

# INSPECTION REPORT

**LADYSMITH FIRST SCHOOL**

Exeter

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113080

Headteacher: Mrs H Thomson

Lead inspector: Mrs L Brackstone

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Inspection number: 267168

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: First school  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 3 - 8  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 589  
School address: Ladysmith Road  
Exeter  
Devon  
Postcode: EX1 2PS  
Telephone number: (01392) 271 596  
Fax number: (01392) 494 714  
Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of Mr A Mulcock  
governors:  
Date of previous 8<sup>th</sup> February 1999  
inspection:

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Ladysmith First is a very large first school near the centre of Exeter that caters for children from three to eight years. Most of the pupils are of white British backgrounds, but a small number are from minority ethnic groups. Approximately two per cent of pupils use English as an additional language. The socio-economic mix of the families is very varied. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is average, but this does not reflect the socio-economic background of the families that includes about 20 per cent of pupils who are recognised as socially deprived. About ten per cent of pupils have special educational needs; their needs include moderate learning difficulties, speech problems and physical disabilities. There are two intakes into the Nursery and Reception classes. Older children start school in September and younger ones start in January. At the time of the inspection, there were 104 Foundation Stage children in two part-time Nursery classes and two full-time Reception classes. The school is part of the reorganisation programme currently taking place in Exeter and, from September 2005, will reopen as an infant school. The headteacher and her deputy have been in post for just under one year.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21872	Mrs L Brackstone	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage English as an additional language
8992	Mr J Vischer	Lay inspector	
16038	Mrs J Bavin	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
22790	Mrs J Pinney	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History
24342	Mrs D Franklin	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI  
Barley House  
Oakfield Grove  
Clifton  
Bristol  
BS8 2BN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet *'Complaining about Ofsted Inspections'*, which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637 833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 5</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>6 - 9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>9 - 14</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>14 - 15</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>16 - 24</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>25</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Ladysmith is a good school** where children achieve well. It is very well led and managed by the headteacher, her deputy, the assistant head and governors. The quality of teaching is good in all areas of learning and the curriculum provided is interesting and relevant. Pupils respond with positive attitudes and good behaviour. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve well and standards achieved in reading, mathematics and art and design are good. Standards achieved in mathematics in Year 3 are very good.
- The leadership of the headteacher, the deputy, assistant head and governors is very good.
- Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 2 and 3. However, pupils in Year 1 are not always challenged as effectively as they could be.
- The pupils are keen to work and behaviour in and around school is good.
- Pupils are looked after well and provision for personal development is of high quality.
- The curriculum is well planned and pupils are given good enrichment opportunities.
- The leadership of some curriculum areas needs to be developed further.
- Pastoral guidance is good but individual assessments could be used more effectively to target academic progress.
- Links with parents are very good.

The school was last inspected in February 1999 and has made very good improvements since then. All areas identified as issues for action have been rectified. In addition to this, the overall leadership and management of the school have improved and standards are higher. The high standards in personal development have been maintained with improvement in spiritual aspects.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Results in the 2004 national tests, recorded above, indicate that the pupils achieved standards in mathematics that were very much higher than the national average and when compared to similar schools. Standards achieved in reading were above national and similar school averages. Standards achieved in writing were average both nationally and when compared to similar schools. This means that **pupils' achievement is good overall**. Children start school with levels of attainment that are below expectations.

Speaking and communication skills are particularly weak. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage, because the quality of teaching is good and a stimulating curriculum is provided. Consequently, by the end of Reception, the children attain the expected levels in all areas of learning except communication, language and literacy and certain aspects of knowledge and understanding, which remain below expectations. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Year 1. Achievement is good in Years 2 and 3 where teaching is consistently of a good standard. As a result, standards in mathematics are good in Year 2 and well above the expected level in Year 3. Standards in Years 2 and 3 are good in reading and art and design. Standards in speaking and listening in Year 2 are average and good in Year 3. Standards in writing and science are average in Years 2 and 3. Standards in information and communication technology and geography are as expected in Years 2 and 3. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in Years 2 and 3. No judgements are made on standards in the other subjects.

**Pupils' personal development is very good** with the school firmly believing that it is central to the academic growth of each child. **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Pupils are provided with very clear guidance on correct ways to behave and are given high quality opportunities that help them to develop their social skills. Consequently, the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are good. Opportunities for personal reflection are well planned and cultural awareness is cultivated through good curricular links.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

THE SCHOOL PROVIDES A GOOD STANDARD OF EDUCATION. THE OVERALL QUALITY OF TEACHING IS GOOD AND HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION. IT IS GOOD IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE, AND IN YEARS 2 AND 3, WHERE THE TEACHERS' SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE IS GOOD, EXPECTATIONS ARE HIGH AND A SUITABLE RANGE OF TEACHING METHODS ARE USED TO DEVELOP THE PUPILS' LEARNING. TEACHING IS SATISFACTORY IN YEAR 1. IN THIS YEAR GROUP, TEACHERS ESTABLISH AN APPROPRIATE RAPPORT WITH THEIR CLASS BUT NOT ALL LESSONS HAVE AN ADEQUATE LEARNING FOCUS AND, CONSEQUENTLY, TASKS ARE UNDEMANDING.

Throughout the school, teaching assistants are used well to support the needs of the pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language. The curriculum is well planned and enriched by a good range of visits and visitors. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils are well cared for and the very strong links with parents ensure that there is a smooth transition between home and school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** The headteacher, her deputy, the assistant head, and governors lead and manage the school very well. This senior management team work very closely together and have worked extremely hard to establish the foundations for the new Ladysmith Infant School to be opened in September 2005. However, the leadership role of some curriculum aspects is not as well developed as others. Governance of the school is very good and governors ensure all statutory requirements are met

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

Parents are very satisfied with the school and are particularly pleased with the standards achieved by their children and the quality of teaching. The pupils are really happy with their school and like their teachers very much. They are confident that if they had a problem they could approach an adult at school who would be able to help them.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure that teacher expectations and the range of teaching methods used in Year 1 are of a consistently high standard.
- Develop a more rigorous approach to assessing the academic progress of the pupils.
- Develop consistency in the leadership of subjects.
- Provide more opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills across the range of subjects.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement is good overall; it is good in most year groups, but satisfactory in Year 1. Standards are average overall.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils have achieved well in reading, mathematics and art and design.
- By the end of Year 3, pupils have achieved good standards in speaking and listening, and very good standards in mathematics.

