

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SANDON JUNIOR MIXED AND INFANT SCHOOL**

Buntingford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117147

Headteacher: Mrs J Worth

Lead inspector: Mrs S M Barnes

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> March 2005

Inspection number: 267628

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school:              | Primary                                |
| School category:             | Community                              |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 – 11                                 |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                                  |
| Number on roll:              | 69                                     |
| School address:              | Sandon<br>Buntingford<br>Hertfordshire |
| Postcode:                    | SG9 0QS                                |
| Telephone number:            | 01763 287238                           |
| Fax number:                  | 01763 287298                           |
| Appropriate authority:       | Governing Body                         |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mr C Hunt                              |
| Date of previous inspection: | 8 <sup>th</sup> March 1999             |

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Sandon Primary is a smaller than average school in the village of Sandon, near Buntingford, in Hertfordshire. The 69 boys and girls who attend come from a wide range of homes around the school and from surrounding villages and towns. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, at around eight per cent. Virtually all the children come from a White British heritage and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average at 23.5 per cent. The proportion of pupils with statements of their need is also well above the average at 2.9 per cent. These pupils have a variety of different needs including specific learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural needs, speech or communication difficulties and physical needs. There have been high levels of pupil mobility in some year groups. For example, in the current Year 6, four-fifths of the pupils have started since the end of Year 5. Attainment on entry to reception varies year on year, due to the very small size of the cohorts, and is currently broadly below average. The very small size of the year groups and the high levels of mobility make analysis of standards within and between year groups very unreliable. The school has been awarded the National Association of Advisors for Computers in Education (NAACE) mark 2004 and, recently, the Charter Mark from the Football Association for coaching. It is working towards the Healthy Schools Award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team |                 |                | Subject responsibilities   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| 16249                          | Mrs S M Barnes  | Lead inspector | Foundation Stage<br>English as an additional language<br>Mathematics<br>Science<br>Art and design<br>Design technology<br>Physical education<br>Music                    |
| 31729                          | Mr B Harrington | Lay inspector  |  |
| 16493                          | Mr N Sherman    | Team inspector | English<br>Special educational needs<br>Religious education<br>Information and communication technology<br>History<br>Geography<br>Personal, social and health education |

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school that provides a **good** quality of education overall for all pupils. Teaching and learning are good and, as a consequence, pupils' achievement is good. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 fluctuate year on year due to the size and make up of the different cohorts. Currently, they are above average at the end of Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6. The requirements of pupils with special educational needs are very well met. The school is well led and managed and gives good value for money.

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

- Teachers and other adults are dedicated and make the most of their areas of individual expertise and, as a result, pupils achieve well in the good quality, interesting lessons.
- The leadership and management of the school are effective in working to continuously raise achievement.
- Pupils are very well cared for in a warm and supportive environment.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they are fully included in all activities.
- The provision for physical education and for extra-curricular activities is very good.
- Links with parents are very strong.
- Pupils are very keen to come to school and have good attitudes to their learning.
- Although assessment systems provide very good information about how well pupils are doing in some subjects, in other subjects, whilst satisfactory, these are still at early stages of development as they do not yet provide an easy tool for monitoring of standards by senior management.
- Classroom assistants are knowledgeable and hard working. There are good levels of adult support in classes. However, on occasion, these supporting adults do not know enough about the best ways to guide pupils in their learning.

There has been **good** improvement overall since the time of the last inspection and the issues it identified have been fully addressed. Teachers plan lessons effectively to ensure all pupils, including potentially higher attaining pupils, make the same good progress. In addition, the school development plan now includes success criteria and the curriculum for the reception class is linked to the nationally agreed '*stepping stones*' for the development of young children. Standards have also improved in the provision for pupils with special educational needs, in the range of extra-curricular activities, in systems for the assessment of pupils' work, in the care and welfare of pupils and in links with parents. Standards in teaching have been maintained.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A\* - in the top five per cent nationally; 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. Caution is needed when interpreting these

results, as the size of each cohort is so small.

The pupils' achievement is **good** throughout the school. On the basis of the 2004 national test results at the end of Year 6, attainment was below the national average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. However, a combination of factors, including small year group size, high proportions of pupils with special educational needs and significant proportions of pupils new to the school, makes this data an unreliable indicator of progress. Based on their prior attainment, the pupils achieved well in all three subjects. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science are below national expectations at the end of Year 6, but that pupils achieve well as they move through the school in these core subjects. The 2004 national test results at the end of Year 2 show that attainment in reading and mathematics was well above the national average, and that attainment in writing was average. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. The teacher assessments for science indicate that pupils' attainment was well above the national average. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment is above national expectations in mathematics, reading, writing and science and that pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well.

In religious education, pupils' attainment is above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils' achievement is good. In information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education, pupils' attainment is above national expectations at Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well in ICT and very well in physical education. Standards of work seen in other subjects were broadly at the expected levels at Year 2 and Year 6.

The children's attainment when they join the reception class varies year on year, but overall is below average. Children achieve well and most attain the expected level by the time they move to Year 1 in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal, social and emotional development and creative and physical development.

Pupils of all ages have very positive attitudes to work and set about their activities with high levels of enthusiasm. Their behaviour is good. Attendance is very good, and is well above the national average. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall, and there are particular strengths in pupils' social and moral development which is aided by the very wide range of opportunities they are given to take part in outdoor and sporting activities.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides children with a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **good**. Teachers' areas of expertise are used effectively and, for example, teaching in physical education is very good. Assessment is good overall. The assessment of the progress and attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT is good. It is good for physical education. It is very detailed and used well. Assessment in the remaining subjects is satisfactory overall and being developed as it does not yet provide an easy tool for monitoring. The curriculum is good. Extra-curricular provision is very good. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The accommodation is good, although children in the reception have limited opportunities to develop upper body strength. The school has a good range of resources. The levels of care are very good and there is good support and guidance for pupils. The school's partnership with parents is very good. Links with other schools and the community are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher provides good leadership and management for the school and has led the school forward effectively since the previous inspection. Staff are hard working and form an efficient team. The leadership of subject co-ordinators is good. Governance is good. The governing body is supportive and well informed, and effectively fulfils its statutory duties. The school is well managed on a daily basis, and the strategic and financial management of the school are good.

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

Parents are very pleased with the work of the school. They particularly like the way in which information about the progress of their children is communicated to them. The views of pupils are sought regularly and they appreciate the help and support they receive from all staff and feel that any concerns or questions that they may have are dealt with quickly, fairly and effectively.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Develop whole-school systems for assessment and monitoring in subjects that do not yet have them. (The school has already identified this in its development plan.)
- Ensure that adults helping in lessons are fully aware of the ways to help pupils acquire good learning strategies that will help them in future work.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement overall is **good** throughout the school. Standards vary because of the different abilities of different year groups. Standards in reception are broadly in line with those expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. They are above average overall at the end of Year 2 and below at the end of Year 6.

