

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **KNEBORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Knebworth

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117120

Headteacher: Mr K Williams

Lead inspector: Mr M J Cahill

Dates of inspection: 13-16 September 2004

Inspection number: 267157

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:        | 4 - 11                                       |
| Gender of pupils:           | Mixed  |
| Number on roll:             | 417  |
| School address:             | Swangleys Lane<br>Knebworth<br>Hertfordshire |
| Postcode:                   | SG3 6AA                                      |
| Telephone number:           | 01438 812184                                 |
| Fax number:                 | 01438 233400                                 |
| Appropriate authority:      | Governing body                               |
| Name of chair of governors: | Stephen Crome                                |

Date of previous inspection: March 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in the heart of Knebworth, a large village in Hertfordshire. The school serves an area of mainly well-established owner-occupied dwellings with some rented housing; the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The school is much bigger than most primary schools, with 396 full-time pupils organised into 14 classes. A further 21 children attend the Nursery class part-time. The vast majority of pupils are from white British families; nevertheless the percentage of pupils whose first language is not English is slightly higher than in most schools. There are a few pupils from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds including those from the Asian sub-continent and those of Afro-Caribbean descent.

Attainment on entry is broadly average with annual variations in the proportions of higher attaining children and of those with special educational needs. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below the national average; the proportion with a statement of special educational need is below average. As well as a range of learning difficulties, the special educational needs in the school include social, emotional and behavioural; autistic; and speech or communication needs.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team |               |                | Subject responsibilities   |
|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------|--|
| 19623                          | Mr M J Cahill | Lead inspector | Mathematics<br>Science<br>Information and communication technology   |
| 14066                          | Mrs G Hoggard | Lay inspector  |  |
| 32475                          | Mr N Butt     | Team inspector | Special educational needs<br>English as an additional language<br>English<br>Art and design<br>Design and technology<br>Physical education |
| 21103                          | Mrs V Ives    | Team inspector | Foundation Stage<br>Geography<br>History<br>Music<br>Religious education   |

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very good school; it is highly effective in promoting pupils' personal development and achievement.** Leadership and management are excellent and clearly focused on raising standards through continually improving the quality of education provided. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- excellent leadership empowers all members of staff to promote further improvement;
- high quality teaching, based on very good assessment systems and target setting, lead to pupils achieving very well;
- the Nursery and Reception classes provide children with a very good start to their school-based education;
- very strong promotion of pupils' personal development promotes very good attitudes to learning, very good behaviour and excellent relationships;
- test results in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are regularly well above the national average;
- standards throughout the school are above average in art and design and in information and communication technology.

There has been a very good level of improvement since the last inspection; standards are now higher and the overall quality of education, including the teaching, has been improved.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools |      |      | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
|   | 2001        | 2002 | 2003 | 2003            |
| English   | A           | A    | B    | A               |
| mathematics   | A           | A    | B    | A               |
| science   | A           | A    | C    | B               |

*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.*

**Pupils' overall achievement is very good.** Children make a very good start in the Nursery and Reception classes, achieving well across the areas of learning so that they are well prepared to enter Year 1. Pupils build effectively on their earlier learning as they move up the school so that most have achieved very well in relation to their starting point when they move on to secondary education.

Over the past five years, national test results in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils in Year 2 have improved at a rate that is better than the national trend. Standards in the present Year 2, at this early stage in the school year, are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The provisional 2004 national test results for the present Year 3 also indicate above average standards. Standards in art and design and in information and communication technology are above average throughout the school.

The results of tests taken in Year 6 have been well above national averages for most of the period since the last inspection. In 2003, results dipped and were above rather than well above average because of the presence of a greater number of pupils with special educational needs. Nevertheless, results were much better than those of similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that the standards in Year 6 are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science; provisional national test results for 2004 confirm this view, with the school surpassing the targets agreed with the local education authority for the proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving Level 4 and Level 5 in English and mathematics. Standards in religious education throughout the school match the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are promoted very well.** The very good provision for promoting their personal development, coupled with excellent and harmonious relationships throughout the school, lead to pupils becoming confident, happy and hard working. Attitudes and behaviour are very good; attendance and punctuality are good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a very good quality of education for all of its pupils.** The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Key strengths of the teaching throughout the school include the very effective use of assessment in planning work for pupils of differing abilities, keeping track of their progress and setting appropriate further targets for them. Very good teamwork between the adults in the school promotes a very pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere in which pupils become confident young learners who do their best. Pupils of all abilities, including those for whom English is an additional language, build very well on their earlier learning because their learning needs are very well met. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils throughout the school meets their needs very well and is complemented by very good enrichment opportunities including clubs, visits and visitors. The school provides excellent support, advice and guidance for pupils and maintains an excellent partnership with their parents. The school maintains very good links with the community and good links with other schools and colleges.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are excellent.** The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is excellent and focused on raising the achievement of all pupils. Governance is very good and all statutory requirements are fully met. Management is excellent, the school runs very smoothly and all aspects of its performance are kept under continuous review.

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

Parents are very positive about the school and very supportive of it; they greatly appreciate the approachability of staff and the information that they receive. Pupils like their school very much, valuing their excellent relationship with the adults in the school community and the fact that their views on school development are considered important.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

There are no major areas for improvement. The school should deal with the minor areas by implementing its school improvement plan, through which it rightly intends to revise how the time is allocated to subjects such as geography; introduce more flexibility into afternoon timetabling arrangements; and extend the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is good. Most children in last year's Reception classes attained the national goals for early learning by the time that they entered Year 1. The achievement of pupils in Year 6 has been very good during their time at the school and current standards in Year 6 are well above average. Test results in English, mathematics and science over the last five years have been usually well above the national average.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make very good gains in their skills, knowledge, and understanding because of very good teaching based on very good assessment information and target setting.
- National test results in 2003 in English, mathematics and science were well above the average of similar schools.
- Pupils throughout the school demonstrate attainment in art and design and in information and communication technology that is above expectations for their age.

