

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MOUNT NOD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Coventry

LEA area: Coventry

Unique reference number: 131239

Headteacher: Mr D Weston

Lead inspector: Mr S Bywater

Dates of inspection: 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> April 2005

Inspection number: 267356

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 3 to 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 293 full-time equivalent

School address: Greenleaf Close  
Coventry  
West Midlands  
Postcode: CV5 7BG

Telephone number: 024 7646 6837  
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body  
Name of chair of Mr A Pitt  
governors:

Date of previous March 15<sup>th</sup> 1999  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This larger than average sized primary school is situated in a residential area on the edge of Coventry. The school admits children between the ages of three and eleven. There are currently 293 full-time equivalent pupils on roll, of whom around ten per cent are from a range of minority ethnic groups. No pupil is described as being at an early stage of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is around 5.2 per cent, which is below the national average. Attainment on entry to the school is best described as average, although the full range of attainment is represented. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. Forty-four other pupils have various needs, which include learning or physical difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural problems. The school has been awarded the Healthy Schools Award (2005), School Achievement Award (2002) and British Council's International School Award (2004).

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18463	Steve Bywater	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Personal, social and health education and citizenship Religious education Special educational needs
14141	Ernie Marshall	Lay inspector	
1352	John Carnaghan	Team inspector	English Geography History
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This effective school has some very good features.** Teaching and learning are good and as a result pupils achieve well. By the time pupils are eleven years old, standards are above national expectations in English, mathematics and science. A very good curriculum motivates pupils very well. Mount Nod is a caring school and has good relationships with parents and its community and very good links with other schools. Overall, leadership and management are good and the school provides good value for money.

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

- Teaching is good overall and pupils achieve well. Teaching is very good in Year 2.
- Children get off to a good start in the nursery and reception classes.
- Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs achieve particularly well.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and a clear vision for the school.
- Teachers are not planning sufficiently challenging mathematics work for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Management has shortcomings in that governors and some key staff do not play an active enough role in monitoring what is happening or planning for improvement.
- The curriculum is very good and outdoor accommodation is excellent. Links with other schools are very good.
- Pupils' personal, social and moral development is promoted very well and results in pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour.

The school has developed well since the last inspection. Standards of writing and the quality of assessment have improved. Good progress has been made in improving the provision in information and communication technology (ICT) because investment in hardware and training has raised staff's confidence and skills. Governors now fulfil their statutory requirements but are still not fully involved in school development planning and evaluation.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

In the 2004 national tests for eleven year olds, pupils' performance in English was in line with the national average whilst in mathematics it was above average and well above average in science. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well below average in English, average in mathematics and above average in science. Girls have achieved better than boys in English over recent years. The four-year trend in the standards in Key Stage 2 is below the national trend, mainly because of a decline in English standards. Strong leadership and a focused input on improving literacy have halted this trend.

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

*Key: A\* - very high; 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.*

**Throughout the school most pupils achieve well.** Pupils enter the school with attainment that is generally average. By the end of their time in the reception class, most children in the Foundation

Stage<sup>1</sup> achieve the early learning goals and many exceed them. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are currently above average in English, mathematics and science and average in ICT. Higher attaining pupils are not doing as well as they should be in mathematics but lower attaining pupils are achieving very well. Pupils with special educational needs and those from ethnic minority groups achieve as well as their classmates. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, overall.** They display a clear sense of belonging to their school and very good attitudes. This is a community where people get on very well with each other. Spiritual development and opportunities for reflection are satisfactory. Attendance is average and most pupils arrive punctually.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. Teaching is good** and the school has a very good curriculum. The overall quality of assessment is satisfactory. Care and support are good, as are the links with parents and the community. Links with other schools are very good. There is good quality teaching throughout most of the school and especially in Year 2. Good teaching ensures that children get off to a positive start in the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school, teachers prepare a good range of activities to enthuse children. Pupils respond by concentrating very well and being very interested in their work. Teachers share very good relationships with pupils. They link subjects such as art and design and technology well and increasingly use ICT effectively as a tool for teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils are taught well and fully included in all lessons. Assessment enables teachers to identify higher and lower attaining pupils, plan their work and track pupils' attainment across the school. However, teaching of higher attainers in mathematics is not always challenging enough. Pupils' learning is greatly enriched by a wealth of interesting activities, clubs, visits and visitors to the school. The approach to modern foreign languages and educational and cultural links, with a school in Finland for example, are excellent examples of the lengths the school goes to in broadening pupils' experiences through enriching the curriculum. The development of the outdoor accommodation is outstanding.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good.** Leadership of the headteacher is good. The headteacher has a very clear vision and has been innovative in his approach to extending the curriculum so that it supports pupils' personal development very well. Professional development and performance management are very well established and have resulted in improvements, for example in English, ICT and modern foreign languages. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive of school, ensuring that all legal requirements are met. However, they are insufficiently involved in development planning and evaluation of how well the school is doing. The leadership of key staff is good. While key staff contribute satisfactorily to the school's management, their part in checking on provision and managing resources to bring about

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also include: knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development.



pupils' better achievement in their subjects is too slight. As a result, some groups of pupils are not making the best possible progress and some areas are lacking in resources.

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

Parents value the school and express positive comments. They are particularly pleased with the range of learning opportunities offered. Pupils think very highly of the school and speak with pride about their achievements and their experiences.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- Improve the achievement of higher attaining Year 5 and 6 pupils in mathematics.
- Improve the contribution made by governors and subject leaders to finding out about the quality of provision, planning to bring about change and checking on progress towards targets for improvement.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, children achieve well. They achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those pupils from all ethnic groups achieve well as they progress through the school. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards that are generally above average.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage.
- Overall pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils do particularly well in Year 2 where the teaching is very good.
- Lower ability pupils and those with particular needs are well supported and achieve well in mathematics.
- The achievement of higher attainers in mathematics is not high enough in Years 5 and 6.

#### Commentary

1. Most children enter the school with average skills, although the full range of ability is represented. They have good teaching in the Foundation Stage and make good progress through the nursery and reception classes. They achieve well in all six areas of learning<sup>2</sup>. By the end of reception, most children have met the goals expected for their age and some children have exceeded them. Higher attaining children are already working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum.
2. The following table shows the school's results in the teacher assessment trials in 2004. Standards by the end of Year 2 were well above the national average in reading, above average in writing and in line with the national average in mathematics. When compared with pupils in similar schools, pupils' performance was above average in reading, average in writing and below average in mathematics. The four-year trend in the school's average point scores at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly in line with the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.2 (17.5)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.9 (16.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.7 (18.8)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. The following table shows the results pupils in Year 6 attained in 2004 national tests. When compared with all schools, standards in English were average, standards in mathematics were above average and standards in science were well above the

<sup>2</sup> The six areas of learning refer to: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development.

national average. When compared with similar schools, standards in English were well below average, in mathematics were average and science was above average. The four-year trend in the school's average point scores in Key Stage 2 is below the national trend, mainly because of a decline in English standards. A high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the 2004 Year 6 group depressed standards significantly. As a result of recent input from consultants and a school focus on improving literacy, this falling trend has been halted.

