

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **Sidbury CE (VC) Primary School**

Sidbury, Sidmouth

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113363

Headteacher: Mrs D Gordon

Lead inspector: Mrs J Coop

Dates of inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> February 2005

Inspection number: 267665

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:	105
School address:	Church Street Sidbury Sidmouth Devon
Postcode:	EX10 0SB
Telephone number:	01395 597279
Fax number:	01395 597781
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Perchard-Richards
Date of previous inspection:	25 <sup>th</sup> May 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This smaller than average, voluntary controlled Church of England primary school is situated in the village of Sidbury, near Sidmouth. It serves a wide area and many pupils travel to the school from surrounding villages. There are 105 pupils on roll between the ages of four and eleven. Just prior to and following the last inspection, the school experienced a period of difficulty, self esteem dwindled and this impacted on standards, which declined and, the school's standing in the community dipped. As a result, there has been a fall in pupil numbers since the last inspection. In addition, the school is in a non-pedestrian zone and therefore it is deemed unsafe for children to walk to school. Although pupils receive a bus pass, many parents choose to send their children to other schools within walking distance. For this reason, along with local employment conditions and social issues, there is an unusually high rate of mobility of pupils starting or leaving the school. This is most marked after Year 2. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and the proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is average. Most pupils come from a white United Kingdom background and a very small proportion of pupils are new to speaking English. Twenty-five per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is above the national average. Two per cent have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is average. A significant number of pupils have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. As a result of the school's strong emphasis on social and educational inclusion, the profile of the school has changed since the last inspection, with a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Assessment data shows that children now start in the reception class with below average skills overall. The school received a Healthy School award in 2002, the Silver Arts mark in 2004 and the Special Educational Needs coordinator was commended for her work in the 2004 Teacher awards.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
31862	Mrs J Coop	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Information and communication technology Music Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language
31754	Mrs C Roberson	Lay inspector	
1945	Mrs J Watts	Team inspector	English Religious education History Geography
35091	Mr B Pengelly	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology Personal, social and health education and citizenship

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** and rapidly improving school, with some very good features. Very good leadership and management coupled with good teaching and a very supportive family atmosphere ensure that pupils greatly enjoy school and achieve well overall. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The personal leadership of the headteacher is very good. She is a very good role model and provides a strong direction for the school. She is well supported by staff and governors.
- At the end of Year 6 pupils achieve well in most subjects. They do not achieve as well in writing.
- Teaching and learning are good overall, but teachers do not consistently help pupils know what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils have very good attitudes and relationships throughout the school are very warm and caring.
- A good curriculum is enriched by a very good range of activities.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the school is very supportive of pupils with complex needs.
- The school cares very well for the pupils and provides good pastoral support and guidance. The involvement of pupils in the life of the school is very good.
- The school has established very good links with other schools and good links with parents and the community which enhance the quality of education in this small school.

Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Through the hard work of the headteacher, together with staff and governors, the school has recovered well following a period of difficulty. All the main issues identified in the last report have been addressed. However, the school's planned improvements to the Foundation Stage provision have been delayed due to difficulties obtaining planning permission for new accommodation. Despite a change in context, over the past five years the school's performance has been above the national average. Pupils are making better progress overall because the quality of the curriculum has improved. The school now monitors its work very well so that it is well placed for continued and further improvement.

### 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	B	E	E
Mathematics	C	A	D	E
Science	C	A	E	E

*Key: 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*

There is a wide spread of ability in each year group. Small numbers coupled with a high percentage of pupils leaving and starting at different times makes it unreliable to make year-on-year comparisons. Pupils of all abilities achieve **well** overall. Children in the reception class make satisfactory progress overall, but will not quite reach the expected goals by the time they start in Year 1. The exception is their mathematical and personal and social development in which the

current children are in line to reach the expected goals. The reception children's overall achievement is in part hampered by limitations to the accommodation that are soon to be resolved. In the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 2, standards were above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Current standards are average in reading, above average in mathematics, but below average in writing. At the end of Year 6, in the 2004 national tests, standards were well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics. These results were disappointing and well below similar schools. Evidence shows pupils' performance in the tests was not a true reflection of their capabilities, but was impeded by a serious incident in the community that coincided with the national tests and which affected many Year 6 pupils personally. Standards at the end of Year 6 have picked up this year. Current standards in mathematics and science are above average. Standards in English are also above average overall, but standards in writing are average. Pupils' spelling is weak and many pupils do not make the best use of their wide vocabulary when writing. Standards in ICT, music and physical education are above average. Standards in religious education are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **good** overall and their moral and social development is very good. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave well. They are very caring of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils really enjoy coming to school, they are punctual and their attendance is good.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall and satisfactory in the reception class. Teachers have high expectations, are adept at making learning interesting and have very good class management skills. As a result, pupils respect their teachers and try hard to do their best. Teaching assistants provide good support in all classes. Most teachers plan lessons carefully and use questions well to challenge pupils. Where teaching is satisfactory it is mainly due to insufficient attention to planning. However, in all year groups, the learning intentions are not always made clear to pupils so lesson ends are not used consistently to improve pupils' knowledge of their own learning. Assessment procedures are good, but marking and target setting is not consistent or supportive of learning.

Curriculum provision is good overall and is enriched by a very wide range of interesting activities. The curriculum is only satisfactory in the Foundation Stage because limited space inhibits the development of some aspects of learning. The care of pupils is very good and the school guides and supports them well overall. Partnerships with parents and the community are good, with very good links with other schools and colleges that benefit this small school community very well.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **very good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The leadership of key staff is good. Despite a heavy teaching commitment, the headteacher has worked rigorously to enrich the learning opportunities of pupils and improve the school. She is supported well by a small, but committed, team of staff who share her ideals. The management of the school is very good. Governance is satisfactory. Many governors are new to the role, but are developing their skills well for the benefit of the school. All statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents are very happy with the school. They greatly appreciate the improvements made and the caring and supportive family atmosphere. Pupils are equally very happy with the school and know that their opinions count.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- continue to improve pupils' achievements in writing and spelling;
- make sure that the pupils have more understanding of their own learning and what they need to do to improve.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement is **good** overall. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards are above average in all subjects inspected in detail at the end of Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs, those new to speaking English and those who have just started in the school make the same progress as their classmates in lessons.
- Children in the reception class make good progress in their mathematical, personal, social and emotional development.
- Pupils achieve above average standards in reading, speaking and listening, but their level of achievement in writing is not as high.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well in all other subjects by the end of Year 6.

