

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NASH MILLS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hemel Hempstead

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117418

Headteacher: Mrs Jackie Lambert

Lead inspector: Vreta Bagilhole

Dates of inspection: 17-19 January 2005

Inspection number: 267371

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: Voluntary aided  
Age range of pupils: 3-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll; 218

School address: Belswains Lane  
Nash Mills  
Hemel Hempstead  
Hertfordshire

Postcode: HP3 9XB

Telephone number: 01442 252972  
Fax number: 01442 214652

Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of Reverend D Lawson  
governors:

Date of previous 3-4 March 2003  
inspection:

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Nash Mills Church of England Primary School is a voluntary aided school and is situated in Hemel Hempstead. There are seven classes and a Nursery. Pupils' home circumstances are broadly average. The majority of the pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage but there is an above average proportion of pupils of African, Asian and European origin for whom English is not the main language spoken at home. The most common home language spoken by these pupils is Urdu and other languages include Dutch, Spanish and Arabic. Two of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils leaving and joining the school other than at the usual time of first admission is high. Ten per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average and one pupil has a statement of special educational need. Nursery children attend for mornings only. Children enter the Nursery in the September or January before they are four and they spend three terms in the Nursery. Their attainment on entry to the school is below average. It is over three years since the school was put into special measures and almost two years since the last visit by Her Majesty's Inspectors who found the school was providing an acceptable standard of education.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17517	Vreta Bagilhole	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology English as an additional language
9505	David Haynes	Lay inspector	
21103	Valerie Ives	Team inspector	Mathematics Foundation Stage Special educational needs Personal, social and health education and citizenship Geography History
11419	Jeannie Underwood	Team inspector	Science Art and design Physical education Music

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an improving school where the effectiveness is **satisfactory**. Standards in Year 6 are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Teaching is good overall but satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The leadership and management of the school are good. Pupils have good attitudes towards school and to learning. The school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the school is well led and managed;
- pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well in English and standards are above average;
- the more able pupils are not always working to their potential in Year 2;
- pupils' handwriting is very well developed throughout the school;
- relationships in the school are very good;
- the Nursery accommodation is unsatisfactory;
- the school provides very good information for parents.

The school was last inspected in March 2003. Since then it has made good improvement particularly in the proportion of good teaching. Standards in writing are also improving at a good rate in Years 3-6 but more improvement is still needed in Year 2. The school has successfully implemented a positive behaviour policy. The provision of an outdoor area for Reception children has been partly addressed but more improvement is needed. The provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is now satisfactory and members of staff have a good awareness of the pupils' needs.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall. It is good in English in Years 3 to 6. Standards have not settled into a consistent pattern. They improved in 2003 but fell in 2004 because there were more pupils with special educational needs. Current standards in Year 6 have improved. In mathematics and science, standards in Year 6 are now average. Standards in English are above average in Year 6 and the pupils are doing well. Achievement is satisfactory for pupils in Year 2, where standards in reading, writing and mathematics were average in 2004. This year, standards in Year 2 are not as high and are below average. This is because some of the more able pupils are not doing sufficiently well. The present Year 2 did not do well enough in the Reception class and they are still catching up. Standards in information and communication technology are typical of those expected in Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The children enter the Nursery with below average attainment. They achieve well in the Nursery and satisfactorily in the Reception class. Nearly all of the children in the Reception class are on course to attain the national

goals for early learning in all areas of learning except communication, language and literacy where the children's reading and writing skills are not sufficiently developed.

**Pupils' behaviour is good. Their attitudes and personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** Attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory and teaching is now good.** Some very good teaching was observed in the Nursery and in English, science, history and geography in Years 5 and 6. Visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum well. Teaching assistants provide very good support. Assessment is satisfactory. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. Links with parents are very good. Links with other schools are good and community links are satisfactory.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good and have improved significantly in recent years. The headteacher leads the school in a calm, professional way. Senior managers and subject leaders also provide good leadership and are effective in driving improvement in their subjects. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school but need to question and challenge the performance of the school more. Statutory requirements are met.

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

Most parents support the school. Almost all of them feel that their child is expected to work hard and do their best. Members of staff encourage maturity and independence in the children. Parents are very happy with the care and welfare the school provides. Pupils are involved in the work of the school but in the inspection questionnaires some parents felt that the work could be harder and that pupils could be trusted more to do things on their own. Most like school and feel the teachers are fair.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2;
- improve the size and quality of the Nursery accommodation.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Children in the Nursery achieve well and achievement is satisfactory in the Reception year. In Years 1 to 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory with good achievement in English in Years 3-6. Standards in Year 6 are above average in English and they are average in mathematics and science.

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

- Pupils in Year 6 are achieving well in English.
- The more able pupils are not working to their potential in Year 2.
- Achievement is good in the Nursery and satisfactory in the Reception year.
- Standards in handwriting are above average.

#### **Commentary**

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (29.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.3 (27.4)	27 (26.8)
science	27.8 (29.8)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2003*

1. In the national tests for 2004, pupils in Year 6 attained standards that were average in English, well below average in mathematics and below average in science compared to all schools nationally. Compared to similar schools standards were average in English but well below average in mathematics and science. Test results in previous years were higher and the fall in standards in 2004 was due to a higher number of pupils with special educational needs. There is every indication that standards will be higher this year. Inspection evidence found strong signs of improvement in all three subjects and currently standards are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. This is due to effective school self evaluation, leadership and the school's careful monitoring of teaching and learning. Currently, pupils who have always been in the school and those who joined later are achieving satisfactorily.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.9 (14)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.6 (13.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.6 (15.9)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2003*

2. National test results for pupils in Year 2 in 2004 were average in reading and writing and mathematics. Teachers' assessments in science were below average but with an



average number exceeding expectations. This year standards have fallen because not enough pupils are exceeding the national expectation for their age. The previous report identified slow progress when the current Year 2 was in the Reception year. Since then the school has tracked their progress and identified those pupils who were underachieving. However, because of previous gaps in their learning these pupils are still catching up on skills they have missed. Achievement in Year 2 has been satisfactory although some of the more able pupils are not doing sufficiently well. Inspection evidence and the school's predictions show below average attainment in reading and writing and mathematics. Pupils with average ability and those with below average ability are achieving satisfactorily but achievement is unsatisfactory for some of the more able pupils. This is especially the case in English and science.