#### Commentary

##### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004<sup>1</sup>*

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.7 (16.5)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.8 (14.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.5 (16.9)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 148 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

1. Standards on entry into school are varied and tend to depend on the age of the children when they start. For example, the older children who start school in September are generally more capable and are working within the expected level. However, the younger children who start in January are less capable and levels of attainment are below expectations. Consequently, overall attainment on entry is below that expected for this age group. Speaking and communication skills are particularly weak. The children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and, by the end of Reception, standards are as expected in all areas of learning except communication, language and literacy and aspects of knowledge and understanding, where they do not meet all of the learning goals set for children at the end of the Reception Year.
2. In the 2004 national tests, standards at the end of Year 2 were well above average in mathematics, above average in reading, and average in writing. When compared with schools with similar numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were well above average for mathematics, above average for reading, and average for writing. The results for mathematics have improved since 2003 when they were reported as above average. In science, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in teacher assessments was above average when compared to the data

<sup>1</sup> All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a points score. The average score for all pupils taking the test is used to grade schools in each year. The expected average points at age seven is 15.5. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national average score before grading. The grades are shown in the summary.

for national and similar schools. The number of pupils attaining the higher level in science was above average when compared to national data and well above average when compared to schools in similar contexts. The results for science represent a good improvement since 2003 when the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in teacher assessments was below average when compared to the data of both national and similar schools. The number of pupils attaining the higher level in science was average when compared to both the 2003 national and similar school data. The trend in the school's average point score from 2000 to 2004 is above the national trend and this is reflected in the improving standards.

3. At this early stage in the school year, evidence indicates that standards in Year 2 remain above average in reading and mathematics. Current standards are average in speaking and listening, writing and science. Standards in mathematics in Year 3 are well above national expectations, and are above national expectations in speaking and listening and reading. Standards in writing and science in Year 3 are as expected. Overall, this is a good improvement since the last inspection. Achievement, in relation to pupils' attainment on entry, is good. The promotion of speaking and listening skills is a strong focus in the school and this is helping to raise standards.
4. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved since the last inspection and now meet national expectations in both Years 2 and 3. This is because the school has invested well in staff training and effective resources. Standards in religious education at the end of Years 2 and 3 meet the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and achievement is satisfactory.
5. Standards in art and design have improved and now exceed national expectations in Years 2 and 3. The very good leadership by senior management staff contributes to these good standards and achievement throughout the school, and accounts for the very good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in geography are as expected in Years 2 and 3. No judgements are made on standards in the other subjects.
6. There are well-planned opportunities for the pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills across the curriculum. This is particularly noticeable in the weekly sessions where pupils in Years 2 and 3 talk about a skill they would like to develop and then they share their experiences with the rest of the class. This helps them gain confidence with their speaking and listening skills. Pupils develop their reading skills well when using books to find information. However, there are too few opportunities for them to practise their writing skills in other subjects. Pupils use their mathematical skills satisfactorily across the curriculum. For instance, they measure accurately in design and technology and record their science investigation using block graphs and charts. Pupils are competent in their use of ICT skills and use them to reinforce their numeracy skills when they play computer games, and programmable toys help to develop their sense of direction.
7. The achievement of pupils who use English as an additional language and those who are gifted and talented, mirrors that of other pupils. There is no significant variation in standards achieved by boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Targets on pupils' individual

education plans are realistic and measurable and there is good co-operation between teachers and special needs staff to ensure needs are identified and met.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good. The provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good and pupils are very self-confident.
- Pupils are free from bullying, racism and other forms of harassment and the school deals very effectively with all forms of harassment should they occur.
- The moral, social and spiritual elements are the strongest aspects of personal development.

### Commentary

8. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Nearly all pupils spoken to were very positive about the school. In lessons, pupils are keen to learn, and behave well. Even in lessons where the learning objectives are not clear pupils behave at least satisfactorily and often well. This is partly because of the very good relationships in the school, both between pupils and between pupils and staff. The success of the drive of the school towards developing positive attitudes can be seen in most lessons. The effort put into pupils' personal development is very good. The focus on their wellbeing and the targeting of their all-round learning development, principally through their *'Learning Tree'*, which focuses systematically on personal development, results in high levels of engagement and good behaviour. As this method is used consistently across the school, it acts as very good social *'glue'* through which the school community is bonded together. Ethnic minorities are very well integrated into this community and have positive attitudes. Pupils are very self-confident and pursue what it is they want to say.
9. The moral emphasis on respect for the individual and the promotion of good relationships, which includes racial harmony, are implicit in the way the school functions. For example, the pupils have to move around a large site, from classroom to assembly perhaps, and often at the same time; this means they are required to file along corridors in 'crocodiles' and frequently have to wait for other classes. This they do with patience and good humour nearly all of the time. In the busy but well-supervised playgrounds, the numerous variety of games are played with gusto but not usually to the point of bumping into fellow pupils who may be temporarily in the way. Pupils' attitudes are particularly positive about going up to members of staff when they feel hard done by. This has a particularly positive impact on eliminating bullying and other forms of harassment. This is because the school gives serious consideration to any allegations of misconduct and all staff listen to pupils' complaints as a matter of course. There has been one fixed period exclusion in 2003.

#### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
---

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

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
--------------------------	-----------------------------------	--------------------------------

White – British	380	1	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

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

10. Although the moral and social aspects are the strongest elements of pupils' personal development, as at the time of the last inspection, the spiritual aspect is also now very good. There is a strong Christian flavour to the prayer in assemblies that always draws on considerations of God. In some lessons, staff are adept at creating possibilities for spiritual elements to arise, these are deliberately planned for, such as the sheer delight Year 3 pupils expressed in mixing and smudging pastel colour crayons in art, trying to generate the sort of moods they were looking for. The focus of the *Learning Tree* also generates a high level of self-knowledge amongst pupils through guiding their own personal development goals.

