjects, and teachers choose topics and activities that have a high interest level. Imaginative links are made between subjects, such as DT and history. Learning is extended well through a wide range of special events and focus weeks. These include a 'Book Day' and a 'Creativity Week'. There is a programme of visits to such places as a science exhibition and a zoo, with pupils' understanding of these experiences developed afterwards through work in class. Visitors make a significant contribution to the relevance and interest of the curriculum. These include artists and theatre groups, whose performances illustrate study topics, some with a multicultural emphasis.

24. Pupils are offered a good range of interesting experiences outside normal lessons. There are several clubs, mainly for junior age pupils, including ICT, craft and country dancing. Music is well represented, with opportunities for tuition in a range of instruments. There is a choir and orchestra. There are good opportunities for sport, including netball, cricket and football, with teams for boys and girls. End-of-term productions are used to develop skills in drama and musical performance.

25. In each year group, teachers plan together to ensure that each of their classes covers the same work. This arrangement is generally successful. However, some classes in Years 1 and 2 are given much less time in the computer suite than others and therefore make less progress. Year groups are divided into three ability 'sets' for mathematics in all years and for English in Years 3 to 6. This is effective in allowing teachers to plan for a narrower spread of ability. It is a good feature that tasks are then adjusted for pupils of differing ability in each set. Such adjustments are generally made in other subjects. However, pupils with the potential for higher attainment are not consistently challenged year-on-year through more demanding reading and writing tasks in subjects such as history and RE.

26. The curriculum for pupils with SEN is good, and ensures that these pupils enjoy access to every aspect of school life. Pupils are provided with detailed and well-focused individual education plans (IEPs). These set out clear targets, focused on their identified needs, so that teachers have guidance in planning work for them. Targets are adjusted in the light of assessments so that these pupils make good progress as their needs change. There are some instances of special provision for gifted and talented pupils, but these opportunities are infrequent and need to be consolidated and developed.

27. The school has enough teachers, though the classes for the oldest pupils are generally large, resulting in cramped conditions in classrooms. There are enough teaching assistants for Nursery and Reception children, but too few for Years 1 to 6. Teaching assistants give good support to groups withdrawn for intensive instruction, and very good support to individual pupils with a statement of special educational need. However, few classes benefit from extra help in lessons. The shortage of teaching assistants has meant that an officially recommended literacy programme for selected Year 1 pupils could not be taught this year.

28. The accommodation is of good quality and includes two halls, a swimming pool and attractive outdoor areas. These facilities are used well for learning and recreation. Two Reception classes are being taught in one of the halls until new classrooms are finished. The layout of this temporary teaching area has been carefully planned, and the arrangement is satisfactory. Displays are used well throughout the school to boost pupils' interest in learning. Resources are satisfactory overall, with a recent good improvement in resources for ICT. There are plans to develop the library but it has few books at present and is inadequate.

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

The steps taken to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are very good. Support, advice and guidance based on monitoring are satisfactory. The school involves pupils very well in its work.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school actively promotes healthy lifestyles.
- Staff provide very good care for pupils, and their individual needs are known well. The quality of support for pupils' personal development is strong.
- Good support is available for pupils with special educational or additional needs.
- Learning support staff are not always effectively used.

### **Commentary**

29. Since the last inspection, standards of care and welfare have been improved, and there have been satisfactory improvements in the monitoring of provision. Staff are vigilant in safeguarding pupils' welfare. It is clear that in this school every child does matter; consequently, pupils feel safe, secure and happy. They trust staff, and relationships are strong.

30. Child protection and the arrangements for ensuring pupils' health and well-being are very good. If they have a problem, pupils are confident they can go to any member of staff and get help. They

know who to go to when they are feeling unwell or need first aid treatment. Pupils confidently talk to staff, who listen carefully and always provide help or reassurance.

31. Overall, there are satisfactory procedures and practices for monitoring pupils' achievement and personal development, and for providing appropriate support. The school has insufficient support staff. This situation results from action that was necessary to address a budget deficit. Although learning support staff work very hard, they are not always effectively deployed or managed. Staff try to cater for the individual needs of each pupil, but the link between tracking systems and support is not always clear. The progress of every pupil is monitored, particularly the gains in learning made by pupils with SEN. Pupils become increasingly independent, self-confident and knowledgeable about healthy and safe living. However, they are not fully involved in assessment of their own skills and learning.

32. The views of pupils are regularly gathered, and the school takes their concerns seriously and acts upon their suggestions. Members of the school council have been involved in staff selection procedures. The school equips pupils well with the skills necessary to move on to the next stage in their education and become good citizens. Induction arrangements for pupils ensure that all are assured of a caring and sensitive start to their life at this school. For the youngest children, this is based on very good opportunities for parents and their children to get to know the school, supported by good information and links with some pre-school educators prior to starting. For some pupils who start school at other times, the initial assessment of their learning ensures that an informed picture of each individual is quickly established; they are welcomed, and settle quickly.