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

- Children in the reception class are given a good start to their education.
- Pupils of all levels of ability make good gains in their learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs do very well in relation to their abilities.
- Pupils achieve high standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in a wide range of aspects of physical education.

#### **Commentary**

1. Results in national assessments at the ages of seven and eleven have varied considerably in all subjects over several years. They have ranged from being in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally to being in the top five per cent. This is true both of comparisons with schools nationally and with similar schools based on eligibility for free school meals. The huge differences from year to year are largely explained by the variation in pupils' abilities in different year groups. This has included very different levels of special needs, with the proportion being very high in some years. In addition, in some year groups there is a very high proportion of pupils who have joined the school relatively recently. Not all of these pupils have records of previous achievement in National Curriculum subjects.
2. As there are such variations between year groups, a safer judgement on achievement can be reached by comparing how each individual pupil has progressed over time. The school maintains detailed records of pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT. Along with work in books, these demonstrate clearly that the overall achievement of pupils throughout the school in these subjects is good. The school sets targets for its pupils which are suitably challenging, and it generally achieves them.
3. Results in tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were well above average in reading, average in writing and well above average in mathematics, both when compared to all schools and also when compared to similar schools. Current standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average in Year 2, and this indicates good achievement for these pupils.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading       | 17.6 (17.7)    | 15.8 (15.7)      |
| writing       | 14.8 (15.9)    | 14.6 (14.6)      |

|             |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| mathematics | 17.5 (17.4) | 16.2 (16.3) |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|

There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English       | 26.5 (31.0)    | 26.9 (26.8)      |
| mathematics   | 25.8 (27.7)    | 27.0 (26.8)      |
| science       | 27.0 (30.3)    | 28.6 (28.6)      |

There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. In tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004, results were below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. When compared to similar schools, the results were average in English and well below average in mathematics and science.
5. Currently, standards in English, mathematics and science are below those expected, at the end of Year 6, but this represents good achievement for these pupils, a significant proportion of whom have special educational needs and four-fifths of whom only joined the school in the last year.
6. Standards in religious education and ICT are above those expected by the locally agreed syllabus and the National Curriculum in Year 2 and Year 6. This is due to the high levels of discussion, which allow pupils to participate fully, regardless of their skills in reading and writing.
7. Standards in physical education are well above those expected at Year 2 and Year 6. This is due to the very good provision in all aspects of the subject. Pupils participate and achieve very well in a very wide range of sporting, swimming, athletic and gymnastic activities. Standards of work seen in other subjects were broadly at the expected levels at Year 2 and Year 6.
8. Children in the Foundation Stage make good gains in their learning and achieve well in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal, social and emotional development and in creative development. Standards in these areas are likely to be above those expected by the time they start in Year 1. Achievements in physical development are satisfactory and standards are likely to be in line with those expected.
9. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and their achievements are very good. This level of achievement is due to the good attention given by teachers to ensuring that the individual needs of pupils are met effectively. Boys and girls do equally well and there is no significant difference in their achievements. Higher attaining pupils are challenged well and the achievement of these pupils is good, in line with that of their peers. This indicates a good level of improvement since the previous inspection, when this was a key issue.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **good** attitudes to the school and work hard in lessons. Behaviour in and around the school is also **good** and pupils have a good understanding of how their behaviour can impact on the wellbeing of others. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is **very good** with no unauthorised absence.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils work hard in lessons and enjoy what teachers plan for them.
- Pupils understand well the importance of treating others with respect.
- All pupils value and respect each other and pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated in all the school's work.
- There is good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils are keen to come to school and the attendance rate during the last year was high.

## **Commentary**

10. The school continues to promote positive attitudes in pupils towards the school and each other as it did at the time of the last inspection. An interesting curriculum and teaching that is lively and stimulating help to ensure that pupils have positive attitudes to their learning, to each other and to the school in general. Pupils work hard in lessons and demonstrate good levels of independence when asked to follow through their own lines of enquiry. Participation rates in extra-curricular activities are high, demonstrating further the strong interest that pupils have in what the school offers for them. Pupils with special educational needs have the same positive attitudes to work as other pupils and take a full part in the extra-curricular life of the school.
11. Behaviour in and around the school is good. There have been no exclusions in recent years. The pupils have a good perception of the importance of treating others as they themselves would like to be treated. Movement around the school is smooth and orderly. Behaviour in the playground and the dining hall is equally good, ensuring that lunchtimes and playtimes are pleasant and sociable occasions. The school takes a practical approach to promoting the awareness of combating any bullying and pupils are clear on what to do if such incidents were to occur. Of note is the positive way in which pupils treat those who have a high level of special educational needs. Many go out of their way to make these pupils feel valued and appreciated and this helps to ensure that they are fully included in all that the school has to offer.
12. There is overall good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and that for social development is very good. Teachers make satisfactory use of the potential within different subjects to effectively promote pupils' understanding of the beauty of the world around them. History and geography make a valuable contribution to the pupils' understanding of their local and national culture and the good provision for religious education ensures a secure grounding in the multicultural nature of the wider society in which they live. The pupils have a good understanding of the principles of what is right and what is wrong and are successful in applying these in their relationships with others. Pupils have a very good understanding of the need to work productively and effectively with others. Subjects such as physical education, where pupils work effectively as part of a team, make a valuable contribution to this aspect of their personal development.
13. The rate of attendance last year was well above average. This very good rate of attendance has been maintained over recent years and places the school in the top ten per cent of schools across the country. All absences have been authorised but there is a small number of instances of lateness, particularly amongst older pupils. The school regularly reminds parents of the need for regular attendance and punctuality.