3. Overall achievement is satisfactory. It is good in English in Years 3 to 6 where pupils are working to capacity. However, the more able pupils in Year 2 are not doing as well as they can. Achievement in information and communication technology is satisfactory. It is over three years since the school was put into special measures and almost two years since the last visit by Her Majesty's Inspectors who found the school was providing an acceptable standard of education. Since then the quality of teaching has improved significantly and key issues such as writing have been well addressed. However, it is only very recently that, with a new permanent Reception teacher, the children are building well on the gains made in the Nursery. In 2003 concern was also expressed about the achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 who had significant gaps in their learning. The school has also turned this situation around and most pupils achieve satisfactorily but there are still some concerns about the achievement of the more able pupils in Year 2, who could do better. The school has made raising achievement as its main priority in the improvement plan.
4. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make progress similar to their peers. They make good progress towards the targets identified for them in their individual education plans. This is the result of the good support both from the co-ordinator and class teachers and from the teaching assistants. Those pupils for whom English is an additional language also achieve satisfactorily in most subjects and they are doing well in their understanding of English. Members of staff have received good training and advice from the local authority and they are now aware of how best to help and support them.
5. The children achieve well in the Nursery and satisfactorily in the Reception class. Nearly all of the children in the Reception class are on course to attain the standards expected by the end of the school year in all areas of learning except communication, language and literacy where reading and writing skills are not sufficiently developed. Both Nursery and Reception children are now experiencing enjoyable activities that promote all areas of learning. Thorough planning ensures there is now a strong focus on communication and language and mathematical skills in both classes. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. There are good opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of the wider world. Children make good progress in learning to use the computer. Reception children achieve well in their physical development when using the school hall, but opportunities for them to develop a broad range of physical skills are more limited in the outdoor play area. The children use their imagination well to paint and construct and through participation in role-play activities.
6. Achievement in English is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and is good in Years 3 to 6. Standards in reading and writing are below average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils in Year 1 are making typical progress but some of the more able pupils in Year 2 are not working to their potential. Year 1 pupils plan and draft their ideas for writing well but extended pieces of writing showing the adventurous use of language is not of a good enough standard in Year 2. At the time of the inspection very few pupils were expected to exceed the national level for seven year olds and inspection evidence

agreed with this. This is because the teaching is insufficiently challenging for the more able pupils. Most pupils are, however, likely to achieve the nationally expected level. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do well and have very good attitudes to their work. Teachers' planning enables pupils of all abilities to write across a good range of styles. Reading sessions are well organised in all classes and teachers have conveyed a real enthusiasm for reading which the pupils have embraced with relish. Standards in speaking and listening are below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. The school has identified that skills are not being sufficiently developed in all classes. Pupils are generally good listeners. Most teachers involve pupils well in classroom discussions and drama is being increasingly used to extend skills. Some younger pupils are confident speakers and they will talk in front of the class but others are shy and find this difficult. Most Year 6 pupils can express themselves in an articulate way and they make good contributions to group and class discussions. Standards in handwriting are above average throughout the school and skills are developed very effectively from an early age.

7. Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory. Pupils were achieving well during the inspection in some of the lessons and a significant number of pupils in Year 6 are achieving well in relation to their performance in Year 2. Current standards are below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. The majority of pupils in Year 2 are attaining the standard expected for seven year olds but not enough are exceeding this. The school has placed a good emphasis on improving teaching and learning in mathematics and standards are improving at a good rate as a result but this has yet to be consistently built on in all classes. Good teaching such as that in Years 1, 4 and 6 is having a strong impact on standards and achievement. The pupils enjoy the subject and work productively in lessons. There is a strong commitment to raise standards in the school and the subject is very well led.
8. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in science and information and communication technology. Current standards in science are below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. In Year 2 pupils' achievement during a lesson was satisfactory but pupils' work over the year was disappointing and too many worksheets are used. More able pupils are not being appropriately challenged. In Years 3 to 6 pupils are developing the relevant knowledge and skills and making good progress in planning and devising their own investigations. The recording of work is neat and well presented. In information and communication technology standards are typical of those expected in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils cover all aspects of the curriculum appropriately and keep a good record of their work. Assessment is beginning to check well on the pupils' progress.
9. Insufficient work was seen to form overall judgements about standards in other subjects. The development of these subjects is a current priority of the school. A majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire are happy with the standards that their children achieve and feel that they are making good progress.

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

Pupils' attendance and punctuality is **satisfactory**. Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are **good**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has successfully implemented a positive behaviour policy.

- The school promotes good relationships, including racial harmony.
- There are high expectations of pupils' conduct and behaviour.
- There are insufficient opportunities to develop spiritual awareness.

**Commentary**

10. The school has successfully implemented a positive behaviour policy, the need for which was identified in the previous inspection. Behaviour is now good both in the classroom and about the school. Behaviour in assemblies is very good. Relationships between pupils are very good; they mainly play well together in mixed groups and no one is isolated. In the playground older pupils care for younger ones and behaviour is always appropriate. Pupils develop respect for each other and there is little incidence of bullying, racism or other forms of harassment. Pupils maintain that bullying is rare and if any unpleasant incidents do occur they know what to do and are confident that the staff will deal effectively with the problem. The youngest pupils have an area for play separate from the older pupils and have access to play equipment. However, the older pupils have very limited equipment available at times of play.

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	218	5	0
White – any other White background	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	11	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	11	0	0

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

11. Pupils' levels of confidence and self-esteem are satisfactory but they are developing well and pupils talk confidently with adults. Pupils are not afraid to express their views in classroom discussions and the majority of pupils enjoy and partake fully in lessons. Lunchtime clubs and after school clubs are well attended. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Systems are in place to contact parents on the first day of any unexplained absence. There were exclusions in the last year involving two boys.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (94.1%)**

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
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School data	5.4
National data	5.1