### Attendance

11. Attendance is satisfactory overall. There has been a dip in the attendance rate during the last academic year and there has also been an increase in the number of unauthorised absences. The school does not operate a formal award system to encourage pupils to attend but most parents make good efforts to get their children to school regularly. The school monitors attendance satisfactorily but is aware that it needs to deal with the rise in absenteeism. Punctuality is good and lessons begin promptly. The school encourages positive attitudes and the short period of time before the start of lessons in Year 1 is used creatively to stimulate the pupils' interest. This is innovative and supports learning well.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.4	School data	0.5
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is good, and the headteacher and staff ensure good care and guidance for the pupils. Links with parents, other schools and the community are very good.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 2 and 3 is good.
- Teacher expectations are particularly high in Year 3.
- Aspects of teaching in Year 1 could be improved.
- Assessment procedures could be used more effectively to target individual progress.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 66 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (5%)	10 (15%)	34 (51%)	16 (24%)	3 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. The recent intensive focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage has been successful. All adults employed in the Nursery and Reception classes have a good understanding of the needs of these young children. They plan carefully to ensure that the children are provided with an interesting curriculum that develops their knowledge and skills. There is a good balance between teacher-led sessions and activities where the children can develop their independent learning skills. For example, basic numeracy and literacy skills are taught in whole-class sessions where the teacher uses an interesting range of practical activities to engage the children in their learning. All these qualities were evident in a very good numeracy session in a Reception class when the teacher encouraged counting skills by dropping a set number of plastic cubes into a container that was hidden behind a screen. The children had to count the numbers dropped and this developed counting skills very well. Good use is made of the good quality equipment that is available and the outdoor area is used successfully as a teaching resource throughout the school day. Teaching assistants and volunteer helpers are used effectively to encourage the children to acquire new knowledge and skills.
13. Teaching has also improved in Years 2 and 3. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use their assistants to ensure that pupils are supported well in their learning. Expectations of behaviour are consistently high and this helps classes to focus on the learning objectives that are highlighted. Teachers in Year 2 classes challenge their pupils well and this means that their capacity to work is increased. In Year 3, the level of challenge is very good and this promotes high standards and independent learning skills. Lesson planning is consistent across the year groups and this ensures that pupils learn equally well. A good range of teaching methods and styles are used

and lessons move along at a good pace. For instance, the school has recently adopted a new approach to learning where pupils plan what they would like to do. They then carry out the activity and then share their experiences with each other. This is helping the pupils to extend their capacity to work.

14. The overall quality of teaching in Year 1 is satisfactory. A number of the strengths seen in lessons in Years 2 and 3 are evident in Year 1, but there are a number of weaknesses which reduce the overall effectiveness of the teaching: learning intentions are not always clear and, consequently, lessons lack focus. This was evident in several sessions where the point of the lesson was not clear. As a result, pupils lacked concentration and failed to fully apply themselves. At times, expectations in Year 1 are too low and the pace of sessions slow. Consequently, skill development is unsatisfactory and this has a negative impact on the standards achieved. Lesson planning is not always sharp enough and the end part of the sessions is not used consistently well to consolidate learning and assess its quality.
15. Teachers and staff have very detailed knowledge of pupils' learning needs and work well together to support pupils in class and when withdrawn for support on individual programmes. There is good communication between teachers and support staff. Support staff are used particularly well to deliver speech and language programmes to a high proportion of pupils who have delayed language development. Assessment procedures are used well to identify those who find learning difficult, and early intervention is effective in enabling pupils to make good progress in their learning.
16. Assessment is used well in the Foundation Stage to respond to the individual needs of the children. For example, staff in the Nursery and Reception are particularly effective at observing the children working and playing during activity times and this information is used to inform future planning. Pupils' progress in Years 1, 2 and 3 is tracked well in English and mathematics, but assessment procedures are at a developmental stage in other subjects. The school effectively makes the pupils aware of how they can improve on aspects of their personal development. However, pupils do not have a sufficient awareness of what they need to do to improve academically. Marking is not always used to best effect to help the pupils understand how they can improve.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum and opportunities for enrichment are good. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and the quality and range of resources are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage has been improved since the last inspection and is now good.
- Much thought is put into developing the curriculum to make it interesting and stimulating for the pupils.
- Theme weeks, visits to places of interest and visitors to school support the curriculum well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

- The planned programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good.

## Commentary

| 17. The school appropriately follows the national guidelines for the Foundation Stage curriculum, which is carefully planned to meet the needs of young children. Planning has improved significantly since the last inspection and a stimulating Foundation Stage Unit has successfully been established.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

| 18. The school has worked hard to ensure that pupils are provided with an interesting and challenging curriculum. Effective use is made of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and the recommended guidelines for other subjects. All statutory requirements are met, including those for religious education. Teachers have looked closely at a range of learning styles and have carefully adapted the curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils. For example, the school has introduced familiarisation lessons, based on speaking and listening skills, to support the development of early writing skills. Many pupils find the transition from the Foundation Stage to the more formal setting of Year 1 difficult. The school has recognised this and introduced a physical activities session, usually outdoors, at the start of each day for Year 1 pupils. This is supporting learning well.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

| 19. The regular theme weeks enrich the curriculum. Examples of these include a drawing week, arts week and mathematics week. Pupils and parents work together to make learning fun. There is a wide range of visits to places of interest and visitors to support the curriculum. For example, during the inspection, a visitor played the role of a Roman soldier, which supported the history curriculum in Year 3. A small number of lunchtime clubs enhance learning effectively.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

| 20. Teachers continually review their practice in order to support pupils with special educational needs so that they can effectively meet the different needs of the pupils. All pupils are fully included and this supports their learning very well. Programmes of work are very well planned and pupils have an appropriate balance of work in the classroom and withdrawal in small groups or individually. The timetable is very carefully organised so that there is an absolute minimum disruption to lessons and pupils do not miss the same lessons each week. For example, in one lesson, a pupil was withdrawn to complete a programme of work linked to his targets on his individual education plan. This took place during a handwriting session, within the literacy hour. The pupil was out of the classroom for a maximum of ten minutes and was able to return and continue with his task.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

| 21. The school has adopted an effective programme for developing pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship, including sex education and drugs awareness education. It is closely linked with many aspects of the curriculum, particularly with the '*Learning Tree*'. This is a structure that has many goals relating to developing personal skills in order to access the curriculum and is a central part of the school's provision for personal development.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

| 22. The school makes effective use of every available space in the school, including using the canteen as a teaching area, although there are no toilet facilities in the building.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

A number of classrooms are particularly small, which impedes the use of creative teaching strategies. However, the teachers make good use of corridors and other spaces as work areas. The computer suite is adequate, but the library is small for the number of pupils in the school. The outdoor areas are used well and the school has created many attractive areas in the playground for the pupils. A nature trail is used regularly to support the curriculum and a garden has been created from a parking area to enable pupils to grow their own flowers and vegetables. Although the school has no playfield, it has access to one in the middle school across the road. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. There is a wide range of resources, which are of good quality and used well to support the curriculum.