## Attendance

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

| Authorised absence |     | Unauthorised absence |     |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data:       | 4.3 | 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.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** throughout the school. Assessment is **good** overall. The curriculum is **good** and the school provides a **very good** range of additional learning opportunities. The curriculum for Foundation Stage children is **good** and fully meets their needs. Accommodation and resources are **good**. The school provides **very good** levels of care, and support and guidance for all pupils are good. The school's partnership with parents is **very good**, and it has established **good** links with other schools and the local community.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** throughout the school. Assessment is **good** overall. It is used particularly well to monitor attainment and track progress in the core subjects.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use their areas of skill and expertise well to benefit all pupils.
- Classroom assistants are caring and hardworking but extra adults are not always aware of the best ways to guide pupils in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well in their learning.
- Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards as a teaching aid.
- Higher attaining pupils are provided with good levels of challenge to ensure they achieve as well as they might.
- There are good procedures to monitor and check on pupils' progress in English, mathematics, science and ICT.
- There is no whole-school system for formally monitoring how well pupils are progressing in other subjects.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0         | 2         | 16   | 0            | 0              | 0    | 0         |

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

14. A real strength of the teaching is in the way lessons are organised to maximise the benefit of teachers' individual skills and knowledge for all pupils. For example, all of the lessons in science, physical education, design technology and ICT are taught by the subject co-ordinators. Not only does this ensure that lessons are taken by those with the greatest expertise and enthusiasm for each subject, but it also ensures consistency of approach. There is a steady incremental building on previous knowledge and skills and this organisation also provides the co-ordinator with a good overview of standards across the whole school. As a result, pupils, including those who are higher attaining, make good gains in their learning and find lessons challenging and enjoyable. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
15. There are good adult to pupil ratios in lessons. The school benefits from regular volunteers as well as support staff. These adults help ensure that pupils stay on task and enjoy lessons. However, adults helping in lessons are not always fully aware of the ways to help pupils acquire good learning strategies that will help them in future work. For example, on occasion they are too ready to help pupils find a correct answer or present a neat final copy of work. Help is sometimes focused more on the end product of the individual lesson concerned than in the development of pupils' learning skills. For example, pupils are not always encouraged sufficiently to form their own hypotheses and check them out or to practise skills such as letter formation, working out how to spell words or to resolve simple number problems using their own methodology or simple apparatus.
16. The school successfully identifies pupils with special educational needs at a very early stage and keeps a careful track of how they get on. Individual education plans have precise but achievable targets that are reviewed on a regular basis. The success of pupils' achievement towards these is used as a basis for highlighting what pupils need to do next in order to improve. The register of pupils with special educational needs is regularly updated as pupils move through the school. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the pupils' learning by explaining further what is being taught and by checking that pupils have understood the work and get on sensibly. Higher attaining pupils are also provided with good quality support and challenge in their lessons. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection.
17. The school has good procedures to monitor the pupils' progress in the main subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT. Pupils are assessed regularly in these subjects and the procedures include a combination of regular teacher assessments and more formal tests at different points of the academic year. Pupils are assessed against the different levels of the National Curriculum at the end of each year and targets for improvement are set for each child. In addition, the teachers have a very good informal understanding of the pupils as individuals and this ensures a good profile of the pupils is built up. This is a good level of improvement since the previous report.
18. Teachers undertake the teaching of some subjects in their role as a co-ordinator and this helps to give them a good understanding of pupils' achievement in other subjects. There is, however, no formal system to record how well pupils are progressing in all subjects, making it difficult for pupils' subsequent teacher or senior management to get a clear, quick handle on pupils' previous achievement in the absence of the co-ordinator, so that their learning can be planned effectively. The school has identified this as an area for improvement in its development plan. In addition, the targets set for improvement for individual pupils in some classes are general targets for their age and are not always specific enough for individual pupils.

## The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum that is well geared to meeting pupils' interests and academic abilities. The curriculum is **supplemented very well** by an interesting range of trips, visitors and extra-curricular activities. The accommodation is **good** and used well. Resources are **good** overall.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned and meets the needs and interests of all pupils well.
- Children in the Foundation Stage have their learning needs well met.
- Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all learning opportunities.
- There is an extensive range of activities beyond the school day.
- The quality of the accommodation is good and there are high quality learning resources.
- The outside area is very well provisioned.
- There have been recent improvements to the library and to resources for ICT.

## Commentary

19. The school is careful in planning the learning for all pupils in the school. All statutory requirements are met There is satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and this is planned both as a discrete area of the curriculum and through other subjects such as science. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is good and effectively linked to the six areas for development of young children. Throughout the school, careful account is taken to ensure that pupils are taught basic skills and yet undertake learning experiences that allow for all areas of their development. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
20. Owing to the small size of the school and the fact that pupils are taught in one class for two years, care is taken to ensure that the curriculum is planned over a two-year cycle. This avoids needless repetition while ensuring that all elements of the curriculum are covered well. Good improvements since the previous inspection ensure effective use is made of different subjects to promote the pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. In addition, the school has restructured the organisation of the morning session to allow three discrete teaching sessions to take place, maximising the time available for teaching.
21. The school is very much an inclusive school and this is demonstrated in the way those with particular learning needs have them well met. The school has identified pupils with particular gifts and skills in different subjects and makes suitable provision to enable them to be challenged sufficiently. The school is also positive in the way that it ensures that those with a high level of special educational need are included in all aspects of the curriculum. Even those with high physical need are included in dance work in physical education lessons, for example.
22. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and teachers effectively ensure that the learning opportunities planned for pupils help them to achieve as well as their classmates. The pupils' learning is further enhanced by frequent opportunities to take part in the wide array of visits and educational trips.

23. The curriculum is very well enriched by a full programme of other activities. Care is taken, for example, to dovetail trips, visits and visitors into day-to-day learning opportunities to help the pupils explore themes and topics in more depth. History and geography topics include visits to places of historical and geographical significance and these are augmented further by the organisation of particular days when pupils dress and act out how people from the past may have lived their lives. Older pupils have the chance to participate in a residential trip. The school plans extremely well so that time following the school day is used well to further complement pupils' learning. It is to the school's credit, given its size, that sporting opportunities including football, netball, lacrosse, dance and rugby are all provided. There has been a good level of improvement in extra-curricular activities since the previous inspection. These all have a very positive impact, particularly on pupils' social development.
24. The school buildings are generally in a good state of repair and decoration, with a significant amount of recent refurbishment. An additional mobile classroom has helped to provide stability in teaching groups across the school, which in turn has had a positive impact upon curriculum planning. The library has been transferred to a new resource area and this has resolved the unsatisfactory location of the library as reported in the previous inspection report.
25. There is a good match of suitably qualified teachers and support staff to effectively deliver the curriculum. Learning resources are good for all subjects. Those for ICT are very good, and there is good use of interactive whiteboards and laptop computers in classrooms, which has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
26. The outside area is very well provisioned with designated areas for children in the Foundation Stage. However, the designated area for Foundation Stage children provides little opportunity for them to climb or hang by their arms.

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

Pupils are **very well** cared for and are provided with **good** support and guidance. They are well involved in the work of the school from an early age.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff provide a good level of pastoral care for all pupils.
- Child protection and risk assessment procedures are well established.