33. Pupils with SEN have IEPs which specify their learning, behavioural, and medical needs as appropriate. The plans have clear targets which provide the information and data against which progress can be measured. Pupils know their targets and what they have to do to reach them. Record keeping is good and notes are kept on both statemented and non-statemented pupils. Annual reviews are carefully monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and indicate that these pupils are making good progress. Pupils who have specific learning difficulties are referred to visiting experts where appropriate. All pupils identified by the school as having special educational or other needs are well supported. The school is totally committed to educational inclusion and ensures that all pupils have equal access to the wide range of opportunities that it provides.

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

The school's links with the community and with other schools are very good. The school's partnership with parents is good and has improved since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The wide range of links, both in the educational and local community, has a positive impact on pupils' learning experiences.
- The school's work to promote parental involvement in learning is effective.

### **Commentary**

34. The school has successfully developed its partnerships with the community, with parents and with other schools. Parents are very appreciative of the regular opportunities provided for them to find out about how their children are progressing and how they can support learning.

35. Parents are kept well informed by regular, well-presented newsletters. However, parents commented that other letters are variable in quality. The pupils' annual progress reports are detailed and effective in enabling parents to understand what their children need to do next. Information provided for parents whose children have SEN is good, and parents are involved in the regular reviews of their children's IEPs.

36. The quality of information provided by governors is satisfactory. The school prospectus is clearly set out and easy to follow. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents broadly comply with requirements, but some of the legally required information is missing from the governors' annual report. This relates to the school's provision for pupils with disabilities.

37. The school is committed to developing a strong partnership with parents based on mutual trust and confidence. The school is approachable, friendly and welcoming to parents, and fosters good relationships with them. As a result, parents are very committed to the school, and a number provide valued help in the school. The school is keen to seek, value and act on parents' views, and to help parents support their children's learning.

38. Parents are very supportive of the many events arranged by the hard working Parent and Teachers' Association (PTA), which raises significant amounts of money for the school. The PTA has used these funds to provide valuable additional equipment and resources. Their support is much appreciated by the school. The school is well supported by the local parish and the community. The links with other primary schools are effective and enhance learning opportunities, and there are strong links with the local secondary school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall, the quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher's leadership is very good. The leadership provided by key members of staff is good overall, as is the management of the school. Governance is very good. At all levels, there is a strong commitment to further improvement.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher shows a very clear sense of purpose and clarity of vision.
- Very good strategic planning has enabled the school to successfully manage a period of rapid growth.
- Governors monitor the school's work carefully and are fully involved in shaping the direction of the school.
- The roles of co-ordinators in the non-core subjects need to be further developed.

### **Commentary**

39. The chair of governors provides good leadership of the governing body. Governors visit regularly, and successfully fulfil their role as 'critical friend' to the school through their monitoring of its work. Governors receive detailed reports from the headteacher, meet regularly in committees and, as a full governing body, oversee the work of the school and evaluate progress made. They have developed a very good understanding of the strengths of the school and are well focused on improving the already high standards of attainment.

40. The headteacher has a very clear sense of purpose and high aspirations for the school. In the relatively short period since his appointment, he has successfully managed and resolved a serious financial situation, a significant change in teaching staff, and a range of disruptive building projects, whilst at the same time coping with rapidly increasing pupil numbers. He has been very successful in boosting the morale of staff and has been particularly successful in creating an effective team who work together very well and inspire, motivate and support one another and pupils.



41. The Foundation Stage, comprising the Nursery and Reception classes, is very well led and managed. The leadership of the senior management team is good, as is the leadership and commitment of the co-ordinators for Key Stages 1 and 2 and the core subjects. However, in other subjects, co-ordinators need to improve the quality of their monitoring of teaching and learning. This, in turn, will help to inform planning for the development of their areas of responsibility. The headteacher and all staff have a very clear commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity, and are good role models for their pupils.

42. Systems for the monitoring of pupils' achievement in the core subjects are well established, and policies for behaviour management, lesson planning and, in most instances, assessment are reflected clearly and consistently across the work of the whole school. There are good and well established systems for monitoring performance data, reviewing patterns and taking action; these are largely focussed on the core subjects of English and mathematics. The school's staff performance management systems are well managed and have clearly been effective in providing support and in bringing about improvement. However, there is no one person with an overview of the deployment of education support staff.

43. Inspection findings confirm that essential management functions are covered very well by the school's office staff. Very well organised and well monitored office and accounting systems help the school achieve their key educational priorities and are not unduly bureaucratic, allowing teachers to get on with their job of teaching the pupils.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,263,148	Balance from previous year	-18,953
Total expenditure	1,209,234	Balance carried forward to the next	53,194
Expenditure per pupil	1,875		

*\*NB: the total income figure includes the balance from the previous year.*

44. The strategic management of growth and finance is very good. The governing body is aware of the 'best value' principles of challenge, comparison, consultation and competition, and diligently apply these principles in decision-making when planning for improvement.

