

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School**

Sibford Gower, Near Banbury

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123092

Headteacher: Mrs Joanna Rigg

Lead inspector: Tim Boyce

Dates of inspection: 31 January to 03 February 2005

Inspection number: 267664

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 138

School address: Acre Ditch  
Sibford Gower  
Banbury  
Oxfordshire  
Postcode: OX15 5RW

Telephone number: 01295 780270  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr Richard Earle

Date of previous inspection: 28 June 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School is a smaller than average school in Sibford Gower in Oxfordshire, that also serves pupils from four other nearby villages. Whilst pupils come from a variety of different home backgrounds, the social and economic circumstances of the majority of parents are above average. A lower than average proportion of parents are eligible for free school meals. Attainment on entry spans the full range, but is generally above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational need. The range of special educational needs found in the school includes specific learning difficulties (dyslexia), moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and speech or communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils with a mother tongue other than English is much lower than average. There are currently no pupils in public care. Pupil mobility is relatively low and in the past year five pupils left the school and five others joined at times other than the start of statutory education. There have been several important changes since the last inspection, with the appointment of a new headteacher and three new teaching staff. The school gained a Basic Skills Award in 2000 and an International School Award in 2001. Due to illness, the Deputy Headteacher, who is responsible for the

leadership and management of the educational provision for pupils in the Reception Year, and Years 1 and 2, was absent for the full duration of the inspection.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20932	Tim Boyce	Lead inspector	Mathematics Physical Education (PE) Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Geography
9173	Sarah McDermott	Lay inspector	
12997	Chris Cheong	Team inspector	English Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) Design and Technology Art and Design The provision for special educational needs History
22398	Lynne Wright	Team inspector	The provision for the foundation stage Science Religious Education (RE) Music Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

The inspection contractor was:

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

This is a good school with many very good features, but with one key area that still requires further improvement. It provides pupils with a good standard of education and gives good value for money.

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

- By the end of Year 6 standards are well above average in English, and information and communication technology (ICT) and are above average in most other subjects. Attendance is well above average.
- Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 and are often very good in the Years 5/6 class.
- The leadership of the headteacher and subject co-ordinators is very good.
- The curriculum is very good and is particularly well integrated and exciting in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching and learning are inconsistent in Years 1 and 2, and therefore some pupils do not achieve highly enough.
- The school has a very positive and supportive ethos and as a result, pupils forge very secure and trusting relationships, develop very positive attitudes and behave very well as they become responsible and caring young citizens.
- The school is a very inclusive society, with excellent links with the community and very good links with other local schools.

The school has shown **a satisfactory level of improvement** since the last inspection, when most standards were well above average and many aspects of the school's provision were judged to be very good. The provision for large motor co-ordination for children under five has been improved and the governors' annual report to parents now meets most requirements. Whilst academic standards in several subjects have dropped, attendance has improved, and the very good personal standards have been maintained. The quality of teaching and assessment remains good. The quality of the curriculum has improved from good to very good. Procedures for care and links with parents remain good, whilst links to the local community are now excellent.

**Overall, the achievement of pupils is good.** Most children start school with above average skills in most areas of learning. Achievement is satisfactory in reception and most children achieve most of the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Although it has been unsatisfactory in the past, achievement is now satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. When compared to all schools nationally the scores in 2004 were above average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools (those with less than eight per cent of their pupils eligible for free school meals), standards were below average in reading, well below average in writing and very low (in the bottom five per cent) in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that most pupils in Year 2 are on schedule to complete the year with above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are above expectations in ICT and average in science. Standards in most other subjects are in line with expectations. Standards are higher this year because the current Year 2 cohort has a greater number of higher attaining pupils than last year.

Levels of achievement are good overall in Years 3 to 6, and are very good, sometimes excellent, in Years 5 and 6, where teaching is consistently very good. When compared to all

schools nationally, the scores gained in the national assessments in 2004 were well above average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools by prior attainment, standards were average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. Inspection evidence shows that current standards in Year 6 are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are well above expectations. Standards in most other subjects are above average. Standards in religious education throughout the school are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and above these expectations by the end of Year 6. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is generally good, as is the achievement of higher attaining pupils. Boys and girls achieve similar standards.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A\* - very high; A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Pupils' personal development is very good.** Pupils have very positive attitudes and values, form very secure relationships with adults and their peers and behave very well. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.** Attendance and punctuality are well above average.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The education provided by the school is good overall. Teaching and learning are good overall.** The most effective teaching is seen in Years 3 to 6, particularly in the class for the oldest pupils. The teaching in the reception/Year 1 class is satisfactory. The teaching in the Years 1/2 class is satisfactory overall but is inconsistent as expectations are not always high enough. The school has worked very hard to create generally good assessment procedures. The use of assessment data is good overall but is less effective in the Years 1/2 class where work is not always effectively matched to the needs of the pupils. The school provides a rich and exciting curriculum that is very well enhanced by a wide range of visits, visitors and other extra-curricular opportunities. The school has a suitable number of appropriately qualified teaching and support staff. The accommodation is satisfactory and resources are good. Procedures for providing a caring, safe environment for the pupils are good whilst the guidance and support of pupils is very good. The school's partnership with parents and other schools is very good, and links with the wider community are excellent.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**The leadership and management of the school is good overall.** The headteacher provides clear, imaginative and inspirational leadership. With the support of her very talented co-ordinators, she is effective in raising standards and further developing the school's very inclusive and caring ethos. Due to illness the deputy headteacher, who is responsible for the leadership and management of the educational provision for pupils in



the Reception Year, and Years 1 and 2, was absent for the full duration of the inspection. The overall quality of management is good. The governance of the school is good.

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

Most parents are very pleased with the work of the school and are appreciative of the efforts the school is making to involve them in the education of their children. Pupils are delighted with the school. They like their teachers, enjoy their work and have a very realistic understanding of their achievements. They greatly 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 and effectively.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

**The most important thing the school should do to improve is:**

- Further develop the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 so that all pupils consistently achieve higher standards.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement in reception and Years 1 and 2 is **satisfactory**, and for pupils in Years 3 to 6 it is **good**. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards in English and mathematics are above average by the end of Years 2. Standards in mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 6, whilst standards in English and ICT are well above average.

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

- Achievement is now satisfactory overall in reception and in Years 1 and 2.
- Standards in English, mathematics and ICT are good at the end of Year 2.
- Achievement is good overall throughout Years 3 to 6, and is very good in the class for the oldest pupils.
- Standards are very good in English and ICT by the end of Year 6.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good.
- ICT is used to very good effect throughout the curriculum.

