

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SENACRE WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Maidstone, Kent

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118526

Headteacher: Mr Peter Hellman

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Evans

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 20th April 2005

Inspection number: 267642

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: 190

School address: Graveney Road  
Maidstone  
Kent

Postcode: ME15 8QQ

Telephone number: 01622 759864  
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body  
Name of chair of Mr Paddy Duffy  
governors:

Date of previous June 2003  
inspection:

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Senacre Wood Primary School is an average-sized primary school providing education for 190 children between four and 11 years of age, with 88 girls and 102 boys. The school draws pupils from the surrounding area, but the majority come from other areas of Maidstone. Some of these areas have been identified as having significant levels of deprivation. During the past two years, almost three-quarters of the teaching staff has changed and, for a short time, this disruption presented a barrier to pupils' learning. In some year groups the number of pupils who join and leave the school at unusual times has a detrimental effect on pupils' learning. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. There are a very small number of pupils in the school for whom English is an additional language, and these pupils are truly bilingual. The percentage of pupils in the school identified as having special educational needs is above the national average, with the number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need being in line with the national average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20737	Paul Evans	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Music Physical education
9420	David Martin	Lay inspector	
16971	Roger Hardaker	Team inspector	Science Geography History Religious education
20301	Peter Isherwood	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Personal, social and health education and citizenship Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Senacre Wood Primary School is a **good** school which has improved significantly since its last inspection and is set to improve further. Pupils' achievement is good. Teaching and learning are good. The leadership of the headteacher is good. The role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring standards and achievement in their subjects is good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The school provides good value for money and offers a good education to all its pupils.

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

- The achievement of pupils is good overall throughout the school; pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.
- The educational vision of the headteacher is very good, and the leadership, governance and management of the school are good overall.
- The range of professional development provided for all staff is outstanding.
- Although the quality of teaching and learning is good overall, there is inconsistency in the matching of work to the differing abilities of pupils and in the marking of pupils' work.
- Very good attitudes and behaviour are a direct result of pupils' very good personal development.
- The curriculum is good and it is enriched well through extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school.
- The computer suite is too small to accommodate whole classes and lacks a suitable ventilation system, and the outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- The information given to parents about their children's learning is not good enough and there are minor omissions in some of the school's documentation

Since the last inspection, the school has made very good improvement. Provision for the professional development of staff is excellent and has spearheaded the school's improvement. The leadership and management of the school are now good overall and the contribution to school improvement of the headteacher, the deputy-headteacher and the chair of governors is very good. The quality of teaching is now good throughout the school. Attendance is good and the school now evaluates its own performance well. The achievement of pupils throughout the school is now good. This represents very good improvement in Years 1 and 2 because pupils' achievement in these years was unsatisfactory at the last inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	D	E	D
Mathematics	C	D	E	E

Science	D	E	E*	E
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*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E\* - very low. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

The achievement of pupils is **good** in all key stages. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good planning and support that they are given. Children in the Foundation Stage reach standards which are well below expectations by the time that they reach the end of reception class in all areas of learning, because of their very low level of attainment when they join the school. In national tests in 2004, standards in reading and mathematics were average at the end of Year 2 and standards in writing were above average, when compared to all schools nationally. Standards at the end of Year 6 were well below average in English and mathematics and very low in science. This year group had an unusually high number of pupils with special educational needs and their final two years at the school were disrupted by high numbers of teachers leaving and joining the school. The present Year 6 group is on track to meet expectations in mathematics and to exceed them in English and science in the 2005 tests. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English, mathematics and science are below expectations at the end of Year 2. Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology (ICT) and standards are in line with expectations throughout the school. ICT is well used in the teaching and learning of other subjects. Pupils achieve well in religious education and very well in art and design throughout the school. Achievement in music is satisfactory for all pupils, which is good improvement since the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good throughout the school and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also **very good** overall. Moral and social development are very good, and spiritual and cultural development are both good. Levels of attendance, which were unsatisfactory at the last inspection, are now good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** throughout the school and now a significant amount of teaching is very good. The quality of the curriculum offered to pupils is good and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school. Provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils is satisfactory overall. Procedures and policies for child protection and health and safety have not been updated. All pupils receive good support and guidance. The school has satisfactory links with parents and the community and good links with other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The leadership and management skills of the headteacher, in a close working partnership with the deputy-headteacher, are good. He has a very good educational vision for the school. The leadership and management of key staff, in their various areas of responsibility, are good. Governance of the school is good and the governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have a good working partnership with the headteacher. However, some statutory documents do



not fully comply with requirements, although this does not have any detrimental effect on pupils' learning or achievement. Financial management is good.

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

Parents are satisfied with what the school provides. In questionnaires, during the parents' meeting with the lead inspector and when spoken to during the inspection, most were complimentary about the school. However, a small number expressed concerns about the information that they receive, particularly about their children's progress. Inspection judgements support parents' concerns in this area. Pupils are pleased with their school. They have confidence in all adults working in the school. They enjoy their activities and enjoy attending school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure that all teachers match work to pupils' differing levels of ability
- Raise the quality of all marking to the highest levels seen in the school.
- Improve the quality of information given to parents about their child's progress and ways in which they can support learning at home.
- Improve the quality of the accommodation for the computer suite and the outdoor area for Foundation Stage children.

And to meet statutory requirements

- Update the policy for child protection to reflect the latest legislation and to match the current good practice in the school.
- Improve the quality of annual written reports to parents and ensure that the minor omissions from the governors' annual report and the school prospectus are put right.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils' achievement is **good** at every stage of learning. Pupils with special education needs achieve very well. Standards are **above average** in English and science and **average** in mathematics at the end of Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is now good and rising throughout the school.
- Pupils achieve very well in art and design across the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning and achieve very well.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (13.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.2 (12.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.1 (15.1)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 30 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	24.6 (25.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	23.9 (26.4)	27.0 (26.8)
science	24.3 (27.0)	28.6 (28.6)

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

1. The good achievement throughout the school is a significant improvement since the last inspection when overall achievement was judged to be unsatisfactory largely because of unsatisfactory achievement in Years 1 and 2. Children join the school with attainment which is well below that expected for their age. A significant number of children have poor personal and social skills and have very limited communication and mathematical skills.
2. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well from a low level of attainment on entry. Because of these low levels when they join the school they attain levels which are still well below the expectations of the early learning goals by the time that they join Year 1. This is below the achievement found at the previous inspection, due the much higher proportion of children with special educational

needs, and a growing lack of personal and social skills of many children joining the school.

