

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MERSTHAM COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Merstham

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 124989

Headteacher: Ms M Spencer

Lead inspector: Mrs S Vale

Dates of inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> July 2005

Inspection number: 267312

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

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Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	229
School address:	London Road South Merstham Redhill Surrey
Postcode:	RH1 3AZ
Telephone number:	(01737) 643 978
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Simpson
Date of previous inspection:	18 <sup>th</sup> January 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Merstham is a village primary school with a long history in the Merstham community in Reigate, Surrey. Since the school was last inspected it has experienced an unusual level of change and turbulence. This has included some practical changes, for example, the completion of the school's transition from a two form entry First School to a one form entry Primary School. Of much greater significance to the school was a very difficult period, just after the last inspection. Some indicators of the extent of concern for the school, at that time, included a loss of parental confidence in the school, and a falling roll. This period culminated, at the request of the governing body, in a QCA investigation into the administration of the Key Stage Two National Curriculum Tests. This investigation resulted in the annulment of Standard Assessment Test results for Key Stage 2 in 2001.

The impact of these difficulties on the school was extensive and touched all aspects of school life; the appointment of a substantive head in September 2002 was the fourth headteacher which the school had had since 1999. In the same period the governing body experienced significant change and reorganisation. Last year the governing body carried out a review process which led to the restructuring of the leadership group and the appointment of a deputy headteacher. Parental confidence has increased and after a difficult period there is now a rising school roll. The school has been oversubscribed for the last three Reception class admissions, and now serves a more diverse population of the local community. There are 203 pupils on role; in addition, there are 51 part-time Nursery places. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, at eight per cent, is below national averages. The percentage of pupils learning English as an additional language is similar to other schools. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, is broadly in line with the national average, and the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is above the national average. The school is involved in the Leadership Development strategy in primary schools and in the Primary Learning network.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22476	Mrs S Vale	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage
9519	Mrs S Pritchard	Lay inspector	
22704	Mr G Williams	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History
20614	Mr D Kimber	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs
3574	Dr K Singh	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education English as an additional language

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school with some very good features, providing an effective standard of education. Standards achieved in English and science are well above national averages by Year 6. The leadership and management by the headteacher and governors are very good. The quality of teaching is good overall, with some very good features in the Foundation Stage and at the top end of the school. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Very good leadership and management by the headteacher provide a clear vision and high aspirations for the school. The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and is a challenging force in helping to move the school forward.
- Good teaching overall, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in Years 4 to 6, results in pupils achieving well in these years. Teaching in Years 1, 2 and 3 is satisfactory overall.
- Pupils make very good progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 4 to 6, so that by the age of eleven, pupils achieve high standards in English, science and history. Year 2 and 6 standards in religious education are above the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus.
- Very good provision in the Foundation Stage when children first start school gives a positive start to children's education.
- Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs so that they achieve as well as their peers.
- Pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes and are keen to learn and to do well.
- There are very good extra-curricular opportunities which really enhance pupils' learning and are part of the positive ethos and contribute to the stimulating learning environment.
- Whilst marking is prompt and on the whole positive, there are few examples of marking that gives guidance to pupils on how they can improve and extend their learning still further.

Despite a serious dip in many aspects of the school in 2001 the school has made a strong and positive recovery and good progress has been made in addressing many of the key issues since the last inspection. Curriculum planning has improved considerably and the pupils now receive a stimulating and broad curriculum. Assessment procedures have also improved. Pupils' progress is tracked throughout the school and information found is used to plan the next stage of pupils' learning. Although there is a higher percentage of good or better teaching than at the time of the last inspection, teaching in Years 1 to 3 is satisfactory overall. Teachers' marking is not always consistently used to help pupils to learn where they need to improve their work. Pupils take pride in their work and it is neatly presented, an aspect identified as needing improvement at the last inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Unvalidated results for 2005 show that standard assessment test results for the current Year 6 are greatly improved on the previous years' results. English and science standards are well above national averages. Standards in mathematics are above national averages because of a greater number of pupils attaining at the higher standard. Achievement overall is good. It is very good for pupils in Years 4 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 to 3. The experienced staff and consistently good teaching in the Foundation Stage and at the top end of the school have a positive effect on the standards which pupils reach. In Year 2, standards in English and mathematics are average; the school feels that the emphasis they have put on writing has not yet had time to impact, but there is evidence to show that the current Year 1 pupils are achieving written work of a higher standard. Standards in science in Year 2 are above national averages. In information and communication technology, standards are as expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in all other subjects are as expected, except in history where pupils reach higher-than-expected standards by Year 6, and in speaking and listening where pupils reach higher standards than national averages. There are very few differences between the achievement of boys and girls. There are no significant differences in achievement between different ethnic heritages, although achievement in Years 1, 2 and 3 is not as strong as in the rest of the school. Children start school in Nursery with standards similar to those expected for this age. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well and by the age of five the majority will meet the goals children are expected to reach in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. They exceed them in personal, social and emotional development, numeracy and creative development.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **good**. Pupils from Nursery to Year 6 have very good attitudes to their work; they are keen and really want to learn. Behaviour is good overall. Pupils' attendance is good but punctuality is only satisfactory.

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall. There are some very good features in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6. These are characterised by high expectations of staff, challenging and interesting work, with a good pace to lessons. Where teaching is less successful, lessons lack pace and expectations of what the pupils are learning are not clear enough. Achievement in these lessons is only as expected and different groups of pupils do not achieve as much as they are able.

There is a broad and balanced curriculum which is positively enriched through a wide variety of extra-curricular activities. The care, welfare and support of pupils are good. Pupils are cared for well and there is very good provision of support for pupils with special educational needs, and for the small number of pupils with English as an additional language. There are strong links with parents, who value the school highly, and there are good links with the community and other schools through the Primary Learning network.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

There is **very good** leadership and management by the headteacher and she is supported well by her leadership team and the very knowledgeable and supportive governing body. She has a clear vision and high aspirations for the school. Governors are very effective in carrying out their statutory duties and in providing support.

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

Both parents and pupils are very happy and proud of their school. Parents are very well informed and are particularly pleased with the high standards which their children achieve. Pupils really like their school and feel strongly that their teachers really help them.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise the quality of teaching in Years 1, 2 and 3 to match the good practice seen in the rest of the school.
- Develop marking so that it gives guidance to pupils on how they can improve and extend their learning still further.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils' achievement is good overall. It is very good in the Foundation Stage and at the top end of the school. Standards are generally above the national average, and remain so when compared to similar schools.

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

- Children make very good progress through the Foundation Stage and achieve very well.
- Standards in English, science and history by Year 6 are well above those normally expected, which represents very good achievement.
- Standards in speaking and listening are above average in all areas of the school.
- Standards in ICT have improved since the previous inspection and are in line with national expectations across the school.
- Standards in history are above those normally expected by Year 6.