#### **Commentary**

1. Attainment on entry to the reception class varies from year to year, but is above expectations in most areas of learning. However, it is in line with expectations in most aspects of creative and physical development and some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. Children in the reception class make a satisfactory start to their learning and quickly settle into school routines. Their achievement is satisfactory and they attain above average standards in most areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Almost all the current Reception group are in line to achieve most of the early learning goals in all areas of learning, and almost half will exceed many of them.
2. When compared to national standards, the scores gained in the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2004 were above average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, (those with less than eight per cent of their pupils eligible for free school meals), the scores gained were below average for reading, well below average for writing and very low, (in the bottom five per cent) in mathematics. Teacher assessments indicated that standards in science were average. The trends in performance over the last five years show a slow and gradual improvement in English, but a decline in writing and mathematics, particularly over the past two years. This is attributed to long-term staff illness in 2002 and 2003, variations in the quality of the cohort, particularly in 2004, and some specific weaknesses in the generally satisfactory teaching found in for pupils in Years 1 and 2.
3. Inspection evidence shows that whilst there has been underachievement in the recent past, achievement is now satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, although the work set is not yet always sufficiently challenging for higher attaining pupils. Standards in the current Year 2 cohort are above average in English and mathematics and above the national expectation in ICT. Standards are good for personal, social and health education and are broadly average for science and all other curriculum subjects. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards are higher this year because there

is a higher proportion of above average pupils than last year. Standards in ICT are higher than those found in the previous report, whilst standards in English, mathematics and music are similar to those found previously. Standards in all other subjects are not as high as those previously found, when they were generally either good or very good.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.5 (16.1)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.0 (14.4)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	14.8 (15.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Levels of achievement are good overall in Years 3 to 6, but are very good, and sometimes excellent, in the Years 5 and 6 class where teaching is consistently of a very good standard. When compared to all schools nationally, the scores gained in the national assessments in 2004 were well above average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools by prior attainment, standards were average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science.
5. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 6 are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are well above expectations. Standards in most other subjects are above average. Standards are well above average for personal, social and health education. Standards in religious education exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Trends in English have declined in the past two years after a big decline in 2001 and an increase in 2002. Trends in mathematics have been steady since 2001 when standards declined from the previously very high levels. Trends in science declined in 2001 and 2002, but have been improving since that time. Standards in ICT and music are higher than those found in the previous report but, whilst standards in English, art and design, design and technology, geography and history are similar to those found previously, standards in mathematics, science and physical education are not as good as those previously reported.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (29.6)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.1 (29.0)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.9 (30.2)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

6. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. This is due to the good teacher and teaching assistant support they receive in their lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Evidence shows that many of these pupils become successful, independent learners as they move up through the school, and that the majority achieve standards in line with their peers. The achievement of higher attaining pupils is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Whilst analysis of the results of standardised tests indicates that girls sometimes do significantly better than boys, no particular evidence of this was discovered during the inspection and boys and girls were found to achieve similar standards.
7. The application of literacy across the curriculum is good, whilst the application of ICT across the curriculum is very good and is a major area of improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils are now given many very interesting and relevant

opportunities to practise and develop their ICT skills in other subjects. The use of mathematics in other subjects is satisfactory.

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

Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are **very good**. Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. The level of attendance is **well above average** and punctuality is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very high levels of attendance are a significant aid to good achievement.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and take full advantage of all it has to offer.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good in all situations.
- The school encourages its pupils to care for, and respect, each other.
- Very good relationships within the school community encourage high levels of confidence and self-esteem in the pupils.

### **Commentary**

8. Pupils show a lively interest in school life, have very good attitudes to work and participate wholeheartedly in clubs and other school events. Pupils recognise that their teachers work hard to help them learn successfully and this is reflected in the very good relationships that exist between staff and pupils. This encourages a feeling of partnership in the school society and fosters high levels of self-esteem and confidence.
9. The school's very good provision for social and moral behaviour is reflected in high standards of behaviour, both at work and at play. Good behaviour is expected at all times, and these expectations are rarely disappointed. Minor lapses are not tolerated and pupils readily own up, secure in the knowledge that they will be treated fairly. There have been no exclusions in the recent past.
10. Pupils show a mature awareness of others and are extremely polite and courteous. The school is a very happy place and fosters pupils' social awareness very effectively. Older pupils regularly help the youngest ones. Whole-school occasions, such as celebration assemblies and concerts, help all pupils to feel part of the school community. Older pupils develop very good reasoning skills when debating such topical issues as the dangers of erecting a telephone mast near the school, and they show a very good understanding of how to deal with differing viewpoints, whilst standing up for what they consider to be right. The school gives the social dimension a very high priority and a wide range of visits and visitors helps the pupils to look outside their own community and appreciate their part in more diverse ones.
11. The development of spirituality is an integral part of school life. Values of co-operation, care and responsibility are effectively taught through the actions of adults within the school community, and pupils are given time and encouragement to talk about their feelings and thoughts. Assembly themes, addressing ideas such as curiosity, simplicity and caring, permeate all aspects of learning, for example when pupils reflect on their feeling about changes to the environment in geography. Although the school is geographically isolated from a diversity of cultural influences, the school is very imaginative in helping pupils to understand the multi-cultural nature of a wider society

through consideration of major news events linked to what is familiar to the pupils. The curriculum is broadened and enriched by numerous local history and geography studies. Teaching gives pupils very good insights into other cultures by skilfully blending together examples across the curriculum from many cultures so that pupils understand the richness and variety of cultural influences as part of their everyday lives.

## Attendance

12. The attendance rate has continued to increase since the last inspection and is now well above that found in most primary schools. Unauthorised absence is extremely rare because parents are conscientious and prompt in letting the school know why their children are missing school. Pupils are keen to get to school each morning and parents are very well aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.1	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 provided by the school is **good**.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2. It is good overall in Years 3 to 6. The school has **good** procedures for assessment, and generally uses this assessment data well.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 3 to 6 and very good in the class for the oldest pupils.
- Teaching and learning in the Reception/Year 1 class and in the Years 1/2 class are satisfactory overall, but are inconsistent.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Good use is made of specialist teaching in music and German.
- The teaching of English and ICT is a particular strength in Years 3 to 6.
- Teachers assess work very well in Years 3 to 6 and use the information gained very well to plan subsequent work.