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

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

45. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection.

46. Children achieve well because the teaching is good, with some excellent teaching in the Nursery. There is challenge and high expectation in lessons, with activities clearly differentiated to match the needs of individuals. Curriculum planning is very good and provides a framework in which activities weave together the six recommended areas of learning. The very effective Foundation Stage co-ordinator liaises very well with other teachers and the support staff. Between them, they carefully assess the children and monitor their progress very well. Children are prepared well for transfer from the Foundation Stage into Year 1.

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

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

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

- Children's attitudes and behaviour are always very good and are sometimes exemplary.
- All relationships are very good.

#### **Commentary**

47. Standards in this area of learning are above average, and the children achieve very well. Personal and social skills are well taught, and all children are on course to reach or exceed the expected levels by the end of the Reception year. All adults provide good role models, and this helps children understand what is expected of them in terms of their behaviour and relationships with others. Children quickly conform to the school's high expectations. They behave sensibly and settle to tasks quickly, so that the atmosphere for learning is calm and purposeful. Children are interested and eager in their learning, can stay on task for long periods of time, and are motivated to succeed even when not directly supervised.

48. The adults constantly encourage children and praise their efforts so that they can feel successful. They intervene when necessary with good questioning, which extends learning, and encourage the children to take pride in their work. There is consistency in daily routines so that children know to put up their hands, take turns and listen to others. The children share well and are caring of each other. The environment in the classrooms fosters the development of respect, courtesy and independence.

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

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

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

- Teaching is especially good in fostering enjoyment in writing.
- Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop children's language skills through a range of varied activities.

## Commentary

49. Standards of communication, language and literacy are above average. The children achieve well and make good progress because they are well taught. By the time that they enter Year 1, many children are likely to exceed expectations in this area of learning. Attention to constant questioning, explanation, and activity designed to widen children's vocabulary is a strong feature of teachers' planning, and this is put into practice effectively. Adults continually talk to children, and the imaginative activities help them to think and choose appropriate language to describe what they are doing.

50. Books are readily available and children take them home regularly to be shared with adults. Teachers read stories and poems dramatically; consequently children enjoy them, joining in where the tales are well known or have a repetitive rhythm. Children make good progress in recognising sounds and letters, learning through rhymes, sound and picture games. They have many opportunities to 'write' and do this by making marks on paper with growing confidence. The teaching of this emergent writing is strong in the Reception classes and, in the best lessons, it promotes children's ability to write independently very well.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a wide range of activities to ensure that children achieve well.

## Commentary

51. Standards of mathematical development are above average, and the children achieve well. Teaching is good in this area of learning. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding, so that many children are likely to exceed the levels expected of them by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children persevere even when they find learning difficult, and so make good progress. They count by rote beyond 50 and many can count in 10s to 100. They sing rhymes to help them, and teachers' questioning is designed to develop number concepts further. Children are able to match objects to numbers competently. They can do simple addition and subtraction sums using numbers to 10, and understand how to 'double' numbers. Adults constantly use a variety of mathematical words, such as *above*, *below*, *under*, or *over* in many incidental ways to help develop vocabulary. Children understand symmetry and can make symmetrical 'butterfly' pictures. They know the main colours, recognise two- and three-dimensional shapes such as square, triangle, rectangle, cone and cylinder, and are beginning to develop an understanding of their properties. For example, they know that a triangle has three sides and that a cylinder will roll.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning provides a wide range of activities to promote learning.
- Teachers question the children well so that they develop an enquiring mind from an early age.
- Children use computers with confidence.

## Commentary

52. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developed effectively through good teaching. Standards are above average, and the children achieve well. Many are on course to exceed the levels expected of them by the time they move to Year 1. Teachers stimulate children's curiosity, encouraging them to ask questions about the things they see and handle, and giving them opportunities to explore materials such as clay, paper and fabric. For example, children make puppets and peg dolls to illustrate nursery rhymes and traditional tales. They look at the environment around them and study mini-beasts, noticing similarities and difference between species. They learn about famous people of the past and begin to understand the link between 'then' and 'now'. Old bicycles are compared with modern ones and children look carefully at how these work. Religious festivals, both Christian and from other faiths, are celebrated, so that children begin to consider their own cultural traditions and those of others. They have reasonable opportunities to use computers and quickly become confident in using these and equipment such as programmable toys.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children benefit from a good range of opportunities to develop their skills in manipulating objects.
- The current rebuilding programme has affected the quality of provision.

### **Commentary**

53. Standards in this area of learning are average. Children enjoy physical activity both indoors and out. They achieve well and make good progress, so that most are likely to reach the expected goals by the end of the Reception year. The current outdoor learning area is satisfactory, and the children make the most of opportunities for physical development. At the time of the inspection, space for activities and resources for learning were limited because of the redevelopment programme. However, ride-on toys, prams, and some low level climbing equipment were available. Children have good opportunities to develop fine motor skills in a variety of activities in class. As a result, they confidently use scissors, thread beads, build with construction toys and handle paintbrushes, crayons and play-dough.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good planning gives many opportunities for creativity in a variety of situations.
- Children are aware of the staff's expectations and produce careful work.