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

Provision for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is good. The support, advice and guidance they receive, based on monitoring, are satisfactory. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The extent to which every pupil in the school has an adult to turn to is very good.
- Induction procedures are good.
- Child protection procedures are good.
- The checking of personal development is good.
- There are no systems in place for pupils to express their views formally.

### **Commentary**

23. The very good quality of the relationships between all staff and pupils, derived from a determination to foster pupils' all-round personal development, is one of the key characteristics of the school. A practical result of this aim is that pupils have not one but several adults to whom they can turn and who they can trust. For instance, this means that pupils feel free to raise a potential bullying incident with staff because they know staff will consider the matter and take it seriously. This positive spirit permeates through the entire provision of pupils' care, allowing pupils to be relaxed, feel well supported and be happy. However, although pupils are listened to satisfactorily through the very nature of the good relationships and their views are respected, there are no formal procedures for pupils to express their views, such as a school council. Whilst the targeting of individuals' personal development is consistent, this is not the case for identifying their academic '*next steps*'. Consequently, gains in pupils' achievement are not maximised.

24. The ethos referred to above also impacts on the induction procedures for pupils. The premise that their personal development is the key to being happy in school, and ultimately their academic achievement, guides the carefully considered introduction to school and the settling-in period. Although visits to pre-schools are not a practical proposition with over 20 feeder institutions, parents are very closely involved through pre-visits and meetings and are given clear information on how they can help their child both to settle in and to learn. Staff closely monitor pupils' gradual entry into the school and once in the school pupils are accustomed to its procedures carefully. For example, the daunting prospect of lunch in such a big school is thoughtfully tackled by a gradual acclimatisation.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering



25. There are very good links with outside agencies to support pupils with special educational needs, in particular the educational psychologist, speech and language therapists and the behaviour support team. This effectively ensures that all pupils have the best possible support to meet their individual needs. Annual reviews are appropriately completed, with all agencies involved with the pupil making contributions as well as parents and pupils themselves.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

26. Child protection provision also benefits from the positive relationships between staff and pupils so that normal procedures are further extended by the easy communication between adults and children. Concerns are more likely to come to light. Even minor concerns about pupils' wellbeing are recorded in confidential note form to ensure that should something develop at some future time evidence will be at hand. Health and safety procedures are sound and up-to-date; all requirements are met. A reasonable range of risk assessments is in place. The site is regularly checked and staff have a simple logging system to bring matters to the attention of the caretaker. First aid procedures are also satisfactory.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

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

The school has very good links with parents and good links with the community. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are kept very well informed, but annual pupil reports could be better.
- Parents are continually consulted for their views.
- Governors are very closely involved with parents.
- The school is very open to parents' concerns.
- Induction links for new parents are very good.
- There are close ties with the neighbouring middle school.

### Commentary

27. The school has a strong tradition of seeing parents as partners and has succeeded in maintaining the high standard of these links since the previous inspection. Parents are very well informed on curriculum detail, a process that begins very well with the prospectus. A newsletter keeps parents in touch almost every month with additional supplements if the need arises. Parents know to look for one on the Friday at the end of the month and this ensures that they are not lost between school and home. Parents' evenings are also well planned and matched by an almost 100 per cent turnout. The only area where information is not so good is with annual pupil reports. Although details on English, mathematics and science are very good - concise and evaluative - information on other subjects is meagre.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

28. Parents are consulted often and regularly. For example, they have been recently consulted over how their children's reports can be improved, and in this way they automatically feel that they are fully included in school life and their views are

carefully considered. In the same vein, the school is very anxious to hear parents' concerns and parents themselves are very positive about the openness of the school.

29. Governors are also very active in informing parents. The parents and community committee has produced several pamphlets for the prospectus which are very helpful to parents. Even the formation of such a committee is more than would normally be found. The committee regularly seeks ways it can be of help to parents. For example, it is currently involved in ways that it can assist parents with the local schools reorganisation upheaval. The Parent Teacher Association raises large sums for the school and coordinates very effectively with school priorities. Many parents help in the school on a regular basis – mostly with reading - and some grandparents are also regular visitors. Induction links for new parents are very good because of the number of meetings arranged for them and the involvement of staff and governors. These are then followed up with briefings and coffee-mornings offered in the first term.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

30. Links with the community are good, not least because the very positive links with parents extends through the local area, and the school is seen to be a listening school and a centre for support. Events organised by the school are well supported. The very recent employment of the family support worker only extends this vision and the school's impact in the community. The local area is used well for its wealth of historical resources, with regular trips and walks for pupils. The leader of the local Roman Army Re-enactment Club, through visiting the school, offers Year 3 pupils and staff alike a vivid portrayal of the disciplined life in the Roman army. The local parish church is used regularly, more than might normally be the case in a non-denominational school.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

31. The good links with other schools revolves principally around the close ties with the neighbouring middle school. Governors are particularly pro-active in maintaining strong links through holding joint meetings and addressing common issues, such as the imminent reorganisation, together. Nearly all pupils move on to the middle school and the uniforms of both schools are almost the same. The two schools use the same kitchens and ex-pupils from the middle school enjoy returning to the first school site for lunch in the canteen; this helps them to feel the continuity of their education and aids the transition. Links with other schools are satisfactory.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are very good overall. The leadership of the headteacher, the senior management and governors is very good. Management is very effective. Governance is very good and all statutory requirements are met.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership of the headteacher and her senior management team is very good.
- Governance is very effective.
- The school is very well managed.