4. Girls' results were slightly better than those of boys in Year 2 and Year 6 tests in English but there was no significant difference in other subjects. The very small numbers involved means that it is not possible to make comparisons between different ethnic groups.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (28.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.5 (28.8)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.4 (30.8)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. In English, current standards in Year 2 are above average, indicating good achievement for all pupils. Due to the recent improvements, standards in Year 6 are also above average; in particular the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels is much higher. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6. Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are above average by the end of both Years 2 and 6. Pupils swiftly gain confidence with their reading and writing in Years 1 and 2 and the good standards they attain are maintained and consolidated in Years 3 to 6. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well throughout the school and their progress is good.
6. In mathematics, most pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding have progressed satisfactorily. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. However, lower attaining pupils in Year 6 do very well and almost all are expected to achieve the expected level because the school provides booster lessons before school. Pupils respond well to the sensitive teaching and are achieving well in these lessons. However, whilst the setting of pupils by ability normally works well because it is easier for teachers to plan work to meet their needs, higher attainers are not being challenged enough. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Although the vast majority of pupils achieve the nationally expected level, progress made by higher attainers is slower, and fewer than nationally expected achieve the higher level.
7. In science, pupils achieve well. The strong focus on ensuring that pupils gain factual knowledge is a reason for this and the school pays due attention to the practical aspects of science and places a significant emphasis on investigational work. Standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6.
8. ICT has been a key priority for school development since the last inspection and as a result there has been good improvement in its provision. Pupils throughout the school achieve well and standards are in line with those expected of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. The impact of the changes are already having their effect in Years 1 and 2 but the developments in Years 3 to 6 take longer to filter through. Those pupils capable of achieving high standards are supported to do so. Pupils are encouraged to work

independently but adults and higher attaining pupils support the lower ability pupils and those with special educational needs well. ICT skills are used satisfactorily in other subjects.

9. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the Coventry Syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, although the recorded work in Years 5 and 6 is limited and does little to develop pupils' literacy skills. There was too little evidence to make a firm judgement about standards and achievement in other subjects.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make consistently good progress throughout the school because of the very good support that they receive. Targets set for these pupils are updated regularly and identify precisely what needs to be worked on next. The additional lessons before and after school are a major factor in their good achievement.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their moral and social development is very good, cultural development is good and their spiritual development satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' interest in school life is excellent.
- Pupils' relationships with others are outstanding.
- Pupils' spiritual development is not addressed consistently well.

### **Commentary**

11. The last inspection identified this aspect as a strength of the school and this remains the case, with a number of improvements. Behaviour is even better as are pupils' relationships with adults and other pupils. Pupils' spiritual development remains satisfactory.
12. Pupils show excellent levels of interest because of the wide range of activities that the school provides both in and out of lessons. The school stimulates in pupils a very strong desire to learn and to be involved in social activities by giving them opportunities that include sport, art projects, residential visits and international links which include pen friends from overseas. Teachers and support staff make careful provision for pupils with special educational needs, which ensures they are fully included in the life of the school. As a result, these pupils show the same positive attitudes to school as their fellow pupils.
13. Adults set high expectations for pupils' conduct and they work very hard to ensure that they are met. Positive ways that promote pupils' self-esteem and behaviour very well include –'golden tickets' awarded for 'good deeds'. From nursery onwards, the school very successfully fosters children's personal development so that their relationships with adults and other children are excellent. Very good strategies for teaching pupils the responsibilities of living in a community include a very popular 'buddy' system that effectively forges extremely strong relationships between Year 6 pupils and reception children. The school council has led initiatives on supporting a wide range of charities, though it has yet to become more autonomous, for example by electing a chair person. There have been no recent exclusions.
14. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good. Their cultural development is better than it was at the last inspection with several significant features contributing. Not least are the notable links with foreign schools, the good teaching about the languages and cultures of other countries and the impact of visiting artists on pupils' awareness of art in the wider world.
15. While satisfactory overall, there is a lack of consistency in the quality of pupils' spiritual development. In an excellent religious education lesson there was ample time to reflect on the issues surrounding the story of the prodigal son. At times, however, opportunities are missed for pupils to reflect on important issues, notably in some assemblies.

### **Attendance**

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 94.1%

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	0.0
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.

16. Pupils' good punctuality at the start of the school day reflects their keenness to learn. Attendance is now satisfactory having been below the national average last year. This was mostly the result of families taking their holidays during term time.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall. Teaching and learning are good and the school provides a good curriculum. Assessment is satisfactory. The quality of care, support and guidance is good and there are good links with parents and the community and very good links with other schools.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is **good**. As a consequence, the quality of learning is **good**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers generally have high expectations, of both what pupils can achieve and how they should behave. Pupils rise to these challenges and achieve well.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and the good planning and use of resources results in good learning.
- Teachers share very good relationships with pupils and enthuse and encourage them well.
- In mathematics, some higher attainers are not challenged enough in Years 5 and 6
- Adult support is used effectively to benefit pupils with special educational needs.
- Assessment and tracking procedures in subjects other than English need further development.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2.5%)	11 (27.5%)	19 (47.5%)	9 (22.5%)	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.

17. The much higher proportion of good and very good teaching represents a good improvement since the last inspection.
18. Most teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects they are teaching and in some of the best lessons teachers deliver their lessons with humour and enthusiasm. The

best teaching, for example that seen in Year 2, is consistently characterised by the high quality of questioning and a brisk pace throughout the lesson. This motivates pupils to want to learn and learning becomes fun. Teaching here ensures challenging work that enables pupils to acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding.

19. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, concentration and hard work. Pupils respond well to these expectations and teachers use praise well to reward their efforts and this has a positive effect on pupils' desire to learn. Teachers regularly review the previous work well to assess prior knowledge and build on pupils' understanding. Pupils know what they are going to learn because all teachers explain the purpose of the lesson and regularly revisit this throughout the lesson. Teachers value pupils' efforts and achievements and display their work carefully. Teachers encourage pupils to develop social skills by working together and co-operating; this they do willingly. In all classes, teachers are aware that pupils learn in different ways and adapt their style and resources to suit pupils' needs.
20. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well at times in other subjects but teachers miss opportunities for pupils to use these skills in religious education. Teachers do not yet identify sufficient opportunities to use mathematics skills in other subjects although there is much high quality independent, investigational and experimental work in mathematics and science. The use of ICT has improved significantly since the last inspection and there are many examples of computer work in many subjects.
21. Teachers generally ensure that all pupils are fully included in the lessons, especially in literacy, by giving extra challenge for higher attainers and extra help for lower attainers and any pupil who is less confident in speaking English, through the support of a classroom assistant. Classroom assistants contribute significantly to pupils' learning. They listen carefully to them and consistently reinforce what is being learned. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that pupils with special educational needs have challenging but appropriate targets in their work and the level of help they need to achieve them. The main thrust in support is in literacy and numeracy where pupils are set in groups by their ability. This works well for lower and average attaining pupils but those of higher ability are not always challenged sufficiently in mathematics. Teachers involve classroom assistants effectively so that pupils make good progress in line with their classmates.
22. In literacy, teachers use the results of the assessment effectively to match work to their varying needs, and feedback to pupils, spoken and written, enables pupils to improve their performance. Assessment in English is good and is used to:
  - establish priorities for development;
  - place pupils in groups by ability so that work can match their needs more precisely;
  - discover what pupils know and understand;
  - obtain information to enable them to set challenging but accurate targets for individual pupils and groups of pupils to help them with their learning;
  - plan work for pupils of different abilities;
  - assess work against learning targets and National Curriculum levels.
23. However, although there is a wealth of data, teachers do not always use this information to ensure that the National Curriculum levels already achieved are taken into account when planning future work for higher attainers in mathematics. Assessment in other subjects is satisfactory. Teachers' marking is inconsistent. Whilst the best is used well to indicate what pupils must do in order to improve, some is