#### Commentary

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading       | 18.4 (16.9)    | 15.7 (15.8)      |
| writing       | 16.5 (15.6)    | 14.6 (14.4)      |
| mathematics   | 18.7 (18.1)    | 16.3 (16.5)      |

*There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English       | 28.3 (29.4)    | 26.8 (27.0)      |
| Mathematics   | 28.3 (29.1)    | 26.8 (26.7)      |
| Science       | 29.3 (30.2)    | 28.6 (28.3)      |

*There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. Over the five years since the last inspection, the school's national test results for pupils in Year 2 have improved in reading, writing and mathematics to an extent that is better than the national trend. Results in Year 6 have been well above national averages over the five-year period, except in 2003 when they dipped to above rather than well above average. The dip was clearly related to the greater proportion of pupils, mainly boys, with learning difficulties. Provisional results for 2004 suggest a return to well above average in each of English, mathematics and science. There are differences from year to year in the relative performance of boys and girls but, overall, there are no significant differences

in the achievement of any group of pupils, including the achievement of the small proportion from minority ethnic families.

2. In 2004, the school appears likely to have exceeded the targets agreed with the local education authority for the proportions of pupils achieving Level 4, and exceeded them at Level 5 in both English and mathematics. Targets for the current Year 6 are realistic and challenging.
3. Attainment on entry is broadly average. Children benefit from the very good provision in the Foundation Stage and by the time that they enter Year 1 most of them will have met the early learning goals and a sizeable proportion will have exceeded them in one or more areas of learning. Overall achievement is good.
4. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good because provision is of a consistently high quality and very well managed. Planning takes account of their differing abilities and pupils are mainly supported within classes. Pupils whose needs require specific funding are very well supported by well-trained and experienced assistants. They are attaining standards overall that are below national averages but consistent with their abilities. Many other pupils with special educational needs make progress that enables them to attain the national expectations in Year 6. Pupils who have English as an additional language are performing as well as other pupils, often to well above average standards.
5. In the current Year 2, the attainment of pupils in Year 2 is above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In art and design and in information and communication technology pupils' attainment is above average. In design and technology, history, music and physical education, pupils' attainment in Year 2 is average. In religious education, pupils meet the standards of the locally agreed syllabus. Achievement throughout Years 1 and 2 is good for pupils of all abilities.
6. Standards in Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science; provisional national test results for 2004 confirm this. Most Year 6 pupils are confident and competent users of information and communication technology and standards in this subject are above average, as they are in art and design. Standards are average in design and technology, history, music and physical education. Standards in religious education match the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Most pupils, including those with particular gifts and talents, make very good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding over their time in the school.

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

Attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance and punctuality are good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships are excellent and harmonious at all levels in the school, producing confident, happy, independent children who achieve their best.
- A very good climate for learning is created.

### **Commentary**

7. Pupils behave very well in and around the school. They are sensible, self-disciplined and calm in lessons, in assemblies, and moving around between classes. From Nursery onwards, pupils are encouraged to work and play together. They are quick to co-operate and help each other. They are, as a result, enthusiastic and interested learners and readily achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning before entering Year 1. As they mature, pupils willingly take on more responsibility and challenge, for example by raising money for charity or helping to organise the school website. As a result of their challenging but supportive environment pupils become articulate, mature and personable and get on very well with their peers of all ages; for example, through acting as reading buddies or helping each other with playground toys. Parents and governors comment that these good attitudes and relationships prepare them well for secondary school and beyond. There were no exclusions in the previous academic year.
8. All staff work well together to ensure each child meets its potential. Since the last inspection, opportunities for spiritual development have been explicitly planned into the curriculum and assemblies improved so that they offer a range of related themes. Foundation Stage children were encouraged, in an assembly, to think about the contrast between their lives and those of less fortunate children in other countries. Social and moral development is particularly advanced, due to plentiful opportunities to collaborate in work and play, and numerous trips to places linked to the curriculum. Year 6 children have an annual residential trip and many pupils take part in extra-curricular activities such as sport. Nursery children are encouraged to plan their activities and then tell their classmates what they chose and why. At breaks pupils proudly wheel round 'Rodney the rubbish cart' to collect leaves and litter. Cultural awareness is good; pupils learn about art and music from other countries, and celebrate festivals such as Diwali. However, displays do not fully reflect the diversity of modern British society or that of the school. Pupils reflect the kindness and respect they are offered and consequently they grow up enthusiastic, friendly and very open to learning.

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

| Authorised absence |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data        | 4.8 |
| National data      | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data          | 0.2 |
| National data        | 0.4 |

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

9. Attendance has improved since last year and is now better than the national average. Pupils are largely very punctual to school and to lessons.

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a very good quality education for all its pupils. Teaching and learning are very good. Curriculum provision is very good overall. The school provides excellent support, advice and guidance for pupils and maintains an excellent partnership with their parents. The school maintains very good links with the community and good links with other schools and colleges.

**Teaching and learning**

The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. Assessment procedures are very good, overall. The teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now better than in most schools.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lesson planning is very good and includes the provision of work that is very well matched to different learning needs.
- Assessment procedures are very good; teachers keep very good track of pupils' progress and set appropriate targets for them.
- Very good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants creates a very good working atmosphere and ensures that all pupils are fully included in lesson and achieve to their capacity.
- Teachers make very good use of information and communication technology resources in literacy and for research purposes; use in other subjects is under-developed.