### **Commentary**

54. Standards of creative development are average. Children achieve well because the good range of activities planned in the Nursery and Reception classes allows them to develop their language and imagination well. By the end of the school year most are likely to reach the expected goals in this area of learning. Role-play is encouraged, and there is a well-stocked dressing up area to help children in their imaginative play. For example, they become pirates on a treasure island and take part in magic carpet rides. Children have good opportunities to paint and to colour and to make collages with fabric and paper, as well as using scissors, glue and paint to make models. They use

tools well and quickly learn how to handle paint and glue efficiently. They sing together in a variety of situations and use instruments well to accompany their songs and to make music.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Pupils in Year 6 speak clearly, listen well, and read confidently.
- Expectations for the most able pupils are not always sufficiently high.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Lessons are well planned to stimulate pupils' interest.

#### **Commentary**

55. Overall, standards in English are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils generally achieve well throughout the school.

56. Standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, and this reflects the results of the national tests over recent years. Standards in writing are average, but lower than the well above average results in recent national tests. Speaking skills are average, but pupils listen well, reflecting the good attitudes to the subject found throughout the school.

57. Standards in Year 6 are above average in speaking, listening and reading, and average in writing. Overall standards are lower than indicated by national test results, which have been well above the national average in recent years. Nevertheless, pupils attending the school since Year 2 have made good progress. A good number in the present Year 6 have reached the expected level (Level 4), but the number achieving the higher level (Level 5), particularly in writing, is well below the school's official target. Reasons for this under-performance include a lack of suitably challenging reading and writing tasks in other subjects, year on year. Expectations for pace and accuracy are not always high enough.

58. By Year 2, pupils listen carefully to instruction and work well together. Teachers involve all pupils and have high expectations for response. As a result, most speak clearly and thoughtfully, reaching a good standard by Year 6. Nevertheless, more use could be made of reviews at the end of lessons to challenge pupils to take the lead in speaking formally and at length.

59. Reading is well taught, so that pupils have secure skills in sounding out unfamiliar words by Year 2. Most try to read aloud with expression. They can explain the meaning of what they read and this skill is developed well through the school in regular small group discussions, led by a teacher or assistant. Homework makes a good contribution to learning, and a rota of parent 'reading buddies' gives valuable help to individuals. By Year 6, most pupils are keen readers, though their library skills are underdeveloped. Some higher attainers choose easy-to-read books for private reading and their choices need to be monitored more closely to avoid underachievement.

60. By Year 2, standards of handwriting and presentation are satisfactory, having improved since the previous inspection as a result of an effective whole-school policy. Higher-attaining pupils write interesting stories, with good use of dramatic dialogue. Many others write slowly, and expectations for quantity are not always clear enough. Spelling and punctuation are satisfactory overall. Pupils write confidently for a range of purposes and audiences by Year 6. They use a wide range of vocabulary and sentence patterns, structuring longer pieces in paragraphs. A small amount of work is word-processed, with good results. However, many pupils write slowly, and some do not proof-read their work carefully enough. Teachers' marking is generally detailed and encouraging, but it lacks impact when pupils are not required to learn from their mistakes by making improvements and corrections.

61. Teaching is good overall. Of the 11 lessons seen, one was excellent, two very good and most others were good. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen, where the slow pace of instruction prevented pupils from completing a brief writing task. Lessons are well structured, following the recommendations of the National Literacy Strategy. It is a very good feature that topics are generally stimulating, with well-chosen extracts to illustrate language features. In the best lessons, such features are explained very clearly so that pupils know how to use these features in their own writing. In other lessons, though, the link between the text studied and the expectations for pupils' own writing is not made clear enough; as a result, their work is not carefully crafted. Pupils are generally keen to take part in discussions, and this is a generally strong feature of teaching. Some discussions are excellent, when teachers build on pupils' interest and probe the understanding of all pupils through skilfully varied questions.

62. The school has few teaching assistants. Pupils with SEN make good progress when an assistant helps them in class, and very good progress when withdrawn for intensive instruction. Effective use is made of recommended 'booster' programmes for targeted pupils. However, the shortage of teaching assistants meant that a nationally recommended programme was not taught to targeted Year 1 pupils this year.

63. The subject is well led and managed. Writing has been identified as a weaker element in pupils' performance and decisive action is being taken. Assessment information is used effectively to identify pupils falling behind. Specific targets for improvement are set for groups in each class. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress in developing its provision in English since the last inspection.