simply a cross or a tick and this does little to help them improve their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils have started to become involved in assessing their own work in English and mathematics. They have a good knowledge of their own targets and use this information to help them improve. The school recognises that this is an area for further development.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a very good curriculum supported by good resources and good accommodation. There is very good enrichment through activities both within and outside of the school day.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is an exciting curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes.
- The school has embraced the excellence and enjoyment agenda.
- Innovative use of the good facilities in the school grounds and of international links enhances pupils' experiences at school.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and provided for.
- The school provides a good range of curricular opportunities, including a good programme for arts and modern foreign languages.
- Enrichment activities provide very good and, in sport, excellent opportunities for pupils.
- School is inclusive, providing very good access and opportunities, especially for lower attaining pupils.

### **Commentary**

24. The curriculum for children in the nursery and the reception classes is very good. There is a very wide range of exciting experiences in all areas of their learning. There are ample opportunities for children to choose what they will do. Adults focus well on small groups of children to ensure that they teach them the skills that they need in the different areas of their learning. Good links between the areas make learning meaningful and relevant. Children's learning is well planned to ensure a good balance between chosen activities and tasks when adults teach them specific skills. Outdoor provision in nursery and reception classes has been greatly improved since the last inspection and it now makes a significant contribution to children's learning.
25. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school is fully committed to providing excellence. The impact of this is clearly seen in the pupils' growing confidence and self-esteem as they enjoy a colourful and exciting curriculum that enthuses and makes them want to learn. Teaching and learning in many subjects are enlivened by visits to relevant areas of the attractive and interesting school grounds. Pupils enjoy these varied experiences which especially support work in science and drama. The school has a strong focus on the visual arts. Through its links with Creative Partnerships, it welcomes many specialist arts experts into school to work with and talk to pupils. Their input is used well to support pupils' learning in interesting ways and also provides many strong links between subjects. The creation of benches decorated in the style of famous artists is impressive and show very good links between art and design and technology. The school makes excellent provision for teaching modern foreign languages and has received national recognition for the innovative way in which international links and a strong partnership with the local specialist language college are both used to enhance what is offered to pupils. The pupils' enjoyment and quality of their Spanish speaking were a delight to hear.

26. Curriculum planning is thorough and meets the needs of a diverse range of abilities in the mixed aged classes. Work is generally well planned for higher achieving pupils with the exception of mathematics in Years 5 and 6. The curriculum is inclusive, in keeping with the ethos of the school, and this promotes equal opportunities effectively. For example, the school does all it can to ensure that pupils from different ethnic groups and backgrounds are fully included in all activities. The school prepares pupils well for transfer between the different stages of education. Personal, social and health education is currently at an early stage of development. However, the subject leader has been in consultation with the local education authority adviser and an action plan has been prepared ready for implementation next term.
27. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in the school because targets from individual education plans are included in teachers' planning and very good support is provided. Lower attainers in mathematics are offered additional lessons before school and these are well attended. It is to the credit of the staff involved that almost all pupils achieve the nationally expected level in the subject.
28. Pupils benefit from a very good range of activities held outside the school day. Both pupils and parents appreciate the wide variety of clubs and other opportunities. The range of sporting opportunities offered to pupils is outstanding and many pupils are developing their skills as a result. There are a number of visiting specialists whose skills support the arts, sport and other activities. Pupils undertake a range of useful visits to further enhance their learning in history, geography and religious education.
29. Teachers are suitably qualified and trained. Some have specialist expertise; for example, those who teach Spanish have benefited from a week-long course held in Spain in association with a partner school. Support from the nearby secondary language college is substantial and beneficial to pupils' achievement. Learning support staff are well trained and deployed, providing very good support to teachers, which, in turn, is advantageous to pupils' academic and social development.
30. Resources for most subjects are good and easily accessible. In some subjects, like English, they are very good and their dynamic use in lessons greatly benefits learning by enthusing pupils and making their learning fun. Accommodation is good. The school has good-sized, light classrooms and many other rooms and spaces, which are well used for specialist activities. The area outside the school is very good in meeting the expectations of a modern curriculum with, for example, wildlife areas, performance areas, a wonderful brickwork dragon and an owl built from recycled wooden floor tiles. These, along with the input from artists in residence and the inclusion of links with their international friends, have helped pupils to create a stimulating environment of which they are justifiably very proud. There are a variety of small, well-equipped and attractively planted areas that are used for science work.

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

The school's arrangements for ensuring pupils' care, welfare and safety are good and are systematically implemented by the staff and governing body. The provision of support, advice and guidance for pupils based on teachers' monitoring of academic progress and personal development is good. Pupils' views and suggestions concerning school improvement are regularly sought and acted upon. This enables them to play an active role in bringing about change in school facilities and routines.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good level of trust and mutual respect between pupils and teachers ensures pupils can confidently approach an adult for help or advice.
- Well-planned and organised procedures for induction into the nursery and transfer to the reception class help children to make good early progress.
- Regular canvassing of pupils' suggestions, views and concerns ensures they are given an effective voice in school improvement.
- The good level of care provided by the school ensures pupils feel secure and valued.

## **Commentary**

31. This is a caring school. Teachers know pupils as individuals with individual problems and needs. The caring attitude of the staff is clearly shown in the high standards of mutual respect that exist between pupils and staff. Pupils readily approach their teachers for help and advice if they are worried or concerned. Staff continually assess their pupils' achievement levels and take note of their personal development characteristics. However, tracking is not always rigorous enough so the advice and support offered are not always appropriate and relevant to their needs. Year 6 pupils are entrusted with the task of becoming 'Buddies', who volunteer to befriend and take care of the younger pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well cared for and are supported by both the staff and visiting specialists. Pupils and parents are included in the regular reviews of their progress and setting new targets.
32. The school has implemented good procedures for induction of new children into the nursery class. Prospective parents meet the nursery teacher and any perceived problems are quickly identified and discussed. Parents are given a comprehensive information pack with advice on what is taught and how parents can help. There is regular contact with the reception class children and staff. Joint story times, singing and assemblies are frequently provided. An 'Integration Day' is held when all nursery and reception children and parents come together for a full day programme of transition activities. These procedures help children settle in quickly and gain the trust and confidence necessary to make good early progress.
33. The school asks all Year 6 leavers to complete an annual review of their opinions on aspects of school routine. A suggestions box is provided for use by the elected members of the school council in obtaining the views of pupils across the school in relation to concerns or suggestions for school improvement. The council comprises two representatives from each of the Years 1 to 6, who gather the suggestions for discussion with senior staff. Recent achievements include new play equipment, re-decoration of toilets and environmental projects around the school. Within the school, pupils are encouraged to discuss and agree their own class and playtime rules. In English, the junior pupils are also encouraged to discuss and agree personal targets. Pupils feel their views are valued.
34. The school provides a good level of pastoral care. Pupils are carefully supervised throughout the school day and dispersal arrangements ensure a safe return to their parents and carers. The usual risk assessments, health and safety inspections and tests are carried out and regular fire drills are held. First aid arrangements are good. Medicines are properly controlled and staff have appropriate child protection training, including control of Internet security.

