

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SPINNING INFANT SCHOOL**

Ramsey, Huntingdon

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110684

Headteacher: Mrs Diana Cooling

Lead inspector: Mr Martin Newell

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

Inspection number: 267710

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 5-7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number on roll: 177

School address: High Street  
Ramsey  
Huntingdon  
Cambridgeshire

Postcode: PE26 1AD

Telephone number: 01487 813587

Fax number: 01487 711987

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of  
governors: Mr Jeremy Hyde

Date of previous inspection: 23rd November 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the market town of Ramsey, near Huntingdon in Cambridgeshire. The school gained a Healthy Schools Award and a School Achievement Award, both in 2003. The school has also recently gained praise and recognition from OFSTED for its excellent commitment to inclusion. There are 177 pupils on roll at the school with a slightly higher number of boys than girls. The level of pupil mobility is a little higher than that found in other schools. Although most pupils that attend the school are of white British origin, a small percentage of pupils are from different ethnic origins and are at an early stage of acquiring English. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs stands at 13 per cent and this is just below the national average. The percentage of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is a little higher than the national average. The nature of special educational needs includes moderate learning and physical difficulties, and autism. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average at 8 per cent. Attainment when children start at the school covers the full ability range, but is at an average level overall.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10638	Martin Newell	Lead inspector	English as an additional language English Religious education Art and design Design and technology Personal, social and health education and citizenship
15181	Meg Hackney	Lay inspector	
20301	Peter Isherwood	Team inspector	Special educational needs Foundation Stage curriculum Mathematics Music Physical education
13805	Lynn Lowery	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology History Geography

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good** school with some excellent features. Throughout the school, children and pupils achieve very well and by the time that pupils leave the school standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. The excellent leadership of the headteacher, the very good teaching, excellent team spirit and the school's excellent commitment to inclusion are all factors that contribute significantly to the school's many successes. The school provides good value for money.

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

- At every stage of the school, all pupils achieve very well because of the very good quality of teaching.
- The leadership and management skills of the headteacher are outstanding and she is supported very well by all staff and a very good governing body.
- The school ensures, in an excellent manner, that all pupils are fully included in the wide range of vibrant and exciting learning opportunities that are on offer.
- The very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils add much to the excellent ethos of the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent overall.
- The standards of care and welfare for pupils are very good and the uniqueness of the individual is recognised and celebrated.
- The very good links that the school has established with parents and the community bring an added dimension to pupils' learning.
- Assessment procedures in some subjects are not yet rigorous, formal or effective enough.

The school has made very good progress since the time of the last inspection. There have been significant improvements in standards and how well pupils achieve. Teaching and learning have gone from strength to strength and the role of the governing body is much improved. Many of the strengths identified in the last inspection have been maintained and indeed built upon. This is a school with no sense of complacency as it constantly strives for excellence.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 2 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	A	A	A	C
writing	A	B	B	C
mathematics	A	C	B	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

*Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 achieve **very well**. The above table shows that on the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment

was well above the national average in reading and above the national average in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science showed attainment to be well above the national average. When compared to similar schools on the basis of free school meals, attainment is at an average level. This similar schools comparison puts the school in a high socio-economically advantaged banding which does not consistently reflect the area that the school serves. Inspection findings show that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are well above average and that all pupils achieve very well given attainment levels when children start at the school. A particular strength of the school is the fact that a very good emphasis is given to developing pupils' learning in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. As a result, by the end of Year 2, standards in art and design are well above average and all pupils achieve very well; standards in religious education, information and communication technology and history are above average and achievement good and at times very good. Aspects of music and physical education are above average with pupils achieving well. Although design and technology and geography were not inspected in depth, evidence indicates that pupils do well in these subjects.

Children get off to a flying start during their time in the Foundation Stage and achieve very well. Attainment when children start at the school covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall. The very good teaching and curriculum provision ensure that by the end of the reception year, standards exceed the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning except in children's personal, social and emotional development where attainment is much better than the expected level.

Across the school pupils with special educational needs and pupils who are learning English as an additional language achieve as well as their classmates because of the very good provision and levels of support.

Overall pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **excellent**. Spiritual and cultural development is very good with moral and social development being excellent. The behaviour in class and around the school is very good. Pupils show a real thirst for learning, have very positive attitudes and the fact that they love coming to school is reflected in the attendance rates which are above the national average. Punctuality is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is **very good**. Teaching and learning are **very good**. Assessment is good overall. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very well planned and learning is fun, strikes a very good balance between adult and child led activities and suits very well how young children learn best. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is focused, challenging and exciting and very well matched to the differing needs of individual pupils. Throughout the school teaching assistants make a powerful and significant contribution to how well children and pupils achieve. Very good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress in the Foundation Stage and in English, mathematics and science. The school has accurately identified the need to put in place more rigorous and effective assessment procedures in other subjects. The curriculum provided for pupils is very good and is enhanced by a very good range of enrichment opportunities provided through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. The provision made for pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. The level of care and welfare provided for all pupils is of a high standard and pupils' voices are respected, listened to and acted upon. Relationships in school are excellent and add significantly to the sense of community that

pervades the life of the school. Pupils leave the school as very well rounded, mature, happy and high achieving individuals. The links with parents and the community are very good, add much to the sense of togetherness and enhance the quality of pupils' learning. Links with other schools are good overall.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the school are **very good** overall. The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent and have contributed significantly to how successful the school is. The headteacher's commitment, vision and enthusiasm are outstanding and have been pivotal factors in establishing an excellent team spirit and ethos that permeate and illuminate the work of the school. The headteacher is supported by a very effective deputy headteacher, subject leaders and administration staff who all contribute a great deal to the leadership and management of the school. Governance of the school is very good with governors playing a very effective role in the strategic management of the school and in holding the school to account for the quality of education it provides. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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

The parents are delighted with the quality of education that the school provides. The response to the parents' questionnaire and responses at the parents' meeting were very positive about almost all aspects of school life and only a very small number of parents registered any concerns. Parents are very appreciative of the quality of education that the school provides and are proud of how well their children achieve during their time at the school.

Discussions with pupils show that they too are very proud of their school and thoroughly enjoy their time there. Pupils recognise that all staff want them to achieve well but, equally, many pupils stated how much fun learning is. They say that staff are always ready to listen to them and that there is always somebody to talk to if they have any problems or concerns. They do not feel that bullying is an issue in school because "everyone in school is friends."

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Develop sharper and more rigorous procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress in subjects where they are not yet in place.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Standards overall are **well above average** by the end of Year 2. Across the school, from reception to Year 2, children and pupils achieve **very well**.

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

- Children get off to a flying start in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve very well and attain high standards in a number of subjects.
- The excellent manner in which the school embraces inclusion means that pupils with special educational needs, pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those who are gifted and talented achieve as well as their classmates.

#### **Commentary**

##### **FOUNDATION STAGE**

1. The attainment levels when children start at the school cover the full ability range but are at an average level overall. The children benefit from very good teaching and curriculum provision which results in all children making very good progress and achieving very well across all areas of learning. As a result by the end of the reception year, attainment is above the expected level in all areas of learning, except in personal, social and emotional development where it is well above the expected level.