### **Commentary**

27. The provision of systems to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of all pupils is very good. The headteacher has been named to deal with any issues of child protection that may arise and has received recent relevant training for this role. All staff are aware of the child protection procedures. Several members of staff have received accredited training in first aid and all staff are planned to receive further training this month.
28. There are good arrangements to support a safe environment. For example, the headteacher conducts an annual risk assessment of the premises, which she augments with termly reviews. Risk assessments are undertaken for all school visits and equipment is checked annually.

29. Pupils receive good support and guidance. Classes are small and teachers and teaching assistants know the individual needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs, extremely well. Staff show a real concern for pupils' welfare, reflecting the caring ethos of the school. As a result, the pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school. Duty staff all contribute to an incident book which the headteacher monitors for patterns of unacceptable behaviour. Circle times, assemblies, the school council and tutorial periods provide good opportunities for pupils' views to be sought and for good levels of pupil involvement in the life of the school. There are good induction arrangements for children entering the reception class and for older pupils joining the school, both of which include preliminary visits. All of these systems make a positive contribution to pupils' happiness and wellbeing. There has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection.

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

The school has **very good** links with parents and keeps them **very well** informed about school events. There are **good** links with other schools and with the community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents receive good formal and informal information about the school and its work.
- Parents make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

30. Parents receive very good quality information about the school through formal documentation, newsletters and the school's website. Annual reports are of good quality, inform parents about what their children can do, and provide personal and academic targets for development. Parents have positive views of the school and its work, although a small number say they would like to be kept even better informed of their children's progress and would appreciate further guidance on how to help their children with homework.
31. A substantial number of parents regularly help in school by listening to pupils practising their reading and supporting special events. Some parents organise after-school clubs and support the sports teams by transporting them to away fixtures. The Friends of the School is a very active association, which has raised large amounts of money to provide additional learning resources such as interactive whiteboards and the adventure trail. As a separate effort, the parents raised sufficient funds to purchase a mobile classroom, which has had a significant positive impact upon teaching and learning across the school.
32. Parents' views are canvassed every two years and they are invited to express their views at the annual governors' meeting for parents. The headteacher maintains an open-door policy and, with her staff, provides parents with good opportunities to resolve concerns at the beginning and end of each day. Consultation evenings provide further good opportunities to discuss pupils' progress. Parents are encouraged to involve themselves in the life of the school and sports day is always held on a Saturday to encourage this. As a result, parents are enabled to make a very positive contribution to their children's learning and the social life of the school.
33. The school has established very good links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and many parents talk very positively about the provision that their children receive. Proper procedures are in place for the formal review of pupils' progress and effective informal contact supports the pupils' learning well. There are good links with various external agencies to support these pupils.

34. Links with the local community are good. The vicar regularly visits to take assemblies and pupils visit the church for Harvest Festival and to sing. Pupils participate in the village flower festival through dance and song and attend similar festivities in a neighbouring village. Local people come into school to talk to pupils about their own experiences of school, such as growing up in the village, and pupils have studied the life of George Orwell who lived locally. The 'Luncheon Club' is invited to dine in school twice each month, which helps to reinforce in pupils a sense of community. Members of the local community are also invited to attend the school pantomime and singing performances at Christmas time. These all have a very positive impact on pupils' awareness of community and their social development.
35. Pupils are involved in a very wide range of sporting activities and regularly compete against other schools. Most pupils transfer to the local high school and there are good arrangements in place to make pupils' transfer as pleasant as possible. There has been a good level of improvement in the links the school has with parents and the community since the previous report.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher provides **good** leadership for the school. The leadership role of subject co-ordinators is **good**. The governing body is **effective** and very supportive.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher leads the school well and has a very clear vision of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- The governing body is very supportive and is actively involved at many levels.
- Co-ordinators provide good leadership for their subjects, and their monitoring role is developing well.
- The school is very strongly committed to the principles of inclusion, and is successful in meeting the needs of all pupils, including higher attaining pupils and also those with special educational needs.

### **Commentary**

36. The leadership of the headteacher is good, and is characterised by a clear vision for how the school can continue to move forward. The way in which the headteacher has led the school forward since the previous inspection has led to good levels of improvement and a strong team spirit amongst all staff. Statutory requirements are fully met.
37. The headteacher has provided good guidance to the school's work in terms of developing very effective assessment systems and analysis of data produced, and linking this efficiently to whole-school planning. She monitors the school's work effectively and analyses data to ensure all pupils achieve well. Performance management systems are effective and are firmly embedded. The monitoring of lessons and pupils' work by the headteacher is good and has led to an overall improvement in the quality provision for all pupils, especially those who are potentially higher attaining.
38. Co-ordinators provide overall good leadership and management for their subjects and their monitoring role is generally good, although their monitoring of classroom practice is under-developed in some subjects. The management of the curriculum and the

practice of co-ordinators teaching their areas of expertise across the whole school demonstrate efficient use of teaching resources. In the case of physical education, they have led to provision which is very good and which has a positive impact, not only on pupils' physical skills but also on their personal and social development.

39. The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good, and have led to a significant and continuing improvement in achievement. The school has a very strong philosophy towards inclusion and the management of arrangements for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator, who is the headteacher, has a good insight into how best to manage arrangements given the size of the school. Governors are kept regularly appraised of developments as they take place.
40. The governing body is effective. Governors provide very good support for the school and fulfil their responsibilities well. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths of the school and also of the areas for development. The governing body is fully committed to inclusion, and is very effective in ensuring that pupils enjoy equal access to all aspects of school life.
41. The school is well managed, and daily routines are well established so that the school runs smoothly. Financial systems are good and the principles of best value are firmly embedded. The strategic plan for the school's future development is good, and contains indicators to measure progress and improvement against costs. Recently, money has been put to one side to ensure replacement of windows, refurbishment of teaching areas and the maintenance of staffing levels so that reception children can be taught in a separate class. **This is why the school had such a high balance at the end of last year.** Good procedures are in place to measure the cost-effectiveness of spending decisions, such as the generous ratio of teachers and support staff to the number of classes and pupils on roll. The school provides good value for money.