## Commentary

10. During the inspection the quality of teaching and learning in the Nursery and Reception classes was never less than good; in two thirds of lessons it was very good. In Years 1 and 2, teaching was at least good in more than 90 per cent of lessons with nearly a half that was very good. In Years 3 to 6, teaching was at least good in well over three quarters of lessons with around a third being very good. There was no teaching that was less than satisfactory. Evidence from examining the work of pupils over the previous school year supports the judgement that the overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. The quality of teaching of English, including the skills of literacy, was very good. In mathematics, including numeracy, teaching was good during the inspection, with several very good lessons observed. Over time very good teaching has led to very good achievement in each of English, mathematics and science. There are many good examples of the planned development and use of the skills of literacy in other subjects, for example history and science, but fewer in respect of the skills of numeracy. The teaching of other subjects is almost always at least good and is often very good. As a result of this consistently high quality of teaching, pupils achieve very well and develop very good attitudes to learning.
11. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good teaching. Teachers have high expectations of what they can achieve. Progress is very well monitored. Members of staff work well together with the special educational needs coordinator to ensure that individual education plans are relevant and targets are attainable. Teaching assistants provide very good support in lessons, and pupils know how well they are doing. Pupils learn very well because teaching is interesting and work is well matched to their abilities. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well integrated into lessons, and given every support to acquire fluency.
12. A very strong feature of most of the teaching observed was that lesson planning included the provision of tasks set at varying levels of difficulty for groups of pupils of differing abilities. For example, when Year 2 pupils were learning to subtract 11 by subtracting 10 and then adjusting, higher attaining pupils worked independently and some took away 12, 13 and 14 as well, others worked with the teaching assistant on a large number square in the playground while the least able pupils worked with the teacher, using a number line and cubes to count with. As a result of the well-focused, mainly practical, tasks and skilled adult support, the quality of pupils' learning was very good and they achieved well. As in many other lessons, good teamwork between the teacher and the teaching assistant supported pupils' learning well and contributed to the pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere so characteristic of the school.
13. The very good assessment procedures, especially in English and mathematics, enable teachers to match tasks to learning needs and to set appropriate targets for individuals. This makes a very important contribution to pupils' overall very good achievement. Throughout the school, teachers and other adults have consistently high expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour and the standard of work expected. Because of this pupils know where they are and what they are supposed to do. They are helped in this by teachers' very good practice in making sure that pupils know what they are intended to learn in a lesson and using the concluding part of it to check for understanding. Teachers use questions very well in this context as well as in earlier parts of lessons when they help pupils to revisit earlier learning and then extend it.

14. The school places a high emphasis on building pupils' self-confidence and independence from their time in the Nursery onwards. By the time that pupils leave the school they are well on the way to becoming self-motivated and confident life-long learners, already displaying pride in their work and good perseverance. They become confident in using the school's information and communication technology resources, particularly the Internet for research purposes and word-processing their work, notably in literacy. There are fewer planned opportunities in other subject areas and the school rightly sees this as an area for development.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 58 lessons**

| Excellent | Very good | Good      | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0         | 23 (40 %) | 28 (48 %) | 7 (12 %)     | 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.*

**The curriculum**

The curriculum meets pupils' needs very well. There is a good breadth of curricular opportunities and the curriculum is enriched to a very good degree. Accommodation and resources are very good.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides very good opportunities for enrichment; a very good range of additional activities stimulates pupils' learning outside class lessons.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Teachers regularly modify their planning to provide a relevant and challenging curriculum and the time allocation for some subjects is rightly under review.
- Very good provision is made for personal, social and health education.

**Commentary**

15. The curriculum is generally very well organised and planned, which has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Teachers regularly evaluate their planning and adjust it in the light of their assessment of pupils' needs, to provide continual challenge and a relevant and stimulating curriculum. However, organisation in terms of blocks of time for subjects and the use of time in the afternoon sometimes lead to difficulties. For example, there are occasionally long gaps between successive units of work in subjects such as geography and this hinders the systematic development of skills.
16. The quality of the provision for special educational needs is very good. Children with special educational needs are given full access to the curriculum. They take part in class lessons for much of the time, with work suited to their abilities. The coordinator runs an after-school computer club for pupils with special educational needs, which boosts their confidence. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are encouraged to share their home language and culture, for example in multi-lingual registration sessions in Year 5.

17. Inspection evidence confirms the views expressed by almost all parents who felt that the school provides a wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities for their children. The school ensures that all pupils have a very good quality and range of learning opportunities. It provides them with very good opportunities to widen their experiences through additional activities outside the school day and a wide variety of visits and visitors to the school. Physical education is greatly enhanced by a good variety of sports that take place after school and at lunchtime. School staff, parents and bought-in expertise provide coaching for cricket, football, golf, hockey, basketball and netball. All members of staff, whether directly or indirectly involved with pupils in the classroom, work together very effectively as a team and make valued contributions to the overall quality of learning. There are very good links with the community; for example, a local secondary school boys' choir performs for the pupils. There is good involvement with a local schools sports partnership that gives the school access to additional training, support and equipment.
18. The very good accommodation, including the recent development of the purpose built Nursery and the very good provision for outdoor play, provides the pupils with effective opportunities, both inside and outside, for practical activities that promote speaking and listening skills and physical development. The outdoor curriculum provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good and makes a valuable contribution to their learning. Pupils' personal, social and health education is very effectively promoted in lessons and throughout the school day.

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

Pupils are given a very high level of care, support and guidance by staff who work very effectively together.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good attention is paid to pupils' health, safety and welfare.
- They are given excellent support advice and guidance.
- The school involves pupils very well; it actively seeks their views, acts on and values them.

### **Commentary**

19. The school takes pupils' health, welfare and safety very seriously. Everything from daily routines to health and safety checks is organised with efficiency and care. For example, a detailed risk assessment is carried out for each of the many trips pupils undertake. There is training in child protection for all members of staff; office staff are helpful and reassuring in dealing with parents who are sometimes anxious. Entry into the school, and transfer to secondary school, are carefully planned to ensure pupils feel safe and supported.
20. All staff work together for the good of the pupils, with teaching assistants and teachers collaborating seamlessly; in turn a very high percentage of pupils say there is a trusted adult they could turn to if necessary. Each pupil is assessed and guided with targets set in the core subjects, so pupils are left in no doubt as to the level they are working at and how they can improve; teachers frequently share learning objectives, even with younger pupils, and ask them to assess how much they have learned. This is reflected in full and

detailed annual reports to parents where pupils give their opinions on their own work. As a result a very large proportion of pupils are working at levels that exactly match their needs, enabling them to make terrific progress as well as enjoy what they do.