### COMMENTARY

1. In this small school, standards vary each year because of small numbers and the varying proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. This, coupled with a high degree of pupil mobility, makes any year-on-year comparison of standards unreliable. Nevertheless, over the past five years, the overall performance of pupils in the school has been above the national average. Pupils with special educational needs, the few new to speaking English and those new to the school make good progress and achieve well because they are supported well in lessons and because they know they are valued members of the school community.
2. The attainment of children starting in the school in the reception class varies from year to year. It is average in some years, but generally it is below average. The children who are currently in the school have started with below average skills overall but, due to good relationships and good teaching of early mathematical skills, have settled well and are on course to reach the expected goals in their mathematical, personal, social and emotional development. In the other areas of learning, the teachers' planning is not as successful and learning is restricted in part by the limitations of space. As a result, although children make satisfactory progress and their level of achievement is satisfactory, most will not quite reach the expected goals by the time they start in Year 1. The new planned accommodation, coupled with very good staff development opportunities and very good support from the headteacher, means that the provision is well placed to improve in the near future.

### KEY STAGE 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.8 (15.0)	15.8 (15.7)

writing	15.8 (15.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.1 (17.2)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. In the 2004 national tests, results were above the national average in reading and writing and, in these subjects, overall standards were much better than in schools with similar socio-economic circumstances. Standards were in line with the national average and similar schools in mathematics. Results from the teacher assessments in science were also in line with the national average and similar schools. Over the past five years, despite an increasing number of pupils with special educational needs being educated in Sidbury, the school has kept up with the national trend and, taking the past three years together, the overall performance of pupils has been above the national average, with reading consistently the most successful subject.
4. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading, mathematics and science are above average. This represents good progress and achievement in relation to their attainment when they started in Year 1. Current standards in writing are below average where pupils' level of achievement is satisfactory. Standards of achievement are not as high in writing because pupils' early spelling skills are not well developed. As a result, many pupils struggle to put words onto paper and do not do justice to their developing vocabulary.

## KEY STAGE 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.8 (27.5)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.9 (28.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.0 (30.8)	28.6 (28.6)

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

5. Results in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 6 were a disappointment for the school and unexpected. Standards were well below the national average in English and science and below the national average in mathematics. Compared with their prior attainment in the Year 2 tests, pupils made well below average progress in all three subjects. In this year group, nearly 30 per cent were pupils with special educational needs. In addition, a further 9 per cent had more complex needs. Also, 18 per cent of pupils had recently arrived in the school. Whilst these factors undoubtedly impacted on the overall standards attained, this was not the whole picture. During the week of the tests, a serious incident which occurred in the village community affected some Year 6 pupils personally. Evidence shows that many pupils' actual performance was well below that expected from their previous work and did not reflect their performance in optional tests taken previously.
6. Inspection evidence shows that current standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Based on their capabilities and performance in the 2001 national tests in Year 2, pupils have made good progress in these subjects and are achieving well. However, whilst this looks a positive picture and standards in speaking, listening and reading are above average, standards in writing are average. In this aspect of English, pupils' level of achievement and their written work does not do justice to their level of knowledge and understanding. In particular, spelling skills are weak. Pupils have a good vocabulary, but appear reluctant to put their ideas down onto paper. Many state that they do not like writing.

The school has canvassed pupils and is aware of this issue. Through an innovative approach to the curriculum, it is trying hard to make writing more meaningful for pupils. However, it recognises that under the principles of 'Excellence and Enjoyment' (DfES Circular) this could be further developed.

7. Standards in ICT are above average and improving rapidly, due to increased staff skills, support from a local technology college and the provision and updating of equipment. Standards in religious education are above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in all other subjects inspected in depth are also above average. The school has been recognised with an award for its work in the creative arts. The good standards in the more practical and creative subjects are in part due to the good quality curricular provision, effective use of specialist teachers and visitors and increased staff expertise that serve to make learning interesting and relevant.

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

Pupils' attitudes to learning are **very good**. Their behaviour is **good**. Other aspects of pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very good attitudes and relationships are very warm and caring.
- Pupils take a great interest in school life and are prepared to take responsibility.
- The school sets high expectations of pupils' conduct and good behaviour, which most pupils meet.
- Pupils' social and moral development is very good and very well supported and their spiritual and cultural development is good.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good.

### **Commentary**

8. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. This is similar to the previous inspection. Pupils participate readily in and enjoy the life of the school. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and to show initiative, especially when given the opportunity. Pupils feel valued so their confidence and self-esteem improve. Relationships throughout the school are very good. An atmosphere of trust pervades. The very high quality of the relationship stimulates in most pupils a desire to learn and do their best.
9. Behaviour is also good overall, especially given the changed context of the school, high pupil mobility and differences in the intake since the previous inspection. Good behaviour overall has been maintained. Pupils move around the school sensibly and behaviour on the playground is good. Currently, there is a large proportion of pupils in the school with learning and behavioural difficulties and some pupils do demonstrate challenging behaviour, but such incidents are very well managed by teachers so that they do not have a negative impact on learning. Most pupils understand and support the school's code of conduct and the school's values, which emphasise strongly respect for others and their feelings. Opportunities such as the 'Buddy Bus Stop', shared reading and physical education partners are highly effective in bringing together pupils from different age groups and ensuring a sense of belonging. Such features have an especially positive impact on pupils' social and moral development. Incidents of bullying or harassment are reported to happen very rarely and are dealt with effectively.
10. Children achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development in the reception class and reach the standards expected. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Social and moral development is very good. Support for these attributes is embedded in the school's ethos and code of conduct. The range of visits and visitors, very good range of clubs, together with various charitable fund raising events, also encourage pupils to develop socially and morally, as well as contributing to their personal development. Spiritual awareness is well promoted through assemblies which reflect the Christian nature of the school and has improved since the last inspection, when it was an issue. Pupils are given good opportunities to contemplate and reflect within a quiet and supportive atmosphere. Pupils' cultural development is good because it is enriched through the curriculum by the creative arts and literature. A range of cultures from across the world are represented, celebrated and valued. People who have visited India, Africa and St. Lucia enrich the geography curriculum, for example, but also widen and deepen pupils' cultural understanding. Pupils are well aware of

the multi-cultural nature of society and they have a good understanding of other faiths and cultures.

## Attendance

11. Attendance and punctuality are good. Figures are much improved since the previous inspection. This reflects the hard work of the headteacher. Parents are fully supportive and send their children punctually in the morning. If pupils do arrive late, it is generally because the public bus is not on time. The school administrator fully understands and implements her role in recording and monitoring attendance efficiently. The school works successfully in partnership with outside agencies to support more vulnerable pupils.