## Financial information

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

| Income and expenditure (£) |         | Balances (£)                         |        |
|----------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income               | 289,133 | Balance from previous year           | 56,333 |
| Total expenditure          | 294,412 | Balance carried forward to next year | 51,054 |
| Expenditure per pupil      | 4,329   |                                      |        |

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

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

The overall provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

The children in the Foundation Stage (reception class) receive a good start to their education. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well by a dedicated practitioner. Teaching and learning are good overall in all areas. Good planning and assessment systems contribute to the effectiveness of the education of these young children. Planning ensures that all children, including potential high-flyers and those with special educational needs, have equal access to a broad and worthwhile curriculum, based on the nationally agreed 'stepping stones' for early development. Assessment is good and is effectively used to track children's progress. The information gained is used well in planning lessons. Children start in reception in either the September or January of the academic year they are about to be five. There is also provision for a small number of children to start part time in the class in the term before this, dependant upon places being available. The overall attainment of children on entry to the school is below average. By the time they move into Year 1, most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in the six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. There has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection.

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

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

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

- Children are developing their levels of personal independence well.
- Children behave well for their age.
- Some children have difficulty in learning to share with their peers or in following adult advice.

#### **Commentary**

42. Teaching and learning are generally good. All the children receive plenty of praise and encouragement. This is effective in building up their self-esteem and confidence, and achievement is good. The children quickly develop their confidence and establish good relationships with one another and with adults. They can negotiate when asking to join in with games "*...and if you let me play, I will play with you a hundred times!*" They behave well and are encouraged to be considerate of others, although some still find it hard to share equipment and adult attention, or to follow advice. For example, they will assert emphatically that they do not need a coat to go outside and have not brought one, until guided gently and persistently by the teacher to find it. All the teachers work effectively to promote children's personal development by establishing routines such as washing hands or getting changed for physical education sessions. Children are starting to display high levels of concentration and involvement in activities, particularly those they find enjoyable, such as playing with the equipment in the 'Optician's Shop'. Adults provide good opportunities for children to make choices in the activities they are to take part in, and this is carefully monitored to ensure they have a balanced curriculum. By the time they move into Year 1, most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in this aspect of their learning.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's speaking and listening skills are fostered effectively.
- Early reading skills are developed well.
- Some opportunities to use computers to develop children's vocabulary and communication skills are missed.

## Commentary

43. Teaching and learning are good. Many opportunities are provided for children to extend their speaking skills through all areas of learning and, as a result, children achieve well. When they enter the reception class, some children's skills in speaking and listening are weak for their age. Adults pay good attention to developing these skills and to extending children's vocabulary. For some children, some simple terms like 'bread roll' are unknown to them. Children enjoy looking at books, which they hold correctly and turn pages of carefully. They enjoy listening to stories and sharing books, and many can describe the main story settings, events and principal characters. Many are still at early stages in speaking and listening, using simple statements, for example, when talking about the toys they are playing with. For most, reading is in its initial stages. They can read and write their names and many are beginning to read some simple words, such as recognising when the sign in the class shop says 'open' or 'shut'. By the time they move into Year 1, most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals for this aspect of their learning. There is a good range of picture books, including non-fiction titles, which is accessible to the children. Good use is often made of classroom computers to support children's early reading and writing skills, although some opportunities to use programs to develop early reading and writing skills are missed.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical vocabulary and concepts are developed well.
- Teachers make lessons interesting.
- Many good opportunities are provided to develop counting skills and knowledge of space and measure, but there are not enough opportunities for simple calculation practice.

## Commentary

44. The children make good progress in their early understanding of number, shape and measure, and achievement is good. By the time they move into Year 1, most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals for this aspect of their learning. Many children in reception can count and handle simple addition with numbers to five and ten. Teaching and learning are good. There is a good range of games and puzzles, specifically designed to support early understanding of number, which is used well and children enjoy their lessons. The well-planned use of a range of resources makes lessons interesting. Adults use the classroom clock, for example, to point out what time things will happen, so that children then incorporate this into their play and dealings with each other, for example exclaiming "*It will be two o'clock!*" when making pretend appointments for eye checks. Children's use of mathematical vocabulary is developing well, as a result of the good emphasis teachers place on this aspect of learning. Children use mathematical terminology, such as using the term '*a hundred*' and knowing that this is a large number, when referring to how many small toys may be in a box. Adults make lessons interesting and memorable. As a result, children enjoy activities such as making and baking round pizzas when learning about shape. However, opportunities to learn

simple calculating skills, such as separating a group of objects in different ways, are sometimes missed.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have good opportunities to explore and learn about their world in the classroom and the outdoor play area.
- Children have good access to computers, which they learn to use with confidence, although some opportunities are missed.

### **Commentary**

45. Children make good progress in this area of learning and achievement is good. This is because they have plenty of opportunities to experience a wide range of activities, such as sand and water play, baking and working with construction toys. By the time they move into Year 1, most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals for this aspect of their learning. Teaching and learning are good and teachers prepare resources well, so that activities are interesting, for example providing bread rolls with different 'fillings' to use as a prop when planning a healthy lunch box. The children are interested in all activities presented to them, such as playing in the adventure garden, home corner or the 'Optician's Shop' and so make good overall gains in their learning. They quickly learn to use computers and are developing good control of the mouse. Adults select programs that are appropriate to the lesson, although some opportunities to encourage children to use the computer are missed. Children learn to use a range of tools and techniques safely. They learn more about their world by observing, handling and discussing a variety of objects, such as figures in the toy hospital, and start to notice and comment upon patterns, such as similarities and differences. They gain an awareness of the beliefs and celebrations of others through regular religious education lessons. For example, they learn about Guru Nanak's birthday, Diwali, Christmas and Bonfire night. Activities are planned well to support and extend learning through the healthy living topic in all curriculum areas.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills on a range of large exercise equipment, such as tricycles.
- There are limited opportunities to climb or develop upper body strength and lung capacity.
- Children are developing their expertise effectively in manipulating pencils, scissors and other small tools.

### **Commentary**

46. Teaching and learning are good. Adults ensure good use is made of the available time in the school hall or to take the children to visit the adventure equipment on the school

field when the weather allows. Manipulative skills are developed effectively through the use of pencils, brushes, scissors and small construction apparatus in the classroom and building with small and large construction toys. Children have good opportunities to learn to use a good range of small equipment, such as small construction blocks, with dexterity. They have daily access each morning to a suitable area where they can ride tricycles and play with construction equipment or other large toys. Its use is planned well and it is used effectively for a range of outdoor activities. As a result of the good opportunities they are given, children learn to persevere in repeating attempts when learning a new skill, such as when they learn to throw beanbags into a hoop and achievement is good in these aspects of physical development. By the time they move into Year 1, most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals for this aspect of their learning. However, there is no large climbing equipment in the reception area for children to climb, balance and develop upper body strength and lung capacity on a daily basis and this is a shortcoming.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have plenty of opportunities for imaginative play.
- Children have access to a good range of resources for creative work.
- There are only limited opportunities for incidental music making.