## Commentary

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (5%)	9 (24%)	14 (37%)	13 (34%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

13. During the inspection, a very capable supply teacher taught the reception/Year 1 class in place of the regular teacher who was absent with illness. This teacher, with the support of the very capable teaching assistant, provided effectively for the individual learning needs of the children. The teaching and learning observed was never less than satisfactory and by the end of the inspection was at least good, as the children were beginning to make more rapid progress in their learning. A careful analysis of work and discussion with the children indicates that teaching has been satisfactory overall and that children are making satisfactory progress in all areas of their learning. This is a similar standard to that found in the previous inspection.
14. The quality of teaching and learning in the Years 1/2 class, whilst satisfactory overall, is inconsistent and in some lessons is barely satisfactory. Relationships are secure, discipline is suitably established and good use is made of available resources, including support staff, as a result, most pupils enjoy completing the work set. However, expectations of what the pupils are to achieve are not always high enough, particularly for higher attaining pupils. There is often insufficient use made of assessment data when planning lessons and questioning often lacks sufficient refinement to target pupils with particular strengths and weaknesses. The school is aware of these issues and the teacher concerned is working constructively with colleagues to improve specific aspects of her teaching. This is not as good as in the previous inspection, when teaching was judged to be good.
15. The teaching and learning in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 is good overall, it is often very good and sometimes excellent in the class for the oldest pupils. This is mainly because the teachers have such very good relationships with their pupils. This gives the pupils the confidence required to tackle new work with great enthusiasm and the certain knowledge that their efforts will be appreciated. Subject knowledge is very good and expectations are very high and, as a result, pupils make very significant gains in their knowledge and understanding and develop remarkable self-confidence. This is an improvement on the quality of teaching and learning found in the last inspection. The school makes very good use of specialist teaching in music and German and pupils achieve well in these subjects. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and teaching assistants operate as an effective team to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lesson activities.
16. In English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, regular assessments of pupils' attainment are used very well to plan the match of work to the needs of older pupils. Lower down the school assessment is satisfactory. However, the assessment data that is gathered is not always used sufficiently well to ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged. In non-core subjects, different assessment systems are currently being used by individual teachers, to generally good effect. Detailed information is kept about the progress of pupils with special educational needs so that all staff involved in providing for their particular needs, are well informed and are able to provide the correct level of challenge. Marking is variable in its quality and is often good. At its best, work is clearly marked against the learning intention of the lesson and reinforces what the pupil needs to do to improve, as well as praising their efforts.

## The curriculum

The quality of the curricular opportunities provided by the school is **very good**. The way the school enhances and enriches the curriculum is **very good**. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very broad and exciting curriculum.
- Additional learning opportunities have a very positive impact on pupils' learning and social development.
- There is a very good planned programme for personal, social and health education.
- The provision for special educational needs is good.
- The school prepares children for the next stage of education very well.

### Commentary

17. The very broad curriculum is good overall and fully meets statutory requirements. These findings are better than those of the last inspection. The curriculum includes personal, health and sex education, and religious education in line with the locally agreed syllabus. The amount of time given to different areas is suitable, including German for older pupils. Key staff, under the guidance of the new head teacher, are reviewing the subject contents and coverage of the curriculum for the mixed-aged classes and have made very good long-term plans to ensure that all the required areas are covered without repetition. These plans make the most of the very good links between subjects such as science, English and ICT.
18. The programme for personal, social and health education is very good. Included in this is education about citizenship for the older pupils, including taking part in a "Junior Citizenship" session run nearby. Because the school is small, children know all staff well and the preparation of pupils for the later stages of education is good. The school prepares pupils very well for their move to secondary school.
19. The school provides well for pupils identified as having special educational needs. It is good at ensuring that the curriculum is well adjusted to suit their needs and provides a good level of support from teaching assistants. Provision is good in junior classes and satisfactory for the rest. Where it is good, pupils achieve well. The paperwork for these pupils, which is completed by the class teachers, is helpful and of good quality. Parents are fully involved in reviewing their child's targets and in the setting of new ones.
20. Staff provide a very good range of after-school clubs, day-visits, visitors and residential visits. The three residential visits, including an annual visit to Sweden, enrich the curriculum very well. These visits enable a large number of pupils to participate. The after-school clubs cover art-and-craft activities well and sports very well. The uptake for these is very good and parents are involved, as well as most staff.
21. The school's accommodation is satisfactory. Whilst classrooms are a good size and the buildings are in good condition, the layout of one classroom leading into another and a road between the two buildings means that it is no better than satisfactory. Resources are satisfactory overall and good for the youngest pupils.

## Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are **good**. The provision of support, advice and guidance is **very good**. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school attends to the pastoral needs of individual pupils particularly well.
- The ideas and concerns of pupils are very carefully listened to and followed up.
- Parents are justified in feeling that their children are safe and secure while at school.
- Some formal procedures are not yet sufficiently embedded to make the tracking of each pupil's well being as easy as possible.

## Commentary

22. The school caters well for the health, safety and welfare of pupils. The headteacher is constantly reviewing the safety of the pupils and finding improved ways to ensure their wellbeing. Together with governors she is currently undertaking a full review of health and safety procedures. The headteacher, designated to liaise with the social services for child protection, has recently organised for all her staff to attend the required training for safeguarding children in maintained schools.
23. The school is lagging behind other schools in some of the formal systems to track the welfare of the pupils. For example, there is no log of minor accidents to record the incident and the details of treatment. Although this has little impact on the effective first aid of the pupils, it does hinder the quick retrieval of accurate information. Attendance registers are completed swiftly and accurately so careful tabs can be kept on the whereabouts of pupils. However it is currently unsatisfactory that these important legal documents are kept in loose-leaf files for over a week before being logged on the computer. The headteacher is aware that registers should be gathered in a safe place for emergency procedures and is reviewing the existing practice of teachers keeping registers in their own classroom to find the best solution for the school's split site.
24. Pupils receive very good support and guidance for their personal development. Staff keep a close eye on each pupil's happiness and achievement, so they can act swiftly if required. Behaviour management is unobtrusive and successful. Even though bullying is very rare, the school is not meeting the requirements to have a formal anti-bullying policy in place. Young children starting in the reception class are settled in well and are soon able to cope with the routines of school life. The school gives pupils a very good grounding in personal, social and health education, often tailored to the needs of the pupils at a particular time. This area of support and guidance is just as strong as at the time of the last inspection.
25. Pupils know that their views matter and are confident that staff will respond if they have any concerns. The involvement of pupils in deciding how they can improve their learning is at an early stage, but the headteacher is working effectively to establish a consistent approach to the setting and reviewing of targets by the pupils themselves. Pupils are given a good range of responsibilities and are involved in organising fundraising activities. However, there is no established forum, such as a school



council, for pupils to have a regular say in the running of the school and to learn more about the democratic process.