#### **Commentary**

1. Standards in 2004 National Tests at the end of Year 6 are well below average in English and below in mathematics and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.2 (28.2)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.2 (28.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.3 (31.1)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. Inspection evidence, supported as yet by unvalidated 2005 National Test results, indicates that current standards in Year 6 in English and science are well above the national average and well above those in 2004. The school's focus on English in the past two years has ensured this marked improvement. Standards in mathematics are just above the national average, with more pupils attaining the higher level, and again indicate a marked improvement from the 2004 results. The school has identified a need to have a sharper focus on mathematics in order to secure an improvement in this area, similar to that in English and science. The indications from the present Year 5 and 6 are that standards in English and science are now stabilised and the use of tracking data to focus on particular needs has been very successful.
3. The school's scores in National Tests for seven-year-olds in 2004 (table below) were above the national averages in reading, in line with the national average in writing and below in mathematics. Standards when compared to similar schools are lower in mathematics compared to English and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.4 (16.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.4 (14.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.7 (16.4)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. Inspection evidence suggests that current standards in Year 2 are similar to national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. They are above in science.
5. Children make very good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage and by the time they enter Year 1, all children attain the nationally suggested Early Learning Goals. They exceed them in personal, social and emotional development, numeracy and creative development. The very good achievement results from consistently good teaching and the opportunities for children to engage in a rich range of stimulating activities.
6. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Although this appears to present a similar picture to the previous inspection, there are aspects which have improved, such as the more effective use of the computer suite and its use to promote ICT skills and research information for other subjects. The software to develop this area is improving but is limited in supporting control skills. Standards in history by Year 6 are above those normally expected, which indicates good improvement since the previous inspection. By Years 2 and 6, standards in religious education are above the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus.
7. Other subjects were only sampled. There is no formal judgement about attainment in these but standards appear to be generally in line with those usually found and represent good achievement for the pupils.
8. Pupils achieve well overall. There is very good achievement in the Foundation Stage and in Years 4 to 6 because of consistently good or better teaching. Achievement in Years 1 to 3 is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve similarly to their peers. There are a small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language and the good support they receive has enabled them to achieve well.

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

Pupils behave well, establish very good relationships and have very good attitudes to learning. They have good records of attendance and their punctuality is satisfactory. The provision made for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and helps pupils value themselves and others.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils value friendships, show a lively interest in learning and want to do well.
- The school lays great importance on giving all pupils equal opportunities to succeed and develop their self-esteem.
- Pupils' relationships with others are very good and underpin the happy and inclusive nature of the school.

## Commentary

9. Governors, staff and parents all expect good manners and good behaviour and the pupils respond accordingly. Throughout the school, pupils work together very well in pairs and in groups, showing they are interested and eager to learn. They play harmoniously in the playing field where it is obvious that they are much more interested in keeping up a friendship than an argument. Pupils agree with their parents that incidents of bullying are rare and that there are good procedures to deal with these should they arise. No pupils have been excluded from the school in recent years.
10. Pupils with emotional and social difficulties are very well integrated in all lessons and activities. This is a real strength of the school's work. Teachers bring out the best in pupils with lively introductions to lessons, clear explanations, probing questioning, purposeful activities with high levels of interaction, all conducted at a brisk pace. Where this occurs, the pupils are far too involved in what they are doing to waste time or misbehave. However, when on occasions teaching lacks pace and the pupils have to sit through over-long explanations, their motivation to work hard and achieve suffers a little as a result.
11. The school promotes equal opportunities very well. The value placed on every pupil's contribution in lessons promotes their self-esteem and sends a clear message that everyone has a right to be heard. As a result, pupils are very happy to listen to the other person's point of view and do this very well. Pupils with special educational needs are also keen to succeed. This is because their efforts are valued by teachers and the well-planned curriculum makes good provision for pupils of different abilities to achieve and learn in different ways. The very good range of extra-curricular activities, for example, successfully motivates the interest of the school's young artists, athletes, chefs and gardeners.
12. Pupils' cultural development is good. In religious education lessons and in assemblies they learn about the influence faith has on the way people choose to live their lives. Visiting artists, musicians and representatives from churches and charities bring added value to pupils' learning. A good range of books and religious artefacts in school helps pupils recognise the distinctive costumes and traditions found in other countries and cultures. The school makes good provision for pupils to learn about British customs and traditions. Pupils gain much from their visits, for example, to museums, theatres, stately homes and local farms. Traditional country dancing also features on the school's calendar. Harvest time celebrations allow pupils the chance to reflect on and recognise the value of others in the community.
13. Pupils' spiritual development is good. Lessons and assemblies encourage pupils to empathise and reflect on their own existence and being. The highlight of one whole-school assembly, for example, came when pupils gasped in astonishment at a projected photograph of a rainbow settling over Victoria Falls. The benefits of focused art, book and technology weeks and special assemblies for parents and grandparents add to the richness of pupils' learning and heighten their spiritual awareness. There is good provision for pupils to become emotionally involved in their learning.
14. Pupils' moral development is good, as is their social awareness. The essential values of self-respect and care for others form the basis of all assembly themes. The staff are good role models for pupils and encourage them to think about rights and wrongs of life in a very positive way. As a result, pupils have a good sense of social awareness and a good ability to adapt their behaviour to different situations. On their visits to the school, governors are singularly impressed by the way pupils conduct themselves. Pupils lean towards 'doing the right thing', a quality upheld by the parents, who give a good level of support to the school and its rules.

## Attendance

15. Attendance levels are above the national average and have improved in the last two years. Parents give good support to the school by ensuring their children attend regularly and by informing the office of any reasons for absence. Some parents remove their children for holidays during term time but the school discourages the practice. Most pupils are punctual and by the start of next term the school plans to have more stringent methods of recording and monitoring lateness.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are good overall, with some very good features. There is good care and support for children and good partnership with parents which support pupils' personal development well. The curriculum provides a stimulating learning programme. All of this means that pupils in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6 achieve well.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall, with some very good features in the Foundation Stage and in Years 4 to 6. Assessments are good, and pupils' progress is clearly tracked, carefully monitored and used well to help pupils learn at a good rate.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall.
- Lessons are interesting and capture pupils' attention so that they want to learn.
- Assessment procedures are used well to plan future work. However, marking does not explain to pupils sufficiently how they can improve their work.

### Commentary

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	15 (40%)	10 (26%)	12 (32%)	1 (2%)	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.*

16. Teaching and learning overall are good. There are more better lessons than there were at the time of the last inspection. The table above shows that approximately two thirds of the teaching seen during the inspection was good or better. Evidence gained from looking at pupils' past work and talks with parents and pupils confirm that teaching and learning have been good over time.