School data	0.5
National data	0.4

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

12. Spiritual development is satisfactory; this is lower than found at the previous inspection when it was found to be good. Assemblies contribute well to the moral, social and cultural development of the pupils but they lack a strong sense of spiritual awareness. Opportunities for quiet and meaningful reflection are promoted satisfactorily. Pupils are very aware of those less fortunate than themselves. In one assembly pupils showed empathy for the poor who sleep on the streets. Pupils have opportunities to discuss their own feelings and those of others. Lessons encourage pupils to show wonder and animation in what interests them. For example, older pupils are very keen to explain why they find books so enjoyable. The school promotes racial harmony well.
13. Moral and social development is good. This is an improvement from the previous inspection when they were found to be satisfactory. These qualities are supported by the strong Christian ethos in the school and are reinforced through timetabled personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils have a good understanding of what is right and wrong. They have the opportunity to make sensible decisions about their own lives and to be responsible members of the school community. The school supports national and international charities. There is no school council but the school has plans for one.
14. Pupils' cultural development is good. This is an improvement from the previous inspection when it was found to be satisfactory. Pupils understand and accept that other people have different beliefs and cultures. In history and geography, the pupils learn about life in other countries. Visitors from Japan show the pupils their clothes and bring food for the pupils to taste. A parent tells the pupils about life under occupation in Holland in World War II. Pupils handle Egyptian artefacts carefully asking questions about them. However, visits to the places of worship of other faiths are rare. Since the last inspection there has been some improvement in reflecting the multicultural background of the pupils but this is still not as strong as it could be.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory and it is improving. Teaching and learning are good overall. The curriculum is satisfactory. Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good and links with parents are very good.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching is good. Assessment is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good proportion of very good teaching in Year 6 and in the Nursery.
- Teaching assistants provide very good support for the pupils.
- Most pupils apply themselves well to their work but in some lessons in Year 2, a significant number of more able pupils are less well motivated.
- A sharper focus is needed when setting targets for the levels pupils are expected to achieve at the end of each year.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	7 (23%)	14 (47%)	8 (27%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	[0 (0%)

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

15. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and it is now mainly good. Seventy per cent of teaching is now good or better. This is mainly due to the careful monitoring of teaching and learning that has taken place and a determination by the leadership to improve the standard of teaching. Very good teaching was observed in the Nursery and in English, science, history and geography in Years 5 and 6. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall but it is good in Year 1. The present good teaching in mathematics throughout the school is having a significant impact on raising the pupils' achievement.
16. Teaching in the Nursery shows a very good understanding of the needs of young children. Teaching in the Reception class has improved since the last inspection and is now good overall. Sessions in both classes contain a good balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities. All staff, including the Nursery nurse and teaching assistants, create a calm, secure and purposeful learning environment in which the children thrive and become confident learners. Adults effectively build on what the children know, and provide many well-planned opportunities to enhance children's learning.
17. The main strengths in teaching are that lessons are well planned and they provide interesting work for the pupils. Teaching assistants are consistently used very effectively. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well. All the very good lessons displayed a effective knowledge of the subject and the challenging use of questioning with a brisk pace enabling all pupils to be fully engaged in activities. Pupils' behaviour was good because teachers had high and consistent expectations of how pupils should behave in lessons. In a very good science lesson in Year 6 the teacher was skilful in keeping the pupils very well focused when investigating how forces can act on an object. She paid very good attention to scientific vocabulary. In the unsatisfactory lesson in English a significant number of the more able pupils in Year 2 were not well motivated because they were not challenged sufficiently or interested in what they had to do.
18. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in the systems for monitoring the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language and these are now well developed. In many lessons, pupils for whom English is an additional language received good support. Members of staff have received training since the last inspection and they are now more effective and knowledgeable. Pupils at the early stage of learning English speak very positively about the support they receive and they enjoy their work in the school.
19. A secure learning environment is achieved and good relationships are established which enable pupils with special educational needs to become confident and want to improve. In addition, clear instructions build confidence and enable the pupils to sustain concentration and complete the tasks set for them. Class teachers and teaching assistants are well aware of individual needs and pupils who need additional

support are identified early. Teaching assistants are well deployed and have a considerable influence in guiding the learning of pupils with special educational needs.

20. Assessment is satisfactory overall and good practice is beginning to be well shared across the classes. Assessment and lesson evaluations are used well to identify good written targets for pupils in English and mathematics that are clearly displayed in books or on the walls. Marking is also being well used to identify what the pupils need to do to improve but this is not fully consistent in all classes. Pupils are not yet regularly involved in helping to assess their own work although this has started in subjects such as English and information and communication technology. The school's tracking systems have identified some pupils who were underachieving and effective action has been taken. Teachers track pupils' progress and set targets for the levels they are expected to achieve at the end of each year. However, the school's predictions are computer generated and teachers are not reviewing them sufficiently and using their current good knowledge of the pupils to identify achievable but higher levels for the pupils to work towards. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and all adults are well involved.

## The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **satisfactory** for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and **good** in the Foundation Stage. Opportunities for enrichment are **good**. Staffing is **good**. However, the Nursery accommodation is **unsatisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities are good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the good support they receive gives them effective access to the curriculum.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory for Nursery children.

## Commentary

21. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets requirements for all subjects including religious education, where the pupils follow a syllabus agreed by the Diocese. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy a good curriculum which provides them with a wide range of activities in all areas of learning. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively implemented. Teachers plan a broad programme for personal, social and health education, including sex and drugs education. The school is inclusive in its approach to offering all pupils access to activities and equal opportunities.
22. All subjects have schemes of work devised from national guidelines. Plans are regularly evaluated and they are amended to meet the needs of all pupils. Wherever possible, links are being made with other areas of the curriculum for example, art in history and mathematics in science for data handling. Teachers provide a varied programme of learning experiences for all pupils, including extra-curricular sporting, art and musical activities. The environment is used effectively to foster pupils' understanding of history and geography. These, along with visitors, visits to the local church, other places and a residential visit for Year 6 pupils help to enrich the curriculum by increasing the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
23. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. These pupils' individual education plans are thoughtfully written; the targets are specific and measurable

and progress is carefully monitored. Planning is clear and specific, evaluations are discussed between the teaching assistant and the co-ordinator, and adjustments are made to ensure that the pupils' needs are met. The provision for pupils who have English as an additional language is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. Specific resources have been purchased and adults are now involved more effectively in monitoring and supporting learning. The school has identified pupils who are gifted and talented and is working well to ensure that they are receiving a challenging curriculum.

24. A dedicated and enthusiastic team of teachers and support staff work well together. All of these adults are well deployed to meet the demands of the curriculum and to support pupils' learning needs. Accommodation for Nursery children is unsatisfactory as there is insufficient room for the number of children. The lack of space impinges on the delivery of the curriculum. The provision of an outdoor area for the Reception children, a key issue from the previous report, has been partly addressed. There is room for further development and improvement. The school is aware of these deficiencies and has already highlighted them in its improvement plan.

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

Provision for support, advice and guidance is **good**. Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **good**. Parents are very happy with the care and welfare the school provides for their children. The school satisfactorily involves pupils in its work and development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Members of staff know children and families very well.
- The school provides good support, advice and guidance for pupils with special educational needs.
- There are very good induction procedures to the Nursery.
- There is no structured or guided play at lunchtime.