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

The school's links with parents are good. Parents feel well informed of their children's progress and feel their views are taken into account. The school has developed good links with the community and uses them well to enhance the curriculum. There are very good links with other schools and colleges and the school uses them well to improve the quality of education provided for the pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good links with other schools and colleges provide a wide range of opportunities for both staff development and improvement in pupils' learning.
- Good use of the local community provides opportunities to broaden the curriculum.
- Supportive views expressed by parents indicate a good level of satisfaction.

### **Commentary**

35. The school has established very good productive links with other local schools and these provide significant support for pupils' learning, particularly related to modern foreign language work, art and sports coaching and help with the after-school club activities. The foreign language work involves pupils in modern video-conferencing sessions supported by visiting staff. Links with primary schools in Finland, Sweden and Spain are used well to broaden pupils' knowledge of other countries. E-mail and pen friend writing is popular. The local links provide opportunities for staff development through sharing best practice experiences and joint training provision. Headteachers, deputy headteachers, special needs co-ordinators and the Early Years groups all meet to discuss and develop new initiatives for improving the quality of education provided. The links with local secondary schools help with the transfer of Year 6 leavers. Links with the local colleges provide additional adult help in the classroom in the form of work experience placements for students on national vocational courses and for graduate teacher training.
36. The school promotes itself well in the community and welcomes out-of-hours use of the school premises and facilities by community groups such as local fitness, sporting and language clubs. The sports field is available for weekend use by local youth football teams. Representatives from the local police, fire and health services are invited into school to meet the pupils and give them advice on personal and home safety matters.
37. Partners within the community have been actively sought and the school has been successful in obtaining support and sponsorship from local companies including motor manufacturers, a professional football club, a superstore and local bank. Staff from the local branch of a major insurance company have been engaged on voluntary work to improve the central courtyard. The school makes effective use of the local area and services to broaden pupils' learning experiences. Off-site visits such as to the local church, museum, nature reserve and environmental centre are carefully chosen to illustrate and reinforce classroom learning.
38. The school positively welcomes parents' views and opinions. The governing body has introduced and publicised a suggestions box for parents to use at any time during the year. There are three parent consultation evenings provided each year and parents' views are sought in discussion with class teachers. The school gives a high priority to parental concerns and responds well. The school has provided adult tuition sessions for literacy and numeracy and has set up a parents' writing club to promote their interest in literature and poetry. Parents are informed at an early stage if their child has special educational needs and they are informed regularly how their child is

progressing in meeting targets set in their individual education plans. Both parents and pupils contribute to this target-setting process. A good number of parents provide regular help in classrooms, including the making of 'story sacks', and help with off-site activities and weekend club work. Parents and friends in the community provide a good level of support for the annual programme of fund-raising events.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher leads the school well. Management is satisfactory. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has used funding well to provide an exciting and rich curriculum.
- Governors and subject leaders are insufficiently involved in development planning and evaluation.
- Professional development and performance management are very well managed.

### **Commentary**

39. The headteacher is a caring and sensitive leader who has been instrumental in developing very good relationships within school and within the local community. His commitment to the well-being of the staff and pupils is effective and there is a positive and welcoming atmosphere. The headteacher has been innovative in his fundraising and has found grants totalling over £50,000 to support his vision of providing an exciting curriculum. This vision has been met particularly well and is clearly outlined in the current school development plan – a useful document to take the school forward and which builds well on previous targets and the previous inspection. Since the last inspection, standards in writing and ICT in particular have risen well as a result of these strategies. The teaching of foreign languages, links with schools in Finland and Spain and some outstanding artwork produced with the support of artists in residence are further examples of this success. The school development plan provides for curriculum development and encompasses other aspects of school management, for example a programme for maintenance and development of the school grounds and buildings. It gives a clear outline of plans for the current school year and briefer plans for the next two years. The school has improved well since the last inspection and is accurate in its self-evaluation.
40. Governors maintain good relationships with staff but few are regular visitors. Whilst they have a good understanding of the pastoral features of the school, they have not been sufficiently involved in planning for the school's development, especially in the systematic and rigorous monitoring of standards, quality of education or school development. There are positive features such as the invitation to co-ordinators to speak to governors about developments in their subjects. However, when it comes to financing the subjects, most governors are unable to make well-informed decisions when allocating financial resources and rely heavily on the headteacher alone. Some governors are new to their roles and others are in no position to monitor or evaluate the developments effectively. Governors do, however ensure that statutory requirements are fulfilled.
41. Co-ordinators have varying degrees of experience and expertise to successfully monitor and support colleagues. The curriculum co-ordinators have ensured that whole-school planning is effective since the school has introduced national schemes of

work to provide progression. There is a good sense of teamwork among all staff and they are not overburdened with administrative tasks. However, post holders are not given sufficient opportunity and guidance to demonstrate their competence and expertise as curriculum managers. For example, the quality of subject action plans vary from weak to very good, they do not manage their own budgets, and most have not benefited from opportunities to monitor standards, the quality of education and the value for money achieved by the expenditure. Although the impact on pupils' standards is not significant, as a result of these drawbacks some relatively minor issues, such as the inconsistencies in recording of work in religious education, the shortage of ethnic instruments in music and the lack of records to show how many pupils can swim the required 25 metres by the time pupils leave school, have been missed. In addition, the very good emphasis on the teaching of lower attaining pupils in mathematics has meant that the slower progress of higher attainers has been somewhat over-looked.

42. Issues relating to special educational needs are managed well by the special needs co-ordinators. They maintain records appropriately, oversee early identification, ensure regular communication with staff and the responsible governor, monitor records, communicate with parents and organise review meetings.
43. Overall, professional development is very good and especially successful developments have taken place in literacy, mathematics and ICT. There is a strong link to school development plan priorities and careful targeting of in-service training to meet specific needs, which benefit the school and staff themselves. As a result, standards have risen in writing, and pupils' problem-solving skills and mental arithmetic skills have improved. Performance management is fully established and planning for workforce reform is well advanced. Staff new to the school speak very highly of the support given by the headteacher and other staff. Regular dialogue with colleagues has enabled teachers to become familiar with school routines. The school has appropriately employed a sufficient number of education support staff and these make a very positive contribution to school life and are valued members of the school community. The caretaker is a good role model for pupils. He is fully involved in the life of the school, for example in helping to support the school's sports teams as well as helping to provide a bright and cared-for environment.
44. A general long-term, financial view is linked to identified school priorities. Spending patterns are carefully monitored by the headteacher. Funding for pupils with special educational needs is used appropriately and money for the teaching of modern foreign languages is used very well. However, the governing body is generally more supportive than effective in establishing financial priorities, which are instead determined by the headteacher on an annual basis. Governors and subject leaders are insufficiently involved in monitoring spending patterns and evaluating spending decisions for cost effectiveness. Subject leaders' action plans are insufficiently precise to enable funding to be carefully earmarked to priorities or the impact of spending to be monitored. This prevents the governing body from effectively undertaking this aspect of its role and there are no criteria for checking the success of this venture and ensuring best value.
45. Children achieve well; there is good teaching and learning and a good quality of education. Pupils develop very positive attitudes to learning and very good standards of behaviour. Taking into account these factors, the school is judged to provide good value for money.