##### **KEY STAGE 1**

2. On the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils, attainment was well above the national average in reading and science and above the national average in writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools on the basis of eligibility for free school meals, attainment was at an average level in reading, writing and mathematics. The free school meals banding in which the school is placed suggests that the area that the school serves is very socio-economically advantaged but this does not truly reflect the actual and more socially and economically diverse communities that the school serves. The trend in improvement of the school between 2000 and 2004 is broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection findings indicate that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are well above average and all pupils, regardless of ability, gender or ethnicity achieve very well, given their attainment levels when they start at the school. The school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' abilities in subjects other than the core subjects. As a result, pupils achieve very well in art and design and standards are well above average by the end of Year 2. Standards are above average in information and communication technology and history by the time that pupils leave school and achievement is good. By the end of Year 2 standards in religious education exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and all pupils achieve well. Although timetable constraints meant that not all subjects were inspected in depth there is clear evidence to suggest that standards are above average in geography and pupils' singing across the school is good as is their level of gymnastic ability. Achievement in lessons in these subjects is often good.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.0 (17.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.8 (15.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.9 (16.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 70 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The school's commitment to inclusion is excellent and this is reflected in the manner in which all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those from different ethnic backgrounds, higher-attaining pupils and those who are gifted and talented are all given equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and to everything that the school has to offer. These are significant factors in ensuring that these pupils consistently achieve as well as their classmates.

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

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has high expectations of the behaviour and attitudes of its pupils who rise to the challenge very well.
- Bullying is a rare occurrence.
- Pupils' moral and social development and the quality of relationships in the school all add much to the outstanding ethos of the school.
- The school places a strong emphasis on the spiritual and cultural development of all pupils.
- The fact that pupils love coming to school is reflected in the good attendance rates.

### Commentary

4. Pupils have very good attitudes towards school, their learning and people around them. They are very interested in all that the school has to offer and are very keen to take advantage of the activities provided for them. Pupils work together very well and show a real desire to please and to do well. Pupils say they love coming to school because learning is fun and exciting. Pupils are very happy in school and parents support this view. This starts in the reception class where children settle quickly because of the calm, purposeful working atmosphere that is present. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language show equally positive attitudes to learning because they are valued by members of staff and as a result gain confidence in their learning. The school has maintained and in some instances built on the high standards of behaviour, attitudes and personal development identified at the last inspection.
5. Behaviour in and around the school is very good and at times excellent. The school sets high expectations of good behaviour and actively involves the pupils in drawing up class and school rules. Pupils show high levels of respect for one another, their teachers and visitors. They are very polite, considerate and helpful and older pupils

show a genuine concern for younger ones. Pupils from different social backgrounds and minority ethnic groups are very well integrated. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent and a sense of togetherness and community lights up the school. Pupils say that the school is a very friendly place where everyone is valued and that bullying is not an issue. Discussions with pupils clearly show that should bullying occur they are very confident that it would be dealt with quickly but fairly. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils show respect for each other, their teachers and visitors.

6. Pupils’ spiritual and cultural development is very good and their moral and social development is excellent. School assemblies are uplifting and awash with a sense of spirituality and reverence. Within assemblies and lessons pupils are given time to reflect on what they have heard, to discuss their emotions and feelings and to appreciate the world that they live in. There is a strong moral code evident in the school and the pupils respond in an excellent manner. Already they have an outstanding grasp of what is right and wrong and show a very impressive readiness to take responsibility for their own actions and to recognise how their behaviour can affect others. Pupils’ social development is equally good. They often work together in an impressive manner and cannot wait to carry out tasks and responsibilities around the school, and do so with high levels of maturity. Pupils are already aware that there are others in the world less fortunate than themselves. They support a number of different charities as well as wanting to take part in numerous community events because they feel a sense of belonging to the local area. Pupils are made very much aware of the fact that they live in a multicultural society. Lessons in subjects, such as religious education, art and design, music and geography, together with visits and visitors to the school all help to recognise and celebrate this fact. The school has a very good array of books, artefacts, posters and musical instruments which all recognise and celebrate cultural diversity. The pupils show high levels of respect for the beliefs and cultures of others and the school is also very good at celebrating the pupils’ own culture and in making pupils aware that they are citizens of Ramsey and the wider world.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.5	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.

7. Attendance is above the national average. The school follows very good procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality and parents are reminded regularly of the importance that good attendance has on pupils’ achievement. Most pupils arrive on time in the morning because they are very keen to come to school. Lessons start promptly.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **very good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **very good** and assessment is **good**. The curriculum is **very good** with **very good** opportunities provided to enrich pupils’ learning outside of the formal curriculum. The accommodation and resources are **very good**. The provision made for pupils’ care, welfare, health and

safety is **very good**. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **good**. Links with parents and the community are **very good** and with other schools they are **good**.

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **very good**. Assessment is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage helps children to get off to a flying start in their educational lives.
- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is very good at providing challenging learning activities that are very well matched to the individual needs of all pupils.
- Teaching assistants contribute significantly to how well pupils achieve.
- The very well planned use of visits and visitors significantly enhances the quality of pupils' learning.
- Pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills are utilised very well overall in subjects across the curriculum.
- Although assessment procedures are very effective in the Foundation Stage and in the core subjects, they are not rigorous, formal or effective enough in other subjects.

## Commentary

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	21	7	0	0	0	0

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

8. Teaching and learning are very good across the school and this is one of the main reasons why all children and pupils achieve so well. Teaching is a significant strength of the school and has improved well since the time of the last inspection.
9. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are very good. All the adults in the Foundation Stage work together very well and consistently set high expectations as to how children are to work and to behave. The children rise to the challenges that are set for them. A very good range of learning opportunities is on offer so that children learn very well through both child-initiated and teacher-led activities. From the very outset, teaching is most effective at meeting the individual needs of all children and in ensuring that all children are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum.
10. This very good start is built on in Years 1 and 2 where teaching and learning continue to be very good. Reading and writing skills are taught very well and a very good emphasis is given to pupils' learning through investigative and problem-solving activities in mathematics and science, alongside the systematic development of pupils' knowledge and key skills. A particularly strong feature of teaching is the manner in which teachers plan work so that it consistently matches the individual needs of each pupil. Teaching recognises that pupils learn in different ways and high

quality resources and the very effective use of interactive whiteboards in some lessons all help to bring an added sparkle to learning. Lessons are often challenging, have lots of pace but are always laced with good fun and humour which keep pupils highly motivated, keen to do well and often hanging on the teachers' every word.

11. Another way in which teachers help to bring learning to life is the imaginative use of visits and visitors. The school is very effective at the planning stage in identifying visits and visitors which link very well to topics that pupils will be studying. Visits to museums, churches, places of artistic or geographical interest and the very good use made of the local community, all add to the quality of learning as well as filling the pupils with enthusiasm. During the week of inspection, an artist in residence produced some very good work with the pupils to add to other previously completed and high quality pieces of art work which include painted murals on the playground walls and wooden sculptures, including a totem pole, in the grounds. Other visitors to the school have made a similarly effective impact on pupils' learning and attainment.
12. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs and those pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. Work is consistently matched well to their needs and challenging targets are set and reviewed on a regular basis. The contribution that teaching assistants make in supporting the learning of these pupils is significant and is one of the key reasons why these pupils achieve as well as they do. The school clearly identifies higher-attaining and gifted and talented pupils. When planning work teachers always strive to ensure that work is challenging and demanding and, on most occasions, they are very successful.
13. Another significant strength of teaching is the manner in which again at the curriculum planning stage, teachers map out the opportunities that are on offer for pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills to be put to very good use in different subjects of the curriculum. Teachers recognise that such opportunities should be relevant and meaningful and add significantly to the quality of learning. As a result, pupils' learning is significantly enhanced and pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills are continually being built on and often extended.
14. Very good assessment procedures are in place in the Foundation Stage and the information is used very well to guide and inform curriculum planning. Very good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science. Very good use is then made of the information for setting targets for individual pupils and for tracking their progress as they move through the school. Very good procedures are also in place for tracking the progress of different groups of pupils such as boys and girls, similar-aged pupils in different classes, pupils with special educational needs, pupils for whom English is an additional language and higher-attaining and gifted and talented pupils. The school is very effective at quickly spotting if a pupil is not making the expected progress and immediately puts in place effective strategies to tackle the issue. The marking of pupils' work is good because it clearly outlines what a pupil needs to do to improve and pupils are made aware of the targets they are working towards. The weaker aspect of assessment lies in how well pupils' attainment is assessed and tracked in other subjects. It is satisfactory overall but the procedures that are in place are not rigorous or formal enough to be having the biggest possible impact on pupils' learning or in giving the teachers a good grasp of how well all pupils are attaining and achieving in different subjects of the curriculum. The school has already flagged this up as an area for improvement.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a **very good** curriculum which meets the needs of all its pupils. The range of enrichment opportunities is **very good**. Accommodation and resources are **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Curriculum planning throughout the school is very thorough, provides a very good range of exciting activities and matches the needs of all pupils very well.
- The provision made for pupils with different needs, aptitudes and backgrounds contributes significantly to the excellent equality of opportunity the school achieves.
- The school is very innovative in its approach to curriculum development.
- A very good and interesting range of enrichment opportunities ensures pupils enjoy their learning.
- The stimulating learning environment and high quality resources impact very positively on pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