### **Commentary**

47. Children have a good range of opportunities to develop their creativity. Planning of this area is carefully thought out and teaching and learning are good overall. Children's achievements are good. By the time they move into Year 1, most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals for this aspect of their learning. They handle play-dough and use a variety of tools to create different effects, such as making imitation pizzas from salt dough, following on from a lesson in which they made real ones. They have many good opportunities to use their imagination through role-play and enjoy playing with the 'Opticians', for example, or by raiding the tray of glasses and adapting dressing up clothes, turning the home corner into 'Harry Potter's School'. They enjoy listening to stories and engage in imaginative play based on their own first-hand experiences, such as playing with the 'small world' characters or building 'homes' for soft toys. Children are taught simple songs and rhymes, but opportunities for incidental music making, such as having a range of instruments available during free choice time, are sometimes missed.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision for English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well in each aspect of English.

- Teaching is good and characterised by the way in which teachers creatively use the potential in other subjects to promote pupils' literacy development.
- The school has good procedures to monitor and keep a close eye on how well pupils make progress as they move through the school.
- The school utilises well the interests of parents to support the children in their learning.
- Occasionally in lessons, learning support assistants do not let pupils take sufficient responsibility for their learning.

## Commentary

48. Good achievement throughout the school is not always reflected in the results of national assessments, which vary considerably from year to year. This is because of very small numbers of pupils in each of the cohorts and the significant proportions of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups. Last year, for example, results were well above average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. The inspection findings indicate that standards are currently above average in reading and writing by Year 2. Standards are below average overall by Year 6, although standards in reading are above average. However, no pupils in Year 6 are likely to reach the higher Level 5 in writing. There are, however, very few pupils in the current Year 6 cohort and, of these, four joined at the end of Year 5. Close evaluation of pupils' work and teachers' assessments demonstrates clearly that pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in English as they move through the school.
49. Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening in each year group and standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their vocabulary and, when recalling events, their talk is well structured. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are able to explain clearly their reasons for their answers and understand the need to listen carefully to the views of others. Role-play is used well to stimulate pupils' speech and by the time pupils leave the school they can take part in simple debates, and present reasons and opinions to a wider audience.
50. Standards in reading are above average in Years 2 and 6 and achievement is good. By the end of Year 2, pupils read well and have developed a good sight vocabulary that enables them to make good attempts at words and phrases they are unfamiliar with. By the end of Year 6, pupils read widely and express their preferences well for the sorts of books and authors that they enjoy reading. A wide range of literature, including the regular use of the Internet, helps to boost the pupils' confidence in viewing reading both as a source of pleasure and as a way to extend their learning. The school is also very successful in harnessing the interests of parents in supporting their children in their reading development. Many of them, for example, listen and read regularly to their children and add thoughtful comments in reading diaries. This adds a further positive strand to the very good links that the school has with parents.
51. Standards in writing are above average in Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6. However, the small number of pupils in the cohorts masks the overall good level of achievement in writing. By the end of Year 2, pupils write their letters neatly and understand the need to use suitable punctuation so that what they write is clear in its structure. As pupils move through the school, the teaching is such that the pupils make suitable progress in their understanding of how writing can take different forms according to its intended purpose. Pupils often write thoughtful poetry and the good scope they are given to use word-processors to assist in their work promotes well their understanding of how drafting and editing of work can improve its overall quality. However, while pupils' work is neat and legible and often characterised by the use of

joined handwriting, pupils find it difficult to use rich and imaginative vocabulary to give their work an added degree of interest.

52. Teaching and learning are good overall. Reading skills and a strong interest in reading are both taught well throughout the school. Good use is made of 'story sacks', for example, to promote younger pupils' interest in reading. Quiet reading sessions for all pupils at different points help to give reading its high status. Teachers are imaginative in the way they seek out the potential in other subjects to help teach writing skills and the pupils are provided with sufficient opportunities to develop a good understanding of the different forms and styles that writing can comprise. Marking is good and often features clear and precise development points for pupils to work on in order to improve their efforts. Just occasionally, the impact of teaching is reduced due to the learning support assistants scribing too much for the pupils – which works against pupils developing their writing skills.
53. The quality of leadership and management is good. Although the co-ordinator is only part-time, she has a good understanding of the standards that pupils are reaching in the school through strategies like teaching other classes, and evaluating pupils' work and assessment data. There is a focused and rigorous approach to the analysis of test data and to the monitoring of how well individual pupils are making progress towards the targets that have been set for them. Standards are broadly similar to those noted by the previous inspection.

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

54. The good achievement of pupils, in all aspects of English, is partly due to the way other subjects are used effectively as an opportunity to develop and refine the core skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Written work is encouraged in many subjects, such as science, where pupils record their findings in their own words.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- Pupils make good gains in their learning throughout the school.
- Teachers are confident and knowledgeable in the subject and in the National Numeracy Strategy.
- Learning support assistants make a positive contribution to the achievements of pupils with special educational needs.
- Assessment systems are efficient and are used well when planning work to ensure there is a good level of challenge for all, including potentially higher attaining pupils.

#### **Commentary**

55. As with English, good achievement throughout the school is not always reflected in the results of national assessments, which vary considerably from year to year. This is because of very small numbers of pupils in each of the cohorts. Standards in tests for pupils in Year 2 were well above average. At the end of Year 6, they were well below average when compared to all schools nationally and also when compared to similar schools.
56. Achievement is good overall. Inspection evidence and results from school assessments indicate that standards currently are above average overall at the end of Year 2 and pupils'

achievements are good. At the end of Year 6, standards are below those normally attained, but pupils' individual achievements are good.

57. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Teachers are knowledgeable and confident in the subject. They use numeracy strategy techniques effectively and lessons move on with good pace. Teachers make generally good use of resources, such as number squares and the interactive whiteboard in lessons, and this enables all pupils to take part with developing confidence. However, on occasion, other supporting adults do not encourage pupils to make use of the many practical systems there are to help them, such as number lines and cubes. At such times, the pace of learning slows unnecessarily for some pupils, in otherwise good lessons.
58. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well; they join in with work and take part fully in lessons and class discussions, due to the tactful and supportive help they are given by well-trained and knowledgeable classroom assistants.
59. Clear, effective whole-school assessment systems have been developed. The information gained is used well by teachers to plan work for each pupil, including higher attaining pupils, which is neither too easy nor too hard. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when assessment information was not used well enough and potentially higher attaining pupils were not sufficiently challenged. Pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6, are made aware of how well they are doing and what their targets are.
60. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a very accurate understanding of standards throughout the school and of teachers' and pupils' skills. Careful analysis of interim non-statutory tests and monitoring of lessons and pupils' work have enabled the co-ordinator to plan training to develop teachers' skills effectively and so raise standards throughout the school. There has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection, particularly for potentially higher attaining pupils.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

61. Teachers identify a good range of opportunities for pupils to develop mathematical knowledge and skills and also to enable them to appreciate the importance of the subject in many aspects of life. For example, pupils learn to measure and record findings in science. ICT is used effectively for pupils to practise and develop mathematical skills, although some opportunities are missed.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

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

- Pupils' achievements in science are good throughout the school.
- Teaching throughout the school is knowledgeable and enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress in learning how to set up hypotheses and test them.
- On occasion, adult class support is focused too much on the answer rather than enabling pupils to gain confidence in their own investigations.
- Management of science is effective and clearly focused on raising standards even higher.
- Good attention is paid to all aspects of science, especially to pupils learning to ask questions and plan their own investigations.
- Good use is made of interactive whiteboards as an aid to teaching.

## Commentary

62. As with English and mathematics, standards in tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 fluctuate year on year, as a result of variations in the make up of small cohorts. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were well above the national average. In tests at the end of Year 6, standards were well below average and well below the results attained in similar schools.
63. The school has successfully introduced good quality strategies emphasising the development of pupils' investigative skills to boost provision in science amongst all groups of pupils. Achievement is now good in all age groups. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards that are above those expected. In Year 6, pupils' standards are below average, but there is clear evidence that, for these pupils, achievement is also good. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls, or between different groups. The strategies have now been successfully implemented to ensure that all pupils, including those who are potentially higher attaining, are challenged appropriately in their work.
64. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Lessons for all year groups are taken by the co-ordinator and these are planned well so that pupils have good opportunities to learn to question why things are the way they are and to set up experiments to test their theories. The teacher manages lessons well and her questions are well tailored to suit the wide range of ability clearly evident in most classes throughout the school. The practical aspect of the subject motivates pupils well, and learning and achievement are good as a result. The majority of pupils find the emphasis on finding things out interesting and enjoyable. However, on occasion, adults supporting in lessons place too much emphasis on the 'right' answer and so some opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative and experimental skills are lost.
65. Leadership and management of science are effective, and the co-ordinator works hard to support learning throughout the school. Assessment is good. The school has made a good start at analysing the scores achieved in national tests, taking stock of strengths and monitoring individual pupils' progress. The systematic monitoring of teaching and learning is good. The marking of pupils' work is good. There is good use of the interactive whiteboards as an aid to teaching, for example linking it to the digital microscope to enable pupils to see the different structure of fibres in pairs of tights of different thicknesses. There has been a good maintenance of the high standards noted by the previous inspection.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all ages achieve well.
- The school carefully plans to ensure that those with special educational needs can achieve as well as their classmates.
- Teachers creatively devise activities in different subjects that promote pupils' ICT development.
- Assessment of pupils' progress is thorough and teachers have a good understanding of individuals' levels of ability.

## **Commentary**

66. ICT features prominently in the day-to-day learning experiences of all pupils at the school and the strong commitment provided by both the co-ordinator and the management of the school has helped to ensure that it has kept pace with developments seen nationally in the subject. Progress since the previous inspection has been good, with much improvement seen in terms of staff development and the range of equipment for pupils to use. Such work has had a positive effect on the level of pupils' achievement. As a result, pupils reach standards that are above expectations in both Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils achieve well and those with special educational needs achieve very well. This is due to the care and attention that is given by the school to ensuring that the pupils concerned have suitable equipment and software.
67. In Years 1 and 2, many pupils are confident users of a wide range of software. Of note are their skills in using word-processing for the writing of stories and accounts. Frequent access to laptops gives the pupils good scope to use the Internet and they understand well how this can provide a rich source of information to assist them in their work. Careful planning by teachers, incorporating the use of ICT in different subjects, ensures that pupils use a wider range of software as they move through Years 3 to 6. Pupils are increasingly confident in using spreadsheets, databases and programmable devices as well as multi-media software to help them extend their learning. Achievement is boosted by the good use of wireless technology in the suite of laptop computers. Pupils use these effectively in lessons such as religious education, English and mathematics.
68. Teaching and learning are good overall. They are occasionally very good. Most teaching is undertaken by the co-ordinator who has a good understanding of the subject and in Years 5 and 6, for example, gives the pupils challenging and meaningful work. Good use is made of the Internet and this helps to broaden the pupils' understanding of how information can be gathered, researched and conveyed electronically. The time at the end of lessons is used well for pupils to explain their thinking, their learning and what they may have found difficult to the rest of the class. This gives the teachers scope for them to note down what pupils are saying and use the information to build up a profile of the level of pupils' achievement. This information is then used well to set pupils follow-up work that successfully builds on what they already know, can do and understand. Just occasionally, there are missed opportunities to incorporate classroom-based machines more fully into teaching and this lessens the impact of teaching overall.
69. The subject is effectively led and managed. The co-ordinator provides a clear steer in leading the subject. Through undertaking most of the teaching herself, she has a good understanding of how well pupils are achieving. Resources are of a very good quality and there is a clear action plan that outlines well the school's continued desire to build further on what is already provided.

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

70. There is good use of other subjects to promote pupils' learning of ICT. Pupils get good scope to develop their word-processing skills in history, geography and religious education as they write up accounts and notes of the various topics that they explore.

Increasing and effective use of the Internet in various subjects provides a further avenue in boosting the pupils' learning in other subjects.

## HUMANITIES

71. History and geography were not inspected during the inspection and provision was only sampled. Evidence from pupils' work, teachers' plans and discussions with the co-ordinators indicates a good range of learning opportunities is provided for the pupils. Trips and visitors are very much a cornerstone of what is provided and such activities help to bring learning alive for pupils. Standards in work seen were generally average.
72. In **history**, pupils gain a secure understanding of how people lived their lives in the past in terms of homes, dress and entertainment. Pupils have also explored different historical periods and can explain, for example, the impact that the Romans had on life in Britain. Good use is made of the locality around the school to extend pupils' **geographical** understanding and equally good opportunities are provided for pupils to broaden their learning of life in other countries by exploring contrasting localities. An annual residential trip adds further to pupils' understanding of different areas and the geographical features of places in other parts of the country.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils are provided with good opportunities to explore aspects of religion in depth.
- Good use is made of the skills and expertise of the co-ordinator, who teaches the subject well.
- Effective use is made of ICT to support learning.
- The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development.