17. Throughout the school, lessons overall are well organised and relevant to the needs of the pupils. Teachers know what they want pupils of different abilities to learn and in the better lessons clearly communicate this to them. The basic skills in literacy and science are taught well because staff have a good knowledge of these subjects and of individual pupils' needs.
18. In the Foundation Stage teachers have very good knowledge of the relevant curriculum and children are taught well. Lessons are very well planned and challenge children effectively in all the areas of learning. In the Foundation Stage and in Years 4 to 6, teaching and learning are consistently good and very good features are seen when:
  - Teachers plan thoroughly for lessons, have good subject knowledge and clearly explain what they want pupils to learn.
  - Good use of information from assessment is used to inform the next stage of pupils' learning, and group targets are referred to, so that pupils know what they need to do to improve.
  - There is very good encouragement for pupils to work together collaboratively and co-operatively.
  - Interesting lessons stimulate pupils to want to learn and create a positive learning ethos.
  - There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
  - Very good use of questioning by teachers enhances pupils' learning.
19. The majority of pupils are interested in their lessons and want to learn and this makes a very strong contribution to their achievement. Even when they find work challenging, many try hard and most sustain good levels of concentration. Teachers are using the interactive whiteboards well to enhance teaching across a number of subjects. This provides pupils with lots of visual clues that enhance their learning.
20. Where teaching is not so strong, lessons are too controlled and teachers do not allow pupils to find things out for themselves. The pace is slower and pupils are left sitting on the carpet for too long. Other features which could be improved include a clearer understanding of different ability groups within classes so that not all pupils have to follow the same introduction to lessons.
21. Assessments allow teachers to find out regularly what pupils know and can do. These are then used successfully to plan what pupils will learn next. More formal tests in English, mathematics and science also add to the information gathered about each pupil. It is used in tracking the progress of every pupil and highlighting both successes and any areas of concern. These concerns are noted and group targets for improvement are set. Pupils are aware of these targets but as yet individual pupils' targets for pupils to improve their work are not set.
22. Teachers question pupils well so that those who experience difficulty are quickly identified and given extra support or further explanations within lessons. Marking is not being used effectively enough to evaluate pupils' work. Where it is often used to say 'well done', it does not give sufficient pointers about how pupils can improve their work in the future.
23. Through small-group work, pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively. This is very successful and begins right from when pupils first start at school. The good encouragement to work co-operatively is well integrated into the everyday learning ethos. This makes a good contribution to learning since pupils have lots of opportunities to learn from one another.
24. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to join in lesson activities with other pupils, and this contributes to the good progress they make towards their targets. Support

staff also work well to enable pupils with greater learning difficulties to become more independent and develop their confidence and self-esteem.

## The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **good**. The range of extra activities outside of lessons is very good. Accommodation and resources are very good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned, is innovative and meets the needs of all groups of pupils.
- There is a very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs.
- Teachers implement the curriculum well.
- The enrichment opportunities are very good for older pupils.

## Commentary

25. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection. The planning of the curriculum has improved and schemes of work in all subjects are well implemented. Theme weeks and curriculum days such as poetry day, art day, feeling good day and book days extend learning very well.
26. The Foundation Stage curriculum is used well to plan activities in all six areas of learning for children. Good emphasis is placed on supporting pupils' personal, social and educational, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. As a result, children achieve the learning goals in communication, language and literacy and exceed the learning goals in personal, creative and mathematical development.
27. The programme for personal, social and health education is good and is underpinned by the school ethos of respect and care. A scheme of work for sex and relationships education is well implemented. In discussion, pupils indicated that they are well aware of misuse of drugs and their long-term negative consequences on health.
28. The range of extra-curricular activities to make learning more interesting is very good. Years 5 and 6 go on a week's residential visit and this has a positive impact on their social development. Year 4 have a night's sleep-over in the school and thoroughly enjoy the experience. A wide range of clubs in sport, drama, dance and music is offered and pupils value these clubs, with many attending them. Pupils are also enthusiastic about the 'special days' and enjoy visits to places of interest and visits from people who bring a wide range of experiences. This extends and enriches learning very well.
29. The very good curriculum and access to it support pupils with special educational needs. This is an improvement upon the good quality noted at the time of the last inspection. The quality of individual education plans (IEPs<sup>1</sup>) has improved since the last report as targets are more focused, and have appropriate activities related to individual needs. Class teachers are now more involved in helping to devise them, liaising with the SENCO<sup>2</sup> and also with individual pupils. Good links are maintained with the special schools (secondary) which will receive some of these pupils when they leave Year 6.
30. The school has a very strong commitment to ensuring equal access and opportunity for all its pupils. Currently there are two pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. Pupils whose mother tongue is not English and belong to different minority ethnic heritages receive a curriculum that is exciting and promotes high achievement. Pupils take a full part in all school activities. They get good opportunities to gain confidence about their own and other cultures through the study of major world religions and celebrations of festivals such as Diwali and

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<sup>1</sup> IEPs are individual education plans.

<sup>2</sup> The SENCO is the special educational needs co-ordinator.

Chinese New Year. In geography they study a locality in India. In literature they read stories from different cultures.

31. The accommodation and resources are very good, and are very well used to the pupils' advantage. Engaging displays of pupils' work enhance the accommodation. This stimulating learning environment adds positively to pupils' desire to learn.

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

Arrangements to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils are good overall. Staff give good support to pupils' personal needs and to their academic progress. The school takes good account of pupils' views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Well planned and organised daily routines and special events in school enable pupils to form good and trusting relationships with adults in school.
- Health and safety matters are handled very well in school.
- Systems for tracking pupils' progress are good but more profitable use could be made of target setting.

### **Commentary**

32. Pupils' personal well-being is a priority of staff. The school carefully and skilfully balances the support it gives to pupils' academic progress with the care it takes with their personal development. The annual Year 4 sleep-over in school is just one example of a well-planned event with many positive outcomes, not the least of which is the strong bond of caring support that is fostered between staff and pupils. Pupils turn readily to the adults in school for guidance and are very confident about asking for help when they need it. The school council is used well to consult with pupils and give them an insight into systems of democracy. The verbal feedback given by teachers to pupils during lessons is good. Pupils agree that teachers are *'very kind and easy to talk to'*. There are frequent examples of good practice where teachers help pupils gauge how well they have done in relation to the main objective of a lesson or unit of work. However, this is not always sufficiently focused on helping them understand exactly what it is they need to do to improve the work they are doing on a more individual basis.
33. There are good opportunities for all pupils, including those of the higher ability groups, to work with pupils of other schools in technology and sporting activities, all designed to extend the breadth and scope of their knowledge. Good efforts are made through liaison with parents and health agencies to ensure that pupils with specific medical needs receive the care they need to take part in school activities. Very good support is afforded to pupils with special educational needs. Their individual education plans are subject to frequent reviews to ensure that targets are met and the progress of each pupil carefully tracked. Staff exercise their child protection responsibilities with care and the school is currently pursuing additional training to help all staff become even more alert to indicators of children at risk.
34. There are very good procedures to ensure that the school is a safe working environment. Governors have been instrumental in ensuring potential risk are identified and eliminated at an early stage. This is particularly evident in the new building where they have had the greatest input. They have also put together an 'Accessibility Plan' to show steps taken by the school to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.
35. There is good quality support for pupils with special educational needs. Parents are fully informed of their child's work, and they are encouraged to be involved by giving help and guidance.