15. The school provides a very varied, exciting and stimulating curriculum based on national guidance and allocates appropriate amounts of time to each subject. It places a strong emphasis on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum and has worked hard at ensuring that computers are an integral part of learning in all subjects. A very good emphasis is given to pupils learning through investigative and problem-solving tasks in subjects such as mathematics, science and history. Wherever possible, teachers develop very good and meaningful cross-curricular links, which makes learning more relevant and interesting for the pupils. Planning is very thorough. It ensures that pupils in parallel classes have a consistency of experience in their learning and that work is very well matched to pupils' needs. Children in the Foundation Stage receive a very good quality curriculum which prepares them very well for the National Curriculum. It covers the six recommended areas of learning and ensures that children are given every opportunity to experiment, to investigate and to find things out for themselves, as well as being directly taught a plethora of key skills and concepts. Improvement in curriculum provision overall has been very good since the time of the last inspection.
16. The school provides excellent equality of opportunity for its pupils. There is very good provision within school for pupils with special educational needs. Very good individual education plans are in place. The very high quality support pupils with special educational needs receive from learning support assistants ensures that they have access to the full curriculum and has a very positive effect on the progress they make. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and teachers ensure they are sufficiently challenged. Very good provision is made for pupils for whom English is an additional language. All these factors help to ensure that every child in the school, regardless of ability, gender or ethnicity takes part in every curriculum activity on offer.
17. The school provides very good opportunities for enrichment, both in and out of school hours. There is a good range of clubs, all of which are very popular. These include football, netball, and gardening and computer clubs. Visits to museums and places of historic and environmental interest are an integral part of the school year. Pupils visit the museum of rural life in Ramsey and the local country park on a regular basis. The school takes a pride in the development of pupils' sense of belonging to the Ramsey community. Pupils are involved in all the local events, including making a float and

taking part in the annual Ramsey carnival. Pupils also take part in music festivals. In addition to the normal curriculum, the school runs a 'themed week' during the year. Last year it was based on art and enabled the pupils to work alongside professional artists to further develop their skills and knowledge. During inspection week, pupils had the chance to help the visiting 'artist in residence' produce a wall mosaic, which portrayed ammonites made from a variety of pebbles and shells. Previously they have helped him with painted murals on the playground walls and made wooden sculptures, including a totem pole, in the grounds.

18. The school is very innovative in its approach towards the curriculum and is always looking at initiatives that will impact on how well pupils learn. A lot of effort has gone into the school's approach to cross-curricular work in ensuring that, at the planning stage, relevant and meaningful links are identified and opportunities capitalised on in a very effective manner if they will add significantly to pupils' achievement. Other examples include the fact that the school has successfully achieved status as a 'Health Promoting School' and that it is currently working towards achievement of the NAACE award for its teaching of ICT. Along with other local schools, it is involved in a new initiative designed to raise boys' attainment in English.
19. The school has very good accommodation. It is spacious and very well maintained. High quality displays create a welcoming and stimulating learning environment and are not only aesthetically very pleasing but are also a valuable learning resource. The school benefits from an eye-catching, well stocked library, a food technology area and a spacious hall. The outside environment is particularly attractive and pupils have lots of space to play. Pupils benefit from well-qualified, committed and enthusiastic teachers. They are supported by a very good number of competent teaching assistants. Resources are very good in terms of quantity and quality across many subjects of the curriculum and these resources are used very well to stimulate and enthuse the pupils and to make learning more fun and enjoyable.

## Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. Pupils receive **good** support, advice and guidance. Pupils have **good** opportunities for their voice to be heard in the life of the school.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a very happy and safe environment where pupils receive a high level of pastoral care and academic support.
- Good procedures overall, with examples of very good practice, are in place for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development but there is scope for improvement in how well pupils' progress is tracked in the foundation subjects.
- Pupils' health and safety at school are assured through very good procedures.
- Pupils are encouraged to share their ideas for improvements to activities and resources.
- Very good induction arrangements help children to settle down quickly into school routines.
- Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language are very well integrated and supported.

## Commentary

20. Since the last inspection the school has continued to provide a high level of care and support for all pupils. Parents speak very highly of their children's individual needs. The staff and governors are committed to ensuring that pupils learn in a safe environment, and very good procedures are in place to monitor all aspects of health and safety. Child protection procedures are good and the headteacher ensures that all staff are fully aware of the school's responsibilities. The staff know pupils and many of their families very well. Relationships are excellent and pupils place great trust in their teachers and teaching assistants. Induction arrangements are very good, and the school has a good partnership with the local playgroup which helps children to settle quickly into the reception class. Pupils joining the school at different times are welcomed and very well cared for. Pupils feel very safe and secure in school and this makes a strong contribution to their progress and personal achievements.
21. Overall, the school has good formal and informal procedures for assessing pupils' academic and personal development, although there is a need for more rigorous assessment procedures to be introduced in the foundation subjects. Pupils are actively involved in their own self-evaluation. Pupils with special educational needs and their parents receive very good support through well-organised individual education plans which are reviewed regularly. Very good academic and personal support is available for pupils for whom English is an additional language. There are very good links with outside agencies, including speech and language therapists, the educational psychologist, occupational therapist and inclusion team. This ensures that the school addresses any barriers to learning caused by special educational needs or different language needs very effectively. Across the school, pupils' work is regularly monitored to ensure that they are making good progress towards achieving their own individual targets.
22. Good arrangements are made to involve pupils in the development and improvement of the school environment. Although there are no formal school or class councils,



pupils are encouraged to share their views and ideas during assemblies, PSHE lessons and circle time. Discussions with pupils show clearly that they feel confident that they have a voice in the school and they are proud that their ideas are valued, respected and acted upon.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school welcomes parents and encourages a strong partnership in pupils' learning.
- Parents' views and support are sought and valued in the development of the school's work.
- Regular and very good quality communication keeps parents very well informed.
- The very strong links with the community enhance pupils' learning and social experiences.
- The school has established good links with a number of schools.