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

64. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities for reading and writing in other subjects, though such work is not always demanding enough for more able pupils. By contrast, good work results in Years 3 and 4 from a half-termly 'Big Writing Day', when pupils write about topics in other subjects. This works well because of the sharp focus on a specific kind of writing, and the extended time given to planning, improving and proof-reading. The non-fiction library has too little stock, and pupils lack experience in finding information for themselves.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a positive learning atmosphere in lessons.
- Pupils of all levels of attainment work hard to improve their performance.
- The marking of pupils' work is consistent, but does not tell them how they can improve.

### **Commentary**

65. Standards are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils achieve well throughout the school.

66. Pupils in the current Year 2 are performing at close to the national average, principally because fewer are attaining the higher Level 3. In Year 6, pupils have improved on last year's national test results, particularly at the higher Level 5. Those with SEN are given work that is at the right level for them, so that they can move forward, whilst those with complex needs are well supported by their teaching assistants and make good progress. The arrangement of 'setting' pupils in ability groups for lessons in mathematics works well. It enables the higher attainers to be suitably challenged, but does not dishearten those who find the subject more difficult.

67. Teaching and learning in mathematics are good overall. Fourteen lessons were seen, 11 of which were good or better. Three were very good, and one was outstanding. Lesson planning ensures that all teachers have a secure understanding of the work to be undertaken and the resources available to support their teaching. The objectives for lessons are shared with the pupils, and this helps to focus their attention. The teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and the needs of their pupils; as a result, extra attention can be given to individuals or groups when it is required. Because of well-organised teaching and the very good ethos of the school, pupils generally show themselves to be both willing and enthusiastic in their lessons, and find their work stimulating and interesting. This motivates them, and they respond by working hard and showing high levels of enjoyment. By Year 6, pupils make good use of the subject-specific vocabulary they have acquired. They also show the ability to work very well together when the occasion demands. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, and relationships are good. Both of these factors help promote a good atmosphere for learning. All adults take every opportunity to praise and encourage success. In most lessons the final few minutes are spent reviewing what pupils have discovered or achieved. Homework was not seen set during the inspection, but discussion with pupils indicates that it is regularly set to help consolidate understanding and promote independent learning. The assessment of pupils' progress and systems for setting future targets for achievement are generally good. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used frequently as a teaching resource to engage and motivate the pupils.

68. The subject co-ordinator has been in post since last September and is building well on earlier work to sustain the improvement that has been made since the last inspection. An audit of mathematics has been completed, and a subject improvement plan is being implemented. There are analyses of the Standardised Attainment Test (SATs) papers and the non-statutory tests. The conclusions drawn from these, and the resultant changes made, are good indicators that the subject is well led. The quality of the presentation of pupils' work is usually good and marking is consistent, but there are too few examples of helpful comments to aid pupils in improving their work, or informing them of the progress they are making. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

69. Mathematics makes a good contribution to other areas of the curriculum, and pupils' skills are, in turn, consolidated as a result. It is used effectively in areas like science, where graphical skills and the ability to read scales and understand measures are important. Similarly, pupils measure length accurately during their assignments in DT.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership.
- Assessment in the upper junior classes is weak.

### Commentary

70. Standards in science are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6, and pupils achieve well. Provisional results of the most recent national tests for science confirm this judgement and indicate that, overall, results for Year 6 are better than in most schools.

71. The quality of teaching in the six lessons seen ranged from very good to satisfactory. Teaching is particularly effective in Years 3, 4 and 5, where all the lessons seen were judged to be very good. Owing to the way in which the timetable was arranged, no lessons were seen in Year 6. However, a scrutiny of the pupils' previously completed work shows that teaching in both of these year classes is generally good. In all the lessons seen the teachers planned well and carefully prepared the equipment needed to help develop pupils' skills of scientific enquiry. Where teaching is very good, teachers are particularly skilful in guiding pupils' investigations while developing their independence in learning. As a result, pupils are very well motivated and eager to learn. These features were evident, for example, in a Year 4 lesson where pupils were observing mini-beasts and recording their characteristics. The teacher had very high expectations of the pupils and provided appropriately challenging tasks for the different ability groups within the class, stretching the more able pupils particularly well. She used subject-specific vocabulary consistently and expected the pupils to do likewise. The activities were very well resourced and generated a very good level of motivation and interest in the pupils, with the result that they made very good progress. Throughout the school, pupils with SEN are generally supported well and make good progress.

72. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership. School test results are analysed in considerable detail, and the predicted results for the current Year 6 pupils, based on the regular 'before and after' unit tests, mirror almost exactly the actual results in this year's national tests. However, there are clearly problems with communication within the school. The assessments carried out by the Year 6 teachers are considerably less accurate than those of the co-ordinator, and their predicted results do not reflect pupils' actual abilities. More importantly, the teachers' predicted results (based on previous examination papers), which placed the standards achieved by the current Year 6 well below national averages, did not result in any alarm bells ringing or action being taken. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used appropriately to support science lessons. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in developing its provision in science.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils regularly use computers as aids to learning in a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils in some classes have more time in the ICT suite than others.
- Systems for recording pupils' progress need to be improved.
- The subject co-ordinator has made a number of improvements but does not have enough of an overview of provision.