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

The school has a **good** partnership with parents. Links with the community are **excellent** and links with other schools are **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very keen to see their children achieve well.
- The school involves parents very well in school life by providing plenty of information on school activities and by consulting them regularly.
- The school is very much at the heart of the local community and there are excellent links.
- Membership of the Warriner Partnership provides valuable opportunities for collaboration with other primary and secondary schools, including specialist schools for ICT and Sport.

### **Commentary**

26. The school has good links with the parents, who are very supportive of the school. Their high expectations, which were reflected in the recent questionnaire, revealed some dissatisfaction with the procedures for homework, the provision of information on their children's progress and the chances for consultation on how their children are educated. The inspection team finds that the new head teacher is ensuring that homework is now regularly set and is well linked to the pupils' learning needs, although there is scope for investigating parental expectations further. Information to parents on the progress of their children is considered by the inspectors to be good. Parents have a good number of formal opportunities to meet their children's teachers and are encouraged to arrange appointments at other times should they have concerns. The annual reports are satisfactory. They give a clear message on how each pupil has improved over the year in English, mathematics and science but there is insufficient information on progress in the other subjects.
27. Information to parents on school events and activities is very good. The newsletter is upbeat and a useful reference. The prospectus and annual governors' report give a very good flavour of the school, although the latter omits to give the number of pupils expected to reach Levels 4 and 5 in the national tests at the end of Year 6. Information on the curriculum is improving with overviews of topics available each term and the start of regular information meetings. The headteacher is very approachable and makes a point of being on hand to meet parents. Complaints are taken very seriously and are dealt with sensitively and effectively, although currently the formal complaints procedure has yet to be agreed by the governors.
28. Links with the local community are excellent. The school is very proud to be an active member of the village community. The school readily makes its facilities available for village use, such as parish council meetings, and there are well-established contacts with the local churches. As part of their work in geography and history, pupils are often out and about in the village looking at the buildings and learning about life in previous times. Volunteers from the village willingly come in to give a hand in school, whether to hear readers, give talks, or for more practical help in the grounds. The school,

parents and villagers all work together extremely well to watch over the pupils in a mutually supportive community. Links with the neighbourhood have strengthened even further since the last inspection and bring a positive dimension to the pupils' education.

29. Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School has very good links with other schools through its involvement in the Warriner Partnership and links with several specialist schools. There are also good links with other primary schools in the partnership for sport, drama and music. The older pupils are very confident to move on to secondary school because they have plenty of chances in Year 6 to meet and work with fellow pupils from other primary schools. Inclusion in a physical education programme is bringing useful expertise in sport and physical activity to the school. The school has benefited from links with a specialist ICT school in the partnership. Good links with the local nursery, including shared care, contribute well to settling in new children to the reception class.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall quality of leadership and management is **good**. The leadership provided by the headteacher is **very good**, as is the leadership provided by subject co-ordinators. The school's management is **good**. Governance of the school is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a very good understanding of priorities for development.
- The headteacher, subject co-ordinators and governors share a clear sense of direction for the school's further development.
- The headteacher and staff are very good role models for the pupils and are strongly committed to giving all pupils equal opportunities to do well.
- New staff members are very well supported when they join the school.

### **Commentary**

30. In the short time since taking up her appointment, the headteacher has made a thorough evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has ordered the priorities for development accurately. She has rightly targeted the improvement of standards through Reception and Years 1 and 2 as her main priority and is working hard to achieve this. Inspection findings show that her intervention strategies are already achieving some success in the form of higher levels of attainment in English and mathematics. She has quickly established open and honest relationships with staff and offers very good professional and pastoral support, whilst maintaining sufficient professional distance to introduce new initiatives with rigour.
31. The headteacher has a constant presence around the school and her very good relationships with all members of the school community contribute greatly to the school's calm purpose and very positive ethos. She is acutely conscious of the school's very good reputation, built up over many years, and is working determinedly to maintain and develop the many strong features of the school and make good any areas of weakness. In all this, she is well supported by a newly constituted governing body, who are embracing their new responsibilities with energy and enthusiasm, aided by their good knowledge of what the school does well and where it needs to improve. Together with the headteacher, they make an effective management team, although,

as yet, there has been insufficient time for the impact of their management to take full effect.

32. Teachers currently in key co-ordinator roles are providing very good support to the head teacher and have rapidly established themselves as an important part of the move forwards. The current headteacher has delegated management responsibility so that key staff have a clear overview of the school's work. They are all benefiting from their attendance on the primary leadership programme, through which they have set clear targets to develop a corporate leadership style. As a result of these opportunities for increased responsibilities, together with professional training, key co-ordinators have contributed significantly to the development of a very good quality curriculum and good assessment systems. As a result of the deputy headteacher's absence, through illness, the progress towards some targets has slowed, and the school development plan, for example, has yet to be completed.
33. The headteacher aims to an advocate of excellence. Her lesson monitoring notes shows she has a very good understanding of best primary practice, which she demonstrates in her own dealings with pupils. Together with key staff, she is promoting a very inclusive approach to the development of all pupils. This ethos extends to new staff, who are given very good support. New teachers are welcomed as good sources of new ideas as the focus of the school's development changes.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	370,984
Total expenditure	393,149
Expenditure per pupil	2,639

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	64,771
Balance carried forward to the next	42,606

34. The previous headteacher accrued a larger than average sum to carry forward into the new headteacher's first year so that she could finance the priorities of the new action plan. The money has been wisely targeted towards raising standards, particularly in literacy and mathematics, and ICT through the purchase of up to date computers and more interactive white boards.

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is **satisfactory**.

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

- The very good support of the teaching assistant helps pupils feel confident and happy in coming to school.
- Teaching plans do not focus on the purposes for learning closely enough.
- Many lessons do not have a clear enough focus on speaking and listening and personal and social development.
- The outdoor area is imaginatively set out and well resourced.