3. In the 2004 national assessment trials for Year 2 pupils, standards were average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing when compared to all schools nationally. Teacher assessment in science showed that standards were average. Compared to similar schools, results were average in reading, above average in writing but below average in mathematics. The trend of improvement across all three subjects is above the national trend.
4. Because teaching and learning are now consistently good and serious weaknesses have been eradicated, pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in almost all lessons and standards and achievement are improving. Whilst achievement is now good and still improving, the low levels of attainment when children join the school mean that standards are below expectations for many pupils at the end of Year 2. There are differences in the abilities of different year groups because of the number of pupils with special educational needs or, occasionally, a class having a significantly greater number of more able pupils.
5. In the 2004 national tests for Year 6 pupils, standards were well below average in English and mathematics and very low in science, compared to all schools nationally. Compared to schools whose pupils had similar scores in their tests at the end of Year 2 in 2000, pupils' progress was below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. The trend of improvement in standards at the end of Year 6, over the past five years is below the national trend across all three subjects. Looking at the school's scores between 2000 and 2004, standards in English, mathematics and science fell significantly in 2004 tests. This was because of a significantly higher number of pupils with a variety of learning difficulties and the fact that their final two years in the school were affected by a high changeover of teaching staff. The school has now achieved stability and standards are set to improve this year.
6. Inspection evidence shows that the present Year 5 are on track to achieve results which are in line with expectations and the present Year 6 are on track to reach standards which are above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Much has been done in the two years since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses. The issues of matching work to pupils' abilities and the policy of teachers marking to the learning objectives of each lesson have been addressed recently and there are very clear signs of improvement in both areas, even though there is still some way to go before there is consistent practice across the school. The school has identified these areas for further improvement.
7. Inspection evidence shows that standards in mathematics are average at the end of Year 6. Standards in English and science in the present Year 6 class are above average. At the end of Year 2, standards are below average in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Standards are also below average in mathematics and science. Literacy and numeracy skills are well used in the teaching and learning of other subjects. Standards in ICT are in line with expectations throughout the school and ICT is used well in the teaching of other

subjects. In religious education, standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and above expectations at the end of Year 6. Standards in history and geography are in line with expectations throughout the school. Art and design is a strength of the school and standards are well above expectations throughout the school. Standards in music are in line with expectations and all pupils achieve satisfactorily, which is good improvement since the last inspection. Standards in design and technology and physical education were not judged.

8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good quality support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants and because work is set at the correct level. Children with special educational needs in the reception class get off to a good start to their education. They achieve very well because of the good quality teaching and learning they receive.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has high expectations of the behaviour and attitudes of its pupils who rise to the challenge very well.
- Pupils' moral and social development and the quality of relationships in the school all add much to the very good ethos of the school.
- The school places a good emphasis on the spiritual and cultural development of all pupils.
- The school's actions to promote good attendance and punctuality are effective.

### **Commentary**

9. Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning and to the people around them. This is good improvement since the previous inspection when attitudes were good. Pupils are very interested in all that the school has to offer and are very keen to take part in the good range of activities provided for them. Pupils work together very well in all classes. There is a real desire to please and to do well. Children in the reception class soon settle in well to the very good routines and they relate very well to the adults in the room. A number have difficulty relating to other children when they first arrive in school but the adults work effectively to overcome this. Pupils with special educational needs show very good attitudes to learning because they are valued by members of staff and, as a result, develop confidence in their learning.
10. Standards of behaviour both in the classroom and around school are very good. This allows teachers to concentrate on imparting knowledge, developing skills and understanding and giving support where it is needed. Pupils are expected to behave well in all aspects of their school life and they do this very

well. They show high levels of respect for one another, their teachers and visitors. They are very polite, considerate and helpful. Older pupils, for example those involved in the 'Buddy' scheme, show genuine concern for younger pupils. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good and have a positive impact on developing pupils' learning and confidence. No examples of bullying were observed during the inspection period and discussions with pupils show it is not an issue.

## **Exclusions**

11. There has been one temporary and one permanent exclusion in the last year, involving the same pupil.

## 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	167	1	1
White – any other White background	2	0	0

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

12. Pupils' moral and social development is very good and their spiritual and cultural development is good. Clear rules include the consequences of actions. All pupils show a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils often work together in a very impressive manner, helping each other in developing their learning. Pupils show concern for others who are less fortunate than themselves and raise money for charitable causes. Assemblies give pupils the chance to think and reflect on the topic being discussed. Religious education is used very effectively to develop pupils' spiritual awareness and understanding. Beauty is celebrated in the school, particularly in the very high quality artwork produced by the pupils. Pupils know they are valued by adults: work is extremely well displayed and this increases the pupils' sense of worth. Lessons in subjects such as religious education, art and design, music and geography are used effectively to develop an understanding of pupils' own and other cultures. The school has successfully started to address an issue raised in the last report to prepare pupils for life in a culturally diverse society. This is at an early stage of development and has not yet had time to have a full impact. Books, art and music recognise cultural diversity. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection when spiritual, moral and social development were satisfactory. All areas have been improved and, as a result, there has been an improvement in pupils' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	School data	0.5
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

13. The last reported figure for overall attendance for the year 2003/2004 is good, being above that of most other schools. The amount of authorised absence was below the national rates and the amount of unauthorised absence was just above the national rate. These figures show a marked improvement from the situation at the time of the last inspection. However, figures for the current year show that this good performance has not been fully maintained. The school has good procedures to monitor attendance and is diligent in working with the

education welfare officer and family liaison officer to establish reasons for absence in order to improve the record of pupils who cause concern. *Attendance Ted* is awarded each week to the class achieving the best attendance record and, together with *Certificates of Achievement* for individual pupils, is effective in promoting good attendance.

14. Punctuality is good, which is also an improvement since the last inspection, with only a relatively small number of pupils being habitually late. The school operates a late book system as a means of improving punctuality and the education welfare officer carries out 'late gate' checks.

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

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. The quality of the curriculum is **good**. The school offers **satisfactory** care, welfare, health and safety, and **good** support, advice and guidance to all its pupils. Partnership with parents and links with the local community are **satisfactory** and links with other schools are **good**.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are **good**. Assessment is **good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers and teaching assistants work together very well to meet the needs of pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour.
- The quality and use of assessment are very good in the Foundation Stage.
- Most teachers effectively evaluate pupils' learning in lessons to plan the next stages of learning.
- Assessment strategies are good, but they are not consistently used to match work to the differing abilities of pupils.