## Commentary

25. Teaching and non-teaching staff provide a good level of personal support and care, involving parents where necessary. They know their pupils and families well. A clear and consistently applied reward system encourages good achievement in all aspects of personal and academic development. Pupils do not see bullying as a problem and state if they had any concerns they would confide in an adult in school. Induction<sup>1</sup> arrangements for pupils entering the Nursery are very good and establish a good home-school relationship. Members of staff get to know the children very well through home visits at which they take photos of the school to show the children. There are meetings for the parents and an open evening to which all the children are invited.
26. Assessment information is used to give good support and guidance to pupils on how to improve. Members of staff are setting individual targets for pupils that help them to raise their achievement in English and mathematics. This has yet to become consistently applied in all classes. The school cares well for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements. Pupils with special educational needs are quickly identified and their progress is monitored and supported thoroughly. Assessment across a wide range of complex needs is detailed and comprehensive links with outside agencies are strong. Careful consideration is taken of the needs of all pupils through presenting understandable and practical targets, modifying activities or providing support to meet their needs. The progress of pupils for whom English is an additional language is also well monitored; they are well supported in lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There is an increased focus on supporting the most able and gifted pupils which is especially noticeable in mathematics.
27. The school cares well for its pupils and there is generally a high level of attention to matters of welfare and health and safety. Parents at the meeting had no concerns or worries about how well their children are looked after. Child protection procedures are satisfactory and all members of the classroom staff are aware of their responsibilities. Members of staff are trained in first aid care for pupils who are ill or who have accidents. Standards of maintenance and cleanliness are good and vandalism and graffiti are not a problem. This instils high values in the pupils who show respect for property and resources. The levels of playground supervision are satisfactory and older pupils care well for younger ones but lunchtime play is not well structured and it lacks the provision of well planned play activities. There is a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities for the day to day running of the school. There is no school council but pupils are encouraged to air their views in classroom discussions and have taken part in questionnaires. A recent survey of pupils shows they like the teachers and the school clubs and think lessons are fun.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There is a **very good** and effective partnership with parents and **good** links with other schools. The views of parents were very positive in the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school.

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<sup>1</sup> Induction refers to the arrangements to receive pupils who are new to the school, to help them settle into school routines and to make friends.



- There are good links with other schools that benefit pupils.
- Very good information is available for parents.
- There is an active parents' association.

## Commentary

28. Parents' responses to the inspection questionnaire and at the parents' meeting show that all but a very few are very happy about all that the school has to offer and particularly value the caring, Christian ethos. An active parents' association supports the school well by providing good social opportunities for parents and their children and by providing good financial support for learning resources.
29. Information available for parents is very good. Regular school newsletters and a curriculum newsletter keep parents very well informed of all aspects of school life. The pupils' annual reports are clear and cover what pupils have learnt in all curriculum subjects as well as personal and social development. There is provision for both pupil and parent comment. However, targets set do not always provide a clear statement of what their child needs to learn next. The use of homework and reading diaries is good and is an effective means of communication. Parents are welcome in school and many attend special events and parent evenings. Regular meetings are held with parent governors. They prove to be a valuable means of accessing the views of the majority of parents and the school has sought parents' views through a general questionnaire. Evening courses for parents on how to help their child learn at home have been provided but support from parents has sometimes been disappointing. Procedures for pupils entering the Nursery are very good; members of staff make home visits and visits to preschool groups. There are good procedures in place to deal with the concerns of parents but they seldom have to be used.
30. Parents are regularly involved in discussions with the class teachers where children have special educational needs and they are kept fully informed of the support that their children are receiving. They are invited to reviews every term of the targets set in pupils' individual education plans.
31. Links with the church are strong and support the strong Christian ethos in the school; church members contribute effectively to the life of the school. Links with the community are satisfactory. A local supermarket has been used as an opportunity to enrich learning. The school has good links with other local schools and they partake in joint sporting and other activities. Links with local secondary schools help pupils transfer smoothly.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Governance is satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher is providing effective leadership and management which are bringing about good improvements in the school.
- Subject leaders are evaluating the provision in their subjects well.
- The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school but need to question and challenge its performance more effectively.
- Teamwork is good and members of staff share a common purpose.

## Commentary

32. The school is well led and managed. The head teacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and she is achieving this through a clear focus on improvement which she conveys in a calm and professional way. She has established very good relationships with the support of staff, parents, pupils and governors. The direction of the school is very clear. Clear delegation is resulting in an effective senior management team. Leadership and management were found to be good at the last inspection. The school has suffered from staffing difficulties since then which has caused some disruption to pupils' learning. Currently the staffing situation is stable.
33. Subject leaders display high aspirations and have evaluated the standards and the provision in their subjects well. For example, the English coordinator has identified that speaking and listening skills are not sufficiently well developed in all classes. Subject leaders have carefully identified weaknesses in the school's performance by analysing national tests results. There is a clear plan of action for the development of all subjects. The headteacher has been instrumental in securing more support staff in all classes this year, which is having a good impact on the quality of education. The headteacher has a regular teaching commitment.
34. Action taken already has achieved more good teaching in the school and has raised standards in writing particularly in Years 3 to 6. These were key issues in the last inspection and the improvement has been good. This year the school has been particularly successful in turning standards around in mathematics in Year 6 inspired by the very good leadership of the coordinator. A good programme of monitoring teaching and learning has been established and good practice is being shared. The deputy headteacher has supported the newly qualified teachers well in their first year so that they are now making a valuable contribution to the school's provision. Professional development of staff is given a high priority and is well targeted and linked to performance management. The headteacher has recognised the need for training midday supervisors.
35. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good: the co-ordinator provides good leadership and advice and is well organised. Members of the teaching staff collaborate well with her and make effective use of her expertise. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are firmly based on effective early years practice. Coordination of English as an additional language is satisfactory. There is no teacher trained or responsible to take over this area if the present support from the local authority should cease.
36. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties. The governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weakness of the school and are very aware of the improvements the school has to make. They have recently begun a programme of visits to classes. They are also aware of the need to question and challenge the performance of the school more than they do at present and training has begun. Performance management procedures are effective and are monitored by the governing body. The school promotes racial equality well. Basic principles of best value are applied but the governors know that more information and training are necessary in this area. The large under spend has been used for employing more support staff and to keep back money ready for the planned new Foundation stage accommodation.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	552,125
Total expenditure	535,966
Expenditure per pupil	2,458

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	24,853
Balance carried forward to the next	41,012

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

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

37. Overall, the provision for children in the Nursery and Reception class is good. It is of a similar standard in the Nursery to that reported at the time of the last inspection, and continues to be one of the strengths of the school. Good improvement is evident since the last inspection in the quality of teaching and learning in the Reception class. The attainment of the children on entry is below average.
38. In the Nursery, children achieve well and make good progress in developing and consolidating their skills in all the areas of learning. This is because the members of staff have a very secure understanding of how young children learn, and as a result the curriculum and the quality of teaching are very good. The children are very well prepared for the Reception class because of the staff's emphasis on the development of their social skills and the promotion of their independence. The last inspection reported that progress slows in the Reception class. This situation has now improved and the teaching is good and activities are well matched to the children's different needs. The Nursery and Reception teachers now plan well together. The present Reception class has experienced some disruption because of instability in staffing but there is now a new permanent teacher in this class. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed, members of staff work very well as a team, children are assessed well and their progress is carefully monitored.