21. In fact the school makes every effort to involve its pupils, frequently asking their views and allowing them to make choices in small everyday matters right from the Nursery. School rules are discussed and negotiated with each class. There is a school council and pupils are active in contributing to it. For example, they were asked how they wanted money to be spent and chose playground toys; they are also responsible for taking these out and tidying up each playtime. In due course they take over the roles of council chairperson and secretary, adding to their confidence and sense of achievement. Pupils themselves feel that teachers are fair, listen to their suggestions, and respect their views.

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

There are excellent links with parents and very good links with the local community; links with other schools and colleges are good.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are effectively involved in school life and are very complimentary about the school's work.
- Links with the local community are very strong and the school has a special place in its affections.

### **Commentary**

22. The school has worked very hard to improve its communications to parents and has done so very effectively. Written documents are very good; there is a detailed and informative prospectus, a booklet for those coming into the Nursery, regular newsletters and well-crafted, informative reports which also include a space for the opinions of both parents and pupils. They inform pupils exactly where they are and what they need to do to improve. Parents in turn are hugely supportive; they regard the school very highly and frequently come in as helpers in classrooms or to raise funds with the Friends of Knebworth Primary. For example parents help with reading and filling in reading records; regular cake sales have raised substantial sums. They also help in sports coaching or in other practical ways around the school. Their views are sought frequently; the majority, consequently, feel well informed and involved. The homework policy, for example, was fully discussed with all parties to it. Parents are confident that teachers are good, fair and hold high expectations of their children. They praise the settling in arrangements and nearly all say the school is open and approachable on any matter of concern. It is notable that almost all governors are present or past parents of children at the school. They make a good contribution to maintaining good links with other education providers.
23. The community holds the school in special affection, maintaining its village feel despite modern pressures. There are close links with local churches and their clergy. Pupils sing carols at Christmas, for example in retirement homes. Local businesses support the annual Gala day, and in turn some host visits by pupils; various visitors come into school such as grandparents to talk about World War 2 or Indian parents during Diwali, and there are regular events such as the Year 6 visit to 'Crucial Crew' in Stevenage where they learn about a range of useful topics such as personal safety, citizenship and drugs



awareness. A number of governors have local connections, which they use to help the school. As a result the school produces confident, outgoing young people who can mix well and respect others.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the school are excellent. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is excellent. Governance is very good. The effectiveness of management is outstanding.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership, which enables all staff to give of their best for the success of the school.
- The deputy headteacher and other key leaders play a crucial role in driving up standards and supporting staff.
- Exceptionally effective management systems give a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses and underpin school development.
- Governors have established a very strong partnership with the school, shaping its distinct character and upholding its core values.

### **Commentary**

24. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school, which places the individual child at its centre. His passion for all pupils to succeed is translated into a remarkable reality through his ability to communicate what needs to happen to the whole school community. His leadership is characterised by high expectations and rigour, yet enabling staff to take an active role in sharing responsibility. Above all he makes coming to school enjoyable for pupils and staff alike, creating a vibrant and enquiring environment.
25. The deputy headteacher and other key leaders manage the development of subjects and encourage staff with considerable flair. Robust and efficient systems free teachers to focus on raising achievement. In particular the progress of groups of pupils at risk of underachieving is meticulously monitored. Procedures for self-evaluation are outstanding, so that members of staff know exactly what needs improving. For example a whole school focus on boys' writing has been very influential in closing the gap between the relative performance of boys and girls. A governor summarised this as doing the best for and getting the best out of the child. The inclusive nature of the school is its key strength, giving all pupils the security and confidence to flourish.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed. Pupils make rapid progress because very effective systems are in place to include them and to monitor their progress. The coordinator goes into lessons to see how well pupils are being supported. Finances are spent appropriately. There are very good links with other schools, including support from a local special school. Improvement since the last inspection is good.
27. Governors are very proud of their school, have high expectations of staff and hold them to account, ensuring that all statutory requirements, including those related to race and disability legislation are fully met. Despite its large size governors are acutely aware of Knebworth Primary being a village school at the heart of its community, and cherish the family atmosphere that prevails. They have very effective arrangements to shape and

oversee the work of the school. In particular their contribution to the school development plan is vital. At present governors are not linked to classes or subjects in order to gain a deeper insight into the school's day-to-day running.

28. Finances are scrupulously managed. Best value principles are stringently applied in using resources. The headteacher and governors are adept at attracting additional funds to support the work of the school. For example a grant has been secured for interactive whiteboards. An aid to pupils' learning is the willingness of all teaching and non-teaching staff to embrace change and become even better at what they do. Long-term financial uncertainty in terms of national and local education authority funding levels inhibits strategic budget planning.

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

| Income and expenditure (£) |           |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Total income               | 1,034,263 |
| Total expenditure          | 1,005,221 |
| Expenditure per pupil      | 2,263     |

| Balances (£)                        |        |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year          | 6,941  |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 35,983 |

The balance carried forward figure includes an anticipated clawback by the local education authority of £23,635 consequent on lower than anticipated nursery numbers.