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003/2004 (95.2%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.7	School data:	0.1
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.*

## EXCLUSIONS

### Ethnic background of pupils

### Exclusions in the last school year

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	94	1	1
White – any other white background	1		
Mixed-White and Asian	4		

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

12. As the school's inclusion philosophy and practice is so strong, everything possible was done before the decision was made to exclude a pupil last year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good** with some very good features. Teaching and the curriculum are **good**, with **very good** opportunities for enrichment. The care of pupils is **very good**. Taken together with **good** links with the community and parents and **very good** links with other schools and colleges, these features foster very good attitudes to school.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6	13	9	0	0	0

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

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Assessment procedures are **satisfactory** overall.

### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Reception staff plan a wide range of practical activities, but occasionally the pace of learning is slow and activities are not carefully thought out.
- Very good relationships, very good class management skills and effective support from teaching assistants ensure pupils behave well in lessons and develop very good attitudes to learning.
- The teaching of writing is not as successful as other subjects.
- Teachers use questions well to support learning, but the learning intentions are not always clear enough to help pupils understand what they have learned in the lesson ends.
- Assessment procedures are good in many subjects, but marking does not consistently help pupils to improve or make links to individual targets.
- The school monitors and supports pupils with special educational needs well, but individual learning targets are not specific enough to aid teaching and learning.

### Commentary

13. In the reception class, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Relationships are warm and supportive so that children try hard to please their teachers. Children delight in trying out new activities, but are often disappointed when they have to stop after only a short time. Space is restricted and this impacts on the range of activities available each day. Although lessons are often imaginative in their design, activities are not carefully thought out and time is not always well managed. Although children have regular opportunities to make choices, these are not always sufficiently directed, monitored or supported. As a result, children tend to select the same activities and staff do not consistently encourage and extend learning through purposeful interaction. Nevertheless, with new accommodation soon to be realised, coupled with very good support from the headteacher, these issues are already being addressed.
14. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 work hard and achieve well because teaching is challenging and sets high expectations. Although many pupils have emotional and behavioural problems, teachers' good teaching methods and insistence on high standards of behaviour, within a context of very good relationships and mutual respect, mean that all pupils, irrespective of background or ability, strive to do their best. Teachers make good use of teaching assistants, who play an important part in ensuring that pupils make good progress. Teachers' subject knowledge, which has improved since the previous inspection, is good. This ensures that basic skills are taught well in most subjects. However, whilst teaching in literacy is good overall, the teaching of writing and spelling is not so successful. Pupils tend to be over-reliant on the support of teachers and, because they are not confident to spell a range of words, they are reluctant to write at length, either in English or other subjects. This impacts negatively on the progress they make over time.
15. Teachers provide good support in lessons and use questions well to probe and extend learning. Activities that pupils are expected to complete are clearly explained so time is used efficiently. However, the overall purpose of the lesson is not explained in simple terms so that pupils can understand what they are expected to learn. In addition, while lesson ends are

used to celebrate good work, they are not always used to encourage pupils to review their own progress and consider what they might need to do next time to improve.

16. Assessment procedures are good and the school has improved the way that it monitors and tracks the attainment and progress of individual pupils in many subjects. This is crucial in a school where pupils often start at other than the usual time. The school now has a wealth of data available from the many assessments undertaken. The school has recently trialled individual targets for the older pupils. However, not all pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve and the school recognises that these individual targets could be developed further. In addition, the quality of marking is not consistent and is not always supportive of learning.
17. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully checked and tracked and satisfactory individual education plans written. However, there are currently too many targets. The targets are often too general and not easily shared with the pupils or parents. They are not manageable tools to support teachers in their planning, nor are they helpful in providing pupils with a vehicle by which they can check on their own progress and success.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **good**. The enrichment of the curriculum is **very good**. The accommodation and learning resources are **good** in the main school. The accommodation is unsatisfactory in the **Foundation Stage**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is well structured to enhance learning by maximising the links between subjects, but opportunities for pupils to investigate for themselves could be developed further.
- The school ensures all pupils have equal access and provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The curriculum is enriched by stimulating educational visits, visitors to the school and high quality extra-curricular clubs.
- The school grounds provide a very good resource for science and physical education.
- The Foundation Stage classroom is cramped and there is difficult and restricted access to an outdoor space.

## **COMMENTARY**

18. The school provides a good curriculum that meets all statutory requirements and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship are given a high priority. The curriculum has been carefully structured to meet the needs of pupils, who are all taught in mixed-age classes. Recently, imaginative links have been made between subjects, reflecting the headteacher's concern to provide a coherent curriculum for all. The resulting topics are highly motivating for pupils and have begun to have a positive impact on learning. The headteacher's strong vision has driven the curriculum forward so that there has been good progress since the last inspection.

19. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and well managed by an experienced practitioner, who has been awarded for her work. The school is very committed to inclusion. All pupils are valued and they have full and equal access to all that the school offers. Pupils' needs are identified early and good quality support provided. The skills of gifted and talented pupils are nurtured well and the school does all it can to ensure that they are stretched and challenged. However, the school recognises that current planning procedures do not specifically address the need for pupils to be challenged through opportunities to develop their problem solving and thinking skills. The headteacher has already attended training to support further innovation and revised plans are well in hand.
20. Good use is made of educational visits and visitors to the school. A recent visit to Coldharbour Mill, for example, effectively supported learning in science and stimulated pupil-generated designs using woven materials. The curriculum is further enhanced by the very good range of extra-curricular clubs offered by the staff of this small school. Clubs are open to different age groups, in rotation, allowing pupils of all ages access to the activities. Opportunities to participate in arts and physical activities are very good and include an art club, music and drama groups, sports teams and an athletics award scheme.
21. The expertise of teaching staff is well matched to the demands of the curriculum. Teachers are supported by experienced and well-qualified assistants, who make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
22. Under the strong and effective guidance of the headteacher the school's accommodation has been significantly enhanced so that every nook and cranny has a useful purpose. The school grounds have also been developed to provide a rich resource for science. There are hard play areas and grassed pitches. These, alongside a very good hall, provide very good facilities for physical education. However, some classes, including the reception class, are small. Space for the youngest children to learn through practical activities is limited and access to an outside area is difficult. This has an adverse effect on achievement. Every effort has been made to address this matter. The planned developments include a new reception class to allow access to an outdoor learning area. This is likely to have a significant impact on the quality of learning across the school as additional space will be released to create an improved library. Its resolution is currently beyond the control of the school, but looks to have been resolved, with new facilities expected to be ready in the very near future.

### Care, guidance and support

Provision for safety, health and welfare is **very good**. The school provides **good** advice and guidance for every pupil. There are **very effective** arrangements to seek and then act on pupils' views through the school council.

### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Policies and training which impact on the high standards of care and welfare are regularly reviewed and implemented.
- The school council is an especially important part of school life.
- Under the strong direction given by the headteacher, relationships are very good in the school and children feel safe and secure.
- Pupils receive good and timely personal advice and support, but academic guidance does not consistently help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.