### **Commentary**

15. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Almost all teaching and learning observed was good or better, with only three lessons out of 29 satisfactory. This is very good improvement since the last inspection when teaching and learning were satisfactory overall and the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 was judged to be a serious weakness. As a result of promotion and personal circumstances, almost three-quarters of the teaching staff has changed during the past two years, which initially led to a period of disruption in pupils' learning as new staff settled into the school. This period of instability is now over and the good quality of teaching seen throughout the school is having the desired effect of improving the quality of pupils' learning and achievement.
16. In the Foundation Stage the quality of teaching and learning is good. A main strength of teaching and learning is the consistent, very good observations and



evaluations of children's progress carried out by the class teacher. These ensure that the teacher and the teacher's assistant have very good knowledge and understanding of what the children know, understand and can do. This information is used very well in planning future tasks and securing the continuity of children's progress.

17. Teachers' planning is good. Lesson plans are clearly aimed at pupils of three different levels of ability. Links are made with the relevant areas of the National Curriculum and, where required, special notes are made to guide the work of pupils with special educational needs. Lesson planning is fully shared with teaching assistants, who work in very good partnership with teachers. They are very well deployed and the work that they do contributes very well to the good quality of the education offered to all pupils.
18. Because of the good quality teaching and learning provided by the teacher and teaching assistants, children in the reception class achieve well in all areas. Lessons are very well planned, with a good balance of activities. Teaching in groups is of very good quality but there are missed opportunities to develop language and mathematics skills when children work in some areas of the classroom on activities they have chosen for themselves.
19. Teachers plan well for pupils with special educational needs. Work is set at levels that meet their needs and, as a result, pupils make good progress both in lessons and over the longer term. Very effective intervention by teaching assistants has a very positive impact on improving pupils' learning. Individual education plans are of a good standard. They are linked very effectively to the English and mathematics elements of the National Curriculum. Almost all targets are specific and are easily measured; they have a very positive effect on developing standards.
20. The school is aware that there are still areas of teaching that could be improved even further. After the last inspection there was much that the school needed to improve. The areas in need of improvement were prioritised well and the evidence from an HMI monitoring visit shows that there was good improvement in some of these areas within a year. Other strategies were disrupted by the high turnover of teachers and are only just beginning to show results. Assessment has been improved well and the information gathered is used well to track pupils' progress through the school. However, strategies to match work to the varying abilities of pupils are at an early stage of development. While some teachers are providing the right level of challenge for pupils of different abilities, others still expect pupils of different abilities all to tackle the same work. The school is aware of this inconsistency which subsequent strategies are intended to eradicate.
21. Each lesson now has a clear aim for what pupils should learn (learning objective) and the school has recently introduced a new policy for marking pupils' work, in line with the learning objective for the lesson. From looking at pupils' recent work, it is clear that this has led to some improvement, but not all marking is yet of the highest level seen within the school. Again, the school is

aware of this and, as the policy becomes embedded, the intention is that inconsistencies will be corrected.

22. A strong aspect of teaching in most lessons is the very good relationships apparent between pupils and adults, so that pupils are keen to do well. Teachers' management strategies are very good and they have high expectations for pupils' good behaviour and attention, to which pupils respond well. Because of this very good management, resulting in very good attitudes, pupils' are becoming keen learners and this promotes their learning and achievement well.

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11	15	3	0	0	0

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

#### The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. **Good** opportunities are provided for curriculum enrichment. Accommodation and resources are generally **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good provision is made for learning in a wide range of subjects.
- A good variety of learning activities give reception children a good start to their schooling.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- There are good opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum both within the classroom and outside formal lessons.
- There are weaknesses in accommodation for the Foundation Stage which constrain aspects of learning.
- The computer suite is inadequate.

#### Commentary

23. The curriculum is very good in art and design and good in English, mathematics, science, information and communications technology and music. In art and design, pupils enjoy a wide range of experiences and are introduced to a variety of media. As a result good standards are attained. In English, good strategies are in place for developing reading and writing skills and these are enabling pupils to achieve well. In mathematics, there is a strong focus on developing number skills. Some good improvements have been made to the science curriculum since the last report. For example, pupils now get many more opportunities to develop investigative skills. As a result, the standards reached by Year 6 pupils are now above average in this area. The provision for information and communications technology is good, with pupils achieving well. They are given good opportunities to use their ICT skills in a number of subject

areas, such as geography and science, and this significantly contributes to their effective learning.

24. Children get a good start to their schooling. Reception children benefit from a good range of practical learning activities that help them to achieve well and prepare them well for the next stage of learning. Particular attention is paid to developing children's social, linguistic and mathematical skills. Teachers successfully enhance children's self-esteem and raise levels of maturity. In all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage, the range and quality of resources for teaching and learning are very good and they are used effectively to develop learning. The indoor accommodation is good and used very well. However, the lack of a suitable dedicated and secure play area for children in the reception class unfavourably impinges on aspects of their physical development.
25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Very well planned activities and very high quality support from both teachers and teaching assistants ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities. This has a very positive effect on developing their learning both academically and socially. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection when not all work was well matched to pupils' needs.
26. The indoor and outdoor accommodation is generally good and it is used well. For example, most classrooms are of a good size and the main hall can easily accommodate all pupils in the school when they gather together. It is well equipped for use as a sports hall. Outside, there is plenty of space available for games activities and the immediate environment offers itself as a valuable resource for field study work in geography and science. The school makes good use of this facility. The ICT suite is too small, lacks facility for air extraction and contains some ageing machines. As a result, whole class groups cannot be comfortably accommodated, the inadequate number of computers restricts pupils' ability to gain sufficient hands-on experience working on a keyboard, and the room often becomes uncomfortably stuffy.
27. School life is enriched well through extra activities. There are good opportunities for children to participate in creative and other activities and to receive coaching in a number of team games. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to go on a short residential visit to the Swattenden Centre. The school organises an annual theme week focusing on a specific area of the curriculum. Visiting specialists with their skills and special knowledge come to the school to work alongside the pupils and teachers and add a vital dimension to a variety of activities.