### **Commentary**

32. The headteacher, her deputy and assistant head have a very strong sense of purpose, work together closely as a team and are high quality role models. Together, they have been instrumental in the reorganisation of the Nursery and Reception classes into the Foundation Stage Unit and are working hard to develop a more creative curriculum. They work very well together as a team and are appreciative of the support they have received from the local education authority during recent difficulties with staff illness and school reorganisation issues. Under the leadership of the headteacher and her deputy, the new infant school is well placed to move forward.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

33. Particular strengths among other key staff include the Foundation Stage co-ordinator, who has successfully implemented more structure to the curriculum; the temporary English leader, who has a good understanding of how the subject can be improved further; the ICT subject leader, who has been instrumental in improving standards; and the special educational needs co-ordinator, who has set up very good systems for the provision. There are also two very capable and experienced teaching assistants who take responsibility for other support staff and have clearly defined leadership roles. Consequently, within the school, there are effective teams that actively promote high standards of teaching and learning. The leadership of other subject areas is developing and staff are now working towards a more common approach to the monitoring of teaching and learning.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

34. At Ladysmith, learning is seen as a lifelong experience and staff feel passionate that all the children must develop as independent learners. These two issues are fundamental to the school's future planning. The school has a comprehensive self-evaluation programme. Data from national tests is carefully analysed and the information gathered forms the basis of the school's improvement plan. This means that it is securely based around improving standards and ensures that all pupils receive the best possible education. Staff development is closely linked to this improvement plan, but the needs of individuals and teams are also carefully considered.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

35. The school has very close links with teacher training institutions in Exeter and Plymouth and support for teachers new to the profession is of very high quality. Staff induction procedures are effective and individuals feel well informed by the staff handbook. Many teaching staff have been employed at Ladysmith First School for a considerable number of years and there have been no retention or recruitment issues. However, during the past year, a significant number of staff have faced redundancy because of the reorganisation into an Infant school and this has had a negative impact on staff morale. Within huge financial constraints, the school is working hard to reduce the workload of the teaching staff and reallocate responsibilities.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

36. Spending is closely linked to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The school administration staff and the finance committee of the governing body work hard to ensure that the financial management of the school is secure. Those closely involved with the school, such as parents and staff, are consulted over major spending issues and projects are carefully budgeted for. Day-to-day administration procedures are very efficient. All office staff provide a warm welcome to school visitors and pupils approach them with confidence and enjoyment.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

37. The governing body fulfils statutory requirements and governors work very closely with the headteacher. They are kept fully informed about school issues and this means that they have a very good understanding of the strengths of the school and are able to effectively challenge the senior management. Governors are also fully aware of the areas needing improvement and are supportive in their role. For instance, they are aware that some classrooms are cramped and this causes problems. The governors have been very actively involved in shaping the future direction of the school through discussions with the nearby middle school. They have played a key role in the major redundancy process and have used their professional expertise to ensure that this has been achieved fairly.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,300,587
Total expenditure	1,257,438
Expenditure per pupil	2,135

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	1,824
Balance carried forward to the next year	44,973

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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

PROVISION FOR ALL AREAS OF LEARNING IS **GOOD**.

### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- All the children achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Individual progress is carefully monitored and tracked.
- The curriculum is planned in an interesting way.
- The activities provided stimulate and motivate the children.
- The Foundation Stage is well led and managed.

### Commentary

38. Children start Nursery with skills in **personal, social and emotional development** that are below the expected level. By the time that they have completed the Foundation Stage, they have reached the recommended level for this age group and achievement is good. This is because provision is good with teachers carefully planning activities that systematically develop these specific skills. They are very well looked after and the Foundation Stage co-ordinator ensures that all children and their parents are well prepared for starting school. Consequently, all children, including those with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language, quickly settle in to the daily routines. In the Nursery, they feel safe and secure in their environment and begin to show concern for the needs of others. They also start to show a sense of pride in what they achieve, particularly when they paint or create models using plastic construction kits. By the end of Reception, they maintain appropriate levels of attention and have positive relationships with adults and classmates. They dress and undress independently and can go to the toilet on their own. The children develop an understanding of how people all over the world celebrate different events such as Bonfire night, Christmas, Diwali and the Chinese New Year.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

39. Children achieve well in **communication, language and literacy** because the teachers plan good quality activities and resources are used well to enhance their learning. Standards are variable when children start school, but many have poorly developed speech. The teachers provide good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening through role-play and discussion. Reception children are learning to listen carefully and express themselves clearly when they are encouraged to work with a partner, taking turns to talk and respond to each other. At this early stage in the school year, few children are reading words independently, but all enjoy regular opportunities to share books with adults and each other. Reading skills are developing well. Teachers' records show that the recent implementation of an early reading programme is having a beneficial effect on standards as the children move through the school. In writing, most Reception children understand that writing conveys meaning, although they are not yet writing recognisable letters or words. The children are given regular opportunity to develop their writing skills. However,

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

progress is sometimes limited when, in lessons, Reception children spend too long sitting listening to the teacher, leaving insufficient time for writing independently. Regular assessments ensure that children achieve well overall because focused activities are mostly well planned to meet their individual needs and the staff work together as an effective team to make sure that children are well supported.

40. Provision in **mathematical development** is good because teachers use a good range of practical activities to develop the knowledge and understanding of all the children. Consequently, achievement is good. In the Nursery, children count up to ten using plastic tiles and learn to recognise simple two-dimensional shapes when they create repetitive patterns. The Reception children count up to 30 when supported by adults and use their hands to count in fives. They understand the difference between tall and short and are able to put three sizes of bears in order. This also helps to develop their vocabulary. Teachers organise interactive displays well and this stimulates the children's interest. For instance, there are interesting displays that show different two-dimensional shapes and the children are encouraged to talk about sides, curves and corners.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

41. Achievement in **knowledge and understanding of the world** is good. However, few children achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage because of their limited communication and language skills. In the Nursery, children listen carefully to the story of Guy Fawkes and are beginning to understand that this story is associated with bonfire and firework celebrations. By the end of Foundation Stage, children are beginning to have some understanding of the past. They are beginning to understand the importance of some of the festivals, such as Diwali and Christmas that are celebrated in Britain today. In Reception, children describe autumn fruits and leaves. They know that leaves often change colour in autumn and many trees lose their leaves at this time of the year. Children are confident in the use of the mouse and keyboard when using the computer by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