### **Commentary**

23. The school's links with parents are a significant strength, and the partnership has been well maintained since the last inspection. Parents are very satisfied with the quality of education provided, and hold the school and the headteacher in high regard. Parents are very supportive and find the staff very approachable and open to them. They value the fact that their views are sought and that the school is ready to listen to them. Prior to induction into the reception class staff conduct home visits to offer support for children and parents and to allay any concerns. A group of parents help regularly in classrooms and many more provide valued support with visits and other activities. The very active Friends group organise regular and well-attended fundraising and social events, and this provides the school with a good range of additional resources to support teaching and learning.
24. Parents are very satisfied with the amount of helpful information they receive, and this has improved since the last inspection. Home/school communication is very good with regular newsletters, curriculum information and homework guidelines. The regular consultation evenings are very well attended and, in addition, the school is working hard to encourage parents to attend curriculum and information evenings to help them support their children's learning at home. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed and they are fully involved in assessments and reviews and parents know how they can help their child at home. Parents of children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs are fully consulted about their child's needs. The school prospectus has improved well and contains a wide range of helpful information about the curriculum and parents' partnership with the school. The improved annual reports are now good and provide parents with clear information about their children's progress and areas for development in all subjects of the National Curriculum.
25. The school's links with the community are very good and this helps to enrich the curriculum and pupils' learning experiences and social development. The headteacher is very pro-active in establishing the school's high profile in the local community and involving pupils in a range of additional local activities. Pupils take

part in Ramsey town events such as the Carnival, maypole dancing and the Fun Run, and this provides them with a sense of identify and community spirit. There are strong links with the church, and members of different denominations visit to lead assemblies and to support the curriculum. Through established links with local business, pupils have benefited from additional resources such as the presentation of encyclopaedias and financial support for activities.

26. Overall, there are good links with other schools and playgroups which ensure that children are well supported at the time of their induction into the reception class. Pupils benefit from the school's partnership with the Ramsey area cluster of schools which provides opportunities for pupils to take part in additional activities such as master classes for gifted and talented pupils and enrichment for ICT in liaison with the secondary school. Although the school liaises effectively with the local junior feeder school to ensure pupils' smooth transition into Year 3, the headteacher is currently seeking to establish stronger curriculum links to help benefit both pupils and staff alike. The school regularly welcomes students on work experience from the secondary school and initial teacher training students from De Montfort University.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The governance of the school is **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **excellent**. The leadership of other key staff is **very good**. The management of the school is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is led in a highly influential and motivational manner by the headteacher.
- There is an excellent sense of team work in the school and the deputy headteacher and other key members of staff, subject leaders and all support staff contribute significantly to the school's successes.
- The school shows excellent commitment to include all pupils in all activities.
- The governors are very supportive and have a very good understanding of the school's work.
- Day-to-day management is very good.

### **Commentary.**

27. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership to the school. She has an excellent vision which ensures that there is constant striving to improve the high standards in the school. Through her vibrant interpersonal skills and passion for success she has brought all the staff with her and there is a tremendous team spirit in the school. She sets high expectations for all who work at the school while nurturing the skills and talents of every individual. Her excellent leadership skills have gained her the respect of pupils, staff, parents and governors.
28. Teamwork is an excellent feature in the school. Staff complement each other very effectively. The deputy headteacher, although only recently appointed, supports the headteacher, colleagues and the work of the school very well. The quality of leadership and management of subject leaders is very good. Subject leaders work very closely with colleagues. They use a variety of very good methods to monitor and evaluate learning, including classroom observations and the analysis of work. Very good procedures are in place for analysing test and assessment data and for target-

setting and tracking pupils' progress. Information gathered by co-ordinators is fed back to staff and enables them to improve their teaching and, as a direct result, levels of achievement improve. Leadership and management of special educational needs, provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language and provision in the Foundation Stage are all very good. The deputy headteacher has put in place very good systems to identify and monitor the progress of gifted and talented pupils and this ensures that their needs are fully met. The overall picture that emerges is that this is a school that is very successful at analysing how well it is doing and self-evaluation skills have been developed very well to ensure any issues are quickly and very effectively dealt with.

29. The school is totally committed to ensuring that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum and this has a very positive impact on ensuring that each and every one of the pupils achieve very well. Additional support is targeted to where the need is greatest and this means that all pupils, regardless of ability, gender or ethnicity, take a full and active role in all that the school has to offer and that all pupils partake fully in the school's life as a very successful and thriving community.
30. There has been very good improvement in the governance of the school since the previous inspection. The role of the governing body, which was a key issue in the previous report, has been developed very effectively. The governors give the school very good support. They are very committed to raising standards of achievement and in holding the school to account for the quality of education that it provides. They ensure that finance and curriculum matters are very effectively monitored. Very good links with particular subjects and aspects of school life ensure that governors have a full understanding of how the school is functioning and how well pupils attain and achieve. They have a very good grasp of the strengths and areas for development within the school. Governors fulfil their legal responsibilities including disability and race legislation. They comply with recent legislation regarding child protection. Discussions on workforce reform are taking place at the present time and governors are on course to meet legal requirements,
31. The management of the school is very good. Teaching and support staff are very well managed by the headteacher. Day-to-day routines are very good and the office staff contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school and to providing a very welcoming first point of contact for visitors to the school. The most recent audit report from the local authority shows financial management and controls to be strong. The school applies best value principles very effectively by ensuring it receives value for money in purchases, by comparing themselves with other schools and by consulting pupils and parents. The school carries out very high quality self-evaluation procedures. Judgements about performance are honest and accurate. When there are issues, they are immediately addressed. This was seen when writing standards of boys were below those of girls and when mathematics attainment was lower than English. Action by the school has effectively addressed these issues. The school improvement plan is well thought out with targets which move the school forward. Senior staff consult colleagues before deciding priorities for the next and future years. Performance management procedures are very good and linked very effectively to the needs of both the whole school and individual members of staff. This has a very positive effect on improving the quality of education. New staff are inducted very well and the good quality support they receive ensures that pupils in their classes benefit from teaching which improves their learning. Students training to be teachers receive very good support and guidance from the school. Taking all factors into account, the school is providing good value for money.

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

<b>Income and expenditure (£)</b>	
Total income	567 898
Total expenditure	560 211
Expenditure per pupil	3 165

<b>Balances (£)</b>	
Balance from previous year	64 089
Balance carried forward to the next	71 776

## **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 **very good**.

32. Children enter the reception classes in September. The youngest children attend on a part-time basis until half term. There were a total of 61 full-time children during the inspection based in two classes. There are very good procedures in place to ensure that children settle in quickly, including pre-admission and home visits. Attainment on entry covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall. The very good quality of teaching and learning ensures that all children achieve very well during their time in the Foundation Stage. By the time that children are ready to start in Year 1 standards exceed the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning apart from in children's personal, social and emotional development where they are well above the expected level.
33. The very good quality curriculum covers the recommended areas of learning very well. Very good use is made of the school environment, local area and further afield to develop learning. Very good resources are used very effectively in all areas of learning. Planning is very good and is similar in both classes. Identification and support for children with special educational needs is very good, ensuring they make progress in line with other children. When children are learning to speak English as an additional language, additional very good quality support is given if necessary. There are very good procedures in place to identify and challenge children who are gifted and talented to ensure they achieve in line with their classmates. Assessment is of very high quality and used very effectively to develop learning. There is very good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage. The Foundation Stage team work very effectively together to ensure that all children receive equality of opportunity and learn very well. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection in maintaining the high standards and addressing issues raised by national changes to the Foundation Stage curriculum. The children in reception get off to a very good start to their education. Liaison with Year 1 is very good and this has a very good impact on the transition to the main school.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Adults put very good emphasis on developing independence skills.
- Routines are planned very effectively to develop social skills.
- Children achieve at a much better than expected rate.

### **Commentary**

34. Children enter the reception classes with a wide range of social skills and attainment is at an average level overall. Teachers and support staff provide a wide range of very good teaching and learning activities and as a result children achieve much better than expected. From the moment they enter the classroom children are made very welcome and are valued. Independence skills are developed very effectively

when children choose their own activity. Circle times, where children sit and discuss a range of different things, are used very effectively to develop self-esteem and the understanding that everyone is a special person. All adults are excellent role models; they expect high standards of behaviour and children respond very well to this. By the end of reception, standards are well above expected levels with all children attaining the Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage and a substantial number exceeding them. Children relate very well to one another, they persevere at tasks and follow adult instructions very well. They act in a very mature way around the school and are very aware of the needs of others.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff provide a very good range of activities to develop early reading and writing skills.
- There is very good support for children with English as an additional language and for those with linguistic needs.
- Children are very effectively encouraged to develop speaking and listening skills.