## **Financial information**

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	869412
Total expenditure	863253
Expenditure per pupil	2740

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	22679
Balance carried forward to the next year	28838

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

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

Children get a good start to school life because all adults in the nursery and reception classes plan closely together to ensure that provision is good. They give children a very wide range of stimulating learning experiences in all areas of their learning. There is a good balance between opportunities for children to try things out for themselves and tasks for individuals and small groups when adults ensure that children learn new skills at a good rate. Fruitful links between the different areas of learning make children's learning meaningful and help them to make good progress across all areas. Leadership and management are good, ensuring that planning makes effective use of all adults. Detailed joint planning and similar very good organisation mean that teaching is consistently good in nursery and reception classes across all areas of learning. Parents appreciate the arrangements for introducing children to the nursery because they help them to settle quickly. Effective links between the nursery and reception classes support children's smooth transfer, as do those from the reception classes to Year 1. The careful checks that adults make on children's learning are used effectively to plan what they need to learn next. Children with special needs receive suitable support and those identified as more capable are given tasks that challenge them. There have been significant improvements in the provision of outdoor facilities since the last inspection. As a result, children have ample opportunities for physical and imaginative play, outside as well as in, in both nursery and reception classes. Above all, learning is fun.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

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

- Teachers and support staff create a positive climate for working and playing.
- Children play well together.
- Reception children benefit from a very good 'buddy' system.
- Snack time is used well to encourage children to relate well to one another.
- Sometimes there are missed opportunities to make children increasingly independent.

#### **Commentary**

46. Children achieve well. The air of happy purposeful activity in the nursery and reception classes results from children exercising their independence from an early stage, as when choosing from exciting activities. They work and play alongside one another well and show increasingly that they like to offer help to others, as when reception children make a picture for a parent. Reception children enjoy the regular contact with their Year 6 buddies and this helps them to mature and learn about the responsibility of looking after others. Teaching is good because it develops children's independence well through being able to make decisions about what they will do as well as encouraging them to concentrate on their learning in small groups that are supported well by adults. Nursery snack time is a valuable time for children to talk to one another in a real social situation. This they do very calmly and sensibly for their age. Adults usually encourage children to take responsibility. Reception children, for example, hang up their own paintings to dry. They change very quickly and independently for



movement in the hall, though nursery children are not always given this opportunity. This slows their otherwise good progress in becoming increasingly responsible. Most reception children listen well in discussions and the majority are well on course to meet the targets for their age by the end of reception, with some exceeding them.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good strategies for helping children to associate letters with sounds help them to make good progress in writing and reading.
- Teaching extends children's skills well in interesting ways.
- There are good opportunities for children to talk and listen in different situations.

### **Commentary**

47. This area of learning is taught consistently well in nursery and reception classes so that children achieve well and many are well on course to meet the goals set for them by the end of their time in reception. In nursery and reception there are ample opportunities for children to listen and talk to adults and to each other in relaxed situations such as during play, as well as in groups including the whole class. Because adults are very supportive, most children quickly gain the confidence to talk to others. Where children, for example with special needs, lack this confidence adults give them the encouragement and support that they need and they achieve well in relation to their difficulties. In the nursery there are ample opportunities for children to experiment with their developing mark-making skills. While these chances effectively continue in the reception classes, teachers use additional methods for helping children to gain confidence when making words when writing. One such strategy ensures that children use their good knowledge of letter sounds to start the words that they want to write while encouraging them to leave a line when they are unsure of the following letters. This helps the children to keep their very good level of interest as it lets them move on with their writing. Adults in the nursery and reception foster children's love of reading well by, for example, involving parents in the use of imaginative 'story sacks' that contain a range of resources for captivating children's imagination. Teachers take care to extend the more capable children through more challenging books, supported effectively by children's independent use of recorded stories. The good teaching in reception provides well for the more capable children, for instance by teaching the use of punctuation marks such as question marks. Reception class teachers use their knowledge of children's attainments to provide work in reading and writing in small groups, that matches the attainment of the children accurately. Adults often conscientiously promote conversations through skilful questioning.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Counting skills are developed well in nursery and reception.
- Links with other areas of learning often (but not always) help children's understanding of number.

### **Commentary**

48. Teaching and learning are good, and result in most children achieving well and working effectively towards the goals set for them by the end of the reception year, with some

likely to go beyond them. Links with other areas of learning are often used well to develop children's understanding. In outdoor play, for example, nursery children learn about numbers in their 'vegetable shop', one higher attaining child attempting to explain the 'p' sign in '2p'. Support assistants skilfully involve reception children in counting to high numbers (up to 100) when engaging them in outdoor physical activities. Good teaching enables most reception children to gain a good understanding of the rudiments of weighing and of measuring length. One higher attaining child, for example, spoke in detail about the sausages made from dough: "This one is longer than that one but not as long as the other one". Some lower attaining children have yet to grasp the skill of describing certain objects as heavier or lighter than others when using scales. Links with other areas of learning are not always successful, as when the numbers on pictures of houses confused nursery children about how many squares a robot needed to move to reach a certain square.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Planning ensures that first hand experiences engage children well and develop good learning.
- The good use of ICT is an improvement since the last inspection.
- Although children answer questions, more could be done to encourage them to ask questions of their own.

### **Commentary**

49. Teaching and learning are good, ensuring that most children achieve well and are on course to meet the goals set for them by the end of reception, with some exceeding them. There is much to excite and interest the children because the area is well planned to enable them to learn from meaningful first-hand experiences. Children in the nursery are involved with growing plants while good use is made of visits out to broaden the reception children's knowledge of the world beyond the school. Firemen and policemen visit the nursery and reception classes to talk about their work and this enriches the children's learning. Children's skills in ICT are developed well. This is an improvement since the last inspection when computers were not used enough. Nursery children get a good start to their use of ICT by, for example, learning how to program a floor robot so that it moves a given number of squares. Reception children make good use of listening devices to follow stories while voluntary helpers and older pupils effectively support their growing computer skills. Although teaching provides good opportunities for children to explore their ideas through talk and adults often question them well to extend their thinking, not all children ask questions of their own. Opportunities are sometimes missed to promote this skill.

## **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is good outdoor provision.

- While indoor space is used effectively, teaching does not always fully consider the implications of what children wear.

### **Commentary**

50. Children achieve well. The school's improved outdoor provision since the last inspection provides good facilities for nursery and reception children. Teaching is good because it enables children to choose from a wide range of physical activities including adventurous and boisterous play. Nursery children learn to climb, dig, kick balls, and co-operate with one another when using wheeled toys. Reception children build with bread crates and use them imaginatively as stepping-stones while adults sensibly intervene when physical activity becomes over-boisterous. The school hall is effectively used for large group activities and movement. Just occasionally however, teachers do not carefully consider the implications of what children wear. For example, some nursery children found it difficult to stretch in what they wore. Children enjoy the opportunities to develop handling skills including cutting, sticking, painting and arranging objects in a variety of situations. They make good progress and are well on course to meet the set goals by the end of the year, with some exceeding them.