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

The school provides **satisfactory** care, welfare, health and safety for its pupils. It provides them with **good** support, advice and guidance and makes **satisfactory** arrangements to seek their views and involve them in its work and development.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils receive good advice and guidance to support both their personal and academic development.
- Pupils have trusting relationships with adults.
- There are good arrangements for pupils' entry into the school.
- The policy for child protection requires updating.
- Some health and safety items require attention.
- There is very good support for pupils with special educational needs.

## Commentary

28. The school has satisfactory arrangements for identifying and monitoring situations which may give rise to child protection concerns. The issue raised at the last inspection has been dealt with, and the day to day practices in child protection are good. However, the school's policy and staff training have not been updated in line with the latest legislation. There are satisfactory procedures and practices to meet the medical needs of pupils.
29. Pupils work in a generally safe and healthy environment. Regular property checks and statutory testing of fittings and equipment are carried out. However, the school has been made aware of some deficiencies which were noted during the inspection, including, for instance, some items relating to fire escape signage. Risk assessments are carried out prior to any external visits.
30. As a result of the good relationships within the school, pupils feel confident to approach an adult regarding any matters which are troubling them. Their personal development is aided through features such as the 'buddying' and mentoring systems and the *Safety in Action* project run by Kent police, in which Year 6 pupils achieved 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Effective programmes run by the learning mentor and the family liaison officer, support pupils with particular needs, such as the gifted and talented or those who need to develop their social skills and self-esteem. Regular *Circle Time* sessions give good opportunities for pupils to raise matters that concern them. Pupils' academic progress is well supported through targeted provision and the effective use of assessment.
31. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support in school. There is very early identification of need. Good programmes are put in place to address needs and, as a result, pupils achieve very well. Pupils are involved in discussion about the targets on their individual educational plans. This helps them to understand how they can improve their learning. Advice and support from visiting professionals are used effectively by the school to develop pupils' learning and staff knowledge and understanding.
32. The school has good induction arrangements which help to reduce any potential anxiety for the child and assist with their early learning. For instance, children make preliminary visits to the school, and parents are consulted about their child's level of personal and academic development. The school maintains close liaison with its main feeder playgroup.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **satisfactory**. Links with other schools are **good** and those with the community are **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are strong links with other schools through the cluster arrangements.
- The quality and usefulness of pupils' annual reports are not as good as they should be.
- The range of information provided to parents does not enable them to support their child's learning.
- There is good support for parents of pupils with special educational needs.

### Commentary

33. Overall, the quality of information given to parents is unsatisfactory. Some parents who responded to the questionnaire prior to the inspection felt that they are not well enough informed about their child's progress. Evidence gathered during the inspection largely supports this view. The school provides a written report in the summer term which details what pupils have been doing. The report also sometimes gives targets for English and mathematics and information about children's personal development. However, these targets are not consistently given. They are not always written in clear language or indicate how parents could assist their child's learning at home.
34. Parents also receive newsletters which keep them informed of forthcoming events. Some also receive information regarding curriculum and topic work for the term, but this is not a consistent practice throughout the school. Guidelines for a new handwriting scheme and how to help pupils with reading at home have been issued. A reading record, a link book for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and a homework diary are used as means of communication between home and school and these promote good communications between parents and teachers. There are omissions in some statutory documents, such as the school prospectus and the governors' annual report but these do not adversely affect pupils' achievement.
35. Parent consultation evenings are held each term. These meetings are well attended and provide parents with good opportunities to discuss their child's progress and their suggested targets. However, very few parents come into the school on a regular basis to help and no surveys have been carried out to discover the views of parents, as suggested by the response of some parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire. Together with the evidence regarding the quality and extent of information for parents, this means that parents' contribution to their children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory.
36. Parents are informed at a very early stage if their child has special educational needs. They are invited to discuss target setting on individual education plans but are not yet fully involved in initially setting the targets. Parents are

encouraged to help their children to work towards their targets at home. This has a positive effect on the good progress made by pupils.

37. The school has good links with other schools through its membership of an *Excellence Cluster* and another consortium. These links enable the school to share practices, run joint activities and provide additional help for more able pupils. Additionally, they allow the learning mentor to work with identified pupils and the family liaison officer to support vulnerable families. Collectively, these links make a significant contribution to the learning of pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is **good**. Management of the school is **good**. Governance is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher displays a very strong sense of purpose which influences and motivates all staff.
- Key personnel strive for continuous improvement in creating a very effective climate for learning.
- There is an excellent school commitment to improving the knowledge and skills of all staff.
- The governors have a very good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses which enables them to play an effective role in shaping the direction of the school.
- Some written policies do not fully reflect recent changes in regulations and legislation.
- Financial management is strong and makes a significant contribution to the success the school has had in achieving its aim to be an inclusive school.

### **Commentary**

38. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school, which he communicates well to others. He enjoys the full confidence of teachers, other staff and governors. He succeeds well in his endeavours to ensure that all pupils enjoy all the benefits the school offers. Under his leadership there has been very good improvement since the last inspection. Within school there is a strong sense of purpose and a determination by all to succeed. To this end, strong teamwork and commitment have been developed and morale within the school is high.
39. The deputy headteacher supports the headteacher well and provides a good role model for the rest of the staff in his teaching. The subject managers of English, mathematics, science, religious education and ICT are all effective in their leadership and management, giving their colleagues effective support. They are all good role models in the teaching of their subject and this gives them credibility in the eyes of their colleagues. They display a strong

commitment to improvement and to meeting the needs of all pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and is very well led and managed. Good improvement has been made in this area since the last inspection. These children's needs are very well catered as a result of the very effective support for learning they receive in classrooms. The Foundation Stage is also led and managed well. A very strong feature of teaching in the reception class is the effective way in which all adults in the classroom work well together in providing well for the learning needs of all the children.