### Commentary

23. The health, safety and welfare of pupils are very good and improved since the last inspection. Many improvements to the buildings and the site have been undertaken and governors ensure



that safety and security are always given careful consideration. Staff, including the headteacher, regularly review and meet their training needs in many areas, for example child protection issues and first aid. Many routines are now very well established. Adults clearly understand their individual roles and responsibilities and work closely together to support all pupils. The school has been adapted very well to meet the needs of pupils with physical disabilities. In a designated non-pedestrian area, many pupils have to travel unaccompanied to school on public transport. Ongoing discussion and attention are given to transport arrangements, which have been of concern in the past. During inspection it was noted that the supervision of pupils while waiting for the public bus was very good.

24. The school council meets every half term along with representatives from the governing body, from parents, from teaching assistants, from mid-day supervisors and the headteacher. This sharing of views and ideas is very effective in raising the profile, status and impact of pupils' own opinions within the whole school community. Council members spoke articulately about the difference they make to their school, for example when designing a 'Quiet Area' in the playground. Overall this is a very good feature of the school and one which is very well established.
25. Personal support and guidance is good. The headteacher actively involves parents at all stages when pupils need extra support and care. The care, support and guidance for pupils experiencing difficulties in their lives, those with emotional and behavioural problems and those with more complex learning needs are very effectively met. Teachers notice when pupils are experiencing difficulties and work closely with a range of outside agencies to get help and support. Pupils get along very well, really enjoy school and appreciate the care and support they are given. They readily approach adults, who know them well. They quickly adjust and adapt to life in reception class, where induction arrangements are good. Informal arrangements to monitor and track aspects of personal development are in place and, because teachers know the children so well, their needs are fully met.
26. Academic support and guidance are satisfactory overall. Pupils know they can ask for help and are very confident to do so. In some classes, academic support and guidance is good, but assessment information is not used consistently by all teachers to help pupils recognise and understand how they could improve their learning.

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

Links with parents and with the community, including the church, are **good**. Partnerships with other schools are now **very good**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- Parents have very positive views of the school and, in particular, appreciate all the headteacher is doing for them.
- Very good partnerships with other schools are of real benefit to pupils and staff.
- After some troubled times in the recent past, links within the community are developing very effectively and are now good.
- Church links are firmly established and the school is keen to maintain this close friendship with the new vicar.

### **Commentary**

27. Parents have very positive views of the school and recognise its many strengths, including the strong leadership shown by the headteacher. She has worked hard since her appointment to regain their trust and support. Parents value greatly her openness and honesty and they know she is doing her best for them and the children. They know too that she has built a successful team of staff in the school who work purposefully together. She keeps parents fully informed

through newsletters, the prospectus, the website and a very good welcome pack. Annual written reports are now much improved. Adjustments made after listening to parents and an audit of parents' views have led to ongoing changes. Many parents get involved in the parent teacher association or help in classes or the after-school club, but the headteacher is keen to involve even more parents in the life of the school.

28. The headteacher is very active in ensuring very secure partnerships with many other schools. She is committed to supporting students from initial teacher training institutes and in addition the deputy headteacher is an effective mentor. The headteacher organised joint training with other school staff recently and is always looking at opportunities to motivate staff and share good practice. The school benefits from being involved in this very active learning community. Links with secondary schools are very good and pupils from Year 6 complete shared projects and are involved in joint drama projects, which help to ensure that they settle well when they leave what is a relatively small village school.
29. The school is outward looking and sees its community as an asset. Community links have had to be worked at, but many now believe the corner has been turned and there is evidence of strong friendships developing. Members of community groups, for example the Women's Institute, willingly give their time to help with practical activities such as sewing in class. Other visitors from the community are frequent. The school gets involved in community events, for example local pancake races and 'Hot Pennies Day' and in local art competitions and, through the parish magazine, share and celebrate the children's achievements. As a result, links within the community are now good.
30. Church links are strong, including thorough involvement on the governing body. By tradition the whole school attends church, which is adjacent to the school grounds, every Wednesday and pupils spoke positively of this experience. The previous vicar is still very supportive of the school while the new vicar gets to know everyone. It is pleasing to hear that this year for the first time the school and the church are to have a joint fete in the summer. Events like this are set to bring the school and the community even closer.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are **very good**. Governance is **satisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. The leadership of key staff is **good**. The school is managed **very well**.

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The personal leadership of the headteacher is very good and management is very effective.
- There is a strong commitment to inclusion for all.
- The school makes a very good contribution to initial teacher training and staff development is very effective.
- Very effective self-evaluation procedures mean that the school correctly identifies its own priorities for improvement.
- The financial management of the school is astute, but success criteria to check on best value are not specific enough.

## COMMENTARY

31. The strong, supportive and very good personal leadership of the headteacher has resulted in a school with a clear sense of direction, vision and purpose, shared by all.

She has very skilfully steered the school through a difficult period, dealing swiftly with competency issues. There have been some significant improvements since the previous inspection, particularly in the last three years. Despite difficulties, overall standards have been maintained and in some instances, for example ICT and religious education, improved. Except for the difficulties encountered last year, trends in pupils' performance are mainly upward and above the national trend. With the support of governors, many of whom are recently appointed, confidence in the school and the trust of the community has been restored.

32. The leadership and management of the special educational needs provision are good. Staff and governors are very committed to inclusion and are very welcoming and supportive of pupils from all backgrounds and abilities. The school always ensures that all pupils are highly valued members of this small Christian community.
33. All subjects, including the foundation subjects, have a regular schedule for review and evaluation. Many subjects are well led and managed and, as a consequence, the school has effectively improved provision in many subjects. The school makes very good use of self-evaluation processes and monitors its work very well. All issues for improvement in this report have already been identified by the school as priorities for development. The highly competent school administrator ably assists the headteacher, staff and governors to discharge their responsibilities effectively and day-to-day management of the school is very efficient.
34. To the credit of the school, given the class teaching commitment of the headteacher, direct observation of teaching and learning does take place and teachers are given feedback on these observations, including points for improvement. The overall good quality of teaching in the school demonstrates the positive impact of the school's very good policies for continuing professional development and performance management. Teachers who are less confident are receiving very good help and support. Both the headteacher and deputy are closely involved as mentors of initial teacher training and the school regularly welcomes students. Provision and support for them is very good.
35. Governance is satisfactory overall. The committed and supportive governors are all linked to areas of the school and to subjects and many visit regularly. Many of the governors are recent appointments and inexperienced. As yet, they have not been able to help shape the vision and direction of the school and their monitoring of the work of the school is satisfactory, but developing. However, one of the longer established governors has been very supportive of the development of the religious education curriculum and pupils' spiritual development. Governors are proud of the school. They share the school's vision and ethos and fulfil their statutory duties well. They are becoming more aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, but are not yet confident enough to challenge its work.
36. Financial planning is very good and governors monitor the budget closely. Governors regularly seek out the best value when considering the purchase of equipment or alterations to the building. However, they are not always able to monitor best value fully as the success criteria used to assess pupils' performance, particularly their understanding and assessment of their own learning, are not yet rigorous enough. The relatively large carry forward, permitted by the local education authority, is designated to be used for the proposed new reception classroom. Expenditure per pupil is about average. Given the overall good quality of education provided, the school is judged as giving good value for money.