### **Commentary**

35. Children enter the reception classes with a wide range of communication, language and literacy skills but overall attainment is at an average level. A number have particular speech and language needs. The quality of teaching is very good. This ensures that children build up their skills, make very good progress and achieve very well. Staff provide a wide range of activities to develop communication and language skills. They model speech very well in the carpet groups when discussing what the children have done over the half-term holiday. Stories and rhymes are used very well by staff to develop both speaking and listening skills and to reinforce that words and pictures have meaning. Mark making and writing skills are developed effectively, with the higher-attaining children writing simple sentences with uniform size letters. Children with English as an additional language achieve very well because they are given very good levels of additional support. Children with special educational needs are very well supported and as a result make very good progress. Adults support children with speech and language needs very well, ensuring they are fully included in all lessons. Children develop their speaking and listening skills very effectively in role play in the 'Crumbs and Bonjour cafes'. By the end of reception children attain at above expected levels. Many have exceeded the expected Early Learning Goals. Higher-attaining children write in sentences, make good attempts at spelling words such as 'rattle' and read simple sentences.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Resources are used effectively to develop learning.
- Teachers use a very good range of learning activities to capture the interest of the children.

- Teachers have high expectations of children's performance.

### **Commentary**

36. Children make good progress and achieve very well because of very good quality teaching and learning. Children enter the reception classes with standards of attainment which cover a wide range but are at the expected level overall. Teachers make lessons interesting and relevant for the children. The language of size is developed very effectively when children use their own teddy bears to sort and record. Children are challenged very well when they are asked to count the number in the class having lunches and then identify two digit numbers on the board. Children respond very well to the very high expectations both in terms of standards of work and behaviour. As a result, adults can concentrate on developing skills and knowledge through the direct teaching of key skills to groups of children, knowing full well that other children can work independently on practical, hands on tasks. By the time they leave reception, children attain at higher than expected levels with a significant number exceeding the expected Early Learning Goals. Almost all children count to 10 and above, they recognise two digit numbers and carry out simple addition and subtraction sums. They use the language of size at better than expected levels and identify regular two-dimensional shapes.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are given a wide range of very good quality activities to develop learning.
- Staff make very good use of children's own experiences to develop learning very well.
- Children have much better than expected knowledge and understanding of the information and communication technology aspect of this area of learning.

### **Commentary**

37. Children enter the reception classes with the expected levels of knowledge and understanding of the world. Children achieve very well because teachers give them very good quality activities to develop an understanding about the world around them. The quality of teaching and learning in the reception classes is very good. Lessons are very interesting because adults use children's own experiences as a base for learning. Teachers and support staff talk to children about the toys that their parents and grandparents played with to give them a sense of the past. Children learn about other places because teachers talk about places that 'Barnaby Bear' has visited and by asking children and their parents to produce half-term diaries. Construction kits are used very effectively to develop children's making skills. Children have much better than expected information and communication technology skills. Many children use the mouse with confidence and many input instructions, with adult support, for the programmable toy. They are starting to access the Internet for information. Planning shows that the children learn about religious education in line with the syllabus taught locally. By the time they leave reception, children are attaining higher than expected levels with many exceeding the Early Learning Goals. Most children have developed a sense of time, they talk about areas other than their

own, and they work on computers without direct help from adults and make good quality models using construction kits.

## **Physical development**

The provision in physical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Indoor physical development sessions are used very effectively to develop learning.
  - Resources are used very well to develop physical skills.
38. Inclement weather meant that there is limited evidence on outdoor physical activities but a group of children were observed in a formal physical education session in the hall. This was of very good quality and ensured that children involved were developing their physical skills very well. The session was very well planned and children achieved very well because activities challenged them very effectively. In this aspect of physical development, children attain higher than expected standards at the end of reception. Photographic evidence shows that the outdoor physical development sessions use resources very well to develop learning. Children are provided with very good and interesting activities to develop their physical skills when they cut out shapes such as teddy bears. By the time they leave reception children attain at better than expected levels with a significant number exceeding the Early Learning Goals. They move with good co-ordination, show good awareness of space and use scissors and other tools well.

## **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Resources are used very effectively to develop learning.
- There are very good opportunities to develop imaginative skills

### **Commentary**

39. Children develop their creative skills very well because teaching and learning are very good. There is very good achievement in both reception classes. Teachers and nursery nurses provide activities which interest and stimulate the children and as a result the children learn very well. Teachers combine different areas of the curriculum to inspire children to use their imagination. Work on a story about bears is used very effectively to lead to children making bear puppets and then using their imagination to make up and act out a story. Children are given very good activities which very effectively develop their creative skills by colouring and painting. Planning shows there are very good activities which develop children's musical skills. By the time they leave reception, children are attaining at higher than expected levels with almost all attaining the Early Learning Goals and many above this level. Children use their imagination to design and make things, explaining clearly what they have made. They join in songs with complex rhythms in whole school singing sessions.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1**

### **ENGLISH**



Provision in English is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve very well.
- Reading and writing skills are taught very well with opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills consistently seized upon.
- Writing skills are developed very well in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Teaching assistants contribute significantly to the progress that pupils make.
- Assessment and tracking procedures are very thorough and effective.
- Leadership and management of the subject have contributed much to the high standards that pupils attain.

### **Commentary**

40. On the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was well above the national average in reading and above the national average in writing. When compared to similar schools on the basis of pupil eligibility for free school meals, attainment was average in reading and writing. Inspection findings show that attainment is well above average in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Given that most pupils start school with average levels of attainment, this represents very good achievement over a short period of time. Importantly, there are no differences in achievement by gender, ability or ethnicity. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good because standards, teaching and pupils' achievement have significantly improved.
41. By the time that pupils leave the school, they are very confident speakers who use a very expressive and expansive vocabulary. Pupils listen very attentively and show high levels of respect when others are speaking. Pupils follow instructions very well. Discussion forms a part of many lessons and teachers seldom miss the opportunity to get pupils to expand and explain their point of view and pupils are only too willing to do so. Reading standards are high. Pupils read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books with expression and fluency. They have a genuine love of books and are reluctant to put them down once they have started- helped in no small part by the tremendous range of high quality and attractive books the school has in classrooms, corridors and libraries. Pupils use a wide range of strategies to tackle new words and locate required information with ease. Writing standards are at a similar level to reading standards. Pupils write very well for a wide range of audiences and purposes. Their writing is technically accurate but, importantly, pupils use a good vocabulary, use punctuation well to enliven the text and write extended pieces of work that do not fizzle out after a captivating start.
42. Teaching and learning are very good. From the start teaching places an important emphasis on the development of pupils' phonic skills. This is done in a lively and stimulating manner and sets very good foundations for pupils' more advanced reading and writing skills to be built on. Teaching throughout the school is full of pace and challenge and planned tasks take very good account of the differing needs and abilities of the pupils. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of different authors and poets and are constantly encouraged to read aloud with expression. They do so very confidently because they have been taught a range of strategies to help them with any new words they come across. Pupils' writing standards are high because they are taught the skills to write captivating stories, autobiographies, instructions, letters,

character profiles as well as making information booklets containing a contents page, index and glossary. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons because of the animated and lively manner in which teachers introduce new learning which seldom fails to capture the interest of the pupils and, in return, pupils put a great deal of care and effort into their work. Across the school, the contribution made by teaching assistants is pivotal. Their support is both challenging and sensitive, responds very well to the individual needs of pupils and helps to ensure that pupils take a full and active role in all aspects of the lesson.