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

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

29. This provision has improved very well since the last inspection. A Nursery unit has been purpose-built and is successfully developing. All staff work extremely well together and interact very effectively with each other and with the children. A thorough scrutiny of photographic evidence clearly shows the wealth of learning opportunities that are provided for the children. Very rigorous assessment procedures are in place.
30. In both the Nursery and the Reception class, children achieve well and make good progress in developing and consolidating their skills in all the areas of learning inspected. This is because the members of staff have a secure understanding of how young children learn and as a result the quality of teaching is very good and the curriculum meets children's needs very well. The children are very well prepared for entry to Year 1 because of the emphasis on the development of social skills and the promotion of independence, combined with the provision of activities that are well matched to different needs. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed and provides children with a very good start to school life; the vast majority of children build well on their skills on entry and very successfully extend their learning in new areas of the curriculum. Members of staff work very well as a team, children are efficiently assessed and their progress is very carefully monitored. Proficient teaching assistants and the Nursery nurse are deployed very well to the benefit of all.

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

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

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

- Very good teaching and the excellent role models provided by members of staff.
- Good behaviour management ensures that children know the rules in a climate where everyone is 'special'.
- Assemblies make a very good contribution to this area.

#### **Commentary**

31. The children enter the school with average social skills. The school has very good strategies to develop these, and by the end of the Reception year almost all children attain or exceed the national goals for early learning and many exceed them. Achievement overall is good.
32. The overall very good teaching in the Nursery and Reception class has a positive impact on learning. The children develop a positive attitude to school and make very good progress because adults are well organised and plan interesting and stimulating activities. Members of staff create a calm, secure and purposeful learning environment in which the children thrive and become confident learners. Newcomers are settled in thoughtfully and successfully and are happy to come to school. All the children, including those from minority ethnic groups, are well integrated and they develop very good attitudes to learning. Very good, clearly understood routines enable them to settle down very quickly to their tasks.

33. Foundation Stage assemblies make a very good contribution to the children's personal, social and spiritual development. For example, the children effectively learn to sit and share together in a large group: they listen attentively to the Bible story about planting beans and discover the differences between their life and that of a child in Kenya, who is sponsored by the teacher. This is further expanded as the children look at possible alternative gifts for Harvest Thanksgiving.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Overall, good teaching: staff question skilfully and explain clearly, helping the children to understand better.
- Resources are very thoughtfully chosen to stimulate interest and motivate learning.

### **Commentary**

34. Children enter the Nursery with average ability to communicate. Most achieve well because they are very well taught and there is a strong promotion of language development throughout both Nursery and Reception classes. As a result, they have a good grounding and are on course to attain the national goals for early learning by the end of Reception.
35. A strong emphasis is placed on speaking and listening from an early age and all members of staff provide ample opportunities for the children to develop these skills. Very skilful and clear questioning techniques help the children to think about what they are doing and to talk to each other and to adults. In the Nursery, the teacher and the Nursery nurse provide very good opportunities for speaking and listening throughout the sessions. These opportunities clearly benefit all the other areas of learning.
36. Activities are well matched to the different needs of the children and resources are carefully chosen to stimulate their interest, encourage learning and help them to understand different ideas. For example, in Reception, good use was made of the book 'Grandma's Bill' to reinforce the children's understanding about growing old. The children enjoyed the story and it was used effectively to support their knowledge and understanding of the world. An examination of the children's past work shows that activities are thoughtfully selected to increase the children's writing and letter formation skills.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lessons are well planned, with clear aims that are shared with the children.
- All staff, including the Nursery nurse and teaching assistants, work very effectively together.

## Commentary

37. Children enter the Nursery with average skills in mathematics. They achieve well and are on course to attain average standards by the end of the year. Teaching in this area of learning is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Adults effectively build on what the children know, and provide many well-planned opportunities to enhance children's learning. For example, children learn to sequence correctly the days of the week as they sing and complete the calendar each day. Good questioning probes the children's understanding and helps them to think harder as they work out, for example, the order of numbers from 1 to 10.
38. Learning is enhanced because the children have many practical opportunities to increase their understanding and worthwhile challenges to build on what they have learned. For example, in the Nursery, individual fish with spots on them and number cards are presented and the children are asked to match the number of spots with the numeral on a card, while in the Reception, an examination of the children's past work shows that they have used cubes to measure the height of different sized teddy bears. The very good collaboration between the teachers and the Nursery nurse and teaching assistants successfully reinforce the children's learning.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and make good progress in their learning.
- Very good adult involvement in all practical activities ensures that children make the best use of these opportunities.
- There are good opportunities to use the computer.

## Commentary

39. School records show that the children enter the Nursery with limited knowledge of the world around them. Teaching and learning are good in both the Nursery and Reception classes and all children make good gains. The majority of the children are on course to attain or exceed the nationally agreed early learning goals, while the more able children, around 25 per cent of the year group, are likely to achieve higher than the expected level.
40. An examination of the children's past work shows that they are provided with a wealth of experiences to enrich their learning. For example, they find out about their five senses, look closely at bulbs and plants to see how they grow, they make finger and pop-up puppets and design a route for the floor turtle to travel along. The Reception children enjoyed their learning about the different uses of feet. They respond to questions with, *"We need feet to help us walk"* and *"If you had only one foot you'd have to hop"*. They are alert, attentive, and keen to participate in the lesson. The children's interest is further stimulated and their knowledge of the wider world is extended by the visit of a granddad as they see for themselves the differences that occur in getting old.
41. Children have good opportunities to use the school computer suite and a number of different computer programs are used daily in the classroom to support their

understanding of the planned activity. The children make good progress using the mouse and keyboard.

## **CREATIVE AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

42. No overall judgement can be made about provision or standards in these areas of learning, but teachers' planning, photographic evidence and classroom displays indicate that children are given a very good range of carefully planned experiences. Stimulating resources and equipment are used well to support the children's learning.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

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

- Very good teaching throughout the school means pupils achieve very well.
- The leadership of the coordinator has been pivotal in raising standards.
- Excellent assessment systems ensure pupils' progress is tracked meticulously.