### Commentary



73. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily, and standards are average in Years 2 and 6. However, the rates of progress made by pupils vary from class to class. This is because some classes have much less time to work in the ICT suite than others in the same year group. For instance, one of the Year 2 classes has half of the weekly allocation enjoyed by the other two. Observations of lessons in this year group showed that the same basic skills are taught to all, but that pupils in one of the classes are disadvantaged because they do not have time for extended practice of what they are taught. A scrutiny of the ICT books showed that pupils in one of the Year 6 classes have produced significantly less recorded work than those in the other class. Discussions with a sample group of pupils from this class showed that this is because they do not use their full allocation of time in the ICT suite. The school is aware of this problem and has drawn up plans for the next school year which will ensure more equal opportunities for pupils.

74. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work in ICT. Many bring a good range of skills from home, and readily share them with their classmates. Almost all pupils demonstrate confidence in using the keyboard and mouse to manipulate images on screen and know how to use drop-down menus, while older pupils use Internet search engines to help them research various topics.

75. Teaching is satisfactory. Of the four lessons seen, one was good and the others were satisfactory. Good features of all of these lessons were the teachers' use of the interactive whiteboard<sup>3</sup> in the ICT suite to demonstrate techniques, and the clear links made with previous learning, both of which helped to develop pupils' confidence. Teachers are good at ensuring that pupils with SEN are fully included in all activities. These pupils achieve well because of the good help given to them by teaching assistants or when working in partnership with classmates. A further strength of the school's provision is the way in which the programs selected enable pupils to use the capabilities of computers in a wide range of subjects. However, this can sometimes lead to more emphasis being placed on developing pupils' skills in these subjects than in ICT. For example, when learning was reviewed at the end of a Year 5 lesson about the use of sensors for measuring changes in light, temperature or noise levels, the teacher focused on the scientific content of the session without reference to the gains made by pupils in their ICT skills.

76. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress in developing its provision in ICT. The greatest weakness highlighted by the previous inspection was that there was '*very little assessment of the learning which pupils have achieved*'. A clear framework for assessment is now in place, and a detailed profile of pupils' attainment is beginning to emerge as data is recorded. However, the system being used has two significant weaknesses which need to be addressed:

- the recording system does not make use of ICT;
- some teachers do not keep their records up to date.

The method of recording pupils' achievements on sheets which provide a whole-class overview is useful because the impact of teaching on pupils' understanding of different aspects of ICT could be monitored and analysed more easily. However, because all records are 'paper-based', pupils' individual records cannot be separated out and transferred to new class groupings at the start of each school year. The lack of monitoring of provision has meant that inconsistencies in the quality of record-keeping have not been identified. For example, records for one of the Year 3 classes showed no assessments in four of the five areas of word-processing which should have been noted, while planning shows that all five areas have been covered by all three classes in this year group. No assessment records were produced for the two Year 6 classes.

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<sup>3</sup> This is a large board on which the screen display from a computer is projected. The technology enables the user to control the images on screen by touching it.

77. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. In the short time since he has been in post he has raised the profile of the subject throughout the school and has developed a clear plan of action. However, he is not informed enough to be able to make an impact significantly on standards, because of weaknesses in monitoring procedures.

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

78. Computers are effectively used to enable pupils to apply ICT techniques to their work in many subjects. For instance, pupils used the Internet to research history and geography topics, a graphics program to produce abstract pictures in the style of artists such as Wassily Kandinsky, and data-handling software to generate pie charts or graphs in mathematics.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Religious education**

Provision in RE is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject provides good opportunities to develop pupils' skills in speaking and listening, but opportunities for extended writing are undeveloped.
- Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.
- The study of world faiths makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

79. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with the expectations in the locally Agreed Syllabus. All pupils, including those with SEN, have equal access to the RE curriculum.

80. Inspection evidence obtained by talking to pupils and looking at their work, and from teachers' planning, underpins the judgements of lesson observations that the quality of teaching and learning is sound overall, and that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

81. One of the three lessons seen was good, and the other two were satisfactory. Lesson planning clearly indicates what pupils are expected to learn. Teachers share the purpose of the lesson with pupils, so that they are aware of what they are to do. There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in focused discussion, develop speaking and listening skills, and develop their personal and social skills. For instance, in one lesson observed in Year 4, the teacher made good use of pupils' experiences to help them understand the meaning of forgiveness. Similarly, in a Year 2 class, pupils discussed what is good and bad, and each group contributed a sentence to a prayer which they repeated together at the end of the lesson.

82. Through their work in RE, pupils develop respect for their own and other's beliefs. Although pupils present their work well, too many recording activities include pictures, or require simply the completion of worksheets with one word or short sentences for answers. The use of longer pieces of writing to consolidate learning, and to extend the higher attainers and further literacy, is undeveloped.