36. There are satisfactory arrangements for children starting school. Parents who gave their views to inspectors commented favourably on the help and guidance they received, particularly when transferring to high school.

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

The links with parents, others schools and the community are good and support learning and achievement well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are impressed by the recent improvements across the school and see the headteacher's strong and determined style of leadership as being the key to its success.
- Staff liaise very effectively with all parents, sharing very good quality information about their children and taking all reasonable steps to explain how and what children learn.

### **Commentary**

37. Parents and governors have very favourable views on the work of the school. They are especially pleased with the success it has in encouraging pupils to behave well and work hard. The school is supported well by the parents who contribute much time and effort in making it an attractive, friendly and well-resourced place in which to learn. There are good links with the local playgroup. Children transferring from this to the main school are introduced carefully to school routines through a programme of well-planned visits. Links with other schools, particularly the secondary school to which most pupils transfer, are good. Resources are shared, ideas are exchanged and joint solutions are found to common problems so that the momentum for learning is not lost as pupils move up a stage.
38. The school is well embedded in the local community. Pupils engage in a broad range of subject-based day visits during the year covering sport, creative, environmental, community and artistic activities, all of which help them enjoy their time at school. Other events hosted with the support of parents and governors, the seasonal festivals and special assemblies, the discos and sponsored events enable the whole community to socialise, have fun and often raise money at the same time. These links make a strong contribution to the pupils' social and moral development.
39. Co-operation between home and school is good. The end-of-year reports form a very good basis for constructive discussion at the regular parent-teacher consultation sessions. Parents of pupils with special educational needs have good, additional opportunities to discuss their children's targets and be involved in setting new ones. Parents of the few pupils who have English as an additional language are given all the help they need to ensure they and their children play a full part in the school community.
40. Overall, the information for parents is very good, originating as it does from a number of sources; staff, governors, pupils and parents. School newsletters are a good read. They are packed full of information but the coverage always remains focused on what pupils will actually gain from participating in a particular event or activity. The helpfully detailed and informative prospectus and the governors' annual report together contain all the information parents must by law receive from the school. All this information, together with regular updates on the curriculum and the good, controlled access parents have to the staff, the school and its displays, means that parents have plenty of opportunities to discuss their children's progress with staff, are kept well informed about what they are doing and are thus better prepared to help them at home.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are very good. Governance is very good. The headteacher and staff work closely together as a team. Subject co-ordinators are keen and enthusiastic and knowledgeable in their subject areas. All of this supports the high standards which pupils achieve by Year 6, in particular in English, science and history. The strong leadership and management have a very positive effect on the ethos and learning environment in the school. The principles of best value are central to the school's management.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a very clear vision and high aspirations for the school.
- Strong leadership inspires and motivates both staff and pupils.
- The school undertakes rigorous self-evaluation and uses the findings effectively.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and is a challenging force in helping to move the school forward.
- There is strong strategic planning which reflects and promotes the school's ambitions and goals.

### **Commentary**

41. The headteacher provides strong leadership. Her high aspirations and clear educational direction for the school are the main reason why the school has moved forward so positively. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher. The headteacher has a very clear vision of where the school is, and where it needs to go next. The very good self-evaluation which the school undertakes underlines the constructive way in which any areas which are identified as needing improvement, however slight, are acted upon. This ensures that pupils are given every conceivable opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability, resulting in the improving standards which pupils achieve.
42. Planning, teaching and learning are regularly monitored and constructive feedback given to all staff to continuously strive to improve teaching and learning. This results in overall good teaching and learning across the school, and culminates in the good progress and high standards which pupils reach by the end of Year 6. Leadership of the school is well aware of the need to strive to raise the level of teaching still further in Years 1 to 3 and has given help and support to achieve this aim. It is beginning to have an effect.
43. The governing body shares the headteacher's clear vision for the development of the school. Governors are very well informed and come into school regularly. They challenge and yet at the same time are very supportive. They are actively involved in the development of the detailed and well-focused school improvement plan and are regularly updated about all developments within the school. Governors are proactive in their vision for the school. They take their responsibilities seriously and act as a strong critical friend to the school. They have worked tirelessly and been a driving force behind the development of the new buildings. Governors send home regular newsletters to parents to keep them informed of what they are doing. They are very aware of who they are working for. They ensure that statutory requirements are met.
44. Professional development of all staff is very good. Teachers and support staff receive regular updates and training. All staff are involved in all aspects of planning and strategic development. This is a very positive part of the leadership of the school; it ensures that all staff are aware of what they need to achieve next in the school's progress and development.

45. There is good leadership and management of special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works closely with the headteacher and special educational needs governor to check the good support and progress of these pupils. Very close links are maintained with all relevant outside agencies to ensure high quality support to meet the needs of these children.
46. The budget is administered well and the governing body oversees actions. The school has spent wisely in the design of the new buildings and they are being used well.

**Financial information**

***Financial information for the year April 04 to March 05***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	650,360
Total expenditure	617,952
Expenditure per pupil	2,796

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	19,481
Balance carried forward to the next year	32,408

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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. This is because teaching and learning promote high levels of achievement in very young children in all of the areas of learning. Children enter the Nursery when they are three. They are at an expected level for children of this age when they start. They move into the Reception class part-time when they are four and attend full-time the term they are five. The new accommodation and resources are of high quality. They are used very effectively by staff to help children to become independent, make important choices about their work and learn through a wide variety of challenging and exciting play activities.

Teaching and learning are consistently good, with some very good aspects in all the areas of learning. As a result, many children at the end of their Reception Year exceed the early learning goals set for them in personal, mathematical and creative development.

Common features of the good quality teaching and learning include:

- very good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the ways children of this age learn so that children learn a lot from one activity;
- planning for exciting activities at different levels of the stepping stones or early stages of the National Curriculum that engages children, encouraging them to talk and learn a lot;
- effective teaching methods, use of resources and deployment of adult support so that children achieve as well as they can;
- the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding, especially their capacity to work on their own or co-operatively with others;
- thorough assessment of what children know and can do so that activities are planned to meet individual needs;
- the children's very good attitudes and enthusiasm for learning; and
- the promotion of high standards of behaviour.

Leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good. All the staff in the Nursery and Reception class work very closely together, evaluating their work to bring about improvements. The refurbishment of the Foundation Stage was considered carefully. The rooms have been designed to meet the needs of the children and the curriculum. All the equipment, work surfaces and tables are at the right height for the children. They are colourful and provide very attractive areas in which to learn. The leadership is dedicated to ensuring the high standards and achievement in all areas of the Foundation Stage. The curriculum is innovative, taking into account the many different ways in which children learn. It is very practical and relevant to children of this age. This allows all children, including those with English as an additional language, special educational needs and the higher-attaining children, to achieve as well as they can. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

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

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good** so that many children achieve very well and exceed the early learning goals.

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

- The Nursery children exhibit curiosity and are eager for new experiences.
- The development of independence skills is very good.
- Reception children are confident to try new activities and work co-operatively together.
- All children form good relationships with adults and their classmates, working together harmoniously.

## **Commentary**

47. Staff have set up a range of interesting activities, such as in the sand, half-built models, miniature waterways with boats, and floating and sinking activities. They have set them up in such a way as to help children exhibit curiosity, capture interest and invite creative play. Many other activities in and out of the classroom satisfy their eagerness for new experiences as they are enabled to move freely from one activity to another. Staff are very good role models to the children in their discussions with them, inviting the children to play together or spend time on activities on their own. Routines have been quickly established.
48. Reception children are very confident and work happily on a task on their own or together, leaving the teacher free to work with a particular group. For example, children built Noah's Ark out of building blocks, were engrossed in what they were doing and worked together very well as a group. Children are confident to try out what they know, aware that teachers value their efforts and praise them.
49. In all the lessons observed in the Nursery and Reception classes, children worked together harmoniously, helping each other, sharing their ideas and playing happily together both inside and outside.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good, leading to children's good achievement.
- This area of learning is well planned and assessed.

## **Commentary**

50. When children begin at the Nursery, many children's literacy skills are below the expectations for their age. Good teaching and the provision of a varied range of activities help to interest and challenge them. As a result children develop enthusiasm and enjoyment, and achieve well in this important area of learning. At the end of the Reception Year, most children attain the standards expected for their age, with the higher-attaining exceeding them. There is one child who is new to English and is being well supported. Children with special educational needs achieve well.
51. In both Nursery and Reception classes, every opportunity is taken to extend children's vocabulary skills and imaginative and exciting provision gives children good confidence for talking, for example, when children talk about floating and sinking. Staff keep detailed records of children's language development and use this information to track progress. Children develop their speaking and listening skills well through pretend and imaginative play; for example, when they play with Noah's Ark. Most children's listening and speaking skills are average. Children talk about their experiences clearly and are understood by children and staff.
52. Children have many opportunities to listen to stories or choose books to read with adults. Good use is made of big books to develop reading and writing skills. Nursery children talk about the pictures and know that print carries meaning and are learning letter sounds. Reception children know their letter sounds and are beginning to link them together to make simple words. The more able children could read simple books fluently using phonic skills, context and picture clues. Early writing is taught well. In one session, children were writing about Noah's Ark. More able children were able to use initial sounds to write some words accurately and most others write recognisable letters in their words. Singing well-known rhymes helps the development of speaking and listening skills and motivates the children to try new words.

53. All children are encouraged to take books home to share with parents. Children's progress is tracked well and information is used to plan future learning. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained good provision, teaching and learning, achievement and leadership and management.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **very good** and helps children achieve very well so that they exceed the early learning goals at the end of the Reception Year.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are many practical activities that help children to enjoy learning.
- Very good classroom resources are used well to support children's learning.

### **Commentary**

54. Nursery children are encouraged to learn about capacity through sand and water activities. They learn about floating and sinking through well organised and well structured activities. They are keen to share what they find with others. Reception children achieve very well and exceed the early learning goals through counting confidently to 100 and counting on in tens. This is a high standard of work for children of this age. A well planned practical fun lesson reinforced this learning outside with children searching for hidden numbers in the outside area and then ordering tens in the correct order to 100; again, this is high achievement. Teachers and support staff intervene well to ensure children do not miss opportunities to practise mathematical skills, for example, very good classroom resources are used well to support children's learning. They are readily available and suitably planned to complement direct teaching by adults. Most children are on course to exceed the early learning goals in mathematical development by the end of the stage.

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

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**. Many children achieve very well and meet the early learning goals at the end of the Reception Year.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a really exciting curriculum that promotes high levels of achievement.
- Children achieve very well because of good teaching.
- Information and communication technology is used very well to support learning.
- Resources and accommodation are used very well to provide a wide range of stimulating activities that support children's exploration and investigation skills.

### **Commentary**

55. Some children enter the Nursery with limited knowledge of this area of learning. Teaching and planning are consistently very good, and as a result, children progress at a much better rate than might be expected. Most children achieve very well and are likely to meet the goals for knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the Reception Year, and more able children will exceed the goals in scientific investigations. A diverse range of appropriate and interesting activities stimulates children's curiosity and promotes their understanding.
56. All children show an interest in computers and many children learn to use the mouse and keyboard as they explore different programs. The school makes very good use of digital cameras. Children are photographed as they work. Children are provided with many rich

opportunities for investigation and discovery; for example, when children grow plants. There are very good opportunities for children to learn about floating and sinking.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The planned curriculum promotes good achievement.

### **Commentary**

57. The curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes gives children the chance to develop their dexterity by moulding animals out of malleable materials, rolling out and shaping dough and writing and constructing models from a wide range of materials and toys. They handle tools such as scissors and other objects with increasing control. Outside, children ride tricycles, climb, slide and show good physical development. Many children move with confidence, imagination and in safety.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **very good** so that many children achieve very well and exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are encouraged to use their initiative to enable them to achieve very well.

### **Commentary**

58. Examples and photographs of paintings, collage and paper weaving show that many children express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings confidently through their art work, design and technology. Role-play activities, including dressing up as different characters, for example, acting out the story of Noah's Ark, promote real achievement in the use of imagination and communication of ideas. Playing untuned percussion instruments helps children to explore and understand different sounds. They use their imagination well, matching different musical sounds to the different animals on Noah's Ark. Often, children use information and communication technology to draw pictures or play games to enhance their knowledge in other areas of learning in a creative way.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership and management of English are very good and this contributes to the very good standards achieved.
- Strategies for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning are good and support identified strategies for raising standards.
- Collaborative work is used effectively in lessons and leads to very good speaking and listening skills by Year 6.
- Standards in writing are good and in reading they are very good by Year 6.
- Presentation of work is generally good.
- Assessment of all aspects of English is good throughout the school, but marking, although consistent and diagnostic, is not used to advise pupils what they need to do to improve.