42. Achievement in **physical development** is good because provision is rich and varied. Teachers in both the Nursery and Reception classes use the outdoor area well to promote physical skills such as pedalling, steering and pushing and the children concentrate well with these activities. Each Foundation Stage class is timetabled to use the main school hall and this enables them to develop their spatial awareness, jumping and running skills. One Reception class was observed confidently stretching, twisting and turning as they pretended to be '*rockets*' that soared into the air on Firework Night. The teacher modelled the '*rocket*' movements well and highlighted the effect on their heart as they warmed up for the session. Children are given lots of opportunities to use their hands to cut paper, draw and construct small plastic models. This develops their skills well.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

43. In **creative development**, the more capable children can draw pictures of their family that have details such as eyes, hair and a mouth when they start school. Most other children make marks on paper, but features are not distinguishable. However, children achieve well and they gradually develop an understanding of shape and form. In the Nursery, they interact together in the home corner '*where they are able to make cups of tea for their friends*'. In the Nursery, the children enjoy participating in role-play such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears and happily pretend to '*go shopping*

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

*or have a picnic'. They quickly learn to sing songs from memory and accompany the words with appropriate actions such as 'Oh, I can play on the big bass drum' and 'if you're happy and you know it'.*

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well against their attainment on entry to the school.
- The quality of teaching is good in all areas of learning.
- The links that teachers make between speaking and listening, reading and writing help pupils to learn effectively.
- The clear leadership and management of the subject are having a positive effect on standards.
- Good assessment procedures are not used to set individual targets for improvement.
- The quality of marking is not sufficiently consistent for pupils to be clear how to improve the standard of their work.

#### Commentary

44. Standards in English in Year 2 are average. The results of Year 2 national tests for 2004 were above average in reading and average in writing. This was a similar picture when compared with similar schools. There was a dip in attainment after the last inspection. Raising standards in speaking and listening and writing has been a priority for the school and as a consequence of the success of recent initiatives for improvement, attainment in these areas is rising steadily. Currently, the English standards in Year 2 are the same as at the last inspection. In Year 3, standards have improved and are above expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and who use English as an additional language, achieve well against their attainment on entry to the school. The school has identified that boys attain less well in writing than girls but there are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls in speaking and listening or reading.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

45. The standard of pupils' speaking and listening skills is average by the end of Year 2. Pupils make good progress in the development of speaking and listening because of the well-planned opportunities for the development of these skills, including discussions, drama and role-play activities across the school. Teachers' good questioning effectively develops pupils' speaking skills by encouraging them to express themselves more clearly. New vocabulary is regularly introduced across all subjects of the curriculum. Pupils are frequently asked to work with a partner, taking turns to talk and respond to each other. In classes and groups, pupils listen attentively to the teachers and each other and explain themselves clearly, using a developing vocabulary. In Year 3, standards are above expectations. For example, in discussion, pupils explain most articulately their preference for a particular poem.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

46. Standards in reading are good throughout the school. Pupils are taught well the strategies for effective reading and are developing an enjoyment of books that is

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering



enhancing their learning. The guided reading sessions are very well organised, so pupils who are reading independently are given planned structures for improving their skills. In Year 2, pupils read fluently for their age. They demonstrate a good understanding of the difference between fiction and non-fiction and of the purpose of index and contents pages. In a literacy lesson, Year 3 pupils used their reading skills well as they confidently scanned a text for the key points in order to write a report about the Romans.

47. Pupils achieve well in their writing because the quality of teaching and learning is good, with many strengths. Progress is satisfactory in Year 1 and good in Years 2 and 3, where expectations are higher, activities are always interesting and tasks are well suited to pupils' individual needs. In all lessons, support staff are well briefed and used well to ensure that all pupils are fully included. To help the boys perform better in their writing, a teaching sequence has been introduced that demonstrates the links between listening, reading and writing and includes familiarisation activities. The boys benefit from this sequential approach because it enables them to see clearly the purpose of their writing. For example, Year 3 pupils, including the boys, were totally engaged in their task as they discussed, researched and organised a report on the Roman invasion. Progress books, which have been recently introduced to assess individual pupils' attainment, are not always used as well in Year 1 as they are used in other years to plan the next steps in learning. The quality of marking is inconsistent. Some teachers use it well to move pupils forward, but this is not always the case.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

48. The subject is well led and managed. The acting co-ordinator has a secure understanding of the subject and is herself a good role model. The results of tests are analysed effectively for gender differences in performance and to identify areas for future development. Tracking and checking procedures are used well to identify strengths and weaknesses, although not to identify individual targets for improvement. Pupils' work and the quality of teaching are monitored effectively for coverage of the curriculum and consistency of delivery.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

## LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

49. Teachers provide good role models in their own use of language with pupils. Across the curriculum, there are well-planned opportunities for speaking and listening. Technical language is explained carefully, making sure that all pupils understand. Pupils develop their reading skills well when using books to find information. However, scrutiny of pupils' work indicates there are too few opportunities for them to practise their writing skills in other subjects. In addition, the quality of the written work is variable, with some work being poorly presented and untidy.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Year 2 and very well in Year 3.
- Most teachers have high expectations of pupils and plan well to meet their differing needs.



- Too often expectations of pupils in Year 1 are too low.
- The subject is led and managed well with good teamwork.

## Commentary

50. Standards in mathematics in Year 2 are above average. In the Year 2 national tests in 2004, the proportion of pupils attaining expected standards in mathematics was well above average, with a very high percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels. Standards of work seen in Year 3 indicate that they are working well above the expected level for this age group. This is because the good quality teaching in Year 3 is ensuring that this positive momentum is being maintained and pupils continue to achieve well. This represents good improvement in standards since the last inspection, and the steady improvement over recent years has continued. It also means that girls and boys are achieving well, including those pupils who have special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

51. Teaching of mathematics is good. During the inspection, most lessons were taught well, but there were examples of excellent and very good teaching as well as examples of unsatisfactory teaching. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils and plan carefully to ensure that all pupils are challenged well. When there are teaching assistants in class, they provide valuable extra help for pupils working in small groups. When teaching is excellent or very good, teachers make exceptionally good use of their knowledge of pupils' skills and understanding; there is a cracking pace to the lesson and planning pays meticulous attention to detail. In these lessons, pupils make tremendous gains within the lesson, for example, in transferring data from tally charts to pictograms and using their calculating skills to develop keys where one symbol represents two items. However, in Year 1, teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils. When teaching is unsatisfactory, this is a significant feature and means the pace is too slow, activities do not stimulate pupils sufficiently and not enough mathematical learning takes place. In these lessons, teachers do not give pupils sufficient feedback and guidance so errors go unchecked and learning is limited.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

52. The subject has a new subject leader this term with considerable experience of working alongside the previous co-ordinator for many years. The current subject leader has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within the subject. Good teamwork between colleagues has ensured the successful improvement of the subject since the last inspection. This has included improved analysis of test results and careful planning to address gaps in pupils' knowledge. The new appointment reflects the headteacher's and senior managers' justified determination to develop the subject leadership role within the school.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

## MATHEMATICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

53. Pupils use their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding to the extent expected in other subjects. For example, they measure carefully to make two centimetre deep picture mounts in design and technology and they record scientific information on graphs and charts. In individual lessons, teachers make good use of computers to support pupils' learning, for example, data handling.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

## SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Achievement is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 2 and 3.
- The role of the subject leader is underdeveloped.