#### **Commentary**

35. Reception children join an established class of Year 1 pupils in either September or January, usually on a part-time basis. At the time of the inspection there were sixteen children in the reception year, seven full-time, including one child new to the school, five part-time who entered school in September, and five part-time who entered in January. Attainment on entry varies slightly from year-to-year, but is above average overall. The attainment of the current group of children is wide-ranging, it is above average overall in most areas of learning, but is in line with national expectations for most aspects of both creative and physical development and some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. Children with special educational needs are identified early and given additional support as required.
36. At the time of the inspection, the permanent teacher was absent due to illness and her place was taken by a temporary teacher, the fourth person to teach the class in four weeks. This teacher was still finding her feet at the beginning of the inspection and assessing pupils' so that she could provide more closely for their learning needs. This she did successfully, helped considerably by the very good work of the teaching assistant. Towards the end of the inspection period the teaching was at least good, and the children were beginning to make more rapid progress in their learning. However, the impact of all previous teaching indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and that children are making satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Their achievement is satisfactory and they attain standards that are above average in most areas of learning by the end of their time in the reception year. Almost all of this year's cohort are in line to achieve most of the early learning goals in all areas of learning, and almost half will exceed that standard, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development, the development of their communication, language and literacy skills and in their mathematical development.
37. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. It takes full account of the different needs of young children in a mixed age class, and provides good opportunities for learning within themes that appeal to their interests and link to their experiences. Planning is satisfactory, but tends to concentrate on activity rather than the purposes of the learning, which means that the learning cannot be targeted closely enough to each individual's need. The current temporary teacher has rectified this. Good assessment systems, based on the Foundation Stage Profile, are used effectively to record

children's progress and attainment. In all areas of work in the reception area the teaching assistant gives very good support, based on her very good knowledge of the children and the next steps in their learning. She is largely responsible for the continuity of learning during a difficult time.

38. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and although the phase manager is absent, the headteacher is monitoring the situation closely and is ready to intervene and support if necessary. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory and much the same picture exists now as then. There have been very good improvements to the outdoor area, which now provides an exciting and stimulating learning environment. The indoor accommodation remains adequate, although rather cramped.
39. Children's achievement in their **personal, social and emotional development** is satisfactory because of the consistent care, guidance and support provided by the teaching assistant that gives the children some continuity. Children settle in happily to school routines because of her, and the good induction arrangements. Children are encouraged to make their own choices and decisions early on without looking to adults as a first option. They are encouraged to select their own activities and resources, particularly when playing outside. Children quickly gain in self-confidence.
40. Good behaviour is expected and is the norm. Children show high degrees of co-operation in work and play and will negotiate their own solutions, for example when two boys wanted to build a river and a road in the same space and decided to put a road bridge over the river! They benefit greatly from being in a mixed-age class where the older pupils are good role models of positive attitudes and behaviour. Although there are many opportunities within the teaching to develop this area of children's learning, it is not planned for formally and is somewhat left to chance, thus preventing better progress.
41. Satisfactory teaching in **communication, language and literacy** ensures that children's achievement is satisfactory, and that they make sound progress in their speaking and listening skills. For example, children are keen to respond in whole-class discussions and do so clearly, confidently and fluently. However, the development of this area of the curriculum is not planned specifically and so chances are lost to make teaching fully effective. They enjoy stories and handle books correctly and with interest. They have their own guided-reading sessions that give them suitable opportunities to enjoy their own choice of books. Reading is now taught in a structured way and many children are sounding out simple words correctly. They infer the story from its pictures and deduce what is likely to happen next. A few children are avid readers and read simple texts correctly and fluently so that they are attaining within levels expected of much older children.
42. The classroom is a good reading environment, with labels and questions attached to displays, so that children have other purposes for reading. Most children recognise letter sounds and write with an increasing awareness of sentence form, sometimes using capital letters and full stops. They are confident in having a go at spelling more complex words. There are still too few opportunities for children to practise their developing writing skills in other areas of their work, or to write for different purposes.
43. Children make satisfactory progress in **mathematical development** because of satisfactory teaching. Most recognise numerals correctly and count confidently to ten through games and activities. Many use the terms 'longer' and 'shorter' in a well-

organised outdoor practical activity which measures stride lengths of different children. In this, good questioning by the teaching assistant enabled good achievement. A wide range of mathematics games help able pupils to sort numbers into sets of more than, and less than, 20. Some use dice to consolidate addition facts to 20. The children enjoy these activities and behave very well. Satisfactory opportunities are taken to develop the pupils' speaking and listening skills.

44. Children's development in gaining **knowledge and understanding of the world** is promoted through the satisfactorily teaching and through a variety of planned opportunities linked to themes of immediate interest to the children. For example, they decorate cakes for the local horticultural show and make vegetable soup. They are taught the principles of healthy eating and learn what foods should be a treat and what they should eat more often. Good social development is provided through the partnership with pupils in Year 6 in making good quality sock puppets. Much of the planned activities link to seasonal events, such as Christmas. The children regularly attend whole-school assemblies, where they listen attentively, and in the traditional festivals of Harvest and Christian celebration of Christmas. Although teaching is satisfactory and pupils make sound progress in this area of their learning, lesson plans are not strong enough to promote better achievement.
45. Satisfactory teaching in **creative development** enables children to achieve satisfactorily and the majority of children will reach the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Children quickly become engrossed in their practical activities because they have very good attitudes to learning. Tasks are enjoyable, without being particularly challenging, and many such as role-play in the 'doctor's surgery', are not planned with sufficient rigour to support more successful learning. The classroom is rather cramped and areas for creative development quickly become congested and cluttered as children move about. In music, children have satisfactory opportunities to appreciate pulse and rhythm in songs but teaching the use of technical terms and the pace of teaching is sometimes beyond them. Adult intervention and interaction is intermittent and so opportunities are missed to promote children's speaking skills and personal and social development more effectively.
46. During the inspection it was not possible to observe children's **physical development** other than during activities in class and in outdoor play but the available evidence suggests that the majority of children will reach the expected level by the time they enter Year 1. The activities provided effectively promote dexterity, such as handling pencils and crayons, collage materials and construction equipment satisfactorily, but there is no specific planning to ensure better achievement and progress. Children show good confidence and dexterity in manipulating the computer mouse to drag and click. The outdoor provision for physical development is good with plenty of large toys and apparatus that they can select independently. However, although each area is planned with an activity focus, there is no focus on the learning purposes of each activity.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

47. Provision in German is **very good**. It is taught each week to pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6, who are making rapid progress and are developing a good accent. The teacher has high expectations of their performance and through her skilful prompting they are acquiring a very good knowledge of the common vocabulary for areas such as the weather, seasons and numbers. Standards exceed the national expectation.

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at age seven and well above average by the age of eleven.
- Pupils' standards in speaking are excellent. They are very eloquent speakers.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. It is very good for pupils aged seven to eleven, and satisfactory for pupils aged six and seven.
- Very good cross-curricular links are formed with other subjects.
- There is very good leadership and good management to support teaching and learning.
- Not all staff consistently use the school's good systems for marking and record keeping.