83. The leadership and management of this subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has prepared well for the introduction of the new locally Agreed Syllabus, which the school has used for this academic year. However, the new assessment arrangements do not help teachers in planning future work and are to be reviewed and revised as a matter of urgency. Overall, there is a satisfactory range of resources, and the school recognises that those for the teaching of Hinduism and Islam need to be improved. Visits to places of worship and visitors to the school also extend the

variety of experiences available to the pupils. The monitoring of teaching and learning is not yet fully in place, although some limited observations have been undertaken.

## **Geography and history**

84. No **geography** lessons were observed during the inspection and therefore no judgements can be made on the quality of provision or standards and achievement.

85. A revised scheme of work is used, based on nationally recommended materials. This includes more 'political' geography, with Year 6, for example, studying Australia in some depth. The scheme provides for the satisfactory development of pupils' skills and knowledge as they move through the school. To help enrich provision, pupils' studies are appropriately supported with visits. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been responsible for introducing and adapting the curriculum, and for introducing a whole-school assessment system in which pupils are assessed at the end of each unit of work. However, she has not yet had sufficient opportunities to observe teachers in the classroom and thus gain a good overview of both teaching and standards in the subject.

86. **History** was also sampled, and no secure judgement can be made on the quality of provision in this subject. Standards of work seen in Years 2 and 6 are average overall. However, more able pupils in Year 6 do not have the opportunity to achieve above the nationally expected level because tasks are not designed to challenge them at this higher level.

87. Year 2 pupils achieve well in explaining the importance of famous people, and in interpreting evidence in pictures and stories. For instance, higher-attaining pupils write lively stories about the Great Fire of London, showing good understanding of life at the time. Pupils with SEN achieve well in producing their drawings and labelled diagrams. Overall, pupils' written commentaries in Year 2 are brief, although they show sound understanding.

88. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have produced detailed work on several of the historical periods studied, including the Romans and ancient Egyptians. Facts are recorded correctly and longer pieces are well structured. They achieve well in creative writing, through the use of techniques such as imagining themselves living in the past. In discussion of Tudor explorers, Year 6 pupils show a good understanding of the harsh conditions for sailors on wooden sailing ships and the skills they needed.

89. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good overall. It was very good in one of the three lessons seen and good in the others. Lessons are carefully planned and very well resourced. This has a strong impact on pupils' interest. For example, Year 4 pupils were fascinated by the gruesome details of mummification. They showed very good understanding of the process and its significance as volunteers re-enacted it, using clay jars and small-scale models of body parts made in DT. Higher-attaining pupils were set the task of finding further information in reference books, giving them good experience in developing their literacy skills. However, such challenging work is not a consistent feature of provision for higher-attaining pupils through the school.

90. The subject is well led and managed. The curriculum is well planned and stimulating. Staff are imaginative in making learning interesting through links with other subjects and practical activities, including drama, sometimes led by visiting theatre groups.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### Art and design, and music

91. No lessons were seen in art and design or music so it is not possible to make judgements about standards or provision in these subjects.

92. Evidence from discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator, together with a scrutiny of pupils' previously completed assignments, shows that work planned in **art and design** is interesting and varied. Displays show that pupils learn a wide range of techniques, including collage, printing, computer graphics and painting, sometimes motivated by the work of famous artists. Art weeks are held, with visiting artists and sculptors working alongside pupils to produce works such as a large mosaic which is displayed on an outside wall in the school. Pupils use materials imaginatively; making natural sculptures with leaves, and wall hangings from plastic bags, and taking the colours used by Claude Monet as inspiration. By Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of sketching techniques, and use shading with pencils to good effect.

93. Discussions with pupils and the **music** co-ordinator show that pupils follow a clear programme for learning. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop skills in singing in class lessons, assemblies, and choir sessions. Activities such as musical productions help to enrich provision. Pupils are given adequate opportunities to compose music and listen to the works of famous composers, reflecting on the moods that these evoke. By Year 6, pupils use correct musical vocabulary, recognise musical notation, and use tuned percussion to compose and perform. Pupils have the opportunity to learn a range of instruments, taught individually or in small groups by peripatetic teachers, and to take part in the school orchestra.

### Design and technology

Provision in DT is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils gain good experience of a range of materials and techniques.
- Pupils evaluate their work well in Years 3 to 6.

#### Commentary

94. At the end of Year 6, standards in DT are similar to those found nationally. All pupils, including those with special education needs, achieve well. Pupils are very well motivated and have very good attitudes in lessons. Standards are average at the end of Year 2. Pupils achieve well because of effective teaching about the handling of tools and the wide range of materials used by pupils in their work.

95. Teaching is good. In the five lessons seen throughout the school, teaching was good or better in four, with the other lesson satisfactory. Teachers encourage pupils to develop designing skills by giving clear explanation and appropriate challenge in the activities provided. The pupils use utensils accurately and make realistic plans for achieving their intentions.