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR THE YEAR APRIL 2003 TO MARCH 2004**

<b><i>Income and expenditure (£)</i></b>	
Total income	328,340
Total expenditure	302,382
Expenditure per pupil	2,964

<b><i>Balances (£)</i></b>	
Balance from previous year	16,981
Balance carried forward to the next	28,338

## **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 **satisfactory**.

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

- Relationships are good and children are developing their levels of personal independence well. There is a good emphasis on practical counting and early mathematical activities.
- Practical activities and good links between areas of learning make learning interesting, but time is not consistently well managed and this impacts on learning.
- The teaching of early literacy skills, particularly writing, requires further development.
- Staff work well together to support learning, but opportunities for children to make decisions about their own learning require more purposeful direction and support.
- Opportunities to allow children to review their own learning are limited.
- Limited classroom accommodation and restricted access to a secure outside area affect learning, but these are in the process of redevelopment.

#### **Commentary**

37. The reception children are taught alongside Year 1 pupils. Children attend between one and four half days initially, depending on parental choice. At the time of the inspection, twelve children were attending full-time, but nearly half of these had only just started in the class. When children start school, their attainment is wide and varied, but below average overall. Evidence shows that the children are making satisfactory progress and their overall level of achievement is satisfactory. By the time they start in Year 1, they will not quite reach the expected goals for children of this age in most areas of learning. However, children make good progress and achieve well in their personal, social and mathematical development. In these areas of learning the children are in line to reach the expected goals when they start in Year 1.
38. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some good features. The teaching assistant provides good support for the teacher and children. Relationships are supportive, with warm praise and encouragement used so that children are happy, settled and eager to learn. Staff work well together and plan a range of practical activities around themes that interest the children. However, not all lessons are carefully planned and time is not always well managed. As a result, children can spend too much time listening to the teacher and do not always have enough time to develop their skills in the independent activities planned. Children can be just getting into their stride when activities have to stop and this puts a limit on the progress they make.
39. Satisfactory improvement has been made to the provision since the last inspection. The leadership and management are satisfactory and with very good support from the headteacher there are well thought out ideas about how to make further improvements. The building of the new accommodation, planned in response to issues raised in the last inspection, has been seriously delayed due to the nature of the proposed new site. Issues appear to have been resolved so that the children should be moving to new accommodation in the near future. In the meantime, the constraints of the internal accommodation, coupled with difficult access to the outside area, restrict the range of learning opportunities provided. The regular use of sand, water, painting, junk modelling and use of large wheeled toys, for example, is restricted by limited space. However, staff ensure that children have a broad range of suitable learning experiences, with daily opportunities for the children to make decisions about their learning. These 'free choice' activities, however, sometimes lack sufficient direction and purpose, with no time set aside for the children to review their learning with an adult. Also, not enough care is taken to ensure that children make sensible choices. As a result, children tend to select the same activities each day, rather than being encouraged

to take other options. In addition, adult input is not always supportive of learning. Children can therefore quickly lose interest and, when put together, these features limit the progress that children make.

40. Due to the short time available and the focus of the inspection, it was not possible to inspect all areas of learning in depth. In the areas of **personal, social and emotional development** and in their **mathematical development**, the quality of teaching and learning is good and children are achieving well. Many opportunities for the promotion of mathematical and personal skills are incorporated into daily routines. Interesting games and adult supported practical activities, such as counting the plates, cups and spoons to help *Goldilocks* prepare for a tea party, predicting the number of blocks hidden in the box or sorting the number tiles into the correct order, make learning interesting and relevant and this has a positive impact on the progress children make and their attitudes to learning. Staff promote children's confidence well and encourage them to be polite and caring towards each other. A warm rapport is evident between the adults and children and, because the simple rules are constantly reinforced, children settle quickly into the routines and are quickly becoming sensible and caring young people.
41. In **communication, language and literacy**, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Children delight in acting out the story of Goldilocks and, as a result of good support, recognise the sequence of events and enjoy telling traditional stories in their own words. Parents are very supportive of reading and this, coupled with regular opportunities to share a book with an adult, ensures that more able children are beginning to recognise some words and other children develop a love of books. However, a weakness is the teaching of letter sounds and early writing skills. Activities are not always well thought out and, as a result, children become restless as they wait for their turn. No models of the children's names, letters or simple words are available so that when children do attempt to write they become frustrated and this impacts on their confidence. In addition, there are limited opportunities for children to write for a purpose in their 'free choice' activities. This limits the progress they make.
42. In the area of **physical** and **creative** development and in their **knowledge and understanding of the world**, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Staff make the best use they can of the local area, playground and hall to enrich learning. Children enjoy examining moving toys, learning about levers, the forces of 'push and pull' and painting characters from traditional stories. Children dance to music with imagination and expression as 'Humpty Dumpty' because instructions are clear and they enjoy working with their older friends. They sing simple songs sweetly and try hard to create their own 'up and down' sound picture. However, in many activities, simple questions are not posed in a way that allows children to explain their ideas and, because lesson ends tend to be a little rushed, an opportunity is lost to allow the children to review their learning. This also limits the level of children's achievements.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Across the school pupils achieve well in speaking and listening and reading, but this is not reflected in pupils' writing, which could be improved.
- Standards of spelling are below average across the school.
- Pupils are not sufficiently aware of what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers are beginning to make good links with other subjects to develop pupils' writing skills.