#### Commentary

48. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well by the age of eleven. Standards in the 2004 national tests for seven-year-olds were above average in reading and below average in writing. Compared with similar schools, standards were below average in reading and well below average in writing. Results for eleven-year-olds in the same year were well above the national average and average when compared with similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that standards are better this year with standards above the national average at age seven and, as last year, well above average for eleven-year-olds. The improvement at the end of Year 2 can mainly be attributed to the fact that the current cohort contains a higher proportion of higher attaining pupils. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection. In recent national tests girls did better than boys, but the inspection found no significant difference in achievement by gender.
49. Skills of speaking and listening are a considerable strength of the school. Pupils in all age groups listen very attentively and are confident and articulate speakers. Overall standards are excellent. They become confident communicators because of the good teaching they receive and the many regular opportunities that are given for them to discuss in other subject areas.
50. The standards attained in reading are very good with pupils achieving well during their time in the school. In Year 6 all abilities of pupils are able to discuss their favourite authors and suggest reasons for their likes and dislikes, with the less able being in line with national averages. All pupils have good expression and understanding and are

able to explain inferences in the text, with the most able reading at a very high level. Reading records and planning show that pupils read in school and at home from an early age. The school is aware that greater structure is needed in the teaching of reading in Years 1 and 2. Some higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by the tasks set.

51. By the time pupils reach Year 6 the quality of their writing is very high. Attainment in writing is above average in Years 1 and 2 and well above average in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate sound writing skills in lessons, but sometimes expectations are too low and within some satisfactory lessons not enough progress is made. Handwriting is very well taught and pupils take pride in presenting their work well. The school has a good marking policy but practice is variable. There is also inconsistent practice in the use of learning intentions and the dating of work.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with an excellent lesson seen in Year 6. Teaching is generally better in Years 3 to 6. The frequent, regular monitoring of lessons by the headteacher is proving effective in building staff expertise. In the best lesson seen, all pupils succeeded to a very high level because of very interesting subject matter, excellent pace, a very high level of challenge and very clear instruction and support for the less able. Plenary sections of lessons reinforce learning well and occasionally include good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own learning. Teaching assistants consistently make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
53. Leadership is very good and management is good, which is an improvement from the last inspection. There are good systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress but these are more consistently used in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6, with visits and visitors, theatre workshops and historical storytellers enriching the curriculum very effectively.

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

54. Good use is made of language and literacy skills to support learning in all areas of the curriculum. High expectations of pupils ensure that pupils' books display a high level of recording in other subjects. Teachers give pupils a wide variety of writing tasks, such as a set of instructions in design and technology. Very good use is made of ICT to enhance pupils' literacy skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve above average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is very good.
- Teaching and learning are inconsistent in Years 1 and 2.
- Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 3 to 6 and very good in Years 5 and 6.
- There are numerous, carefully planned applications of mathematics across the curriculum.



## Commentary

55. The results of the 2004 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 showed attainment to be well below average and continued the downward trend begun in 2003. When compared to similar schools (those with less than eight per cent of their pupils eligible for free school meals) standards are very low and are in the bottom five per cent of schools. Inspection evidence shows that whilst achievement may not have been sufficiently good in the past, it is now satisfactory and standards at the end of Year 2 are now above average. This is a similar situation to that found in the previous inspection. This is mainly because a higher than average proportion of pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject, can calculate numbers with speed and accuracy and are on course to achieve the higher Level 3. This recent improvement can chiefly be attributed to variations in cohorts, with the current Year 2 containing a higher than average proportion of higher attaining pupils, and to recent improvements in teaching.
56. At Key Stage 2, the results of national tests showed that the high attainment of the previous few years had been maintained and standards were above average. This positive situation is supported by inspection findings. This demonstrates very good achievement as the great majority of these pupils were attaining well below average standards when they left Year 2. By the end of Year 2 pupils are developing a good understanding of how mathematical patterns can be used to solve various problems and investigations, for example when they were able to use their knowledge of square numbers to calculate the total number of squares on a chess board.
57. The quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 but is still too inconsistent. In a lesson observed during the inspection, for example, the teacher of the Year 1/2 class used the role-play of a well-known story to effectively demonstrate how equivalent fractions work. Good use was also made of the very talented teaching assistant, (the subject manager working in a supporting role), who challenged the higher attaining pupils very effectively and quickly got them working to a high standard. However, there were some aspects of the same lesson that were either unsatisfactory, or were barely satisfactory. The pace of the introductory mental arithmetic session was too slow and the questioning lacked sufficient focus either to support the lower attaining pupils or to challenge the higher attaining ones. An examination of pupils' work in Year 2 reveals that expectations are not high enough and that insufficient use is made of assessment data to match work to the individual needs of pupils.
58. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is good overall and often very good, particularly in the class for the oldest pupils. In the best lessons teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and, as a result, pupils enjoy their studies and work hard. In one very good lesson the teacher of the Year 5/6 class demonstrated her very secure subject knowledge by skilfully phrasing questions that were very well matched to the prior attainment of all the pupils. Expectations were very high and because pupils were working at the very limits of their knowledge and understanding, learning was very rapid and pupils were delighted with their own achievements. The curriculum is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and is good in Years 3 to 6, where there is a more frequent use of problem solving and investigative work to make learning relevant and interesting to the pupils. Attitudes to work are generally satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but are good overall in Years 3 to 6.

59. The quality of leadership and management is good. The subject manager is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses that exist in the subject and is now concentrating on improving the quality of teaching in the Year 1/2 class by improving teaching strategies and by supporting in class. She has very good subject knowledge and after a careful analysis of assessment data has a clear understanding of the specific areas where better teaching is required and where support should be targeted.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

60. The provision for mathematics across the school is satisfactory and most teachers provide suitably well-planned and interesting opportunities for the pupils to apply their mathematical skills in meaningful ways as they complete their studies in other subjects. However, in some classes opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to practise mental arithmetic and to solve problems in meaningful ways.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at the end of Year 6 remain consistently high.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are given sufficient time and good opportunities to develop their own scientific ideas.
- Teaching in Year 6 is very good with very high expectations of pupils' thinking and effort.