### COMMENTARY

54. By the end of Year 2, standards are average and also meet national expectations by the end of Year 3. This is similar to the last inspection. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2004 indicate that standards were above the national average, with a good number achieving higher than the expected level. This indicates an improving picture since 2003 when standards were below average. Most pupils are achieving well in Years 2 and 3 because of good teaching. Achievement is sound in Year 1, where teaching is satisfactory overall.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

55. Examples of work seen in Year 2 indicate that pupils make good progress in this year. Pupils confidently discuss how a variety of different toys move, and identify the force needed to move the toys. Most know the different parts of a plant and identify similarities and differences between humans. For example, they compare sizes of hand-spans and successfully record their results on tally charts and graphs. In Year 3, pupils recall their knowledge and understanding of forces and give clear explanations of the term friction. They plan a fair test for paper absorbency, predict and draw conclusions from their results. Samples of pupils' work indicate that the good progress is maintained in this year.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

56. Most lessons are well planned and teachers have secure subject knowledge. Teachers have high expectations and focus clearly on the use of specific scientific vocabulary. They question effectively and insist that pupils use the correct scientific vocabulary in their explanations. This supports learning well. No direct teaching of science was observed in Year 1 because science is taught in blocks of lessons and is not currently on the timetable. This means that there are blocks of time without any science lessons and this results in only satisfactory achievement by most of the pupils. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall, with regular assessments at the end of units of work. However, these assessments are not rigorous enough to track individual pupils' progress against National Curriculum levels of attainment. Teachers discuss pupils' work individually, rather than providing detailed marking, but this can be very time consuming in lessons and not particularly helpful for parents when they look at their child's work.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

57. The subject leader has effectively analysed teacher assessments and appropriately identified weaknesses in standards, particularly in *'materials'*. This area has become a focus and consequently standards, in this area of the curriculum, are improving. Resources have been audited by the co-ordinator and the school is well resourced. The subject leader has satisfactorily monitored some lessons and samples of pupils' work, but monitoring sessions do not have a clear focus for judging the quality of

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

teaching in order to improve teaching and learning effectively. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well.
- The teaching of ICT skills is good.
- The leadership and management of ICT are good.
- Assessment procedures are not used effectively to track the progress of individual pupils.

### **Commentary**

58. At the end of Year 2 and in Year 3, pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations and they achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve similar standards to their peers. Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection because of staff training and investment in resources. In Year 1, pupils confidently log on to the computer and use a software program to draw and paint. Year 2 pupils understand that devices respond to signals and are learning to control a programmable toy. Evidence from lesson observations and a portfolio of pupils' work indicates that pupils in Year 3 attain satisfactory standards in a range of activities, such as graphics, word processing and data handling. Pupils know how to use the Internet for research.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

59. In lessons, learning is good because the teachers demonstrate their secure knowledge of the subject as they confidently model tasks and reinforce techniques. Teachers manage the pupils well, offering praise and encouragement and ensuring all pupils are engaged in the learning. Lessons are well planned for the teaching of small groups, so that pupils are not left waiting for help and all pupils are fully included. Tasks are interesting and, as a result, pupils have good attitudes and work hard, often working collaboratively. There is very effective teamwork between the teachers and the knowledgeable and well-briefed support assistant. Consequently, pupils acquire well the skills, knowledge and understanding expected of them.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

60. The management and leadership of the subject are good; the subject is enthusiastically and competently led. The co-ordinator is herself a very good role model and is firmly committed to further improvement in provision and standards. Pupils' work and teachers' planning are regularly monitored to confirm full coverage of the programmes of study and to identify areas for future development. The school is aware that the establishment of systems for individual assessment is an area for future development. The subject is well resourced. The computer suite and the mini suites outside classrooms are well used to enhance pupils' learning.

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

61. The use of ICT across all subjects is satisfactory. For example, pupils use a data base to create bar graphs, linked with their numeracy; they create art work in the style of Mondrian; and there are many examples of word processing being used to present writing and information. The school is in the process of improving its planning to further include links with other subjects.

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

## HUMANITIES

The inspection focused on **religious education** and **geography**. Work was sampled in **history**.

62. In the one **history** lesson that was observed, the learning for pupils in Year 3 was very well enhanced by the visit of a Roman Soldier. The pupils were inspired as they were treated to a vivid example of living history. As a result, they made very good progress in their understanding of the life of a Roman legionary. Scrutiny of pupils' books and a portfolio of their work indicate that knowledge and understanding of history is developed systematically across the school. Pupils use their writing skills appropriately. For example, Year 3 pupils write a newspaper report on the Roman invasion and Year 2 pupils record a day in the life of a Victorian. However, there is limited evidence of ICT being used to support learning. The leadership and management of history are satisfactory.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education lessons make a good contribution to spiritual development.
- Resources are good.
- Learning objectives do not always have a religious focus.
- The subject leader's role is underdeveloped.