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

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good.

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

- Well-planned learning opportunities and clearly established routines help the children become secure, settled and happy.
- Children form good relationships with adults and members of staff provide good role models.
- Children make good progress because they are taught well and enjoy coming to school.

#### **Commentary**

39. The children make good progress because of the consistent team approach in providing a well-organised setting for learning. They achieve well in the Nursery and satisfactorily in the Reception class.
40. The very good teaching in the Nursery, and the good teaching in the Reception class, has a clear impact on the children' learning. All staff, including the Nursery nurse and teaching assistants, create a calm, secure and purposeful learning environment in which the children thrive and become confident learners. New children are settled in thoughtfully and successfully, and are happy to come to school. With helpful encouragement and sensitive handling they begin to form positive relationships with one another and with adults. Very good, securely understood routines enable the children to settle down very quickly to their tasks. For example, 'snack time' is used very significantly to improve the children's speaking and listening skills by asking them to recall what they have learnt that morning. This effectively builds up the children's confidence, together with a sticker awarded at the end of each morning for those children who have been especially helpful to each other or adults. Good levels of independence are evident.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

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

### Commentary

41. Children enter the Nursery with below expected skills in this area of learning. Many children have a limited vocabulary and, whilst they make good progress in speaking and listening in both the Nursery and the Reception class, they will not attain the national goals for early learning in writing and reading. Currently the children are making good progress because they are well taught. Achievement is good in the Nursery and satisfactory in the Reception class.
42. A good emphasis is placed on speaking and listening from an early age, and all staff, including the Nursery nurse and teaching assistants, provide ample opportunities for the children in both the Nursery and the Reception class to develop these skills. Within a few weeks of entering the Nursery, the children become confident in speaking aloud in a group. They listen carefully to instructions and carry these out well because many opportunities are planned to promote these skills throughout the day, so that all the other areas of learning benefit.
43. Very thoughtful stories are carefully chosen to increase the children's literacy skills. For instance, the children in the Nursery enjoyed joining in a story about *The Gingerbread Man*: they correctly put the elements of the story into the proper order with the help of the computer. The children are developing their writing skills well through focused sessions that are planned to match their needs and through a useful writing table on which they practice their letters using different implements. Children make steady progress in developing early reading skills. Most Reception children know a few letter sounds, and more able pupils are reading simple sentences in familiar books without help. The children in the Reception class are confident speakers but this is not securely transferred to reading and writing. Checks to assess how the children are progressing are frequent and manageable and clearly highlight any needs there might be.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned, with clear aims that are shared with the children.
- Practical activities make mathematics fun and interesting.
- Members of staff work well together.

### Commentary

44. The children achieve well in the Nursery. They achieve satisfactorily in the Reception class and most attain the national goals for early learning. Teaching is very good in the Nursery. For example, children learn to sequence correctly the days of the week as they complete the calendar each day. Teaching is clear and precise so that the children know what is expected of them, and work is effectively planned to meet the needs of all the children.

45. Learning is effective because the children have many practical opportunities to enhance their understanding and worthwhile challenges to build on what they have learned. For example, they use buttons from the *Gingerbread Man* to count up to 12 and play a dice game to count up to six. Good teaching ensures that mathematical language such as 'How many more?' is used regularly in every activity. Their understanding is reinforced by good questioning and the effective use of cut out *Gingerbread Men* shapes to demonstrate the concept of 'more' or 'less' buttons. The very good collaboration between the teachers, Nursery nurse and the teaching assistants effectively reinforce the children's learning.

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

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The stimulating, well-organised and managed environment contributes markedly to children's good progress.
- Very good adult involvement in all practical activities ensures that children make the best use of these opportunities.
- There are good opportunities to use the digital camera.

### **Commentary**

46. Nearly all of the children are on course to attain the national goals for early learning in this aspect by the end of the Reception year. A few more able children are likely to exceed them. Teaching and learning are good and the children achieve well. The classroom environment is stimulating and there are good opportunities for using construction kits and making models to develop control of small objects. Computer programs are well chosen and they ably support the children's learning; they have regular opportunities to practice their skills in using a computer. The digital camera is effectively used to record daily activities. These photographs are well presented in a booklet to enable new children to see what happens in the nursery each day, before they come to school.
47. An examination of the children's past work in books and photographs shows that they are provided with a number of relevant experiences to enrich their learning. For example, they look closely at hyacinth bulbs and plants to see how they grow; for signs of autumn around them and they make clay hedgehogs to support their learning for the mini-beast topic. The photographs show that the children are alert, attentive and keen to participate in the lesson as they make, for example, 'wheel' biscuits and use autumn fruits to investigate floating and sinking. The children's interest is further stimulated and their knowledge of the wider world is extended, for example, by looking for autumn leaves in the school grounds and through visits to an environmental centre to support their learning about minibeasts and by enjoying the visit of the Fire Brigade to the Nursery.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Carefully planned learning opportunities help to develop the children's skills.
- A wide range of activities is offered daily to encourage good physical development, with effective adult supervision and guidance.
- The outdoor play area remains unsatisfactory in the Reception class area.

## Commentary

48. By the end of the Reception year, most children are likely to attain the national goals for early learning. The children achieve well in the Nursery and satisfactorily in the Reception class. Teaching is good and children experience a broad range of physical activities.
49. The school has worked hard to develop the outdoor play area in both the Nursery and the Reception class but provision is still restricted. The outdoor space for the Reception class is too small; there are limited opportunities for climbing, balancing and riding bikes and tricycles. The quality of teaching and learning observed during an indoor physical lesson for Reception children was good the children made good progress. Careful planning, effectively supported by practical activities, helps the children in the Reception class, for example, to recognise the changes that happen when they are active. They accurately follow instructions, showing a good understanding of space. All members of the staff interact effectively with the children by, for instance, encouraging them or demonstrating actions when necessary. Adults are acutely aware of ensuring children's safety. In the lesson observed, children enjoyed pretending to grow up from babies and became conscious of how their muscles developed by what they were able to do. This makes a good contribution to their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children with special educational needs achieve well and join in with other children.
50. Scrutiny of the children in photographs show that there are good opportunities provided for them to develop their ability to grip pencils and use paintbrushes and other tools and to learn manipulative skills such as cutting out leaf shapes or decorating their fireworks with glitter. The well-chosen resources create many opportunities for them to cut, stick and join objects together, such as when buttons are stuck onto the *Gingerbread Man* or collage pictures of red berries or the sea are produced.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many creative and artistic opportunities offered every day.
- The good role-play provision in each class links well to other areas of learning.
- The good adult involvement in all creative activities ensures that children make the best use of these opportunities.