#### **Commentary**

43. Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing, are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. Results in the 2003 national tests were well above average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Unpublished results for 2004 indicate an improving picture, especially in the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5. Pupils are very articulate and keen to offer contributions in lessons. They talk enthusiastically about their work. In small group work they collaborate very well together.
44. Reading is greatly valued, and all pupils know their targets for improvement. Very effective use is made of guided reading time to develop their understanding of texts. A sensitive discussion took place in Year 6 about a book depicting the start of the war in Nazi Germany and its effect on a young witness to those events.
45. The school has identified boys' writing as an area for improvement and has worked hard to address this. Teaching methods have been adapted to make writing more appealing, and story structure broken down into component parts. One boy volunteered that he was beginning to enjoy writing because the teachers made it interesting and gave him time to think. Presentation of work is a major strength, with handwriting flowing smoothly.
46. The very good teaching stems from teachers' impressive subject knowledge, which is enhanced by training from the coordinator, for example in guided writing. A range of very effective strategies captures pupils' interest. In Year 1, the teacher asked groups of pupils to shout out when she used a particular method to read a tricky word, reinforcing the various approaches to reading. Teachers have high expectations and set challenging work. Teaching assistants provide very effective support to groups of pupils. Marking consistently moves pupils on in their learning.
47. The coordinator provides very strong leadership. She monitors the quality of teaching and learning assiduously. Outstanding tracking systems enable the progress of each child to be followed. In Years 5 and 6 the formation of additional teaching sets has enabled less confident pupils to receive greater individual attention and boosted their attainment. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

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

48. There are very effective links with other subjects especially in history, science, and personal, social and health education. For example, Year 2 pupils wrote at length about Grace Darling and Year 4 pupils produced leaflets encouraging people to visit a local nature reserve. Class books on a variety of topics are a feature of many rooms and provide ample evidence that that the many opportunities planned for pupils to write for a wide range of purposes effectively promote their literacy skills.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**. Achievement is very good. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good subject leadership has been instrumental in improvements to teaching and learning and to the use of investigational methods.
- Very good teaching and very good systems for keeping track of pupils' progress and for setting appropriate targets lead to well above average standards.
- Organisation and lesson planning cater very well for pupils of different levels of ability and so all achieve very well.
- The use of information and communication technology resources is under-developed.

### Commentary

49. National test results in 2003 for Year 2 pupils were very high in comparison with other schools with more than half of pupils gaining the higher than expected Level 3. These pupils are now in Year 4 and inspection evidence confirms that this is a particularly high attaining year group, with very few pupils having special educational needs. In Year 6, results were above average when compared with all schools nationally and well above average when compared with other schools whose pupils had recorded similar results in their Year 2 tests. Teaching is very good and pupils build well on their earlier learning; achievement is very good, overall. There are very good assessment systems for keeping track of the progress of individual pupils and of year groups. Individual targets for the end of the year are set in October and reviewed half-termly. These arrangements have a very positive influence on pupils' achievement.
50. Examination of the work of pupils in both the past and present Year 2 indicates above average overall attainment with both year groups having an average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils make particularly good progress in number work and exercise books show good variations in the challenge presented to pupils of differing abilities. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 made good gains in their learning about shapes and the quality of their learning was very good because of very well chosen practical tasks and lots of adult encouragement to use descriptive language correctly. Pupils build well on their Foundation Stage learning; achievement for pupils of all abilities, including those for whom English is an additional language, is good throughout Years 1 and 2.
51. Pupils in both Year 5 and Year 6 benefit from the arrangement whereby the two classes in each year group are taught in three ability groups. The less able pupils in Year 5 made good gains, from low starting points, in their facility with addition and subtraction facts for numbers up to 20. Their teaching is rightly building up their self-esteem by going back as far as is necessary in order to establish a secure basis for further learning. The most able pupils in the year group demonstrated in their lesson that they were confident about finding complements to 100 and 1000 and subsequently used this in finding the difference between two large integers. Pupils responded well to their teacher's high expectations and good organisation.



52. The more able pupils in Year 6 clearly enjoyed rising to the challenge of demanding mental arithmetic, for example working out 75 per cent of £32, calculating  $\frac{3}{8}$  of the answer and then halving that. Their mental skills, familiarity with strategies and ability to explain what they were doing was clearly above average and owed much to their teacher's skilled teaching for understanding. As subject co-ordinator she has provided very good support for colleagues and has led the improvement in teachers' use of questions and in their use of more open-ended investigations and real-life applications. As a result the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school are very good and pupils' achievement in Years 1 to 7 is very good. There has been good improvement in provision and standards since the last inspection. The co-ordinator rightly sees the introduction of interactive whiteboards throughout the school as a necessary catalyst for the required increase in the amount and quality of use of information and communication technology in supporting teaching and learning.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

53. There are some good examples of pupils using their mathematical skills, mainly data handling and graph drawing, in other subjects, for example science. Overall, however, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to apply and extend their mathematical skills outside their mathematics lessons.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average in Year 2 and in Year 6 they are well above average.
- Well-informed and enthusiastic leadership and management are facilitating further improvements in pupils' achievements.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good and pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding very well.
- Teaching and learning are very good and pupils achieve very well.

### **Commentary**

54. In 2003, the teachers' assessments show that nearly all of the pupils in Year 2 at that time attained Level 2, the nationally expected level, while more than half of them gained the higher Level 3. Overall, standards were above average. In Year 6, results were average when compared with all schools nationally, although 95 per cent of pupils gained the nationally expected Level 4; overall results were depressed because only 45 per cent of pupils gained Level 5. In the previous years, results had been well above average when compared with all schools. Indications from the provisional test results in 2004 are that overall results are likely to be at least above average with a greatly increased proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5. There has been good improvement in provision and standards since the last inspection.
55. Completed work by pupils in Year 2 shows good development of scientific knowledge and of observational and recording skills. There is evidence of good early predictions and investigative work, for example into whether girls or boys have bigger hands. This is followed well by the use of a formalised planning framework when carrying out

experimental work on the properties of materials. During the inspection, very good teaching and very good parental support in investigative activities enabled Year 1 pupils to make very good gains in their learning about their senses. Year 2 pupils showed good and developing knowledge and understanding of the life cycle of a flowering plant. In one class, their learning was enhanced through the use of drama as pupils enacted the life cycle. Achievement throughout Years 1 and 2 is good.