43. The marking of pupils' work is often very good. It clearly outlines what a pupil needs to do to improve or makes clear why a piece of work is as good as it is. Very good procedures are also in place for analysing test and assessment data and the information is used very well to set targets for individual pupils or groups of pupils. Very good attention is paid to achievement by gender, ability, ethnicity, and similar-aged pupils in different classes. It is this attention to detail that enabled the school to identify a group of boys that could benefit from taking part in a local schools' project aimed at further raising standards in English for boys.
44. The leadership and management of the subject are very good overall. This is because the headteacher has worked closely with the subject leader in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the subject through many formal lesson observations and through the regular scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work. Findings from this monitoring process have helped to identify areas for development and improvement that have been tackled in a highly rigorous and effective manner and over time have contributed significantly to improvements in teaching, learning, standards and to how well all pupils achieve. The school has accurately identified the need for the subject leader to now play a higher profile role in monitoring and evaluating provision in the subject.

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

45. The use of pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum is very good. As well as developing pupils' speaking and listening skills very well in discussion times in many subjects of the curriculum, teachers are very good at putting pupils' writing skills to the test in subjects such as history, geography, science, design and technology and religious education. Such opportunities are identified at the curriculum planning stage and pupils readily see the experience as having a real sense of relevance and meaning and respond in a very positive manner, often producing work of a high standard.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers challenge pupils very well.
- Teaching places a strong emphasis on pupils learning through challenging practical and investigative tasks.
- The subject is very well monitored by the subject leader and this, together with very effective assessment procedures, impacts very well on attainment and achievement.
- Teaching assistants contribute much to the quality of pupils' learning.

- Homework is used very effectively to develop learning.
- Pupils' mathematical skills are put to very good use in other subjects with computers also used very well to support pupils' learning.

## Commentary

46. On the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was above the national average and average when compared to similar schools on the basis of pupils' eligibility for free school meals. Inspection findings indicate that standards for the present Year 2 pupils are well above average. Pupils of all abilities, and those whose first language is not English, achieve very well and as well as one another. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good because of the significant improvements in teaching, learning, standards and pupil achievement.
47. By the time that pupils leave the school they are accomplished mathematicians. Pupils have very good mental agility skills and show a particularly good knowledge and understanding of number. Their understanding of place value is very secure. Pupils identify lines of symmetry well, have a very good understanding of the properties of different shapes and many pupils are very confident at interpreting as well as collecting data. A particular strength is the way in which pupils use and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge in problem solving and investigative tasks. Pupils recognise well that there can be different ways of arriving at the answer and are not afraid to have a go. Pupils use a very good level of mathematical vocabulary when talking about their work.
48. The quality of teaching and learning is now consistently very good and is one of the main reasons for the very good achievement. Pupils learn very well because teachers plan lessons very effectively and because many opportunities are provided for pupils to test out their number skills in practical and investigative tasks that are both challenging and fun. Pupils thoroughly enjoy this type of work. Teaching is very effective at ensuring that the work that is set is at the correct level to meet the needs of every group of pupils. If a pupil has special educational needs or is particularly gifted, teachers take account of this in their planning. Additional support given to pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English, by the very skilled teaching assistants, ensures that these pupils achieve at the same rate as their classmates. Higher-attaining and gifted pupils are identified and given work which ensures they too achieve very well. Pupils are interested in lessons because teachers keep the pace very brisk. They expect very high standards of behaviour and all pupils respond very well showing very good attitudes to learning. Teachers challenge the pupils very effectively by the use of questions and by asking pupils to explain their answers. Very effective use is made of homework to reinforce the objectives that are outlined in the very focused but enjoyable oral mental starters which are a feature of many lessons. Computers are used very well to support pupils' learning in the subject because well chosen programs really extend pupils' mathematical skills, really get them thinking and significantly add to pupils' learning. The marking of pupils' work is good and is used well to improve learning and to remind pupils of the targets they are working towards.
49. There is very good leadership and management in mathematics that have contributed a great deal to how well pupils attain and achieve. The subject leader constantly strives to raise standards even higher. She has very effectively monitored teaching and learning in the classroom to identify areas of strength and those for development and regularly monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work well. Test

and assessment data is rigorously analysed and areas for development have been addressed, leading to improvements in learning. Target-setting procedures are very good and the tracking of pupils by gender, ability and ethnicity is well embedded in school practice and impacts very well on the achievement of all pupils. There are very good resources and these are used very effectively to develop learning.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

50. There are very good opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects. Pupils record results in various mathematical formats in science, they measure accurately in design and technology, examine symmetry in art and design and reinforce counting skills and awareness of different shapes in physical education.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop their curiosity and investigative skills.
- Teaching takes very good account of the differing abilities of pupils for whom teaching assistants provide very effective levels of support.
- Visits, visitors, resources and high quality displays all add to the quality of pupils' learning.
- Computers are used very well to support pupils' learning.
- Assessment procedures are effective and impact well on how well pupils achieve.
- The leadership and management of the subject have contributed much to improvements since the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

51. On the basis of the 2004 teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils, attainment was well above the national average. Inspection findings indicate that standards for the current Year 2 pupils are at a similar level. Achievement for pupils of all abilities and those for whom English is an additional language is very good and all groups of pupils achieve as well as one another. There have been significant improvements in standards and teaching since the last inspection and improvement overall has therefore been very good.
52. By the time that pupils leave school, they have a very good understanding of push and pull forces. Pupils name a good range of materials, identifying clearly where they come from and what they are used for. Pupils have a very secure understanding of electrical circuits and know well what animals need to live and classify them according to the way they move. They already show a very good understanding of what is needed for a healthy lifestyle. A strength in standards is the fact that pupils' investigative skills, as well as their scientific knowledge, are developed well. Pupils carry out investigations very carefully and show very good observation skills and know what factors are needed for a fair test. They make very sensible predictions and are keen to test whether they are correct. Pupils are very good at recording their findings in different ways, for example using the computers to produce pictograms to show the eye colours of pupils in the class.

53. Teaching and learning are very good overall. Teachers have a very secure understanding of the subject, which enables them to plan interesting and enjoyable activities. Teaching strikes a very good balance in developing pupils' investigative skills alongside their scientific knowledge and in getting the pupils to use their knowledge to inform their scientific predictions. Pupils do this really well and thoroughly enjoy the practical activities they take part in but equally take a real pride in how they record their work. Teachers plan different levels of work very well to meet the needs of all abilities in the class. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language receive very good support from the very skilled teaching assistants and their work is carefully matched to their learning needs. Consequently, they achieve very well. A high level of challenge is consistently provided for the higher-attaining pupils. Across the school, teachers use questioning very well to find out what pupils already know and to get them to apply their knowledge to new situations. Teachers ensure that computers are used very well for research, for writing up experiments and for recording results in table and graph form. Whenever possible, the school arranges for visits and visitors to make the lessons more interesting and excellent science displays around the school, many of them interactive, help create a very stimulating learning environment
54. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She carefully analyses data to identify areas needing improvement. She has introduced a good assessment scheme, which gives teachers the information they need to match the level of work to the ability of the pupils. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning, pupils' work and has had the chance to observe numerous science lessons. This means she has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has contributed much to improvements in provision since the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is good.
- Computers are used very well to enhance pupils' learning in different subjects.
- Resources and provision in the subject have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Pupils are very well motivated and enjoy their learning.
- Leadership of the subject contributes much to the school's successes in this area of the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

55. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above average and pupils of all abilities and pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good, in terms of improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, the standards achieved and resources.
56. By the time that pupils leave the school they have developed good levels of confidence when working with computers. They access, save and print their work

competently. Pupils are confident and comfortable at changing the size and colour of the fonts they are working with and when word processing they use punctuation well and delete and correct mistakes. They are good at combining text and graphics, for example when they produced pictures and writing about their favourite animals or when writing and illustrating their 'Marvellous Magic Monsters' poems. Pupils are confident when producing data in different formats such as of the most popular eye colours and forms of transport. They know how to access the Internet independently and are currently learning how to use the web link icon to access other similar web pages and to use the recently installed interactive whiteboards.

57. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have become increasingly confident in the subject and their knowledge and expertise are often good. This enables them to tackle any glitches without any time being wasted. Teachers are effective in the way in which they directly teach key skills and then provide good and interesting activities where these skills can be tested out. Teachers and learning support assistants are currently developing their skills in the use of the recently acquired interactive whiteboards and this too is leading to the planning of even more interesting activities and to providing more effective demonstrations and explanations of new skills. Pupils thoroughly enjoy working with computers and do so with high levels of concentration and perseverance. Higher-attaining pupils are always ready to give classmates a helping hand. Assessment is developing well and teachers are keeping careful records of pupils' progress.
58. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinators have a very clear vision of the future development of the subject. They are keen to achieve the NAACE award and are working enthusiastically towards this. Monitoring of teachers' planning, pupils' work and teaching is regular and very effective and ensures that teaching and learning in the subject are good and that standards continue to rise.

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

59. There is very good use of computers across the curriculum. Pupils have access to computers on a very regular basis. Computers are used very well to support work in most literacy and numeracy lessons. The Internet and CD-ROMs are frequently used to support work in subjects, such as history, geography, science and religious education. Graphics programs support work in art and design. Pupils use databases to produce pictograms in science, geography and mathematics and the Internet was used very effectively to support learning in music during the inspection.

### **HUMANITIES**

60. **Geography** was not taught during the week of inspection and so this subject was sampled. Lessons were observed in **history** and this subject and **religious education** are reported on in full.
61. Although it is not possible, to make an overall judgement on the quality of provision, because no lessons were taught in **geography** during the inspection, evidence from pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers, indicate that standards are above average. Work in pupils' books and on display around the school indicates that pupils are gaining a good range of geographical skills. Pupils in Year1 recognise different types of houses and express valid opinions about the local

environment. They know about the four seasons and the different kinds of weather in each. Pupils have a good understanding of how different symbols can be used to represent different types of weather. They compare the weather in Ramsey with that in Norway well through the Barnaby Bear television programme. Pupils in Year 2 are developing a good ability to compare localities and lifestyles. They identify a good range of physical and human features on the fictional 'Island of Struay' and compare them well with those found in London. They identify a good range of similarities and differences between their lives in Ramsey to those of the Horta family in Mexico and have a good understanding of the differences in climate, eating habits and lifestyles. They have thoroughly enjoyed painting Mexican masks, similar to those made by Sr. Horta. The pupils know how to use maps well and confidently recognise the countries in the UK and know where Ramsey is located. The leadership and management of geography are very good. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work well. Time is allocated for the direct monitoring of teaching when the subject is an identified priority area on the school improvement plan. As a result, there is a good level of consistency in the approach to teaching the subject. She recognises the need to develop a more formalised approach to assessment to ensure that pupils' attainment and progress can be tracked more rigorously and effectively.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching ensures that topics are covered in depth which gives pupils a deeper understanding of what they are learning.
- Learning in the subject adds much to pupils' personal and cultural development.
- The school uses its very good resources and visits and visitors to bring an added dimension to pupils' learning.
- The subject is used well to develop pupils' literacy skills.
- The quality of leadership contributes a great deal to pupils' good achievement.
- Assessment procedures are not yet rigorous enough.

## **Commentary**

62. Standards by the end of Year 2 exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils of all abilities and pupils for whom English is not the first language achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
63. By the time that pupils leave school they have a good understanding of Christianity and a good recall of stories they have been told from the Bible. They recognise important festivals in the Christian calendar such as Easter, Christmas and Harvest. Pupils show a really healthy respect for the beliefs of others and are already beginning to get an early understanding of the fact that there are many similarities as well as differences between faiths. Pupils are reflective and are always ready to discuss their feelings and emotions in a very calm and mature manner. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of light for different faiths and talk knowledgeably about Divali and the celebrations associated with the Chinese New Year.

64. Teaching and learning are good. Different topics are covered in depth and this means that pupils get a good grasp of what they are learning about. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to talk about relationships and feelings and this adds much to their spiritual development as well as enhancing their speaking and listening skills. The subject is also used well as a vehicle for enhancing pupils' writing skills. Pupils are introduced well to different faiths and traditions and this helps them to develop a strong early awareness of the fact that the United Kingdom is a culturally diverse society. A particular strength of teaching is the way that visits to local churches and visiting clergy to the school, together with a tremendous array of religious artefacts from different faiths, are all used very well to give real meaning and relevance to pupils' learning. These factors help learning spring to life and in return pupils show high levels of interest and motivation and show a genuine desire to learn more about Christianity as well as other faiths.
65. The subject is very well led and managed. The enthusiastic subject leader has a strong subject knowledge and is keen for all pupils to gain a deeper understanding and awareness of the faiths that they study. She has a good grasp of the quality of provision because she monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work well. Time is allocated to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom whenever the subject is a priority area on the school improvement plan. She is aware that although teachers assess and track pupils' progress well on an informal basis, there is a need for a more formal and rigorous approach to assessment so that assessing how well pupils are doing becomes even more effective in determining pupils' achievement.

## History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan interesting activities which the pupils enjoy.
- Teachers' planning is detailed and meets the needs of pupils of different abilities.
- Computers are used well to enhance pupils' learning and the subject is used well to develop pupils' writing skills and learning in other subjects.
- A very good range of resources and good array of visits bring the subject to life for the pupils.
- Leadership contributes much to pupils' good achievement.
- Assessment procedures are too informal to have biggest possible impact on pupils' achievement.

## Commentary

66. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above average and pupils of all abilities and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
67. By the time that pupils leave the school they have developed a good sense of chronology. They know that things have changed over time and they are often able to suggest why. Pupils explain well how, for example, a very broad and interesting range of household objects from the past differ from the modern day equivalents. They identify that these objects were made from different materials and that the fire was used to heat curling tongs rather than electricity. Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of famous people and events in the past. They can talk knowledgeably about the work of Florence Nightingale and I.K. Brunel. They know a lot of good



quality information about the Gunpowder Plot and the Great Fire of London. Pupils explain well how the fire started and know that we use different sorts of evidence to find out about such events, for example paintings and, in this case, Samuel Pepys' diary.

68. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and this is used well to motivate and enthuse the pupils. Planning is detailed, clearly outlines high expectations and caters well for the differing needs of pupils. Teaching makes good use of the school's very good selection of historical artefacts which add much to pupils' learning experiences. Learning is also enhanced by visits to places of historical interest in order to bring the subject to life for the pupils, for example the local museum of rural life. In lessons, teachers use questioning well to encourage pupils to share their ideas and make judgements. Computers are used well for carrying out research tasks and opportunities are often seized upon well for pupils' writing skills to be put to the test as pupils write up events from history in their own words. Teachers provide good opportunities for cross-curricular work. The study of Brunel's Clifton suspension bridge was followed by a bridge building exercise in design and technology and pupils also produced some good paintings of the Great Fire of London. Teachers mark work regularly and provide good pointers for improvement.
69. The subject is very well led and managed. The subject leader has very good subject knowledge, leads the subject enthusiastically and has a very accurate understanding of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. She monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work well with time allocated for the direct monitoring of teaching whenever the subject is an identified priority area on the school improvement plan. The school is currently developing more formal and rigorous procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress because at present these are not in place.