## Commentary

51. The majority of children are on course to attain the national goals for early learning by the end of the Reception year. Teaching is good, enabling the children to make good progress right from the start. The children's achievement is good. They explore colour, texture and shape and have plenty of opportunities for personal expression in, for example, painting, printing, collage, colour mixing and clay model-making activities. The members of staff clearly support all creative activities and ensure that children make the best use of these opportunities.
52. There are good links to literacy through the good choice of stories to heighten interest, together with words related to the story that effectively build up the children's vocabulary. Good use is made, for example, of the '*Funnybones*' story to help the children to identify parts of their body and paint and print a skeleton with white paint onto black paper. One child showed her delight by saying, "*Look at that! Look at my skull.*" This is effectively linked to the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. No teaching of music skills was observed. However, songs are used very effectively to support other areas of learning, such as literacy and numeracy. Role-play is used successfully, to nurture imagination and to enable children to act out their own experiences. For example, photographs in the Nursery show the

good use of 'Squirrel Cottage' to link with signs of autumn and in the Reception class, the children happily act out their ideas about going to the doctor's surgery.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are achieving well and standards are improving at a good rate.
- Not all pupils are working to their potential in Year 2.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Handwriting is of a good standard in all classes.

#### **Commentary**

53. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection and achievement is now good in Years 3 to 6. Test results in Year 6 in 2004 were average compared to both the national picture and that in similar schools. Currently standards are improving at a good rate and pupils are working to their potential for learning. There is every indication that by the end of the year pupils will attain above average standards in Year 6. This is mainly because the school has taken effective action to improve standards in writing which was an issue at the last inspection and there is good leadership in the subject.
54. Overall achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but not enough of the more able pupils in Year 2 are doing as well as they can and they are underachieving. In the national tests for 2004, results in reading and writing in Year 2 were average compared to both the national picture and those of similar schools. This was an improvement from the previous year. Currently standards in reading and writing are below average because there are too few pupils exceeding the nationally expected level.
55. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they receive good support in lessons. Children from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who are learning English as an additional language do as well as other pupils. Although boys in Year 6 have not done so well as girls in the past, inspectors were impressed with their enthusiasm for the subject this year and no significant difference was observed between their performance and that of the girls. Handwriting is a strength in the subject. Pupils in Year 1 are already writing in a clear joined style and by Year 6 most pupils' work is fluent and well presented and very pleasing to read.
56. Currently standards in speaking and listening are below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. Pupils in all the classes observed were good listeners but there is a broad range of ability in speaking skills. In the older classes the substantial majority of pupils are confident speakers and teachers involve pupils well in classroom discussions. In other classes, some pupils lack the confidence to express themselves clearly and teachers do not always address this sufficiently. Pupils in Year 2 are not given enough opportunities to talk and listen confidently in different contexts, exploring and communicating ideas. Drama is being used well to enhance speaking skills such as in Year 1 when a group of pupils prepared a short play remembering their words



well and speaking clearly. Pupils in Year 6 were able to discuss ideas for their writing in an articulate way and showed interest and enthusiasm in their work. Pupils who lack confidence because English is not their first language are given good opportunities to express themselves in lessons.

57. Standards in reading this year are below average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. The school has established a daily reading session in which pupils read a good range of fiction and non-fiction books in groups or independently. Although many pupils in Year 2 are attaining the nationally expected level, few exceed this. Year 2 pupils use sounds and word recognition well to help them read but are not sufficiently fluent or expressive to read a range of texts showing a good understanding of the main points. In Years 3 to 6 the pupils are achieving well in reading because of successful action by the school to engage them in enjoying a range of challenging books and texts. Pupils become familiar with a range of styles including fables, myths and legends, parables and fairy tales. They are regularly challenged by staff to select sentences, phrases and relevant information to support their views and demonstrate their understanding. They ask questions about the stories they are reading such as 'What country do you think it is set in?' Boys and girls are equally well motivated. The pupils enjoy using the school library.
58. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good in writing and standards are above average. The writing covers a broad range of styles. Pupils plan and write stories, play scripts, diaries, biographies and questionnaires. They describe the different settings such as that in Romeo and Juliet. There are some good examples of instructional text in most classes such as writing instructions for preparing food at a party. In Year 6 pupils write good poetry critiques stating clear reasons as to why they like the poem. Teachers challenge the pupils well to think imaginatively and to use dramatic and adventurous language in their writing. Pupils produce well thought out written composition, showing good use of grammar and punctuation. This is a good improvement from the previous inspection where weaknesses in grammar and punctuation were identified. Children of all abilities are making good progress. Overall achievement in writing is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but standards are below average because few Year 2 pupils are exceeding the nationally expected standard. There is not enough extended writing that is finished in pupils' books. Pupils in Year 1 are achieving well, practising their writing on whiteboards first and showing good attention to capital letters and full stops. They write about their favourite characters in 'Toy Story' and prepare questions to ask characters from the books they read. Standards in handwriting are above average in all classes. In most classes there is good attention to spelling.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is good. A very good lesson was observed in Year 6 but there was one unsatisfactory lesson in Year 2. In the very good lesson the teacher's expectations were high. She made it very clear that she expected to see dramatic and interesting ideas in the pupils' writing. She also wanted to see a plan first with bullet points listing the main points. Clear time targets were given. The pupils responded very well and showed high levels of interest. In the unsatisfactory lesson the more able pupils were not challenged. They displayed poor attitudes to their work and wasted time talking and fooling about. The lesson objectives were not sufficiently conveyed to the pupils in a clear way. In all the good lessons observed the teachers challenged all abilities well. In all the lessons observed teaching assistants provided good support to pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. The subject leader teaches Years 5 and 6 in English and this is having a good impact on the standards achieved. Assessment is satisfactory overall and there is some good practice. The school has systems to track each pupil's progress and has identified underachievement but should now review the predicted targets for each pupil so that more is expected of them. One piece of writing is

assessed for each pupil at the end of every term. In most classes there is effective marking and the pupils have clear targets to work towards. In some classes pupils are beginning to identify well how they can improve their work. Homework is regularly set and makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning.