### **Commentary**

59. Inspection judgements are that standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected nationally and in Year 6 they are well above average. Pupils achieve very well in all areas of the subject. The current situation shows an improved picture on the previous inspection. Inspection judgements confirmed by the current, as yet unvalidated, 2005 national tests for Year 2 indicate that reading at Level 3 and Level 2 is slightly above the national average but in line overall with the national overall. However, in writing, although in line overall, it is well below average at the higher Level 3. Listening is above average while speaking is in line. At Year 6, the unvalidated results again confirm the inspection judgements. At the higher Level 5 the school's results are well above those normally expected.
60. Standards in speaking and listening skills in Year 2 are satisfactory but in Year 6 they are very good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not always listen attentively, resulting in some pupils not achieving as well as they might. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 respond confidently to probing questions asked by the teacher or support staff. They digest the questions carefully and respond in full sentences. They often discuss questions in pairs, coming up with joint opinions or answers. Similarly, when working in groups, they consider aspects of their learning amongst themselves. In all subjects they are encouraged to use appropriate vocabulary. In most classes, pupils are attentive. This is due to effective classroom routines established, the high expectations of the teacher, the very good management of pupil behaviour and the brisk pace at which lessons are conducted. In both introductory and plenary sessions when direct questioning is used, pupils do not falter in their responses.
61. Standards in reading are average in Year 2. In Year 6, they are well above. Reading records are of good quality and work challenges and interests pupils, making their reading purposeful and relevant. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and are enthusiastic readers with discerning tastes for authors and types of books which they can discuss. They confidently relate the story as far as they have read, describe the characters accurately and predict sensibly. The school has recently refurbished the library, which is conveniently and very sensibly situated in the computer suite. This allows research from books as well as from the Internet to be addressed concurrently. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use the library well and research books for information about the Vikings. There is no evidence that there is any discernable difference between the performance of boys and girls.
62. Standards in writing at Year 2 are average overall but well below at the higher Level 3. By Year 6, pupils are well above average overall and particularly at the higher level. Writing tasks are challenging and interesting and all pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate different styles of writing. Extended

writing is used very well across the curriculum, which raises the profile of this area. In subjects such as science, geography and history, the school considers the balance of the use of worksheets in subjects carefully. This ensures it is equitable and, therefore, increases the opportunity to develop writing skills further. Standards in writing skills are below those in reading in Year 2 but similar at Year 6. The school is now anxious to raise the standards in reading and writing in Years 1 and 2. The school is already addressing this and writing skills in the Foundation Stage are beginning to impact on Years 1 and 2 but now need time to become fully embedded.

63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3. In Years 4, 5 and 6 they are good, with some very good aspects. Teachers' planning is thorough and effective use is made of the interactive whiteboards, where available, to engage pupils' interest. Pupils enjoy their lessons. Their very good attitudes impact positively on raising standards. Time and resources are used effectively and tasks set are purposeful and well supported by probing questioning and effective support from teaching assistants. This challenges pupils, including those with special educational needs, and encourages them to use prior knowledge and skills to address the new task. Marking is detailed and helpful, telling the pupils what they have achieved but does not help them to know what they need to do to improve. Targets are set and regularly reviewed to identify areas of concern.
64. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. Monitoring of planning has taken place with teaching and scrutiny of work and this is good. Resources are good overall.

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

65. The development of language and literacy across the curriculum is very well promoted, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6. The school's focus on raising standards in all aspects of English is supported well through a range of subjects. In speaking and listening, reading and writing, they are very well promoted. The school acknowledges it now needs to continue to work on raising standards, particularly the higher Level 3 in writing by the end of Year 2. An equitable balance between worksheets and extended writing is very well achieved.

### **English as an additional language**

66. A total of 12 pupils do not have English as their mother tongue.
67. Two pupils are at the early stages of acquiring fluency in English. These pupils are well supported and as a result their achievement is good. The local authority service supports school very well. All pupils' stages of fluency in English are assessed and recorded. Their progress is well tracked and shows that pupils achieve well. Staff have received in-service training on how pupils who speak English as an additional language learn.
68. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well integrated in the school life and are well supported. Appropriate guidance is given as and when required. Parents are encouraged to retain their children's bilingual skills. This adds to pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Parents are also supported in improving their language skills. One parent attends literacy classes in the nearby school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average by Year 2 but few pupils attain the higher Level 3.
- Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3 because teaching is satisfactory.
- Standards by Year 6 are just above national averages because of a higher proportion of pupils attaining Level 5.
- Pupils' achievement is good in Years 4 to 6 as a result of good teaching.
- Assessment systems are satisfactory.

## Commentary

69. In 2004, National Curriculum test results in Year 6 and Year 2 were below the national average and those of similar schools. The unvalidated test results of 2005 indicate that the results both at the end of Year 2 and 6 are higher than the previous year. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 is above the national average because a higher number of pupils are attaining the higher Level 5. Attainment of Year 2 is average as a very small number of pupils attain the higher Level 3. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory as a result of satisfactory teaching and it is good in Years 4, 5 and 6 because of the good teaching pupils receive. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they achieve well in relation to their targets set for learning. Boys and girls are currently making similar progress.
70. By Year 2, most pupils' attainment in number work is only satisfactory because teachers do not consistently plan appropriate work to match the needs of pupils, particularly of higher-attaining pupils. In two lessons observed in Year 2, expectations for higher-ability pupils were pitched at a very high level in one lesson and too low in the other. They were asked to find halves of numbers such as 480, 640, 240 and only three pupils could work this out accurately, and they then helped the others. In the other, unsatisfactory lesson they were asked just to count in 10s which was too easy and they made no gains in learning.
71. In Years 4 to 6, achievement is good in all areas of mathematics. Pupils learn to find out fractions of numbers and quantities, with reasonably accurate approximation, and then check with calculators. More opportunities to use and apply mathematical skills in everyday situations such as analysing data from surveys and recording them in graphs, and applying mathematical knowledge to problem-solving activities, would further improve standards. Teaching assistants provide good support to pupils with special educational needs and they achieve well.
72. The quality of teaching is good overall; it ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 3, and good in Years 4, 5 and 6. Pupils in these years rapidly acquire new skills and knowledge as a result of teachers' good subject knowledge. Pupils' work shows that they are given challenging tasks within the higher National Curriculum levels, with good guidance on how to improve their work. Homework is given regularly to extend and reinforce learning. Year 6 pupils' work is very well presented and well marked and that supports their learning.
73. In contrast, where teaching is only satisfactory, pupils are invariably provided with tasks that sometimes are too challenging and other times too easy, as was seen in some lessons. Sometimes in class lessons, pupils' work is not corrected and as a result their understanding is not developed and they end up making the same mistakes.
74. Assessment is satisfactory overall and is good in Year 6. Marking is satisfactory overall. It is better in older pupils' classes where pupils' work is praised and pointers for further improvement are discussed. All performance data is analysed. Progress is tracked, but

information is not always used well to ensure that pupils' progress is monitored or that support is targeted appropriately.

75. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Good opportunities are provided to extend pupils' learning through, for example, the lunch-time quiz. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to improve her ability to analyse data and make use of it to improve achievement and thereby standards. Since the previous inspection provision had gone down but is now improving.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

76. Pupils make satisfactory use of mathematics in other subjects and their mathematical knowledge supports their learning across the curriculum. In art and design, pupils paint and draw geometrical shaped pictures in the style of famous artists. In music, they learn to keep time, and in physical education they keep scores in competitive games. They weigh ingredients in food technology and use measurements in their design work. As part of their work in science and information and communication technology, they use graphs to record data.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

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

- Pupils attain high standards and achieve very well.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, and ensures all pupils get involved.
- Pupils enjoy science and respond well to the opportunities for investigational work.
- The science co-ordinator provides good leadership.
- Assessment procedures are good overall, but not so fully developed in Years 1 and 2.

#### **Commentary**

77. Pupils achieve very well by the end of Year 6. Standards are above average in Year 2, and well above average in Year 6. This is the outcome of the good quality of teaching and learning throughout the school in science. It is especially strong in Years 4 to 6. Standards have improved on those attained by Year 6 pupils in national tests in 2004 last year. They were then just below the national average in comparison to all schools. However, there was a significant number of pupils with special educational needs in that cohort. School records also confirm another improvement in standards of the current Year 6 is the increased proportion of those working at the higher levels of attainment.
78. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in lessons as they join in activities, and thus achieve well. Girls and boys both enjoy the subject and they achieve equally well.
79. Pupils enjoy science, and especially the investigational activities. This enthusiasm helps them to achieve well. Year 2 pupils worked very well together in groups as they were encouraged to share their own ideas to test the effect of different surfaces upon the distance travelled by a toy car. Year 4 pupils worked keenly in pairs when challenged by their teacher to think how they could demonstrate that the angle light reflects off a mirror is the same as the angle at which it hits it. The ability of all pupils in a class to work co-operatively, be enthused and productively noisy, and achieve well, was also demonstrated by Year 5 pupils when investigating how sound behaves differently with different materials.
80. The quality of teaching and learning in science is good overall. It is very good at the top end of the school. This is an improvement upon the satisfactory standards of teaching noted in the last inspection. This very good teaching reflects strong emphasis upon investigational work through the school, and methods of organisation which keep all pupils involved. There is

limited but judicious use of worksheets, and pupils develop their writing skills well when recording their investigations and other work. The use of accurate science vocabulary is emphasised, and class discussions provide further opportunities to practice English language skills. Pupils also now have sufficient time in lessons to complete investigational work and thus meet a criticism noted in the last inspection.

81. Science is led and managed well. The quality of assessment and recording of pupils' progress is very good in junior classes and information from tests is used well to support learning. However, marking does not always provide sufficient help or guidance to pupils on how they can improve. The school recognises the need to enhance the monitoring of pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2. The co-ordinator has also been able to ensure the provision of good resources to support all classes. Science weeks also enrich pupils' learning and foster their achievement.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are achieving well and attain average standards.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good.
- The quality of leadership is good.
- The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is developing well.

### **Commentary**

82. Standards of attainment in ICT are similar to those expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well because of the improvements in resources and confidence of staff. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory, but there is clear evidence of an upward trend in this area. The school has invested in a much-improved ICT suite, which shares its accommodation with the library. It has recently invested in three interactive whiteboards, one of which is established in the Foundation Stage. Staff are quickly gaining confidence in using these to support teaching and learning. They provide a focal point for pupils to observe together.
83. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The timetabling of the suite to provide the opportunity for research sessions, as well as a skills session, is already having a positive impact on raising standards. Planning is appropriate and tasks are clearly explained and demonstrated as pupils are taught their skills. In the lessons observed, most pupils behaved sensibly and are very enthusiastic. When sharing a computer, partners work very well together and support each other. Where there is less progress it is because a few pupils do not pay full attention in the introductory session and then they have to wait for adult support before they can begin.
84. The school's organisation to timetable two sessions per week allows pupils to build up their knowledge, skills and understanding of ICT. Pupils are developing a range of skills to enable them to use ICT to enhance their learning in other subjects. In Year 2, for instance, most pupils successfully used a program to respond to pre-determined questions from different subjects involving researching history and science programs. Pupils' keyboard skills are developing well and in the lower juniors, pupils were establishing a PowerPoint presentation about different aspects of Egyptian life to present to Year 4 pupils and a governor. Year 6 pupils use control mechanisms, currently borrowed from the local secondary school, which confirms the good links established.
85. Although good use is made of the ICT suite, few computers are available in classrooms and no use was observed during the inspection. Leadership and management of the subject are

good. The school is aware that by using a more focused approach to organisation, more opportunities could be made available to allow a one-on-one use of computers. This would not only assist in a more rigorous approach to assessment but allow pupils to work their way through programs independently and further challenge their thinking. The school is in a very strong position to achieve this approach because of the shared accommodation with the school library.

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

86. The management of organising the suite for one session per week for links with other subjects is secure. Clear evidence of this was seen in Years 2 and 3. In Year 2, pupils were required to determine which subject needed to be researched to find answers to particular questions from a variety of subjects. In Year 3, pupils were given the independence to consider an aspect of Egyptian life, such as the shaduf, pyramids or mummies. They were then required to find and draw down an appropriate picture to support their text. The use of ICT to support other subjects is being well developed and now requires time to be fully embedded into the school's cross-curricular planning.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **History**

Provision in history is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at Year 6 are above average.
- Skills development is promoted well.
- Learning activities are good in Years 5 and 6.
- Balance of worksheets in Years 4 to 6 is judicious and enhances and encourages the development of writing skills.

### **Commentary**

87. Standards are in line with those expected by the end of Years 2 and above in Years 5 and 6. Pupils achieve well in all classes and in Year 5 and 6 lessons are introduced in an interesting and stimulating manner. The teacher makes the lessons exciting by asking children to act as detectives by researching aspects such as landing locations of the Vikings and how King Alfred defeated them on the Wessex coast. They study artefacts such as costumes, helmets and jewellery and use the Internet to research different aspects. In discussions with Years 5 and 6 pupils, it is quite clear how much information is being absorbed. Pupils enjoy this approach to their learning, which is well supported by their history-related residential visit to York. Pupils were developing their skills of analysing pictures and maps and enjoyed and were enthusiastic about the opportunities to explore their ideas with others. The learning activities were presented in such a way that history became alive; an important aspect of the creative approach which the school is keen to develop. The interactive whiteboard and computer suite provide an important dimension to aid skills development and promote enjoyment of learning.
88. The teaching is good overall with very good lessons observed in Years 5 and 6. Where teaching is good the approach is creative, management of pupil behaviour is very good and positive attitudes are developed. Learning, therefore, is enjoyable and pupils are keen to talk about what they have found out. Schemes of work and policies are fully in place and followed by all teachers. Assessment procedures are being developed.