### **Commentary**

61. The results of the 2004 national assessments at the end of Year 2 showed attainment at both the expected and higher levels that matched the national average. The results of national tests in Year 6 showed that the high attainment of the previous few years was maintained and that standards were well above average. Inspection findings show achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and that standards remain broadly average at the end of Year 2, although there is a smaller percentage of pupils attaining at the higher level. Reasons for this are the lack of a rigorous assessment system and teachers' expectations which are not always sufficiently high. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of the science curriculum but their progress over time is not tracked carefully enough and challenging targets are not set for improvement. By Year 6, standards are above average, and well above average at the higher level. This indicates good achievement for all pupils and very good achievement for higher attaining pupils.
62. Teaching and learning are good, overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 where pupils' work and teachers' lesson plans show that there is a structured approach to the teaching of all aspects of the science curriculum. Lessons in the Year 1/2 class offer satisfactory opportunities for higher attaining pupils to extend their thinking in science, although their written work does not always reflect this. Marking is sometimes unsatisfactory as it does not always give pupils an accurate idea of how well they are doing, and what they need to do to improve. In Years 3 to 6 the picture is more positive. Teaching is always good, and often very

good. Lessons are well structured and effectively develop pupils' investigative skills in tandem with their knowledge and understanding.

63. A very good feature of science lessons is the time teachers give to enable pupils to think through their own ideas and theories to make predictions and hypotheses. This gives structure and purpose to the pupils' own investigations, particularly when the science ideas become more abstract in Years 5 and 6. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 have very high expectations of their pupils. The pupils' recording of their work shows that they are given every opportunity to demonstrate what they know and understand. They rise to the challenge with enthusiasm, and this helps promote successful learning. The pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are developed well through science lessons and they contribute effectively to pupils' learning in science. In an excellent Year 5/6 lesson, where they searched websites to investigate the life cycle of the worm, pupils were totally absorbed in their learning and achieved very highly. Marking is inconsistent in some lessons across the school and does not always sufficiently extend the pupils' thinking.
64. Leadership and management are good. There is no designated co-ordinator and the headteacher has overall responsibility. The teachers in Years 3 to 6 work very effectively as a team, supporting each other and constantly looking to improve provision. The headteacher is aware of some shortcomings in the Year 1/2 class at Key Stage 1 and is taking action to improve matters, but there has been insufficient time for this to take effect. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory, with the high standards found then at the end of Year 6 being maintained.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are good by the end of Year 2 and very good by the end of Year 6.
- Achievement is good, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching is generally good because most staff have good subject confidence.
- Staff make good use of ICT to supplement learning in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

65. Pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout Years 1 and 2 and the majority of pupils attain standards that are above the national expectation by the end of Year 2. Achievement is good in Years 3 to 6 and the majority of pupils attain standards that are well above the national expectation by the end of Year 6. This is a better standard than was found in the previous inspection when standards were judged to be satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. The main reason for this very positive situation are the consistently good teaching of skills throughout the school and the way that the teachers provide the pupils with many wonderful opportunities to apply and practise their skills in a wide variety of interesting and relevant ways. As a result they learn to identify possible applications and to develop their skills in a wide range of meaningful situations.
66. Pupils in the Year 1/2 class made satisfactory progress when they used the computers in the designated suite to draw and fill a variety of different pentagons. They have a

good knowledge and understanding of a wide range of commands and have highly developed manipulative skills with either a 'mouse' or a touch pad. Pupils throughout the upper years of the school develop very good skills and use them very effectively to word process, to manipulate data and to present information in a wide variety of inter-related forms.

67. The teaching of the subject is good and most staff have a good degree of subject confidence and expertise. Expectations are high and careful planning ensures that work is well matched to the individual needs of the pupils. Learning for all pupils is good because the expectations are high and the tasks are interesting. The pupils become so enthusiastic that they get more done in the time as they strive to please their teachers. The curriculum is broad, very varied and exceedingly relevant and pupils have a very good understanding of the power and flexibility of ICT. Staff make very good use of interactive whiteboard technology where available. The leadership and management of the subject are very good and the subject manager, who has very good personal skills has lead the very significant improvement that has been made in this subject, leading her colleagues, very effectively, by example. Resources are good and are readily available to pupils of all ages.

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

68. Pupils develop their skills very effectively throughout the school and, as a result, their skill in the subject and their knowledge and understanding of its applications considerably exceed national expectations by the time they leave the school. Most pupils confidently use ICT as a very effective tool to supplement their work in mathematics, science, history and a wide range of other subjects.

### **HUMANITIES**

69. Only one lesson was observed in **geography**. It is not possible therefore to make secure overall judgements on provision, teaching or achievement. Discussions with pupils, an examination of planning, work in books, displays and information gained from the one lesson seen indicates that pupils are given a good range of suitable projects to undertake and that geographical skills and understanding are being developed systematically. The available evidence suggests that standards are at least in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and that standards exceed the expected levels by the end of Year 6.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for religious education makes a very good contribution to the pupils' personal development.
- Pupils' recording of their work in religious education helps in the good development of their literacy skills.
- Teaching is inconsistent in quality between the different year groups.

### Commentary

70. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall, and the majority of pupils attain standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the time they are seven. Achievement is good overall in Years 3 to 6 and the majority of pupils attain standards that exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the time they are eleven. This is mainly because teachers have high expectations of the pupils and lessons consistently challenge pupils' to reconsider their thinking.
71. The quality of teaching is good overall, although it varies between the key stages. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although expectations are sometimes not high enough in the Year 1/2 class. Pupils have a good understanding of stories from the Christian and Jewish faiths and retell them in their own words in detail. They are clear about the similarities and differences of each religion. Pupils in Year 2 are very interested in lessons, ask very searching questions and make perceptive comments. These are not always picked up and developed by the teacher, so that opportunities are lost to deepen the pupils' understanding even further to help them achieve at a higher level. Although the pupils record some learning as part of their literacy lessons, they do not record enough and pupils' work in religious education is not kept together. This makes it difficult for the teachers to assess their attainment and for the teachers and pupils to track their progress over time.
72. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are good. Pupils show a good understanding of what is involved in belonging to a faith community in terms of beliefs, practices and values. Teaching is knowledgeable and pupils rise eagerly to the teachers' high expectations that they will think and work hard. Teachers ensure in their planning and in lessons that the main focus of each lesson is always linked to the pupils' own feelings and experiences, so that they learn equally effectively through religion as about religion. Pupils' personal development is fostered very well in these lessons and their self-awareness is raised through consideration of what they are good at and their responsibilities. The thoughtful writing of pupils in Year 6 shows maturing emotional and reasoned responses.
73. The leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is a good role model and provides good support to her colleagues in her own lesson planning and teaching. She has worked effectively with other staff to make effective links with literacy, thereby contributing to good standards in writing. The co-ordinator is trialing a new assessment system, which is giving a more accurate picture of attainment than previously. Records show that pupils' attainment is higher in their learning of Christianity than of other faiths, because they have more experience of it. The picture

in provision is similar to that described in the previous report. Improvement is satisfactory.