60. Leadership and management are good and show a clear vision and high expectations for the development of the subject. The provision and standards in the subject have been well evaluated as has the necessity for development in the teaching of speaking and listening in some classes. The subject coordinator carefully monitors the progress of pupils. Monitoring of planning and classroom practice has been effectively undertaken and has been instrumental in turning standards around. The subject leader conducts work sampling, gives feedback to pupils across the school and supports newly qualified teachers in their planning. The school has recently invested in new reading, spelling and writing schemes. The two libraries are both well laid out with a good range of books. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

61. There is some good use of language and literacy in other curriculum areas. Literacy skills in other subjects are planned into the curriculum. In history the pupils read the diary of Anne Frank and others write letters to Henry V111 from Anne of Cleves. In geography pupils write a group report on the environment. Pupils in all classes write evaluations of their work in design and technology. The school is developing the use of information and communication technology and science to enhance literacy skills. There are some good examples of homework research projects being completed using the Internet. The computer is used well to enhance the reading scheme.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory** and improving.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Decisive action has been taken to improve standards.
- Very good subject leadership and management have provided a firm basis for future improvement.
- There is good teaching with very good emphasis on improving pupils' problem-solving skills.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to work seen in their very careful presentation.
- Standards are below expectations in Year 2.
- Information and communication technology is underused in lessons.

### **Commentary**

62. Results of the national tests in 2004 for Year 6 pupils show that they attained well below the national average. This picture changes from year to year; pupils' test results were stronger in 2003. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall but a significant number of pupils in Year 6 are achieving well in relation to their performance in Year 2. At present, the majority of pupils are attaining levels in line with national expectations, with a good number exceeding these.

63. Achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. Results of the national tests in 2004 for Year 2 pupils show that they attained in line with the national average. Currently, standards are below what is expected for the pupils in Year 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in number work. Exercise books show suitable variations in the challenge presented to pupils of differing abilities. In Year 1, the proportion of pupils working at an above average level is significantly higher than in Year 2, which is a direct result of the good teaching that effectively supports their learning. Well-planned problem solving activities successfully promote the pupils' investigative skills, for example, in the doubling of given numbers up to 100.
64. Across the school, pupils enjoy doing mathematics and they work hard, producing a high volume of accurate and carefully presented written work. They work intently on problem-solving tasks. In a good Year 6 lesson, the pupils successfully explained their methods of working out the answer to a problem in an ordered and logical way. In the same lesson, pupils who were learning at a faster rate discovered that they could develop these strategies and apply them to higher numbers. They used the language of mathematics well.
65. Teaching is good because teachers plan carefully and explain tasks clearly. They use skilled teaching assistants effectively and ensure that their lessons contain a good balance between direct instruction, individual tasks and review and consolidation. They manage their pupils well and have high expectations of behaviour. As a result, teachers create a good climate for learning in which pupils are able to concentrate on their work. Overall, learning is good, because pupils have positive attitudes towards their work and respond well to the teachers' high expectations, producing carefully presented work. Lessons are effective because of the crisp pace at which they are conducted and because of the good systems used to assess how well concepts have been understood and to provide good quality challenges at different levels.
66. The very good quality of leadership and management provided by the subject coordinator has been an important factor in the good level of improvement made since the last inspection. A clear plan of action is in place and is being successfully implemented, and governors are kept well informed of progress. These improvements, which stem from a strong commitment to raise standards, include clear targets set for pupils and an increased focus on the challenge provided for those of higher attainment. The school has effectively evaluated its previous performance in mathematics and is now placing an increased emphasis on problem-solving activities.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

67. Mathematics is well integrated into other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are given regular opportunities to understand the relevance of their learning by applying the skills learned in lessons as part of their work in other subjects, for instance when they use their knowledge of measurement to help their designing and model making in design and technology and data handling and graph drawing in science. In history, they order photographs in sequence from the present to the past and use a timeline to reinforce their understanding, while in literacy they use mathematical vocabulary, such as multiplication and division of decimals, to explain the process they used to work out a problem. There is some use of information and communication technology to record findings and access data, but this was not well developed in lessons to support the pupils' learning in the subject.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching in Years 3 to 6 is now ensuring pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding.
- Standards are below average in Year 2 and the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- More opportunities are now being provided for pupils to devise their own investigations.
- The subject leader is effective and helping to raise standards.

### **Commentary**

68. Achievement is satisfactory overall, although some more able pupils in Year 2 are underachieving. During the inspection, pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieved well in some of the lessons observed. In the 2004 tests, results in Year 6 were below average when compared with all schools nationally and well below average when compared with similar schools. Before then standards had been consistently above average but they dipped sharply in 2004. This can be explained by the increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs and the increase in those joining the school since Year 2. Current standards in Year 6 are close to the national average.
69. In 2004, the result of teachers' assessments in Year 2 was below average. Current standards in Year 2 are below average with fewer pupils on course to exceed the expected level. This can be explained by lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils and insufficient coverage of topics. Good support enables pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language to make the same progress as their peers.
70. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some very good teaching in Year 6. One very good lesson was well planned and provided pupils with hands-on experiences and opportunities to devise their own investigations. This, in turn, motivated the pupils who were keen and enthusiastic. Questioning was used effectively to extend or reinforce pupils' learning. Because of the very good relationships, pupils are confident to respond to teachers' questions, even if they are unsure their answer is correct. In a good lesson in Year 3 the teacher established a calm and purposeful atmosphere and made it clear what she expected of the pupils' work and behaviour. She used a good technical vocabulary, which was made challenging for the more able group. Where appropriate the good support provided by teaching assistants benefits all pupils with special educational needs and helps them to have equality of access to the curriculum. In less effective lessons pupils become a little restless because of limited challenge particularly for the higher attaining pupils. Although teachers share the lesson objective with the pupils, more could be made of pupils' own self assessment in achieving the objectives. Good use is made of information and communication technology to record data. Evidence from pupils' work shows improvements in expectations and recording. The most recent work illustrates a greater range of opportunities for pupils to write for themselves and devise investigations. A further development of this is the use of planning boards that help pupils to hypothesise and predict their results.