## COMMENTARY

43. At the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards in speaking and listening that are in line with the national average. Standards of reading are average, but writing standards of the current Year 2 are below average. This is not as high as the previous year, but is similar to the previous inspection. Given their attainment when they started in Year 1, this represents satisfactory achievement in writing and good achievement in reading. There are 25 per cent of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2, many of whom have literacy difficulties, and a very small number of pupils new to speaking English. Though they may not reach the required standard, because of effective support they make good progress and achieve well overall.
44. At the end of Year 6, current standards are above average in reading, speaking and listening. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Given an above average number of pupils with special educational needs in this class, this represents good progress and achievement. Standards of writing are average and standards in spelling are below average. Pupils' achievement in writing is satisfactory. As a result of this weakness, despite many good features, provision in English is judged to be satisfactory overall.
45. Pupils' speaking skills are good and older pupils especially are often very articulate and demonstrate good use of their very extensive vocabulary. They are well able to express their views, explain their reasoning and enjoy conversing. This extensive use of a wide vocabulary helps pupils' thinking, their learning and consequently their achievement in many subjects. In all year groups, pupils read with increasing accuracy. Older pupils frequently read fluently and with good expression. However, these good skills are not used by pupils when writing.
46. In all year groups, the quality of their written work is impaired by the below average standards of spelling and sometimes untidy handwriting. Many younger pupils do not form their letters correctly and do not always understand the links between sounds and letters. These early skills are not taught consistently so the development of their spelling skills is not always supported adequately. At the end of Year 6, pupils produce sensitively written poetry, letters, descriptions, accounts and narratives, but spelling remains a weakness. In addition, pupils are not always motivated to write and consequently this limits their productivity and achievement. Whilst pupils are introduced to the use of a pen at a suitable age and stage, some do not consistently use a joined, legible style even by Year 6. Left-handers are not always reminded of where to sit or how to position their book or paper on the desk. This prevents them from gaining fluency in their writing.
47. Teaching and learning are good overall. The teaching of reading is a strength and speaking and listening skills are well taught. The teaching of writing is satisfactory. Teaching assistants make a good and significant contribution to pupils' progress, especially with pupils' achievement in reading. Activities and tasks are well matched to the needs of pupils, with teachers using on-going assessments and their personal knowledge of pupils well to plan work suitable for individuals and small groups. Planning is detailed, but teachers do not always share with pupils the objectives of the lesson and what it is that they are intended to learn. As a result, they do not always use the lesson ends to good effect to check and assess pupils' understanding and ascertain what they have learned. Marking across the school is not used consistently to help pupils know precisely what they need to do to improve their writing. Consequently, pupils lack a proper understanding of their own learning and what they need to do to improve. This limits their achievement, especially in writing.



48. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader provides a good role model in her own teaching of English. She has a thorough knowledge of the subject across the school and through her monitoring of teaching and learning has already identified writing as a priority for improvement. As part of this evaluation process, the school has surveyed pupils' views and it is evident that writing is their least favourite area of the curriculum. In response, the school has developed a richer curriculum, with interesting contexts for writing, but its impact on pupils' achievement in writing is not yet evident.

## **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

49. Language and literacy are effectively promoted in other subjects. Opportunities for pupils to debate, act in role and research facts effectively enhance pupils' reading and speaking skills. Increasingly pupils write for a range of purposes in other subjects. In history, books of pupils' recorded work are made and a particularly good link was made when pupils were studying the Tudors. There are several instances of pupils using their well-developed ICT skills to draft, edit and refine their writing in a range of contexts. This approach is an example of the school's drive to make writing more meaningful.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good subject knowledge is used to challenge pupils.
- Pupils engage enthusiastically in lessons and achieve well.
- Marking, target setting and lesson ends are not consistently used to help pupils review learning.
- Opportunities to develop pupils' skills through investigative work are not fully developed, but are being established.

### **Commentary**

50. Inspection findings indicate that pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to reach above average standards. Pupils in Year 2 are also on course to attain above average standards. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those new to speaking English achieve as well as their classmates because they are well supported by their teachers and teaching assistants. There are some gifted mathematicians in the school who are challenged well so they attain very high standards and achieve well.
51. The number of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the beginning and end of the school is above average. This, combined with the small number of pupils in each age group, makes year-on-year comparisons of test results unreliable. Inspection evidence shows that the progress made by pupils is consistently good in relation to their individual capabilities. Pupils make good progress throughout the school in number work, shape, space and measures and data handling. Their progress in using and applying mathematics is satisfactory. This is because currently only a few opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills through investigative work. However, the school is addressing this aspect of learning, for example by establishing more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their

skills to solve problems in other subjects. This was seen to good effect in geography, but it is too soon to have had an impact on learning overall.

52. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good because teachers plan lessons carefully and choose tasks that engage their pupils. Teachers manage pupils very well, ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are able to participate fully. Whilst being sensitive to the needs of pupils with complex difficulties, teachers have high expectations of their pupils, setting suitably challenging work and ensuring that lessons move forward at a brisk pace. This helps to maintain motivation. Lessons start in a lively manner with teachers using well-chosen questions. These short sessions help the pupils develop their mental and oral skills and also settle them quickly in preparation for the main session that follows. Pupils work hard in lessons and have very good relationships with their teachers and each other. However, the purpose of the lesson is not always clearly explained to the pupils at the start and revisited in the lesson ends in order to review learning and check on understanding. As a result, pupils do not receive clear feedback to help them identify successful learning strategies.
53. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. This enables them to adjust lesson content skilfully to meet the wide-ranging needs of pupils. Assessment information is collected and analysed so that staff can adjust their teaching programmes. However, individual learning targets are not set to enable pupils to become more aware of their own learning and how it could be improved. Marking of pupils' work is not consistent and does not always help pupils know how they can progress. This impacts on their achievement.
54. Leadership and management of mathematics are good. The well-established subject leader has developed robust systems for the monitoring of teaching and the recording of pupil progress. She ensures that staff have up-to-date knowledge of the subject and analyses test results, providing information that helps teachers plan more effectively. As a result, the quality of the provision has improved since the last inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

55. Pupils' use of mathematical skills in other subjects is satisfactory and an area for development that has already been identified by the school. In design and technology, for instance, pupils use their knowledge to measure accurately and use computers to draw the nets of three-dimensional mathematical shapes. However, teachers make highly effective use of computer programs in their mathematics teaching.

## **SCIENCE**

No teaching was observed in science, because of the innovative way the school plans the curriculum. However, the inspection team obtained sufficient evidence to make a secure judgement of overall provision.

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have high expectations so pupils make good progress.
- The innovative organisation of the curriculum provides stimulating contexts for learning.

- There are some good opportunities for pupils to raise their own questions for investigation, but these opportunities are inconsistent.
- Marking does not clearly focus on the learning intentions of lessons or inform pupils what they have to do to improve.
- Pupils' progress is tracked, but this could be developed further.