### **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are ample opportunities for children to try out their own ideas.
- There is good teaching of skills.

### **Commentary**

51. Teaching is good throughout the Foundation Stage and reception children are set to reach the expected standards by the end of the year. They achieve well. In nursery, imaginative teaching gives children plenty of chances to explore texture and arranging different objects. Children were fascinated, for example by the effects of objects such as jewellery, transparent paper and feathers on an overhead projector. Free choice includes valuable chances to paint, though paper is sometimes set too high for these young children to reach comfortably. Good teaching of skills enables reception children to explore and talk about the effects of mixing colours to paint fruit. Imaginative sound-making resources such as saucepans encourage children to make sounds in free-choice activities outside. Effective use is made of three-dimensional materials such as dough as when children make 'food'. Ample opportunities for role-play inside and out enable children to take on a wide range of roles, such as shopkeeper and policeman. Reception children are set to achieve the goals in this area of learning and some are likely to exceed them.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and teachers give clear guidance on what is to be learnt.
- Very good resources are well used to develop pupils' interest.
- The presentation and accuracy of pupils' work are good.

### Commentary

52. In national tests in 2004, the results of pupils in Year 2 were well above average in reading and above average in writing. Over the last three years, standards at the end of Year 2 have generally improved at the same rate as the improving national trend. Current standards in Year 2 are above average, indicating good achievement for all pupils.
53. Compared with the previous two years, standards for Year 6 pupils in 2004 declined. A high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the 2004 Year 6 group significantly depressed standards. However, there have been improvements of late and current standards in Year 6 are above average; in particular the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels is much higher. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve similarly. Girls' results were slightly better than those of boys in Year 2 and Year 6 tests but these differences were not evidenced during the inspection. The very small numbers involved means that it is not possible to make comparisons between different ethnic groups.
54. In speaking and listening, standards are above average. Encouraged by effective teaching, pupils' answers to questions are confident and they can explain their views at length. Because pupils receive regular opportunities to speak aloud in class and in assemblies, their skills improve and they speak with increasing assurance, reaching above expected standards by Year 6. Listening skills are above average at all ages; pupils are usually eager to respond to their teachers, their concentration is good, and they develop skills in listening carefully to their peers, which encourages their learning. In reading, standards are above average across the school. These strengths are, in large part, attributable to the effective arrangements made by the school and the support given to reading at home. In Year 2, most pupils demonstrate understanding of simple passages and most confidently express opinions on what they have read. Most pupils can work out how to read new words and show good expression as they read. In Year 6, pupils are confident readers and are comfortable reading unfamiliar texts. Pupils know how to find reference books in the school library and show good familiarity with books. They develop good research skills and their use of expression when reading aloud is strong.
55. In writing, standards are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. In Years 1 and 2 there are many opportunities for pupils to write in a range of subjects. As a result, they achieve well. In particular, the practice they have and teachers' high expectations successfully promote high standards of handwriting and presentation. The school's emphasis on spelling means that most monosyllabic words are correctly spelled. By Year 6, most pupils' writing is fluent and joined; spelling shows good consistency and most pupils use punctuation well. Pupils' vocabulary is broad and used adventurously, at times. Emphasis on the correct terms to use in subjects like geography encourages pupils to select the correct words when expressing themselves in both writing and speaking. Work is consistently accurate and well presented.
56. Teaching and learning are good. Most of the lessons observed were either good or better; most very good lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2. Good and better teaching has a positive impact on achievement. Teaching is planned very carefully to give a varied range of activities

and to provide the correct degree of support and challenge for all pupils in the mixed-age classes; in this way it is very inclusive. Very good resources are used well to provide stimulation in lessons. The specific requirements of all pupils with special educational needs are well known to teachers and teaching assistants and are addressed in both planning and classroom practice. Relationships are strongly fostered by teachers, who tirelessly encourage pupils. Pupils live up to these expectations and help each other with their learning as a matter of routine. They behave very well and adopt very positive attitudes to their learning. Encouraged by teachers, pupils develop good independence as learners. There are some areas for development in teaching: the pace of some lessons can flag and pupils' productivity suffers. Pupils' work is carefully and thoroughly assessed, targets are set and extra help is offered to those who require it.

57. Leadership is good. The two co-ordinators work well with staff and ensure that the curriculum is planned effectively. Teaching assistants, helped by thorough planning, provide skilful support in the classroom where it is most needed. Management is satisfactory. Analysis of test results has led to the introduction of booster classes for pupils of average ability and these are helping to raise standards. Monitoring of pupils' work has helped ensure consistency in teaching. Resources are good; the library is good and is used as an information resource by pupils.
58. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Standards have kept pace with national improvements, teaching has improved and presentation of pupils' work is much better.

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

59. The influence of the National Literacy Strategy feeds effectively into the approaches to teaching in all subjects. Literacy skills are well promoted through the use of subject-specific language. Teachers encourage pupils to present their work carefully and avoid technical errors when writing in all subjects and this is effective in promoting greater accuracy in writing and presentation. However, some opportunities are missed and in some subjects, religious education for example, simple worksheets requiring pupils to insert a single word do little to enhance their literacy skills.

## Modern foreign languages

Due to limited opportunities, this area has been sampled and is not reported in full. The school has significantly developed its modern language provision by embracing partnerships with the nearby specialist language college, the local education authority and a range of international schools with which it has forged powerful links. The headteacher is very supportive of a cross-curricular approach to language learning.

All pupils in Years 3 to 6 are receiving regular high quality teaching and this is a growing strength of the school. There are many benefits from foreign links. In particular, close relationships between teachers and their colleagues in both Finnish and Spanish schools have encouraged the development of linguistic skills. In a Spanish lesson, the teacher communicated an enthusiasm for learning that pupils readily identified with, so that they learnt well. Other opportunities are taken to further pupils' knowledge of foreign languages. For example, registrations are often undertaken in Spanish, promoting simple conversation on a regular basis.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lower attaining pupils achieve very well.
- Too few pupils are achieving the higher standards.
- The National Numeracy Strategy is used well by teachers.
- There is very good analysis of pupils' national tests
- Assessment is not being used effectively to provide challenging work for higher attainers

### Commentary

60. Standards of attainment are above the national average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This pattern of attainment is very similar to that seen in the previous inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are achieving well, whilst those in Years 3 to 6 achieve satisfactorily overall. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attainers do particularly well due to the setting arrangements and the additional lessons in Year 6, which support their learning. The weaker area is the achievement of higher attainers which means fewer than expected pupils reach the higher levels.
61. The quality of teaching is generally good. In the numeracy lessons seen, the teachers' confidence, enthusiasm and good subject knowledge were very evident. The pupils were often highly motivated and keen to be involved and as a result, their learning was good and in some cases, very good. Teachers plan conscientiously and make effective use of practical resources, such as number fans and whiteboards. In sharing the purpose of the lesson with the pupils, the teachers frequently relate it to what the pupils know already. Using the National Numeracy Strategy, teachers ensure that pupils develop their understanding, knowledge and skills in a systematic and organised way. Pupils of different levels of ability have a good understanding of what they are doing because they are always told about what they are going to learn.
62. No time is wasted and lessons move at a good pace. The pupils learn and achieve well because they are helped to make relevant connections between what they know and new information. In lessons, the initial sessions of mental mathematics are generally

lively and the teachers prompt the pupils to think quickly and to explain their answers. In sharing and discussing strategies, the teachers provide a good model for the pupils in the way they set out computations clearly, for example on the class interactive whiteboard. The ready and encouraging exchanges between teachers and pupils give the pupils confidence that in turn leads to success and feelings of positive self-esteem in mathematics. The teachers' skilled questioning, with integral use of mathematical vocabulary, develops and deepens the pupils' understanding. This also ensures that all pupils feel involved and challenged during question and answer sessions and in the plenary at the end of lessons.