40. The overall processes in place to manage the performance of staff are very good. The headteacher, teachers and support staff have excellent records of attendance on professional courses. The impact is seen in the considerable improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection, the consistently good quality of teaching observed during the inspection, and the very effective support children receive from teaching assistants. Procedures for the induction of teachers, especially newly qualified teachers, are very good. These procedures play a significant part in ensuring that teachers who started their professional careers at the school are now effective teachers.
41. The governing body is well organised and has clear lines of responsibility. Governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. There are very good links with subject managers and each governor has an attachment to a particular class, which helps keep them well informed about curriculum provision. Governors largely meet statutory requirements, but there are some minor omissions from the governors' annual report to parents and the school's prospectus. These do not affect pupils' learning but must be corrected. The policy required to meet race equality legislation is to be ratified at the next governors' meeting. Although in practice child protection procedures are good, governors have not updated the policy on child protection in line with the latest legislation.
42. Financial planning and management are good. The governors and the headteacher have a good grasp of finances and funding issues. Finance is used wisely and is directed at carefully considered priorities. For example, there has been good investment in additional classroom support and in training. These two elements have made a significant contribution to the very good improvement in the school since the last inspection. The very good adult support pupils receive in most classrooms enables those of all levels of ability to benefit from teaching and learning. The school is carrying money forward to be able to contribute to the costs of improving the ICT suite and the outdoor area for the Foundation Stage. The principles of best value are clearly understood and applied well and all spending is effectively monitored and controlled. The school is an effective school that gives a good quality of education and provides good value for money.

**Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	418 380
Total expenditure	410 056
Expenditure per pupil	2 146

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	39 291
Balance carried forward to the next	47 615





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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

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

- There is a very good sense of team work in the reception class.
- Staff provide a good range of activities which develop learning well.
- Assessment is used very effectively to develop learning.
- Occasionally, opportunities to develop language skills in play situations are missed.
- There are weaknesses in accommodation which constrain aspects of learning.

#### **Commentary**

43. Children join the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five. There were 27 children in the reception class at the time of the inspection. The level of attainment on entry is well below that expected, with several children showing very low levels of personal, social and emotional development, language and communication skills and mathematical development. Good induction procedures, with regular contact with parents and children before they are admitted to school, have a positive effect on the way children settle in to school.
44. Children in the reception class achieve well in all areas because of the good quality teaching and learning provided by the teacher and teaching assistants. All lessons are very well planned, with a good balance between directed and free choice activities. Teaching in groups led by adults is of very good quality, but there are missed opportunities to develop language and mathematics skills when children play in the sand and water areas. All adults relate well to each other, giving the children very good role models. Very regular observations and evaluations ensure that the teacher knows what the children know, understand and can do. This information is used very well to move children on to the next stage in their learning.
45. Children are managed very well. The use of practical activities such as baking pastry snails and wax painting brings lessons alive for the children. There is a good quality curriculum in place, which covers the recommended areas of learning for the Foundation Stage and includes religious education as part of the knowledge and understanding of the world aspect. Provision for children with special educational needs is very good. These children are identified at a very early stage and effective strategies ensure they make progress in line with their classmates. Very good resources are used effectively to develop learning. The indoor accommodation is good and used very well. The outdoor accommodation is unsatisfactory and affects aspects of physical development. The reception class is well led and managed by the teacher and this coupled with very good team work results in children getting a good start to their school

life. There has been good improvement in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection: there is now no unsatisfactory teaching.

46. Despite the good quality teaching and learning in all areas of learning and good achievement by all groups of children, the standards of attainment at the end of the reception class are well below those expected in all areas of learning. This is because of the very low levels of attainment of a significant minority on entry.
47. Children are provided with a good range of understandable routines which ensure they achieve well in their **personal, social and emotional development**. The use of 'daily helpers' gives children a good sense of responsibility. Children are encouraged to work together in groups and in the role-play area. Many find this difficult and still play or work alongside rather than with their peers. Children relate very well to adults, listening carefully to what is said and following instructions. Few children are confident in initiating activities. The reception children are happy learners because they know adults value them.
48. Standards on entry are particularly low in **communication, language and literacy**. Adults offer children a good range of activities to develop what at times are poor speech patterns. Repeating sentences correctly and good modelling of speech ensure children achieve well. Occasionally, adults miss opportunities to develop speaking skills when they pass children working on 'free choice' activities. Children handle books well and listen to stories. Nursery rhymes are used effectively to develop children's sense of rhyming words. Children are given good quality activities such as tracing and joining dots to develop their writing skills. Higher-attaining children write their name and easily recognisable simple sentences by the end of their reception year. Despite the good quality teaching and learning and good achievement only a minority of children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception.
49. In **mathematical development**, children achieve well but, because of the well below expected levels on entry, few attain the Early Learning Goals. The teacher uses many resources effectively; children are encouraged to count in different situations. The higher-attaining children are challenged by being given simple addition and subtraction sums. A significant number of children still need help with their work. Most count by rote but many have difficulty in recognising and writing numbers. There are occasionally missed opportunities to develop mathematical language in capacity when children play in the sand and water trays.
50. When they enter school, most children have little **knowledge and understanding of the world**. In the reception class, adults offer activities which interest the children and encourage them to become inquisitive. Children achieve well because of the activities offered and the good quality teaching and learning but few attain the Early Learning Goals at the end of reception. Children are starting to understand about beliefs and cultures when they look at religious and other festivals. They develop an understanding of living things and use their senses when they study real snails and their trails. When using information and communication technology children show skills which are almost at the expected level. Children are starting to recognise that different

things happen but are not able to say why. Many find it difficult to discuss similarities and differences between things they observe.

51. Only a very small amount of **physical development** was observed. In an organised physical education session in the hall, the quality of teaching was good, with well-planned activities which met the needs of the children and, as a result, the children achieved well. Children's achievement in physical development is hampered by the unsatisfactory outdoor play area. The present play area is small and is not suitable for more adventurous activities, such as climbing and using wheeled toys. The school recognises this as an issue and uses other parts of the school grounds to compensate but these are a little distance from the classroom and are not easily included in 'free choice' activities.
52. In **creative development** children achieve well because adults give them good quality activities, including paint mixing, which develop their artistic skills. Techniques such as using wax to paint pictures of snail trail are used very effectively to create a sense of awe and wonder and really catch the children's imagination. The musical element of this area was not observed. Despite the good achievement standards at the end of reception are well below those expected.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Teachers promote literacy effectively in other subjects.
- Learning support assistants are used very well to support the learning of those with particular needs.
- Standards in writing are above expectations in Years 5 and 6.
- The school has good procedures to track pupils' progress as they move from class to class.
- There are inconsistencies in the matching of tasks to pupils' individual abilities and in the quality of marking.
- The subject leader monitors the quality of teaching and learning well.