## Geography

89. Work was just sampled in geography because of the limited opportunities to observe lessons. However, from sampling books, scrutiny of planning and assessment files, it would appear that standards in geography are likely to be at least in line with those expected for pupils of this age. As with history, there appears to be a very balanced use of worksheets, and writing opportunities help to raise standards in writing.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 2 and 6 pupils' standards are above the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus.
- Pupils' achievement is good as a result of good teaching and learning.
- Good use is made of visits and visitors to support pupils' learning.

## Commentary

90. Standards throughout the school are above the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus. Most pupils' achievement is good because of the good teaching they receive. Visit to places of worship enrich learning, giving pupils an insight into the ethos and practices of different religions. Visitors to school talk about their experiences and give pupils some idea about what it is like to belong to a faith. Year 1 pupils were learning about the messages that Jesus gave in the parables of The Lost Sheep, The Foolish Man and the Wise Man, and the Good Samaritan.
91. Year 3 pupils' learning about Christian baptism was well extended through discussing personal experiences and observing a video of the experiences of a visitor who was recently baptised. In a lesson in Year 6, pupils understood the need for rules in any society and explored the importance of the Ten Commandments for Jews. Their learning about and from the Jewish faith was good. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that all the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus are met and pupils study the other major faiths such as Hinduism, Islam and Judaism along with Christianity.
92. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The subject is taught on a two-year cycle and this supports teachers to plan together. The work recorded in pupils' book is good. Year 6 pupils' handwriting, the presentation of work and the use of their literacy skills are very good. Good use is made of books, pictures, video, visits, visitors and other artefacts to enrich pupils' experiences.
93. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator ensures that the curriculum is implemented well and assessment is good, with end-of-term teacher assessments and some opportunities for older pupils to assess their own work. Very good arrangements are made for the three pupils who belong to the Plymouth Brethren and are withdrawn from religious education lessons and from Acts of Collective Worship. Assemblies meet the requirements of the Acts of Collective Worship. Since the previous inspection, the school has made good improvement. The provision, standards, achievement and teaching and learning have improved from satisfactory to good.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

94. One lesson seen each in **design and technology** and in **physical education** and two lessons were seen in **music**. No lessons were seen in **art and design**. Planning documents were examined, and discussions with teachers and pupils provided further evidence. Samples

of pupils' work were examined in art and design, and in design and technology. Pupils were also observed singing in assemblies. Except for music there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgment on provision in these subjects,

95. These varied observations indicate that pupils' attainment in Years 2 and 6 is at least in line with expected levels for their age in all these subjects. It is evident that all these subjects are led and managed well. The curriculum for each subject is sufficiently broad. With the exception of music, the curriculum planning is developed from national guidelines. Music planning has been revised at the beginning of this current term in the light of staff evaluation of the commercial scheme formerly used. The school recognises the need to develop a more systematic process of assessing and recording pupils' progress in these subjects as they pass through the school.
96. The subject leader is raising the profile of **art and design**. Pupils enjoy the subject, and spoke positively of the recently instituted Art Week. Every pupil had a piece of their art framed and on display. Individual pupil sketchbooks have been introduced in Years 3 to 6. However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to experiment and practice techniques as opposed to recording 'best work'. Pupils have a variety of experiences through which to learn and develop their skills. Year 2 pupils design sculptures using a variety of materials. Year 6 pupils recall the range of media they have used to develop display skills such as sketching and painting. They also have opportunities to try painting in the style of other artists. The school intends to include more work on non-European artists.
97. Cross-curricular activities are encouraged, and art is successfully used as a basis for work in English to help visual learners in Year 4 as they examine the relationships between two people in a picture. Year 2 pupils created pencil and crayon drawings inspired by William Morris wallpaper designs seen when visiting an 'old' house. Year 5 pupils were motivated by a famous painting to write about their feelings in response to it. Art club provides further opportunities for pupils to develop their water colour skills.
98. In **design and technology** pupils develop planning, designing and making skills in Years 1 and 2 in activities which often link with other topics. These include playground scenes with swings and slides, weaving with different fibres, and making castles with a drawbridge. One lesson was observed when Year 4 pupils began their work on making shadow puppets. Having sketched initial designs, pupils worked excitedly, and pupils showed how they could refine their work. They also were aware of the need to design a puppet that will be seen by an audience.

## Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy music and can work co-operatively.
- The quality of singing is generally good.
- School productions involve many pupils.

## Commentary

99. Pupils of all ages showed their enjoyment of music. In assembly they sang wholeheartedly and in tune, boys as well as girls. Year 1 pupils in a lesson studied pulse and rhythm. They listened attentively to their peers, and responded well as some individuals took a turn at

introducing the rest of the class to commence singing and beating the rhythm. Year 3 pupils showed steady progress in developing group compositions as they created a melody for a line of text. Year 5 pupils were equally proud of their achievement in learning and then performing a calypso.

100. The curriculum for music is undergoing review. The school plans for music lessons next year to be led by the music specialist and thus to utilize his skills more fully. Many pupils through the school have taken the chance to participate in singing and other activities in the school production of 'Hoodwinked' at the end of this term.
101. As it was possible to see only one lesson in **physical education** no judgement can be made on the overall provision for physical education. However, pupils are able to go to swimming lessons and the facilities of the school hall and the spacious playing fields enable the broad curriculum to be followed. Year 2 pupils developed control and accuracy in the basic actions of throwing and catching, and then striking and returning a ball. When evaluating the performance of other pairs, they gave sound suggestions about what helped them to be successful. Girls and boys take parts in after-school sports clubs and inter-school matches, including football, netball and cricket.

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

102. The school places great emphasis on this part of its work. All pupils are encouraged to take collective responsibility for each other and their school. Nowhere is this more evident than in lessons where pupils routinely work together in groups and in pairs assisting one another with their different tasks. The very keen attitudes they display are helped by the work they do in PSHE. In a good lesson in Year 5, pupils explored the distinction between liking someone and admiring them. This then encouraged them to examine their own judgements about people's qualities and why these are relevant. Pupils' personal and social development is also promoted well through other areas of the curriculum such as the programme for drugs education. Pupils said they were appalled to find out about the damage drug abuse can do to a person's appearance. The school council promotes the understanding of what a good citizen is and meets regularly to discuss issues related to the development of the school. Pupils are proud of their role as representatives and talk confidently about the changes they wish to make.

## **PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

***Inspection judgement***

***Grade***

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and college	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).*