63. Numeracy lessons are fun and the pupils enjoy them. In lessons observed during the inspection, teachers were careful to ensure that they directed questions carefully to boys and girls, as well as different ability groups. A scrutiny of pupils' work showed that lower attaining pupils have made good progress in all year groups and are working at a level higher than one would normally expect. For some of these pupils, this represents very good achievement. The higher attaining pupils make best progress in Years 2, 3 and 4. However, higher attainers in Years 5 and 6 are not always challenged sufficiently since the work is set, albeit at a generally good level, not high enough for them. Good quality homework for all pupils builds well on work done in lessons. Some good work has been done across the full range of the mathematics curriculum as a result of the subject leaders' analysis of strengths and weaknesses in answering the national test questions. As a result, all pupils develop a secure grasp of number and of how to apply it in solving problems, as well as good knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures and data handling.
64. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There is currently very good analysis of pupils' results in statutory and non-statutory tests. This analysis also helped to correctly identify the slower progress of higher attaining pupils in a class which was taught by a number of temporary teachers. For this reason, teachers are clear about which particular areas of the curriculum or groups of pupils to focus on in order to improve their practice. As a result of effective input over the past year, the underachievement has been largely, though not fully, corrected. There has been no recent monitoring of the quality of others' lessons and the current subject co-ordinator has had little time to scrutinise work. . Whilst assessment clearly identifies pupils who require additional support and this is good, those who are achieving highly are still not being extended sufficiently in Years 5 and 6. The morning 'booster' sessions are a very positive feature and a key reason why standards in mathematics are above average.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

65. Although opportunities are not planned systematically, the skills associated with numeracy are promoted satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum. Analysis of pupils' work in subjects, such as science and geography, provide good examples of data handling, and work with number is promoted in ICT. Pupils also use careful measuring in design and technology and science.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a strong focus on ensuring that pupils gain factual knowledge.



- Some good use of first hand experience develops pupils' understanding well.
- There are missed opportunities for pupils to use their initiative.
- Teachers do not always set work that accurately matches the needs of pupils of differing abilities.

## Commentary

66. Teachers' strong focus on ensuring that pupils gain factual knowledge contributes significantly to their good achievements. As a result the standards achieved by the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are above those expected for their ages and are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Most Year 6 pupils know about the functions of the human heart for example, and how to separate mixtures such as water, sand and iron filings. In the 2004 national tests the Year 6 pupils reached high standards following revision lessons. A similar programme is currently underway to consolidate and extend what Year 6 pupils know prior to the 2005 tests.
67. Teaching and learning are good and as a result children achieve well. In addition to the keen focus on developing pupils' knowledge, there is some very effective teaching of practical skills, though this important aspect of learning is not developed consistently well through the school. In one lesson the teacher made very good use of hands-on opportunities to enable Year 1 and 2 pupils to find out about seeds. Pupils successfully investigated which fruits had seeds on the inside and which on the outside. More capable pupils were challenged well. They were asked to investigate whether or not small fruits have more seeds than larger ones. This task encouraged them to think about how they would investigate the suggestion and how they might record their findings, so developing their skills of investigation well. Sometimes, however, teaching misses opportunities to enable pupils to use their own ideas and initiative about how they might organise investigations. This occasionally leads, for example, to Year 6 pupils recording findings in very similar ways. Their abilities to select ways to present findings effectively, therefore, are not as good as they might be. There are thorough systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. The information that teachers get from these systems, however, is not always used as well as it might be to match work to the needs of pupils of different ability. Progress occasionally slows for higher attaining pupils for a time as a result. Because pupils gain good amounts of factual knowledge, progress for pupils of all abilities is good overall.
68. Leadership and management of science are satisfactory overall though they have been good in Years 3 to 6. The co-ordinator has only recently taken on responsibility for the overview of Years 1 and 2 and as yet she has not gained a secure view of what is working well and what might be improved. While she checks teachers' planning and pupils' books, she has not had the benefit of observing lessons through the school in order to build on what is working well and to identify what needs to be improved to make teaching and learning even better.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**. The school has acted on the recommendations of earlier reports with determination to resource a significantly improved provision.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good achievement by pupils.
- Good teaching leads to above average standards in some strands.
- There is strong subject management and action to develop the subject.

- The pupils do not show enough independence in selecting some of their own applications.

## **Commentary**

69. The very good subject leadership has encouraged staff to use the school's improved computer resources more effectively than in the past. Over the past two years, a good programme of national and school-based training has increased confidence and expertise. As a result all teachers are able to use the computer suite, interactive whiteboards and resources at the local language college to build up pupils' basic skills in core areas and enhance the provision. This has taken time to fully impact on standards and is most noticeable in the work of pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not had time to fully benefit from the changes. The strongest areas are linked to word-processing and graphics. Year 3 and 4 pupils are confident in finding files, moving text about and illustrating it. Pupils in Year 6 produce presentations about themselves and higher attainers include sound and movement. Pupils throughout Years 3 to 6 open up the Internet rapidly and are proud of their research work in various subjects. Good planning by all teachers takes pupils through a carefully structured set of learning steps. The curriculum now fulfils the complete range of required topics, which is a significant improvement since the school did not meet the requirements of the curriculum at the last inspection. Standards are now securely up to the expected level, in both Year 6 and Year 2. Standards in Years 3 and 4 are above expectations. This represents good achievement by pupils.
70. Because teaching is good throughout the school, pupils make good progress each year. The technician supports teachers and pupils particularly well. Some teachers are beginning to use their knowledge of pupils' skills to match the tasks to ability. A positive approach by many teachers is to pair higher attainers with lower attainers. With the support of their classmates and other adults, slower pupils work confidently on simpler tasks while more advanced pupils are challenged by more difficult projects. Teachers encourage pupils to work independently. Many use computers to consolidate the work that they are doing in mathematics and English. Pupils regularly use sensor technology to produce weather updates.
71. Pupils enjoy working with ICT and they work with intense concentration and behave exceptionally well. In addition, pupils are willing to do work at home. For example, a number of Year 6 girls produced a video of their friends, all of whom have pen friends in Finland and sent this to the Finnish school after a father had edited it.
72. The school is well placed to aim for above average standards overall. To assist with this ambition, the adoption of workable assessment procedures is an early priority in the subject manager's action plan.