#### **Commentary**

53. The results of the 2004 National Curriculum results for Year 2 pupils show that standards in writing were above the national average and the average of similar schools. Standards in reading were average. The 2004 National Curriculum test results for Year 6 pupils show that pupils reached standards that were well below the national average. However, compared to the standards of pupils whose test results were similar at the end of Year 2 tests in 2000, standards were below average. That particular Year 6 group was identified as having a

higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs. Another factor which affected their attainment was the high level of changes in the teaching staff in their last two years at the school. Over time, the improvement in national test results has been below the national trend in Year 2 and well below the national trend for Year 6.

54. The findings of the inspection are that standards are above expectations in reading, writing and speaking and listening in the present Year 6, and below expectations in reading and writing in Year 2 and in line with expectations in speaking and listening. The improvement in the results of older pupils is because of the school's focus on raising standards in English and literacy throughout the school, consistently good teaching and learning and the good use and development of literacy skills in other subjects. The main reason that standards are below expectations in Year 2, in spite of the same positive developmental factors, is that this group of pupils joined the school with communication, language and literacy skills which were well below average for their age and, while achievement has been good, there has been insufficient time to raise standards higher. Achievement is good throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates, because of the special support that they are given by class teachers and the very good teachers' assistants.
55. Inspection evidence confirms that the school has made good progress in the provision of English and literacy since the last inspection. Throughout the school, there is a focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills with the result that these are in line with expectations in Year 2 and above expectations in Year 6. Pupils are consistently taught words which are specific to subjects like science, music or religious education. Sufficient scope is given for pupils to express their views and opinions in lessons and many pupils speak expressively and explain ideas with clarity.
56. Standards in writing improve steadily as pupils move through the school and pupils throughout the school often write at length. By the time that they are in Years 5 and 6, writing standards are above expectations for a significant minority of pupils. Pupils are consistently guided by teachers to understand that written language is to be used to express themselves at the highest level whenever possible. This high expectation leads to pupils using and developing their writing skills well in other subjects such as history, geography, science and religious education. Pupils learn and progress well because of the good quality of teaching and because all teachers have high expectations of pupils' writing in all subjects. The school has evaluated the success of its focus on writing and is determined to raise standards even further. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 use joined handwriting and apply everyday spelling conventions in their writing. Pupils' work is detailed and is capable of holding the interest of the reader.
57. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan pupils' learning well and devise writing tasks, for example, that allow pupils to draft and edit their work in order to improve its quality. Pupils learn about the importance of outlining and reshaping ideas before moving on to produce a final draft. A significant feature of pupils' learning is that they concentrate well and pay close attention to their teachers' guidance. They also work well in small groups and this enables them to learn well together and from each other.

The school has very good procedures for assessing pupils' progress. Teachers and teaching assistants are regularly seen assessing pupils' progress in lessons. The information gathered is well used in planning future lessons and this was seen in practice during lesson observations. This information is also well used to track pupils' progress and achievement as they move through the school. However, the evidence from pupils' recent past work is that this is not always the case, and work in some lessons is set at the same level for all pupils, which does not promote the best level of learning, particularly for more able pupils. The school has recently focused on promoting the marking of pupils' work against what was expected to be learned in the lesson. In many cases, this is being done well and the written comments are promoting pupils' learning well. However, this is a recent initiative and not all teachers consistently reach the highest standards seen in the school. All teachers make good use of ICT in literacy lessons to extend pupils' learning. Literacy skills are often extended when pupils use the ICT suite, but the suite is too small to enable whole classes to work easily and it gets uncomfortably hot because of poor ventilation.

58. There is good leadership and management in the subject. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored well. The co-ordinator has successfully implemented various initiatives and the pace of change since the previous inspection has been good. For example, the professional development opportunities for staff are very good and much greater use is made of monitoring information to plan where teaching and learning need to be further improved.

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

59. The school has made good progress in ensuring that, where possible, other subjects of the curriculum are used to extend pupils' learning of literacy. Science, history and religious education are used well in order to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. There is a clear policy for developing literacy skills in other subjects which is promoting pupils' learning well.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well because of good planning and high expectations for behaviour and attitudes to work.
- Assessment is used effectively to develop learning.
- There are missed opportunities to use marking to move pupils on to the next stage of learning.
- Very good support is given to pupils with special educational needs.
- The subject manager monitors the quality of teaching and learning well.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

60. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Improved assessment procedures and consistently good and better teaching have led to an improvement in levels of achievement for all pupils. All pupils achieve well from a low starting point on entry to the school. The present pupils in Year 2 are attaining standards below the expected levels. This is lower than the most recent national test results, which were average compared with all schools nationally, and is a result of cohort differences. The present Year 6 attain at an average level. This is much better than the most recent national test results, which showed attainment to be well below average when compared with schools nationally. The school has introduced learning objectives and the quality of teaching has consequently improved. This factor, linked with very good quality assessment and evaluations of lessons, has had a positive impact on raising standards. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in lessons because work is set at the correct level and they receive very high quality support both in whole class and group sessions. There is no noticeable difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Around the school there are many examples of pupils' work which has been developed using computers, and mathematical skills are used and developed well in the ICT suite.
61. The good quality of teaching and learning is a key factor in the good rates of achievement. All lessons are now well planned with work set at different levels to meet pupils' needs. Analysis of pupils' work shows that this did not happen consistently in the past and pupils of different abilities were expected to do the same work. Teachers show good knowledge and understanding in the subject. They use questions very effectively to assess what pupils understand and use this information well to move pupils on to the next stage of learning. All pupils respond very well to the high expectations of behaviour, showing very good attitudes to learning. All work is marked regularly and there is particularly useful marking with comments when pupils have answered a problem incorrectly. However, there are missed opportunities to use marking to challenge pupils by asking questions such as 'What happens if I change  $x$ ?' or 'Is there another way to do this?'
62. Leadership and management in the subject are good. The subject leader strives to ensure that standards rise and is achieving this well. The monitoring that has taken place and the initiatives to tackle identified weaknesses are ensuring that the subject continues to improve. The professional development of staff has contributed strongly to improvement.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

63. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply a range of knowledge and skills in a number of other subjects, including data handling, recording and producing graphs and charts in information and communication technology. Pupils measure and record in science. They produce patterns in art and design and measure when designing and making in design and technology. Temperature and rainfall are recorded in geography and there are opportunities for pupils to count in music.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well in the development of investigative skills.
- Teaching is especially strong in Year 6.
- A strong focus on practical work helps pupils to understand new ideas.
- The planning of practical activities does not always meet the needs of all learners in the class.
- Pupils enjoy science lessons and participate with enthusiasm.
- Provision has improved well under the stewardship of a knowledgeable and enthusiastic teacher.