71. Assessment data from national tests is used effectively to track progress and highlight weaknesses in pupils' understanding. Further assessment, closely linked to topics, is being developed to help raise standards. Marking does not consistently provide pupils with constructive comments to help them improve.
72. Leadership and the management of the subject are good. The subject leader monitors teachers' planning and observes lessons. There has previously been limited opportunity to develop the role of the knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader because the subject has not been a priority until now. A new scheme of work has recently been implemented to improve pupils' investigations but it has not had sufficient time in operation to show significant impact on standards.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All aspects of the curriculum are being carefully planned into the timetable.
- Leadership and management are good.
- All pupils keep a good record of their work.
- Some of the computers need upgrading or renewing.

### **Commentary**

73. Standards are typical of those found nationally and the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils have regular lessons which are well planned into the curriculum. Skills are taught during lessons and time is then made available for the pupils to practise these skills during the week. There is no computer suite although the school has plans for this in the future. All the classroom computers are online except for the Nursery but a few of these are old and often break down.
74. The curriculum is satisfactory and pupils experience a range of software enabling them to produce pictures, spreadsheets, multimedia presentations and to present text and their written work effectively. Control skills are developing well. Three lessons were observed during the inspection. In the good teaching in Years 1 and 3 the lessons proceeded at a brisk pace and teachers used questioning effectively so that the pupils could prepare questions on the computer. Those without access to the computer during the lesson were planning their work well on paper. In Year 2 the pupils made satisfactory progress in controlling a programmable toy to move forward, left or right and to turn 90 degrees. The teacher covered the basics of command well and the pupils were aware of the need to control everyday objects such as a washing machine or a video recorder. Pupils in all classes keep an information and communication technology book and those in Years 3 to 6 save their work on the school network. Pupils' work in Years 5 and 6 shows that they have used a spreadsheet and have made a PowerPoint presentation. They create graphs and charts and use the sort function to help them answer questions based on a database. The pupils have used email but the school has identified that this aspect needs further development. Year 6 receive good support from a teacher in the local secondary school. Assessment systems are developing well. The school has monitored pupils' progress in the subject and has started to track pupils' progress through the National Curriculum levels. Pupils are also beginning to assess their own work each term.

75. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has evaluated the school's provision well and rigorously monitored planning in the subject, enabling the school to adapt effectively the national scheme. He has improved the confidence and willingness of staff to teach the subject and has led staff meetings. There is a good action plan for the further development of the subject. The school keeps a good portfolio of work; it is well annotated and it covers all year groups. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

76. There are some good links planned with other subjects. Good PowerPoint presentations have been produced in history linked to work about World War 11. In design and technology, the pupils have designed a fairground and listed the cost of materials on a spreadsheet. Drawings and pictures using art software are of a good standard. Graphs and charts are regularly produced in mathematics and science. Pupils use the internet well to research homework projects.

### **HUMANITIES**

77. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of provision in **history** and **geography**. The school keeps good portfolios of work in both subjects showing appropriate coverage of the curriculum. No lessons were observed in history. Both subjects make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
78. In **geography**, two very good lessons were observed in Year 5 and 6. From the very good lessons observed, a detailed examination of pupils' work and scrutiny of a school portfolio, there is every indication that standards are in line with those expected in Year 6. The very good, clear teaching in Year 6 has a positive impact on the pupils' learning and the very good progress made in developing their geographical skills, for example, as they investigate maps and photographs. Resources that stimulate interest and motivate pupils to focus on their learning are very carefully prepared. The clear exposition and instructions effectively promote the pupils' knowledge and ensure that they understand what they have to do.
79. **History** was not a focus of the inspection and only a small amount of pupils' work was seen. Work in the portfolio shows that the pupils enjoy their work in history. In Year 6 they re-enact a World War II classroom and in Year 2 they show great interest in the story of the Great Fire of London. Good visits are planned to historical sites and the pupils handle artefacts in the classroom. The pupils use information and communication technology well to research projects such as propaganda in World War II.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

80. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of provision and standards in **art and design, design and technology, music and physical education**. No lessons were observed in art and design or in design and technology but one lesson was observed in each of physical education and music.
81. **Art and design** is a developing subject and teachers are beginning to link it with other areas of the curriculum, for example by drawing artefacts in history. Evidence from displays and pupils' sketchbooks shows that a variety of opportunities is provided for the development of relevant skills. Pupils experience a range of media and study the works of well-known artists. There are opportunities to compose pictures in the style of a particular artists using information and communication technology, for example animals drawn in the style of Matisse. Pupils' work was scrutinised in **design and technology**, which showed that all classes have good opportunities to plan, make and evaluate their work. Year 3 pupils' work showed a good understanding of a winding mechanism and Years 4 and 5 pupils studied pop up mechanisms. There is good attention to health and safety in the kitchen in Year 6 but the school has identified that improvement is needed for opportunities for food technology. In **music**, singing in assembly was pleasant and tuneful. However, it lacked enthusiasm except when the words were very familiar. Pupils enjoy adding the actions to the hymns. A satisfactory lesson was observed where the pupils in Year 4 displayed positive attitudes to music and made satisfactory progress in their understanding of how music creates a mood. There are opportunities for instrumental tuition, recorders and choir. In **physical education**, extra sporting activities are beginning to flourish and teams are taking part in inter-school competitions. In a satisfactory lesson in Year 3, the pupils made satisfactory progress in their ability to throw and catch a ball. Opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own and others' performance were less well developed. Improvements are needed in resources. During the lesson observed and at lunchtime play, inspectors observed pupils using poor quality balls that did not bounce. The school fulfils the requirements for the teaching of swimming.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils express their ideas and opinions well.
- The subject is well planned into the school week.

### Commentary

82. Provision for personal, social and health education is good overall. There is a well-planned programme of weekly lessons and other opportunities for personal development, such as class discussion times. For example, very good teaching was observed in Year 5 where pupils were encouraged to express their ideas and opinions about racism and to appreciate the differences between cultures and races. The scheme includes an appropriate drugs awareness programme and sex education is promoted sensitively through science topics. The topics taught provide a good vehicle for the development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills as well as their social development in terms of working in pairs. Aspects of health education are also covered in science and physical education.

83. The teaching of citizenship is at an early stage. The school has worked hard to promote this subject. Teachers encourage pupils to express their views, to listen to others and to take responsibility. There has been significant success in promoting good behaviour and fostering positive attitudes to work. The school's work on this aspect of the curriculum has been good in establishing the basis of a good work ethic on which the teachers can build. However, a school council has not yet been established, but Year 6 pupils are in the process of researching ideas in order to set one up in the near future. For example, the pupils are working on creating a questionnaire on the computer to gain both adults' and pupils' views on the role of a council.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</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	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<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	3

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