## Commentary

73. At the time of the last inspection, standards were higher than those normally found by pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school has maintained the good provision since the previous inspection and a similar pattern of attainment is to be found. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.
74. By the end of Years 1 and 2, pupils have a good understanding for their age of how people from different religious backgrounds and beliefs explore and practise their faith. They know that Christians try and emulate the example of Jesus in their daily lives and that they go to church to worship God. The good progress that pupils make in Years 1 and 2 is continued as they move through Years 3 to 6. This is due to the continued good scope that pupils are given to explore certain aspects of religion in depth. Pupils explore themes over a number of weeks, giving them the chance to explore different facets of a religion and compare and contrast it with others. In addition, pupils are given plenty of opportunities to reflect on the main messages of different faiths and how these may be applied to their own day-to-day lives. They know, for example, that the Parable of the Good Samaritan has a strong moral message of being kind and helpful towards others.

75. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Until very recently, all of the teaching has been undertaken by the co-ordinator and she has a good understanding of how to make learning interesting and meaningful. Pupils are given good scope, for example, to explore the significance of religious artefacts and a wide array of books are provided for pupils to explore features of a religion in more depth. This work is complemented further by the varied opportunities for pupils to use ICT in following through with particular lines of enquiry. Older Year 6 pupils are given opportunities to research and explore the Internet and use the information by combining it with multimedia software to present the results of their findings.
76. There is effective leadership and management of the subject. By having taught all of the classes, the co-ordinator has a good understanding of the progress that pupils make. The rich opportunities pupils are given to explore other faiths and customs ensure that the subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development, as they gain a good insight into how people in other countries both practise their faith and live their day-to-day lives.

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

77. Pupils' work in **art and design**, **music** and **design and technology** was not a major focus for the inspection, and insufficient evidence was gathered to make secure judgements on provision in these subjects. However, the evidence available shows that planning for the teaching of these subjects takes satisfactory account of national guidance. One lesson was observed in art and design and design and technology and in this lesson pupils' achievements were good. From scrutiny of work in books and around the school and evidence in assemblies, standards attained are broadly in line with those expected in all three subjects. In music, pupils are given the opportunity to learn to play the piano, woodwind or brass instruments in peripatetic lessons.

### **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve very well in a wide range of sports and athletic events.
- Pupils are provided with an extensive range of opportunities in after-school clubs and events.
- A strength of teaching is in the good subject knowledge of the co-ordinator.
- Very good use is made of the subject to develop pupils' personal and social skills.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported very effectively and fully included.
- Leadership and management of the subject have led to high levels of pupil involvement.
- Good use is made of the digital camera to record and celebrate achievements and to assess and evaluate performance in gymnastics.

### **Commentary**

- 78 Overall, standards are well above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve very well across a very wide and varied range of activities. The curriculum is very good and pupils develop good skills effectively in dance, games, athletics and gymnastics. Swimming is arranged for all pupils from Year 3 onwards. This results in all pupils

being able to swim at least the regulation distance by the time they leave the school, with the majority reaching much higher standards.

79. Pupils have a far greater opportunity than is usual to take an active part in the wide range of sporting and athletic experiences the school provides. Extra-curricular opportunities are very good and pupils take full advantage to take part in a very wide range of sports, gymnastic and athletic activities. As a result, their participation is good across a far wider range of sports than is the norm in most primary schools and this has a very beneficial effect on their social development.
80. Sporting events are well attended by parents and friends of the school and make a very positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Good use is also made by the co-ordinator of the school achievement book to acknowledge the attainments and sportsmanship of the various teams and individual players. Boys and girls of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, are given full access to all activities and so make good progress in line with their potential.
81. Teaching and learning are very good. During the inspection, pupils of all ages were observed in gymnastics lessons. They achieved very well as a result of their enthusiasm and the very good teaching. There is good use of pace to keep all pupils involved and, as a consequence, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. The co-ordinator takes all classes for the subject and her good levels of knowledge and expertise ensure that pupils of all levels of skill are encouraged to try their hardest and achieve good standards. Strengths of the teaching include careful planning that ensures skills are introduced a step at a time and practised seriously, high expectations that result in considerable challenge, and effective use of praise and encouragement. Lessons commence with good warm-up exercises and careful carrying of equipment. As a result, pupils have a good awareness of the health and safety issues surrounding physical activity.
82. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, very well organised and knowledgeable. She is very keen to continue improving standards. A good scheme of work has been evolved and this is extended well with nationally accredited schemes for gymnastics, swimming and athletics. Resources are good and stored efficiently so that they are easily accessible. Good use is made of the digital camera during lessons and at sporting events to record how well pupils are doing. For example, in a gymnastics lesson, pictures were taken so that pupils could later see and evaluate the balances they achieved with their partner. Assessment is thorough, maintained efficiently and provides a clear picture of the attainment and achievements of all pupils throughout the school. There has been a good level of improvement since the previous inspection.

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

83. No lessons were seen in this area of learning during the inspection and no judgement can be made on the overall quality of provision. Evidence is based on sampling pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers. This indicates that planned lessons for personal, social and health education and citizenship provide pupils with satisfactory opportunities to develop their understanding of the importance of healthy eating and what foods need to be eaten in moderation. Health education is taught well as part of physical education. Pupils understand the importance of healthy exercise as a way of keeping fit and healthy. At certain points of the year, pupils explore the concept of drugs education and how some drugs pose danger and how others, such as aspirin,

help to alleviate pain. Formal provision for the pupils' understanding of sex education is undertaken in the upper part of the school and the school nurse helps in this regard. Further aspects of reproduction are explored through science. However, the provision for pupils' personal and social development in other aspects of the school's work is very good and a strength. For example, in physical education there are good opportunities for pupils to learn the importance of exercise and its impact on their health. The work of the school council provides a useful forum to develop pupils' understanding of citizenship, and their good involvement in various events in the local community support well the pupils' understanding of the part they have to play in the wider world in which they live. Extra-curricular events, such as sports, play a very positive role in providing opportunities for social development, such as learning to win or lose with good grace and a sportsman-like attitude.

## 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>3</b>     |
| Attendance  | 2            |
| 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>3</b>     |
| The quality of teaching   | 3            |
| How well pupils learn   | 3            |
| The quality of assessment   | 3            |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs                           | 3            |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities      | 2            |
| Accommodation and resources   | 3            |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety                              | 2            |
| 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                  | 2            |
| The quality of the school's links with the community                  | 3            |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges                    | 3            |
| <b>The leadership and management of the school</b>                    | <b>3</b>     |
| The governance of the school  | 3            |
| 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).*