### Commentary

64. In the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2004, results showed that standards were in the lowest 5 per cent nationally compared to all schools. Compared to schools in which this group of pupils scored similarly in their end of Year 2 tests, pupils' progress was well below average. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 showed that pupils' standards were average.
65. Since the school was last inspected standards have risen steadily and currently Year 6 pupils are reaching standards above the national expectations in all areas of scientific study. Standards of attainment of pupils in Year 2 are below average in all areas of study. This represents a drop since last year, when standards were close to being average. However, the larger proportion of lower-attaining pupils in the present Year 2 depresses the overall standard. A careful examination of completed work and school test results show these pupils are making good progress with their learning and are achieving well. They are encouraged to observe carefully when experimenting themselves or when watching the teacher demonstrate and they record their findings systematically.
66. Throughout the school, teaching is good overall and is very strong in Year 6. This teaching is exciting and well-informed with the result that pupils are very well motivated and they are currently making very good gains in their learning. In other classes, pupils learn well as a result of confident and knowledgeable teaching. Those with special educational needs receive effective support in classrooms that enables all to participate fully in all activities and subsequently make good progress. A strong focus on investigative work is fostering in pupils a high level of inquisitiveness so that levels of engagement in learning in classrooms are good. Pupils are very enthusiastic to learn and work very well together. Lessons are generally well planned, but in their planning some teachers do not always identify a wide enough range of activities with differing complexity in order to cater effectively for the learning requirements of all pupils in the class. Teachers often plan for pupils to use computers in their learning and this contributes well to the standards that they reach.

67. Leadership and management of the subject are good, so that the subject has improved considerably since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and understanding and provides good support and guidance to teachers. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in lessons is undertaken well by the subject co-ordinator. The school has put much time and effort into staff development, including considerable monitoring of teaching and training. These strategies by the co-ordinator and the school have raised the overall quality of teaching so that it is now consistently good throughout the school. Teachers are confident and now place a much greater focus on investigative work. Effective use is made of good outdoor facilities, enabling teachers to raise pupils' levels of awareness of environmental issues to above expected levels by the time they reach Year 6. The good science curriculum also enables teachers to raise pupils' understanding of health related issues. In this way, the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. The curriculum is further enriched as pupils have opportunities to extend their understanding by attendance at the science club and gardening club. Good procedures for testing learning are in place that enable teachers to look out for pupils whose pace of learning drops off from time to time and those who do not fully grasp some scientific ideas.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ICT is used well in classrooms and in the ICT suite in the teaching and learning of other subjects.
- There is good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- The management of resources is very good.
- Teachers' planning to promote learning in other subjects through ICT is good.
- The resources in the ICT suites are ageing, the room is too small to hold a full class of pupils, and the ventilation is poor.

### **Commentary**

68. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in ICT skills are in line with national expectations. All teachers plan effectively to use ICT in the teaching of a wide range of subjects and pupils' learning is considerably enhanced because of the use of computers and other technology. Achievement is good throughout the school. These skills continue to be built upon well in Years 3 to 6.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is raising standards. This improvement comes as a direct result of the school's focus on the use of ICT for teaching and learning in other subjects. Teachers frequently plan to use computers in lessons. This promotes pupils' learning well because they are keen to use ICT and their attitudes to their work are good and often very good when doing so. Pupils are also provided with good role models as all teachers use the interactive whiteboard in



the ICT suite, and other ICT equipment, such as 'Robolab' (a programmable robot), well during lessons. This promotes pupils' learning well. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs, as teaching assistants ensure that they gain the greatest benefit from using ICT in lessons.

70. Throughout the school, pupils' skills in using computers, digital cameras and other technical equipment are in line with expectations overall, although a significant minority of older pupils exceed this level of skill. They use a mouse and the keyboard well and can find the programs that they want, with ease, by following instructions on screen. They use their skills well when learning in other subjects. Unfortunately, the ICT suite does not present a good working area. It is too small to accommodate a whole class comfortably, the computers are getting old and the suite does not have a ventilation system making it too hot and uncomfortable to work in. Teachers and teachers' assistants work very hard to overcome these problems and their efforts successfully promote good learning.
71. The leadership and management of ICT are good. The leadership is having a good effect on the way the subject is taught and managed. The ICT suite is timetabled well, and its regular use has a positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement. The quality of teachers' planning and of some pupils' work is monitored. The assessment of pupils' progress is good, with teachers often setting tasks which review what pupils have learned at the end of a block of study, and using this information to plan future work.
72. Planning is coherent, with a clear vision for further development. The co-ordinator provides good capacity for further improvement in all aspects of the subject. There has been satisfactory improvement in ICT since the last inspection, with standards being maintained. The use of ICT across the curriculum has been improved well.

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

73. ICT is used well to support pupils' learning and achievement in other subjects. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills to support the development of understanding and skills in other subjects. There is also dedicated time each week for each year group, during which pupils are taught elements of other subjects while also extending their ICT skills. Pupils also use the Internet to research and find information for topics that they are working on. Pupils revel in the many opportunities to use ICT and the good quality of teaching and learning in lessons promotes their achievement well.

### **HUMANITIES**

74. There was no opportunity to see **geography** and **history** taught during the inspection. As a result, it is not possible to make any judgement on provision in these two subjects. A small sample of work from pupils in Years 1 to 6 was seen in both subjects. From this limited evidence, indications are that standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are at least satisfactory. An analysis of this

work sample and an examination of teachers' planning indicate that pupils receive a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. In **geography**, pupils consider environmental issues; for example, Year 6 pupils discuss problems that occur from water pollution, and Year 2 pupils have considered the importance of recycling used materials. In **history**, the curriculum provided for all pupils fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. In their studies, pupils throughout the school use their literacy skills well in their learning. Pupils are often required to find out information from books and the Internet and encouraged to express their ideas in their own words, with older pupils sometimes writing imaginatively. ICT skills are used well to extend learning in both subjects. Both subjects contribute well to the broadening of pupils' social, moral and cultural understanding.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

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

- All pupils achieve well and Year 6 pupils attain higher than expected standards.
- Well-informed teaching gives pupils good knowledge of some major faiths.
- Teachers use resources well to enliven the curriculum and enhance learning.
- Learning makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Pupils make good use of their writing skills in lessons.
- The subject is very well led and managed by a well-informed teacher.