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

70. Due to timetable constraints, only a small number of lessons were seen in **design and technology**, **music** and **physical education**. It was not therefore possible to make a judgement on provision in those subjects. More lessons were seen in **art and design** and this subject is reported in full.
71. In **design and technology**, evidence from pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that standards are at least at an average level and often better. Planning indicates that in Years 1 and 2 pupils are provided with a good range of learning activities where they make a variety of different products, including moving vehicles, picture frames, model playgrounds, moving pictures and toys with winding mechanisms. Finished products are often of a good standard and pupils are conversant with terminology such as cams and axles. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to work with food and pupils have made fruit cocktails, bread, cookies and other tempting feasts. Planning indicates that an appropriate emphasis is given to the designing and evaluating aspects of the subject as well as the making. Pupils are directly taught important cutting and joining skills and are given every chance to work with a wide range of materials including wood, plastic, cardboard and a wide array of different fabrics. Discussions with pupils show that they thoroughly enjoy the subject and that they take a great pride in their work. Pupils also state that they are always encouraged to be imaginative in their work. The subject is very well led and managed. The subject leader monitors planning, provides a great deal of support and guidance to colleagues and maintains very good photographic evidence of pupils' work. Time is allocated to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom whenever the subject is a priority area on the school improvement plan. Teachers keep informal records of how well

pupils are doing but the school has accurately identified the need to introduce more formal and rigorous procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress.

72. In **physical education**, evidence from limited lesson observations, teachers' planning and discussions indicate that standards are at least at an average level by the end of Year 2 with pupils' gymnastic skills being above average. Analysis of documentation and planning shows that all aspects of the subject are covered well. Over the course of the year, pupils take part in gymnastics, dance and games activities and go swimming in the summer term. A small number of gymnastic lessons were observed. In these lessons standards were above those expected and pupils achieved well. Pupils show good levels of balance and agility and move with poise and elegance. Pupils put together a sequence of movements well and their work is inventive and creative. The quality of teaching and learning in this aspect of physical education was good overall with some very good features. Lessons are very well planned to ensure that all pupils, including those with particular physical or other special educational needs, are fully included. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations of behaviour. Occasionally, opportunities for pupils to comment on performance are missed. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities, including football and netball, and all the activities are very well attended. The subject is very well led and managed. The subject leader monitors teachers' planning well, talks to pupils about the subject and shows a real commitment to continuing to raise standards. Time is allocated for the direct monitoring of teaching when the subject is an identified priority area on the school improvement plan. The subject leader is currently working with colleagues to implement more formal and effective procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress, as at present such procedures are not yet in place.
73. In **music**, evidence from limited lesson observations and other activities, pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils, indicate that standards are at least average by the time that pupils leave school. Singing standards are good across the school. Part of one lesson, a singing practice and assemblies were observed. Pupils sing tunefully, showing a good sense of rhythm. They are enthusiastic and really enjoy the subject. Pupils develop their music appreciation skills well when they are given planned experiences, such as listening to music as they enter the school hall. Analysis of planning shows that the recently introduced scheme of work is being used well to teach all elements of the curriculum in depth. In the lesson observed the pupils achieved very well because of the very good quality of teaching. Percussion instruments were used very effectively to develop an understanding of high and low sounds and long and short notes. Pupils responded excellently to the expectations of high standards of behaviour and handled instruments with great care. Music makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural development because teachers introduce pupils to music from many different cultures. Pupils are also given opportunities to perform in school productions, assemblies and the local area music festival which add much to pupils' personal development as well as enhancing their musical prowess. The subject is very well led and managed by an enthusiastic subject leader who monitors provision well through scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with pupils. There is a real commitment to continuing to raise standards and the quality of musical experiences on offer for pupils. Time is allocated for teaching and learning to be monitored through lesson observations whenever the subject is a priority area on the school improvement plan. The subject leader has identified the need for a more rigorous approach to be put in place for assessing and tracking of pupils' progress because at present assessment procedures are not formal or robust enough.

## Art and design

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are provided with a wide range of vibrant learning opportunities.
- The high quality of teaching enables all pupils to achieve very well.
- High quality learning resources and the use of visitors' skills significantly enhance the quality of pupils' learning.
- Provision in the subject adds much to pupils' cultural development.
- The leadership of the subject contributes much to the high standards that pupils attain.
- Formal procedures to assess and track pupils' progress are not yet embedded in school practice.

### Commentary

74. Standards in art and design are well above average by the end of Year 2 and all pupils including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as a additional language, achieve very well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because high standards have been maintained. Many of the strengths remain and in some instances have been built upon.
75. By the end of Year 2 pupils have developed very good artistic skills. Their observational drawings are of a very good standard and they are very confident at mixing colours to produce the desired effect. Pupils show high levels of imagination and creativity in their work and are very confident when working with a wide range of media such as paint, pastels, pencil, charcoal and crayons. Pupils control pencils, paintbrushes and other tools very well and three-dimensional work that they complete when weaving or making masks is often of a high standard. Pupils already have a very good awareness of artists such as William Morris, Cézanne and Van Gogh.
76. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers ensure that pupils are provided with the opportunities to work with a wide range of different materials and media in both two and three-dimensional formats. Teachers love teaching the subject and many classrooms and corridors are a riot of colour with high standards of pupils' work on display around the school. Teachers have good and in some instances very good subject knowledge and use this very well in enthusing and motivating the pupils. Pupils respond very well and talk very animatedly about how much they enjoy art lessons. A particular strength of teaching is the way in which artistic skills are taught in a direct and systematic manner, whilst at the same time encouraging pupils to put their own stamp of originality on their work. The school is very well resourced and the quality of materials that pupils are able to work with reflects the high status that the subject is afforded in the school. Pupils recognise and appreciate this and handle resources and materials with a high level of maturity. Pupils have benefited greatly from opportunities to work with a local artist who has spent a good amount of time in school in working alongside pupils in producing high quality murals, wood and shell sculptures and a very impressive totem pole. Teaching also places a very good emphasis on making pupils aware of art from around the world including Africa, Mexico, China and Australia and this adds considerably to pupils' cultural development as well as extending their artistic knowledge. Teachers make good use

of computers to support and enhance pupils' learning through carrying out research tasks and for pupils to use "paint programs" to produce work in the style of different artists.

77. The subject is very well led and managed. The subject leader is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has a very good grasp of the provision that is made for the subject. She monitors planning and displays around the school, provides lots of guidance for colleagues and has played a pivotal role in maintaining the high standards that were identified at the last inspection. Time is allocated for the direct monitoring of teaching whenever the subject is an identified priority area on the school improvement plan. The school is currently developing more formal and rigorous procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress because at present these are not in place.

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

78. The provision made for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship is very good and contributes a great deal to pupils' personal development. The school puts much effort into promoting healthy and safer lifestyles and the success of its efforts was recognised when the school won a Healthy School Award in 2003. The school makes good provision for informing pupils about the dangers of drugs but does this in a very sensitive manner that takes full account of their ages. The school has timetabled lessons where pupils are given every opportunity to discuss relationships, emotions, feelings, friendship and other important issues such as bullying, keeping safe, the need for rules, growing and changing, and contributing to the community. Pupils feel very confident in discussions because they know that their views and opinions will be listened to and respected. The school has very high expectations as to how much responsibility pupils should take for tasks around the school, for pupils to be self-disciplined and to take account for their actions. Invariably the pupils rise to the challenges set in a very mature and sensible manner. The school is also very successful at raising pupils' awareness of different faiths and cultures and pupils show high levels of respect for people who may hold different beliefs. Discussions with pupils show that, although there are no formal class or school councils, there are many times within lessons and assemblies where their views on school improvement are canvassed and importantly pupils readily say that their views are listened to, valued and acted upon. The leadership and management of personal, social, health education and citizenship is very good and the subject leader has played a significant role in ensuring that the quality of provision is as good as it is.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
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	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
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).*