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

73. Teachers satisfactorily encourage pupils to apply their ICT skills in other subjects. Many teachers regularly make good use of the interactive whiteboards to make learning more effective in English and mathematics. In addition, teachers are innovative in finding ways to encourage pupils to use their skills. For example, a comment by a teacher regarding the enormous number of pens and pencils around the classroom was the starting point for an ICT investigation using data-handling and problem-solving skills. A stunning video-conferencing session was observed to enable pupils to receive the high quality teaching of a Spanish teacher from a nearby college. Most years use the Internet to get information for history and geography. Teachers use

good software for pupils to tackle simple spreadsheets or e-mails, without risk. All classes have the opportunity to incorporate the computer into art activities and they use the resources at the local authority teachers' centre to compose music. However, on occasion opportunities are missed, particularly the kind where pupils would use their own initiative to select some application that fits with the topic they are doing.

## HUMANITIES

### Geography

74. Geography was sampled; one lesson was seen in Year 3/4, another in Year 5/6. One was satisfactory and one good. Teachers display good knowledge and understanding of the subject, and lessons are thoroughly planned. Pupils have positive attitudes, which contribute to their learning. However, some parts of lessons lacked pace and teaching was, at times, pedestrian. The schemes of work are thorough and meet National Curriculum requirements but subject management has no way to ensure that the budget allocated to geography bears any relation to the subject's needs as expressed in the departmental development plan and hence there is no way of checking on value for money.

### History

75. History was sampled. Two lessons were observed during the inspection; both were for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and were very good. Lively teaching, very good resources and perceptive questioning were features of note. Pupils really enjoyed the lessons and so they learnt very well. Schemes of work are comprehensive and encourage links with other subjects like English, science and art and design. The subject promotes research and investigative skills well; pupils produce large quantities of work, often with a wide cultural context. The co-ordinator has no input on the subjects' budget allocation, which is unrelated to the subject's plans for its future development.

### Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good balance between the study of Christianity and other faiths.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are not recording their work sufficiently.
- Pupils share their ideas confidently with others; they know that their thoughts are listened to and valued.
- There is insufficient evaluation of what is going on in the subject.

### Commentary

76. Standards in religious education are generally in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall, but achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. This is similar to standards found at the time of the previous inspection. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but the quality varies. Outstanding teaching in Year 2 challenges pupils' thinking and puts them into open-ended situations where they have to draw upon their knowledge and understandings. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils were asked to discuss the story of the prodigal son and to consider their own feelings of forgiveness and jealousy and the special meaning of the story to those of the

Christian faith. Other lessons are more straightforward and cover the required ground, without really challenging the pupils to think or exciting their imaginations. The amount of recorded work produced by pupils in Years 5 and 6 is rather limited and does little to promote pupils' literacy skills.

77. Year 6 pupils have developed the expected level of understanding of the major world religions and know the beliefs associated with faiths such as Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. They can compare customs and beliefs, such as the way people pray and the meaning of festivals such as Christmas, Diwali and Eid. Pupils recognise the importance of holy books and of different places of worship, including churches, temples and mosques.
78. In those lessons where pupils are considering abstract issues such as friendship or loyalty, they share their ideas confidently and learn from each other. This is because most teachers value and respect others' views. In this way, religious education lessons help pupils develop their sense of community and understanding of other cultures and faiths. This is extended into the wider life of the school through both religious and secular gatherings, such as school assemblies.
79. Although leadership and management are satisfactory, there are areas to develop. For example, teachers do not teach the same lessons despite their planning together. This means coverage of the work is not consistent. Without sufficient work scrutiny, discussion with pupils and lesson observation, this inconsistency, along with the limited work in Years 5 and 6, has been missed.

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

### **Art and design**

80. One lesson was observed during the inspection, so no secure judgements can be made about the quality of teaching and learning and about pupils' achievements. Work on display through the school illustrates a broad range of attainment in all age groups. There are examples of some good quality art that indicate good teaching in some year groups. Year 2 images of daffodils show some very careful use of colour and interesting textured effects, notably by the higher attaining pupils. The quality of the finished pictures reflects the pride that pupils take with preparatory sketches in their new sketchbooks. Some Year 6 pupils have produced evocative paintings in the style of different artists whose characteristics they can describe. One said, "Andy Warhol did not use the colours that would normally be used." The artist in residence has contributed significantly to this work as well as to large dramatic sculptures such as that of a dragon and an owl. Seats made by Year 3 and 4 pupils in the style of famous artists make a strong impact in one of the school's newly developed outdoor areas. Art makes a significant contribution to the pupils' good cultural development.

### **Design and technology**

81. No lesson was seen during the inspection so it is not possible to make a judgement about teaching and standards. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Food technology effectively includes designing and making biscuits and testing bread to judge preferred tastes. Year 1 and 2 pupils use a range of materials to make the model homes that they design and Year 3 and 4 pupils use differing techniques to make 'pop-up' books, with good use of sliding features and split pins.

## **Music**

82. It is not possible to judge standards and achievement because only one Year 3/4 lesson was observed. The plans for music indicate that, as pupils progress through the school, all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered.
83. Although some teachers are not confident in the teaching of music, pupils in infant classes sing tunefully and show good recall of words. From the limited evidence from singing heard in assemblies, pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not sing so well and in the one lesson seen, their musical knowledge and understanding were some way below that which are normally expected. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 did, however, participate well and thoroughly enjoyed singing 'Boney was a Warrior'.
84. There are good opportunities for the more able pupils to develop their skills and interests through the peripatetic lessons, for example in keyboard, guitar, percussion and woodwind. There is no choir or orchestra at present but pupils do sing in concerts and perform for their parents and others at various times of year.
85. The subject co-ordinator has only very recently taken over this role and there has been no monitoring or evaluation of standards; clearly the subject has taken a 'back seat' in recent times. Resources are adequate and teachers are able to meet the National Curriculum; however, the range and number of instruments are limited, especially instruments from other cultures. This reduces pupils' opportunities to explore sound and to compose using a wide variety of instruments.

## **Physical education**

86. Insufficient teaching and learning were observed during the inspection to make a secure judgement about their quality and about pupils' achievements in the different aspects of the subject. Teaching seen in Year 2 was good because it was purposeful and challenging and ensured that pupils exercised vigorously and felt the effects on their hearts. Teaching made very good use of pupils' evaluation of their own and others' work to improve its quality. The use of pupils' understanding from comparing the performance of others was less well used in a satisfactory Year 6 lesson. The co-ordinator does not yet have the benefit of observing lessons to identify strengths in teaching and find out what might be improved. As at the last inspection, wide-ranging opportunities outside normal lessons enrich the curriculum and make a strong contribution to pupils' skills and attitudes. They include sports such as short tennis and cricket as well as adventurous activities such as orienteering undertaken on residential visits.

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

87. Too few lessons were seen in this area of the school's work but since provision in this area is judged from the wider range of evidence included in other subjects and central to school's work, the provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. A new scheme of work is due to be implemented next term but current lessons include work on diet, healthy eating, sex, drugs and personal safety. This programme helps pupils develop a safe and healthy life-style, gain confidence and interact with others. Every class has a regular time during which pupils talk about issues, and the school makes good use of visitors to support this work. The school council provides a voice for pupils and throughout the school there is a huge commitment to good behaviour and the need to follow rules. Children are committed to raising money for good causes, and broader issues covered in lessons such as geography and science enable pupils to consider how they can make a difference in world matters such as pollution and preventing the destruction of the rainforest .



## 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	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 (ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
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 colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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