#### **Commentary**

75. All pupils achieve well. Those in Year 6 attain standards that exceed expectations and those in Year 2 attain expected standards as determined in the locally agreed syllabus. Year 6 pupils have good knowledge about many aspects of the main religious traditions and faiths and the impact these have on people's lives, both in the present and the past. Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of aspects of Hinduism. They use this effectively when setting in context their learning on the different forms the god Vishnu assumes, in order to help the world.
76. Good teaching by knowledgeable teachers makes a significant contribution to pupils' understanding and appreciation of the main faiths. Teachers effectively make good use of a range of resources and artefacts to make the subject interesting and to motivate and enthuse pupils. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson the teacher showed considerable reverence when introducing pupils to a copy of the Qur'an. From her manner and actions they quickly realised that they were viewing a sacred book. The whole atmosphere the teacher managed to create in the classroom significantly contributed to the raising of pupils' spiritual awareness. In many similar contexts, pupils throughout the school are effectively taught to respect other customs, beliefs and traditions. When they are introduced to unfamiliar things in lessons, they respond with considerable interest, sensitivity and reverence. Such moments

make a good contribution to the development of their spiritual and cultural awareness.

77. Pupils are given good opportunity to use their writing skills in religious education. For example, Year 6 pupils write about their personal views, ideas and thoughts under such titles as 'Me as a person', and 'What makes a good friend?' In response they produce some quite thought-provoking and reflective writing.
78. The subject is very well led and managed by a knowledgeable teacher who supports her colleagues very well. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection, resulting in standards rising. A good collection of interesting artefacts and objects is available and this gives pupils first-hand experience of some of the objects used in worship by people holding different beliefs. When these are introduced into lessons, pupils are really interested because they see them and are able to handle some of them. This helps motivate pupils to want to learn more about them. The curriculum is good and meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of visits out of school, for example to the local parish church, and by visitors to the school. These provide effective first-hand study experience and make a good contribution to learning. The subject contributes very well to the broadening of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

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

### **Design and technology and physical education**

79. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on provision in these subjects. No lessons in **design and technology** were seen during the inspection period because there was a concentration on art and design. Analysis of planning and examples of work previously completed by the pupils show that all elements of the subject are being covered. Designing of slippers in Year 6 is above the expected level. Examples of work produced in Year 3 are of good quality. Pupils show satisfactory evaluation skills and are aware of how they can improve their work. Planning and work produced show that the subject is led and managed well. **Physical education** was not seen being taught but planning shows that all aspects of the curriculum, including swimming, are taught. Standards in swimming are in line with national expectations by the time that pupils leave the school. A number of clubs were in evidence during the inspection and the list of sports clubs is greater than is seen in many schools. School teams play regularly in the local netball and football leagues and take part in competitions. They have had some recent success, reaching the quarter-finals of a local schools' football competition.

### **Art and design**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve very well because of very high quality teaching.

- Sketchbooks are used very effectively to develop learning throughout the school.
- Displays around school show pupils that their work is very highly valued.
- The subject makes a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The subject leader promotes improvement well.

## **Commentary**

80. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection and standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well above those expected. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well because of the very good quality teaching they receive. There is no difference in attainment levels between boys and girls.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Lessons are very well planned with different activities for different attainment groups. Particularly good emphasis is put on working in the style of famous artists. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher used examples of works involving flowers to very good effect. Teachers pay attention to detail when talking about drawing and painting. Sketchbooks are used very effectively to develop skills. Pupils' observational skills are well developed by carefully recording what they see in their sketchbooks and later developing these sketches into more complex and accurate drawings or paintings. Pupils are proud of what they have done and are eager to show how they have improved. There is very good emphasis place on art appreciation. The 'Art Gallery' contains the work of several artists; pupils have to vote for the 'best picture', saying why they like it. Art and design has a very strong impact on improving pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils learn about the beauty of the world as portrayed by famous artists from different cultures around the world. Pupils know their work is valued by staff because of the way it is carefully displayed throughout the school. Regular good quality evaluations of lessons are used effectively to assess what pupils understand. The evaluations are used very effectively to move children on to the next stage of learning.
82. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who is committed to continuing to raise standards even higher. Teachers are given very good support and the quality of teaching and learning is well monitored. A good quality curriculum is effectively enhanced by visits out to galleries and museums.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The expertise of the specialist music teacher is an asset to the school.
- The subject is enhanced by good extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils enjoy their musical experiences
- Music contributes well to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

## **Commentary**

83. Pupils' standards are in line with national expectations and their achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. This good improvement since the last inspection has been brought about through the employment of a specialist teacher who teaches the recorder to all Key Stage 2 classes in the school.
84. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed was good. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lessons and activities. This promotes pupils' learning and achievement well.
85. The school offers pupils the opportunity to engage in a variety of musical activities and a significant number of pupils play instruments such as the recorder and the guitar. The school recorder group provides a good opportunity for pupils to improve their musical abilities and is open to any pupil. Pupils clearly enjoy playing together, showing enthusiasm and working hard to improve. Assemblies provide a good opportunity for pupils to sing together very well, sometimes performing movements and clapping the rhythm of songs enthusiastically and accurately. The school is very fortunate to have a room that provides good space for musical activities, which contributes well to pupils' standards and achievement. Resources for music are good and include a good range of music and instruments from other cultures.
86. The quality of leadership and management in music is good. The subject specialist is an expert musician who is an asset to the school. She not only has very good subject knowledge and understanding but also great enthusiasm which she imparts to pupils and staff alike. She ensures that music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. As a result of her expertise, pupils are given a good range of experiences to enhance the music curriculum. This good leadership enhances pupils' learning and achievement well. The school has made good improvement in music since the last inspection.

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

87. Personal, social, health and citizenship education is covered in a curriculum which includes drugs, alcohol, and sex and relationships education. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on overall quality of provision. The procedures in place are of good quality. A good quality programme for personal, social and health education is closely linked with other areas of the curriculum. There is a good balance between individual lessons and aspects being taught through other subjects. The recently produced citizenship policy addresses relevant issues such as living in a multi-cultural society. It has not yet had time to have a full impact. Visitors, including a nurse, police, and fire service and road safety officers, make a valuable contribution to this area. Circle times (where pupils sit and discuss issues) are regarded as important by the pupils. This area is well led by a co-ordinator who has worked hard to produce good quality documentation to guide her colleagues

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
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	4
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	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).*