## Commentary

56. Inspection evidence was drawn from an analysis of books and displays of pupils' work, teachers' planning, the analysis of test results, interim school tests, tracking data and detailed discussions with staff and pupils, including all pupils in Years 5 and 6. This evidence indicates that, by the end of Years 2 and 6, attainment is above average. Although the context of the school has changed, standards are similar to those found at the last inspection. Pupils make good progress in relation to their individual capabilities because it is evident that teachers have high expectations. More able pupils are set challenging work and less able pupils are appropriately supported so all groups and abilities achieve well.
57. Opportunities for the study of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes are good and pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding. The provision for scientific enquiry is less well developed and is satisfactory overall. This is because in some year groups there is an over-reliance on teacher-directed investigation and recording. As a result, some pupils are given too few opportunities to make their own choices and develop their own questions for investigation. Where scientific enquiry is well taught there are examples of pupils carrying out their own research, developing their own investigations and using a variety of recording techniques. The school recognises that this is an area for development and has included it as a priority in the school improvement plan.
58. As a result of the innovative way in which the school organises the curriculum, no science was being taught during the inspection. However, inspection evidence from the wide range of sources already identified indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge by planning carefully structured activities that provide pupils with interesting learning experiences. Where appropriate, these learning experiences are linked to other subjects. It is too new for this initiative to have had an overall impact on standards in science. However, the innovative timetabling, which allows learning to take place in concentrated blocks of time, provides pupils with opportunities for learning at a greater depth than might otherwise be possible. All pupils are enthusiastic about this approach and state that it helps them to learn.
59. Books are marked regularly and pupils are aware of the overall quality of what they have done. Teachers' comments, whilst often supportive, frequently focus on issues of presentation rather than on the scientific learning intention of the work. Opportunities are missed to inform pupils what they should do to improve. Consequently, the marking does not support the development of pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding and pupils' progress is impeded.
60. Leadership and management of science are satisfactory. The subject leader has recently been appointed to the role and has made a satisfactory start. She clearly recognises the gaps in her own expertise and is actively seeking to fill them. The school uses the local environment and school grounds well to enhance learning opportunities and has improved curriculum planning so that good improvement has been made to the provision since the last inspection. Individual teachers assess pupils' levels of attainment within units of work and progress is

tracked. However, the school recognises that the systems for monitoring pupils' progress could be refined further to have a more direct impact on teaching and learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

Provision for ICT is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Resources have improved so that pupils enjoy learning.
- Teachers are skilled, confident and teach ICT well, but learning intentions are not always specific enough to help pupils evaluate their own learning.
- The use of ICT in other subjects is good.
- Very good leadership and management have ensured very good improvements to the facilities, standards and overall provision.

### **Commentary**

61. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and above expectations at the end of Year 6. This marks very good improvement since the last inspection. Since the appointment of the headteacher, the school has made a major investment in resources and staff development so that all teachers have attained the Gold Standard in a nationally recognised award scheme. As a result of these initiatives, all pupils, whatever their ability, are enthusiastic, try hard, achieve well and make good progress from a low starting point. Pupils who start at other than the usual times and the few who are new to speaking English also make good progress because of the good quality support they receive.
62. By the end of Year 2, pupils of all abilities are able to move icons on the screen and most can save and retrieve their work. More able pupils can combine text with graphics and enter data into a database in order to find out the answer to simple questions. Pupils work well together so that they quickly gain confidence and make good progress. All pupils in Years 3 and 4 receive an intensive programme of support to develop keyboard skills. As a result, by the end of Year 6, most pupils have good skills and demonstrate confidence and speed. Pupils make good progress in developing their data handling skills because of the skilful way this is taught. As a result, they are able to handle and communicate information through spreadsheets and suggest improvements. Older pupils can also confidently explore simulations. They show a growing awareness of audience and good technical skills to manipulate text, graphics and sound to produce good quality presentations.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching assistants are also skilled and are a valuable aid to learning, often taking responsibility for teaching small groups. Teachers demonstrate skills clearly and provide opportunities for less confident pupils to work alongside their more able classmates. This enables pupils to support each other so that they learn well. Pupils are actively involved in evaluating their own learning at the end of a topic. However, the learning intentions are not always made clear to the pupils at the start of a lesson. Consequently, pupils are not always sure about what they have learned or what they need to do to improve at the end of the lesson.
64. The subject is very well led and managed by the headteacher who has ensured that the significant weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been fully addressed. She is not complacent and there are good plans to improve the provision further

through links with a local technology college and new resources, once planning permission has been obtained for a new classroom.

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

65. Teachers make good and increasing use of ICT to promote learning in other subjects through the innovative way that the curriculum is planned. Pupils have produced reports for many subjects, including religious education, history and geography, using spreadsheets, music and digital images, for example. Pupils are able to use their ICT skills well to plan and design high quality boxes for design and technology and regularly use ICT skills in mathematics and English. These good opportunities serve to make learning meaningful and relevant.

### **HUMANITIES**

66. Due to the focus of the inspection, no lessons were observed in **history** and **geography**. Consequently, no secure judgement can be made about standards, provision or teaching. The subjects are often linked with other subjects to make learning meaningful. In history, for example, the study of Egyptians was used well to focus pupils' ideas for an Egyptian dance and to design machines in design and technology. Work on Tudors and Henry VIII was used effectively as a vehicle to create songs for a school musical production. Older pupils' study of the local environment in geography is being used successfully to produce well researched reports on the difficulties of walking to school and dangers for pedestrians in the village. Pupils, working closely with local police officers, were observed using their ICT, mathematics and literacy and geography skills to produce their reports. The curriculum for these subjects fully complies with statutory requirements and has been adapted well to meet the needs of pupils working in mixed age classes.

### **Religious education**

Provision for religious education is **good**.

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

- Religious education contributes well to pupils' spiritual, cultural and moral development.
- Pupils' recorded work shows a good understanding of different faiths.
- The leadership and management of the subject have ensured the provision has developed well.

## Commentary

67. Standards in religious education have improved since the previous inspection. Standards are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. From the time they start in the school, pupils develop a good knowledge of different spiritual and religious ideas from the major religions studied. Teachers place a strong emphasis on helping pupils make links between different religious ideas and practices. As a result, across the school, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue, make good progress and achieve well in relation to their attainment when they started in the school.
68. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made some thoughtful, considered comparisons between the Hindu religion and others they have studied. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate a good ability to compare the similarities and differences in religious faiths and a clear understanding of the importance and relevance, for example, of symbolism and places of worship in different religions. Older pupils show sensitive awareness of the circumstances of the early Jews and their flight from Egypt and a good understanding when comparing and contrasting the 'orthodox' and 'reform' aspects of the Jewish faith. They are articulate and well able to describe and understand the way Judaism so strongly influences the Jewish way of life and its culture. As a result, they show great respect for people's beliefs and values so that religious education contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with some very good features. Very good quality relationships and sensitivity to the needs and beliefs of others are characteristics of the teaching. Teachers have a good level of subject knowledge and expertise and they use available resources very well, with a good impact on pupils' learning and understanding. Whilst the pupils regularly visit local places of Christian worship, which helps to deepen their spiritual understanding, the school acknowledges that significant travel time and expense make visits to places of worship of other religions difficult. However, judicious and sensible use is made of video and visitors.
70. Leadership and management of religious education are good. The knowledgeable subject leader has ensured a relevant scheme of work is available and has built up a good resource base for the school. She has ensured that the subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness so that good improvement has been made to the provision since the last inspection. Limitations of time and personnel mean that there are few opportunities to observe learning and teaching directly, but the pupils' recorded work is regularly and thoroughly monitored and analysed.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