## History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' benefit from the way the subject is brought alive for them by good teaching.

### Commentary

74. Achievement is good and most pupils gain standards that exceed those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Inspection findings are similar to last time the school was inspected. Generally good teaching throughout the school uses lively methods to capture pupils' interest, helping their understanding and knowledge. Teachers form good and sometimes very good connections with the pupils' own lives; for example, when they record their own family trees, or exchange letters with and interview an older person who was evacuated to their village in the Second World War. As a result of these very good teaching techniques pupils become self-motivating learners eager to learn more and able to research confidently for themselves. There are good links with the curriculum for English and ICT.
75. Teaching is good and sometimes very good. Staff provide a good curriculum in the infants and a very good curriculum in the juniors. They cover a wide range of topics, giving the subject good time and attention. Lessons are taught well because teachers have good subject knowledge and make good use of artefacts to make learning interesting for the pupils. Visits and visiting speakers enhance the standards gained in the subject well. There are no whole-school systems for assessment and record keeping in the subject. Leadership and management are good.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### Art and design

Provision for art and design is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and above the expected level at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of the artists studied.
- Pupils' work is sometimes too similar one to another.

### Commentary

76. Pupils' achievement is good overall and the majority of pupils attain standards that are in line with the national expectation by the age of seven and above the national expectation by the age of eleven. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. All pupils achieve similarly irrespective of their prior attainment or social circumstance. Pupils enjoy their learning and take a full and active part in lessons.
77. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Observed lessons were generally good, with pupils exhibiting some good skills in painting, patterning, collage and making large three-dimensional objects. Teachers form good links with other subjects, including a good link with the Greek history being studied in the Year 3/4 class. Pupils

have a good knowledge of famous artists and use this knowledge in the development of their own ideas and work. Sketchbooks are often used well and enable pupils to practise and develop skills such as sketching and shading and to try out their own ideas. The work produced, as a result of the good teaching helps to enliven the classrooms and corridors. However, pupils are not always sufficiently encouraged to choose the medium for themselves or to make their work individual, so in some instances much of the finished work is very similar. The leadership and management by the management team are good although currently there is no school-wide assessment system.

78. No lessons were observed in **design and technology**. It is not possible to therefore make secure judgements on either provision or teaching. An examination of planning and work on display, and discussions with pupils indicates that pupils tackle a good range of projects and that the full range of skills is being developed systematically. The evidence suggests that standards are at least in line with expectations throughout the school.
79. Only one lesson and one extra-curricular activity were observed in **physical education** during the inspection and it is not possible therefore to make overall judgements on provision, teaching or achievement. An examination of planning and discussion with pupils indicates that they are provided with a suitably wide range of sporting activities, and that a good range of physical skills is being developed. It is not possible to make a judgement on standards at the end of Year 2 as no lessons were seen, but by the end of Year 6, standards in dance are above the expected level.

## Music

Provision in music is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The specialist music teacher has very good subject knowledge.
- Singing is of very high quality throughout the school.
- Teaching of younger children is less confident.

### Commentary

80. Achievement in music is generally satisfactory and standards are broadly in line with the national expectation by the end of Year 2 and above the national expectation by the end of Year 6. Standards in singing are very high across the school, and pupils' achievement in this aspect of the subject is very good indeed.
81. Teaching and learning are good overall, but the quality of teaching and learning in singing is good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, where the younger pupils enjoy music lessons and generally join in the activities to establish rhythm and pulse with enjoyment. However, the teacher's expectations are a little too high in some areas for pupils of this age, as the musical language the teacher uses is a little too complex for many to understand and sometimes the learning slows as the pace of the lesson loses impetus. Despite this, pupils continue to behave well, listening carefully and following the actions of the teacher, even if they are not sure of the purpose. They begin to understand about musical pulse and identify 'fast, middle and slow' pulses. They apply this knowledge when singing the Grand Old Duke of



York at different speeds with gusto and great enjoyment, before singing a lullaby gently and quietly.

82. Teaching and learning are generally good in Years 3 to 6, particularly in singing, as teaching is more suitably matched to the pupils' language skills and understanding. As a result, pupils' achievement in acquiring correct musical terms and applying them when playing instruments and singing is good. The teaching of the oldest pupils is more confident, and is of very good quality. The pupils' excellent attitudes promote an enthusiastic, enquiring and confident approach to music making so that they achieve very well. They respond very positively to the good opportunities the teacher gives them to use their initiative and develop their creativity so that their own scores to describe "A Space Odyssey" are of a high standard. Singing is used powerfully in assemblies to provide excellent social and spiritual experiences. Pupils of all ages sing four-part harmonies with true feeling that moves the listener.
83. Leadership and management are good. The specialist music teacher is an experienced and knowledgeable musician and this enables her to plan a generally good quality teaching programme. These ensure the pupils experience a widening range of musical instruments, techniques, terminology and knowledge to promote good progress as they move through the school. The music programme links effectively with other curriculum areas, notably literacy and dance, to enrich the pupils' learning and to widen and develop their social skills. Improvement since the previous inspection is good, with improved teaching leading to raised standards and achievement.

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

84. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make an overall judgement about the school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education but a careful examination of work and discussions with pupils indicate that achievement is good and the majority of pupils gain standards that are above the national expectation by the end of Year 2 and well above by the end of Year 6.
85. The good quality curriculum is planned effectively to give due time and emphasis to all elements of the pupils' education. Pupils are aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and this is supported by good teaching in science. Lesson plans show the emphasis in teaching is on active learning and critical decision-making directly related to the pupils' own experiences and allows time for discussion and individual reflection. The local area is used effectively to focus on issues of importance. Older pupils visit a local hospital, and in debates learn about, for example, the nature of prejudice and its effects. Such lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils' thinking skills and their understanding of other people.
86. In the one lesson seen, the theme of the importance of friendship was chosen to respond to one pupil's need for help in forming friendly relationships. Good teaching helped these young pupils towards a better understanding of how to respond to unfriendly behaviour. Residential trips give pupils very good opportunities for increased independence and the time to mix socially and learn in different settings. The pupils take responsibility willingly. The school does a very good job of helping them to become thoughtful, confident and aware young citizens.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### Inspection judgement

### Grade

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3

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

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
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	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
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).*