96. Staff from the school kitchen contribute well to learning about food technology in Year 3, giving very good instruction to groups on the need for cleanliness in food preparation, particularly hand washing. This experience was very relevant to pupils, and they remembered all they had been told. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have developed good skills in evaluating their work. They modify their plans for improvement, so that when, for instance, they design templates for making items they can refine them to produce finished articles, using appropriate materials.

97. The scheme of work, which is based on national guidelines, is good, but assessment opportunities are only adequate. Although the school meets requirements in that it records and

reports 'best fit' assessments for each pupil, assessment systems do not identify the skills to be taught and refined in each year group. Design and technology (DT) is a strong feature of pupils' learning experience and gives them very good opportunities to develop 'thinking skills' across subjects. For instance, in Year 4, DT has played a large part in the history topic on Ancient Egypt. Pupils also have the opportunity to enter competitions such as designing hats for a programmable floor robot. Before moving on to secondary school, Year 6 pupils take part in, and enjoy the Partnership Schools' Technology Challenge.

98. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. She has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and has worked hard to raise its profile throughout the school.

### **Physical education**

Provision in PE is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school makes good provision for swimming.
- The accommodation is very good.

### **Commentary**

99. Standards and achievement in PE are average overall. Four lessons were seen during the inspection, all of which were outdoor games lessons. These observations confirmed that standards in the games aspect of physical education are average at the end of Years 2 and 6. The school continues to put a good emphasis on the teaching of swimming, with pupils up to Year 4 attending swimming lessons weekly. Evidence provided by the subject co-ordinator shows that most Year 4 pupils easily achieve the standards expected nationally for pupils at the end of Year 6. Consequently, standards in swimming are above average.

100. Teaching in the lessons seen ranged from very good to satisfactory, and was satisfactory overall. The best teaching was seen in a Year 4 lesson in which pupils were trying to improve their skills in throwing and catching. The teacher's very good subject knowledge, and the very good pace of the lesson, with its clear focus on correct techniques, ensured that pupils made very good progress. A further feature which contributed strongly to the very good learning in this lesson was the very good quality of relationships between all pupils. Overall, teachers demonstrate good subject skills, move lessons along at a good pace and give clear instructions. The result is that pupils have a good idea of what is expected of them, the amount of time they have to do it in and, where appropriate, what they need to do to achieve the targets.

101. A detailed scrutiny of teachers' planning shows that all strands of the subject, including outdoor activities, are regularly taught. A whole-school scheme of work for PE, based on nationally recommended guidance, has been adopted, and this is supplemented by further published schemes of work for dance and gymnastics. Together, these provide for a secure step-by-step development of pupils' skills as they move through the school. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection. The school has the distinct advantage of brand new and spacious indoor and outdoor accommodation, and this is used well. Resources for the subject are generally good, and a good range of sports-related after-school activities and clubs is offered. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has limited opportunities to formally observe and monitor PE lessons in other classes, and thus to gain a good overview of the quality of teaching and the standards achieved throughout the school.

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

102. No judgement can be made about provision for PSHE and citizenship. This is because in most classes the subject is not taught for long enough in any one session to enable adequately detailed observations of teaching and learning to be made. Since lessons are too short, teachers do not have enough time to develop themes in any depth.

103. The school's programme for pupils' PSHE, which includes sex education and teaching about the dangers of drug misuse, is good. Many of the issues and structures that underpin the school's objectives are addressed, and pupils value the opportunities afforded by discussion time to raise concerns and share ideas. The opportunities provided for personal and social education throughout the school day ensure that pupils achieve well in their personal development. The well-planned programme of PSHE also contains a strong element of citizenship. As part of this, pupils in Year 5, for example, discussed the purpose of treaties and our links with organizations such as the UN, NATO, EU and UNICEF. In a Year 3 class, pupils talked about pollution, and were very aware of the way in which different forms of pollution, such as car fumes, graffiti and discarded paper and plastic, spoil the world in which we live. All pupils are involved in voting for school council representatives, who have a role in activities that involve the school community. For example, school council representatives helped with the interviewing process for prospective members of staff and supported the introduction of 'buddy benches' in the playgrounds<sup>4</sup>. In a Year 4 class, pupils were observed preparing their manifestos for an election for a class representative. Older pupils are expected and encouraged to contribute to the well-being of younger pupils.

104. This area of the curriculum is satisfactorily managed. Broad topics are identified by year groups, and class teachers take responsibility for working within this overall framework. In this way, lessons can be tailored to the particular needs of different groups. There is, however, a significant weakness in assessment, which is neither structured systematically nor rigorous in application. Consequently, the progress made by individual pupils cannot be demonstrated with any degree of precision. Most pupils do not have personal targets to guide their development in this area.

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<sup>4</sup> These are seats which are used by pupils who need someone to play with. Pupils who have volunteered to be 'buddies' are then more easily able to identify and support those who need some help.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
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	4
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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