71. No lessons were seen in art and design and design and technology. Work was sampled and inspectors also talked to pupils and teachers, but it is not possible to form a judgement about provision in these subjects.
72. In **design and technology**, evidence indicates that standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and have improved since the last inspection. The subject is very well resourced and a multi-purpose room that is used for food technology provides improved facilities and makes a good contribution to teaching and learning. Pupils receive an appropriate balance of experiences across the full range of design and technology, including work with textiles, food and resistant materials. The standard of moving models produced by Year 6 pupils is above average and it is evident that pupils take great pride in their work. Staff

have adapted nationally provided schemes of work to produce a well-planned programme of work that meets the needs of pupils taught in mixed age classes. The subject leader has a sound grasp of the subject and is improving her knowledge by attending an accredited programme of training in design and technology.

73. In **art and design** indications are that, as found at the last inspection, standards are above average. The school is deservedly proud of its prestigious silver arts mark awarded in 2004 by the Arts Council. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. The school takes part in the south-west art exhibitions and regularly contributes work to local events. Each year there is an arts week during which pupils go on visits and at other times visiting artists enrich the art curriculum. Pupils work creatively in a wide variety of media. In some classes art sketchbooks are used well to develop pupils' ideas and skills. For example, in Year 2, pupils have developed observational drawing skills prior to painting still life pictures in the style of Cézanne. In Year 4, sketchbooks have been used to encourage the development of ideas linked to a topic on Ancient Egypt, but the use of sketchbooks by pupils to evaluate their own learning is not consistent.

## **Music**

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' enjoyment, attainment and self-confidence are effectively enhanced by regular opportunities to sing and perform.
- Teaching is consistently good and there is a good approach to planning, but lesson ends are not used consistently to help pupils evaluate their own learning.
- The subject leader has worked successfully to improve the provision.

### **Commentary**

74. Pupils achieve well throughout the school and attain standards that are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. All pupils without exception state that they enjoy music and this is evident in the way they concentrate in lessons and strive hard to improve. Pupils' singing is sweet and tuneful, with good breath control and sense of rhythm. By the end of Year 6, they can sing well in parts. Pupils' use of technical language is good and, because of good teaching, older pupils are developing the use of notation when composing and they can play a range of instruments well. Pupils with special educational needs, those new to speaking English or those who have just moved to the school quickly benefit from the good quality teaching so they make rapid progress.
75. Regular opportunities for pupils to perform in concerts and musical productions not only enhance their musical skills, but also make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. In particular, the subject provides an effective vehicle for pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties to shine and express themselves in a meaningful manner. This successfully aids their confidence and self-esteem.
76. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching by a well qualified and talented teacher is consistently good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' enjoyment and the good progress they make. Planning is detailed and the 'carousel' approach to teaching ensures that all pupils in the school from Years 2 to 6 benefit from this good quality support. Lesson planning is detailed and based on a good knowledge and understanding of pupils' abilities so they are always challenged to achieve their best. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own compositions. They respect each other's opinions and are honest and self-critical so they are able to improve on their

performances. However, because the specific learning intentions are not always made clear to the pupils at the start of each lesson, an opportunity is missed to recap in the lesson ends on what they have learned overall.

77. The subject is well led and managed by a part-time teacher who has worked hard to make a good improvement to the quality of the provision. Improved resources have ensured a wider range of musical experiences can be provided and there are well thought out plans to enhance the provision further.



## Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership has enhanced the provision well.
- Pupils enjoy physical education and try hard in lessons.
- Older pupils successfully coach younger pupils.

### Commentary

78. As found at the last inspection, at the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are above national expectations. Pupils of all abilities enjoy the subject and try hard to improve. These positive attitudes, coupled with consistently good teaching, ensure that pupils make good progress and achieve well overall. Pupils with physical difficulties are valued members of the school and because of sensitive support they are able to participate in most lessons, while individual programmes develop co-ordination, balance and upper body strength. This effectively enhances their confidence as well as their physical development.
79. In all classes, pupils dance with expression and with increasing control and skill. Learning to mirror their movements, to create Egyptian dances in support of their history project or movements like machines to support their science work makes learning relevant and interesting. By the end of Year 6, most pupils can plan and execute a well-controlled sequence of movements in gymnastics, with more able pupils producing a good sequence of complex balances with a smooth transition in between. Pupils strive hard to improve because of very high expectations, skilful teaching and very effective use of demonstrations. Pupils have good ball control and a good appreciation of team tactics through regular practice and effective use of praise and encouragement. Older pupils have been trained to coach younger ones and this is not only having beneficial impact on the ball skills of younger pupils, but also the confidence of older pupils, who revel in this opportunity to help.
80. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with very good teaching by the subject leader, who is a very good role model. In all lessons good attention is given to ensuring that pupils warm up and cool down and there is a good emphasis on pupils evaluating each other's performances. Together with many good teacher demonstrations and continual coaching, this ensures that all pupils are enabled to make adjustments to their performance and achieve well. A strong feature of lessons are the very good relationships that ensure that pupils of all abilities try hard to improve, even if they find the activity challenging.
81. The subject is very well led and managed by an experienced and skilled teacher, who is a Primary Link teacher within the local education authority. She has worked hard to improve the range of resources available, develop teachers' expertise, improve planning and raise the profile of the subject through the use of visiting gymnasts and athletes and regular events with other schools. Concerned about the fitness level of pupils, the school has introduced daily 'short bursts' of physical activity, which the pupils enjoy and benefit from greatly. As a result of all these initiatives, good improvement has been made to the provision since the last inspection.

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

82. This subject was not a main focus of the inspection and only one lesson was seen. As a result, it is not possible to make a judgement about provision. However, it is clear from the evidence available that the school places a strong emphasis on the development of pupils as individuals so that they can play a full and active role in the school community and beyond. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has been reviewed. There is now a scheme of work that meets the needs of all pupils. The subject is taught as separate lessons and is also developed through the wider provision of the school. The separate lessons tackle issues that are of immediate relevance to the pupils. For instance, in a good lesson with Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, the teacher helped pupils explore their feelings about 'being left out'. Pupils talked openly and confidently about how they feel when they are picked last for a team. The good choice of context for the discussion led to an interesting and stimulating lesson that is likely to impact directly on pupils' future actions. The scheme of work includes appropriate units on a wide range of health issues including sex education and drugs. This helps pupils make responsible choices in their lives.

## 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	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

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

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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