56. The overall quality of teaching and learning are very good throughout the school and the co-ordinator's recent initiative with respect to learning through investigation has clearly been very successful. Joint planning by teachers in each year group is beneficial and ensures that scientific expertise is shared well. Science is always taught in the afternoons and the length of time allocated is often used well; on occasions, however, for example when Year 5 pupils were investigating the sound insulation properties of materials, it would have been better to allocate the time more flexibly.
57. Year 6 pupils showed good understanding of the scientific method when investigating elastic limits, recognising, for example, the need to take repeated measurements to increase reliability. All, including those for whom English is an additional language and those with learning difficulties, achieved well during the lesson because of good adult support and the setting of tasks that matched learning needs very well. Earlier completed work shows that pupils develop a very good scientific knowledge base and understanding of the scientific method. The subject provides many opportunities for using pupils' literacy skills as they improve their written accounts. The co-ordinator, who provides very good leadership and management, rightly intends to develop more planned links with both mathematics and information and communication technology.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good and pupils achieve well in developing their skills.
- Resources are already good and there has been good preparation for the imminent introduction of interactive whiteboards.
- The subject is very well led and managed and this contributes strongly to the improving standards.
- Information and communication technology is not used enough in other subjects and some pupils have too narrow a view of its use in society.

### **Commentary**

58. In Year 2, pupils' standards of attainment are above average; they become confident users of a good range of software applications and achieve well in terms of developing mouse and keyboard skills. Pupils in Year 6 did not have the benefit of such good opportunities in their earlier years but their standards of attainment are, nevertheless, above average. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when standards in Years 2 and 6 were average. Pupils make good progress in developing their skills throughout the school; they benefit from greater access to computers in corridors and classrooms as well as in the computer suite.

59. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils of all abilities benefit from having work set at a level appropriate to their learning needs. For example, Year 5 pupils on the special educational needs register and those for whom English is an additional language benefited from working in pairs and from the teacher's direct support. Extra challenge was provided for the more able pupils in this very successful lesson.
60. The topicality of a debate on foxhunting provided a good stimulus for Year 6 pupils who were learning to refine Internet searches. Most displayed a good understanding of the principles and higher attaining members of the class worked well at identifying bias in sites. Older pupils, as well as younger ones, sometimes think that the use of information and communication technology is limited to the Internet, games and word-processing and this has been identified as an area for improvement.
61. The leadership and management of the subject are very good and this makes a key contribution to pupils' good achievement. In particular, assessment is very well developed and the computer diaries that pupils keep engage them well in their learning as well as providing useful opportunities for using literacy skills. The co-ordinator also has responsibility for the gifted and talented pupils throughout the school and rightly sees the potential of information and communication technology to meeting the needs of some of them. A group of pupils, for example, produce a newsletter for the school's website and they displayed a very good understanding of website design and features. They have been very successfully empowered to be highly self-starting and self-reliant in their role.

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

62. Information communication technology is widely used in literacy and there are some good examples of its use in other areas of the curriculum. In art and design, for example, pupils in Year 2 painted striking pictures in the style of Mondrian. In Year 5, research on the Bayeux Tapestry led to very good batik work while a painting program was used very well to enhance pupils' learning about reflective symmetry. Overall, however, the school recognises that this is an area for further development and regards the imminent provision of interactive whiteboards throughout the school as part of the means for addressing this.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

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

- Assemblies, visits and visitors make a positive contribution to pupils' learning in religious education.
- There are good cross-curricular links to English.
- There is no formal assessment system.

### **Commentary**

63. There was insufficient evidence available for a judgement to be made about the quality of teaching and learning. From the two lessons seen and from scrutiny of past work,

examination of teachers' planning and discussion with the co-ordinator, it is clear that there is satisfactory provision that meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus; standards are broadly in line with those expected. Teaching in the lessons observed was good and built well on the pupils' previous experiences. In Year 5, the pupils began to understand the necessity of rules in our lives by relating the Ten Commandments to their everyday life; one pupil suggested that rules are "to keep us safe", while another felt there was a need "to look after the environment". In a Year 4 lesson, the pupils compared the signs and symbols found in religions to those seen in their own lives; they talked about the symbols in the Sikh religion and the Christian cross together with symbols for Brownies, the Union Jack and the school badge.

64. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to learn about their own and other's faith. There are good links with literacy, geography and art. Pupils use a variety of written skills to illustrate their understanding of facts and traditions from the different religions. For example, in Year 1, pupils effectively learn about the Qu'ran being a special book for Muslims. One pupil wrote, "It must be looked after very carefully". In Year 5, the pupils recorded a comparison of Christian and Hindu creation stories and then used a storyboard to write an 'uncreation' story.
65. Assemblies and visits to local churches help to develop pupils' emerging understanding of faith, and visits from people such as local church ministers and representatives from charity organisations, Bridge Builders, who present the Christian message through puppets, and parents from different ethnic backgrounds enrich this element of pupils' learning.
66. The subject is well led and efficiently managed and an appropriate improvement priority is to develop an effective system for recording pupils' progress in the key learning areas of the subject.
67. Two **history** lessons were observed, one from Year 3 and part of one from Year 6. From the lessons observed, a detailed examination of pupils' work and discussion with some pupils from Year 6, together with discussion with the subject leader, there is every indication that standards are average in Year 2 and Year 6. There is insufficient evidence to form judgements about the overall quality of teaching and learning and provision.
68. From discussion with Year 6 pupils it is evident that they enjoy learning history. They remember the experience of visiting Kentwell Hall and talk enthusiastically about what it was like in Tudor times. "Mostly boys went to school. They learnt Latin. The girls would mainly stay at home and do the housework. The poor didn't have education."
69. Evidence gathered from displays and pupils' past work in books show that the majority of pupils develop a reasonable sense of chronology and acquire good understanding of people, periods, episodes and events in history. There are good cross-curricular links to mathematics, art and design, geography and literacy to enrich the subject. For example, in a Year 4 art lesson, the pupils explored with great interest how to make a Celtic brooch, while in Year 2 the pupils write a book about Mary Seacole. Information and communication technology is used well as a resource for research and pupils actively search for information from CD-ROMs and the Internet.