## COMMENTARY

63. Pupils' attainment meets the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 3. Achievement is satisfactory and has been maintained since the last inspection. Teachers provide the pupils with plenty of opportunities to reflect on their beliefs and those of others in lessons and this contributes well to pupils' spiritual development. For example, in Year 1, pupils were asked to think about something beautiful in the world and in Year 3, pupils listened quietly to Psalm 23 and reflected on its meaning.
64. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and Judaism. For instance, they compare the Bible with the Torah and make their own set of rules based on the set of rules in both special books. In Year 1, pupils understand significant features of a church and understand that baptism is important

to Christians. Very good links with the local church enable the pupils to visit and take part in a baptism ceremony. Older pupils confidently discuss meanings of religious words and sayings, such as *'The Lord is my shepherd'*. When the main focus of the lesson is religious-based, contributions to discussions are of high quality and many pupils exceed the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

65. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and they are appropriately using the units of work from the Locally Agreed Syllabus, when planning their lessons. However, in some lessons, where the religious element of the learning objective is less clear, the activities planned are too literacy-based. Therefore, teachers are unable to assess the religious knowledge and understanding gained in the lesson. This is having a negative impact on standards because when the focus is clear and teaching is very good, then pupils are exceeding expectations. Assessment tasks are being introduced this year and these are beginning to provide a clearer picture of what pupils know and understand.
66. The school is well resourced and teachers use artefacts and information packs well to support teaching and learning. The subject leader has worked hard to provide a scheme of work to support teachers in their planning. She is effectively developing cross-curricular links, particularly with literacy. For example, the subject leader has recently purchased a literacy pack containing Bible stories for use in literacy lessons. Samples of pupils' work are satisfactorily monitored and the co-ordinator has a collection of pupils' work. However, these samples are currently not linked to the attainment targets in the Locally Agreed Syllabus to support teachers with their assessments. Monitoring of teaching is in the early stages of development and lacks the focus needed to raise standards. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

## Geography

Provision for geography is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good in Year 2.
- The good attitudes shown by pupils.
- There are insufficient opportunities for writing and numeracy across the subject.
- Assessment procedures are underdeveloped.

### Commentary

67. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with those expected and have remained the same as at the time of the last inspection. The achievement of pupils is satisfactory in Year 1 and good in Year 2. By Year 2, pupils can draw simple maps and are beginning to use keys to identify human and physical features. They recognise countries on atlases and globes and are beginning to make comparisons between these countries and their own. During the inspection, no geography was seen in Year 3, and it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching or standards for this year group.

68. Teaching is satisfactory in Year 1 and good in Year 2. In all lessons, pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported and make progress commensurate with the rest of the class. However, in Year 1, progress is limited when learning intentions are focused on the activities to be completed rather than the specific skill to be acquired. On occasion, teachers demonstrate low expectations by accepting work that is poorly presented. In Year 2, pupils have good attitudes and work hard, achieving well because the tasks they are given are interesting and suitably challenging. There was very limited work recorded in pupils' books to make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. This is because pupils do not use their writing or numeracy skills sufficiently in geography to develop achievement and standards. The use of ICT is satisfactory. For example, Year 2 pupils produce maps using the computer and Year 3 pupils use data analysis to find information about The Gambia.
69. The leadership and management of geography are satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors pupils' work and teachers' planning, but has not recently monitored the quality of teaching to ensure consistency in the way the subject is taught. Assessment procedures are not as effective as they might be because they do not monitor individual pupils' progress against the levels of the National Curriculum.

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

The inspection focused on art and design. Work was sampled in design and technology, music and physical education and so it is not possible to give a judgement on provision in these subjects.

70. In **design and technology**, it is evident that there are suitable plans in place that teachers follow and ensure that the National Curriculum is covered. The relatively new subject leader has identified the need for greater consistency in ensuring that pupils always evaluate the work they design and record their evaluations.
71. No **music** lessons were seen, but inspectors heard pupils singing hymns in assemblies, where pupils sang tunefully and with a good awareness of timing. Discussions with staff indicate that the National Curriculum is appropriately planned and implemented.
72. Discussion with the **physical education** co-ordinator and an analysis of paper work indicates that there are good systems for recording pupils' growing skills in the subject. These assessment forms are good because they link what pupils achieve both to learning intentions in lessons and to the national guidance identifying what pupils are expected to do at different ages. Part of one lesson was seen and this was well planned and made good use of pupils' imaginations, successfully encouraging them to move imaginatively and expressively. In this lesson, pupils moved with the level of co-ordination expected for their age.

#### **Art and design**

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and reach good standards throughout the school.
- Pupils benefit from the good subject knowledge of the specialist teacher.
- Senior members of staff lead the subject very well and this has resulted in the very good improvement since the previous inspection.
- The curriculum is enhanced by good links between art and design and other subjects.

## Commentary

73. Standards in pupils' artwork are good in Years 1 and 2 and these strengths are maintained in Year 3. Boys and girls, including pupils with special educational needs and those who are developing English as an additional language, achieve well in the subject. The expertise of the senior teacher, who specialises in art teaching, is of enormous value to pupils throughout the school. In all year groups, pupils benefit directly from her consistently good teaching in lessons, which concentrate on increasing their skills and techniques. They also gain from her collaboration with their class teachers and this is helping to increase staff confidence in the subject. Consequently, the quality of teaching in this subject is good overall. The impact of all these strengths and the high expectations of the art teacher are apparent in the work pupils produce. For example, pupils in all year groups have undertaken good quality pencil drawings depicting people moving.
74. The very good leadership by senior management staff contributes to the good standards and achievement throughout the school, and accounts for the very good improvement since the previous inspection. At that time, art skills were not taught consistently and systematically, which resulted in only satisfactory standards and progress for pupils. The subject has a high profile in the school and contributes well to other subjects and areas of pupils' learning. For example, the annual arts week last year made interesting links between art and mathematics when pupils produced work such as symmetrical patterns. During the inspection, pupils in Year 3 had good opportunities to link art and history when they handled an authentic Roman pot before embarking on their first lesson making their own clay thumb and coil pots. The well-chosen curriculum means that pupils have good opportunities to appreciate the natural world and enhance their spiritual development. This is evident through activities such as the observational drawings of plants and three-dimensional work using natural materials in the style of Arcimboldo.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

75. The personal, social and health education and citizenship programme is good and well established throughout the school. The targets on the '*Learning Tree*' are at the core of the school's personal, social and health education and citizenship programme and provide a good focus for personal development. Pupils have good opportunities to discuss issues such as bullying and to talk about raising self-esteem, such as setting goals and thinking about their personal qualities. There is an effective programme for health education and the school is involved in a number of projects such as The Healthy Eating Project. Only one full lesson was observed during the inspection so it is not possible to judge the overall quality of teaching and learning.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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