70. **Geography** was not on the timetable during the term of the inspection and only a small amount of pupils' work was seen. No overall judgements are made on teaching and learning, standards or provision.

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

### **Art and design**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Skills are well taught throughout the school and pupils' attainment is above that expected for their age.
- There are strong links with other subjects.
- Issues from monitoring are not always followed up.

### **Commentary**

71. Standards are above average throughout the school and pupils achieve well because teaching is predominantly good and lessons are interesting. Pupils enjoy working with a range of media and learn techniques in a structured way. Displays around the school are attractive and diverse. A particularly striking example is work on the theme of Renoir's "Umbrellas". Teachers know their material well and have high expectations of what pupils can do. For example, Year 4 pupils sketched Celtic designs using different grades of pencil to achieve varying shades. Others attempted to reproduce the knot work patterns using pipe cleaners.
72. Leadership and management are good overall. Effective systems are in place for monitoring, including observing lessons. Feedback is not always followed up, though, as the same criticism concerning provision in Year 6 appeared in two successive annual reports. The coordinator keeps a useful photographic record of work, which shows coverage and how well pupils progress. Every other year an art week provides a whole school focus. The work of other subjects is enhanced, especially in English, history and science. Year 3 pupils were making clay bodies for mummification as part of their topic on the Ancient Egyptians. The positive picture portrayed at the time of the last inspection has been maintained.
73. **Design and technology** was not a focus for the inspection so there are no overall judgements. One very good lesson was observed, previous work was seen, planning was examined, and discussions held with pupils and teachers. In the Year 5 lesson pupils researched the qualities of sweets with a view to designing their own. It was well structured, well paced and involved all the pupils whatever their abilities. They recorded their findings very maturely and discussed them afterwards. There is evidence of good and very good work in all year groups, especially of puppets in Year 2, picture frames in Year 3 and Mad Hatter hats in Year 6. Pupils experience all the different stages of researching, designing, making, evaluating and refining their articles. The very effective coordinator has a clear vision for the development of the subject. This includes making assessments more rigorous and making better use of information and communication technology.
74. In the **music** lessons observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory with some good features and standards of attainment were average. Because the subject was only sampled no overall judgments were made. There are clearly planned learning opportunities to help to develop the pupils' listening and appreciation skills. In Year 1, the pupils effectively explore the expressive use of sounds through using both voice and body percussion; this is a good foundation for future

musical composition. In Year 2, the pupils mainly keep a steady beat, using body percussion and reciting a 'rap' poem. Useful opportunities are provided for them to evaluate each other's performance. In Year 4, the pupils are beginning to understand musical notation and to identify crotchets and quavers through the good use of the patterns heard in 'market-calls', such as "*fresh strawberries*". In Year 6, the pupils begin to understand that lyrics can have a social and cultural meaning and that words can be powerful for delivering a message of protest.

75. There are good opportunities for musical enrichment. There are many opportunities for the pupils to learn to play musical instruments such as the trumpet, guitar, violin, cello, clarinet and flute through effective tuition from visiting music specialists. All pupils are given opportunities to perform publicly in concerts and religious festivals. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths of the subject and the areas for future development. There is no evidence to show that assessments help the pupils to know how they can improve or feed into the teachers' future planning.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Involvement in the local schools' partnership has inspired staff.
- Pupils are kept fully involved in lessons.

### **Commentary**

76. Standards are average throughout the school and improving. This is because teachers are enthusiastically involved in the local schools' partnership, which has led to rapid development of the subject. A new scheme has been introduced and training and resources provided. Teachers have grown in confidence and teaching is mainly good. Pupils achieve well because lessons have a vibrant pace and they are expected to take responsibility for their learning. This involves them in exploring new ideas in lessons, showing good examples of their work and commenting constructively on the work of others. For example, Year 3 pupils discussed sequences of travelling and turning performed to music.
77. The coordinator provides very good leadership, and has benefited from working closely with specialist teachers in other schools. A wide range of clubs is available to pupils including football, netball, rugby and golf. Many pupils also take advantage of coaching on offer outside school. Active steps are taken to include those who do not enjoy the subject, such as setting up a club designed to interest them. Effective use is made of display boards to promote the subject. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

78. Concern for pupils' personal development has a high priority among the adults in school and is a thread that runs through all aspects of their work. Subject lessons as well as assemblies and arrangements for break times and lunchtimes are all designed to promote personal development and responsibility. The school's success in this respect is evident in the very pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere that adults and pupils maintain.
79. The school places a strong emphasis on caring for others and helping pupils to recognise the importance of relationships. This has a positive impact on their learning. In Year 2, pupils talk about what makes people special to them. For example, *"My family is special because they care for me all the time."* On considering their feelings about friendship, a pupil in Year 5 wrote, *"I would like a friend who's supportive, kind, friendly and loyal... They must be serious in serious situations and laid back in situations where you can be laid back."*
80. The school provides sex education and pupils are made aware of drugs related issues; Year 6 pupils benefit greatly from their Crucial Crew experience. The school council provides a valuable opportunity for the development of citizenship skills and for contributing to the school community.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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