

# INSPECTION REPORT

**St Catherine's RC Primary School**

Bridport/Dorset

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113823

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Brown

Lead inspector: Jacqueline Ikin

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> May 2005

Inspection number: 267756

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary Aided  
Age range of pupils: 4-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 134

School address: Pymore Road  
Bridport  
Dorset

Postcode: DT6 3TR

Telephone number: 01308 423568

Fax number: 01308 421291

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Miss Sandra Brown

Date of previous inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Catherine's RC Primary School is a small primary school that caters for pupils aged four to eleven years of age. It serves the Roman Catholic parish of Bridport and the surrounding area, and parents choose to send their children to the school because of its Catholic nature. The majority of pupils are from white United Kingdom backgrounds, but other white European backgrounds, African and Asian heritages are also represented. Two pupils speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. The socio-economic circumstances of pupils is above average. Attainment on entry varies from year to year but, overall, it is average. The number of pupils who join the school after the usual time of admission is a little above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average. Their needs include moderate learning difficulties, behavioural difficulties and speech and communication difficulties. One has a Statement of Special Educational Need. The school gained a 'Healthy Schools' award in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3349	Jacqueline Ikin	Lead inspector	English History Geography Personal, social and health education and citizenship
32698	Steven Barker	Lay inspector	
21090	David Manuel	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology French Physical education Music The Foundation Stage
32410	Karen Menis	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school, which is well led by the headteacher and a strong governing body. The school's very strong Catholic ethos is at the heart of its work. Teaching and learning are good overall. The majority of pupils achieve well and standards are above average by the end of Year 6. Overall the school gives good value for money.

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

- The new headteacher is providing strong and committed leadership. She has high aspirations for the future of the school, which are fully shared by the staff and governors.
- Skilled teaching in Years 3 to 6 ensures that pupils achieve well in these year groups. However, higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not always achieve as much as they should because of weaknesses in planning for their needs.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning as a result of the rich curriculum that is offered and the very good support that parents give to the school and to their children's learning.
- Weaknesses in assessment and in planning for the development of skills in design and technology have not been addressed since the last inspection.
- Subject leaders' roles and responsibilities are not shared equally amongst the teaching staff.
- Pupils are not yet as involved as they should be in the school's decision making processes.

The school's improvement since the last inspection is **satisfactory** overall. The school has maintained the majority of the strengths identified in the last inspection and improved its provision for science and information and communication technology. Governors are now much more involved than they were in the leadership and management of the school. However, not enough has been done to improve progression in design and technology skills or to improve assessment procedures or the achievement of higher attainers in Years 1 and 2.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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*

The tables shows that test results in English and mathematics were in the top 5 per cent nationally in 2004. Inspection findings show that **achievement** is **good** overall. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is generally satisfactory, although higher attaining pupils do not achieve as much as they should. In Years 3 to 6 the achievement of all pupils, including higher attainers, is good. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, history, geography and art and design are average in Year 2, and above average in Year 6. Children in the reception class achieve satisfactorily and standards are generally average in all the areas of learning. Pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** are **good** overall. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils' attitudes to their work are good and they behave well. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education** provided by the school is **good** overall.

**Teaching** and learning are **good** overall. They are good in Years 3 to 6, where very good teaching was also seen during the inspection. They are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Teaching and learning for reception-aged children are satisfactory overall, although some good teaching also occurs. In Years 3 to 6, the teachers have very good subject knowledge and a very good understanding of how to present learning to pupils in ways that interest them and deepen their understanding. In Years 1 and 2, there is insufficient planning for the needs of higher attaining pupils. Assessment is satisfactory overall. It is very good in English, mathematics and science but unsatisfactory in other subjects. The curriculum is good overall. It is enriched very well by extra-curricular activities. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs, and for those who speak English as an additional language, is good. The school is well staffed and resources are good. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, but there is limited access for those with a physical disability. Pupils are well cared for, but they are not sufficiently involved in the school's work. The school's partnership with parents is very good. There are good links with other schools and the community.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **leadership and management** of the school are **good** overall and its governance is good. The leadership of key staff is satisfactory overall, although good subject leadership occurs in English, ICT and the humanities. The headteacher provides good leadership and has given the school a clear sense of direction and purpose. She has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the areas in which it needs to improve, which include the unequal deployment of teachers' subject roles and responsibilities which have constrained the school's improvement efforts. The governors are ably led by the chair and they fulfil their statutory duties well.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. Pupils love the school and enjoy being there.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the achievement of higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2;
- review the management structure of the school and ensure a more even distribution of subject leader roles and responsibilities;
- improve assessment for subjects other than English, mathematics and science, and planning for progression in design and technology skills;
- ensure that pupils have more involvement in the school's decision making processes.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils **achieve well** overall. Standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2, and above average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. The achievement of children in the reception class is satisfactory overall and standards are broadly average in all areas of learning, except for in physical development where achievement is good and standards are above average.

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

- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and achieve standards that are above average in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), geography, history and art and design.
- Higher attainers do not achieve as much as they should in Years 1 and 2, but they achieve well in Years 3 and 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the good levels of support provided by teaching assistants.

#### **Commentary**

##### **Key Stage 1**

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.2 (17.2)	15.8 (15.8)
Writing	17.2 (15.5)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.9 (18.1)	16.2 (16.3)

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

##### **Key Stage 2**

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.3 (28.6)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	30.7 (27.6)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	31.3 (30.8)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 18 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. The results of the 2004 national tests for Year 6 pupils were in the top 5 per cent for schools nationally in English and mathematics and well above average in science. The results were also well above average when compared with the results of schools with similar numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals. The results of the 2004 national tests for Year 2 pupils were well above average for reading and in the top 5 per cent for writing. The results for mathematics were above average. When compared with schools with similar numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals, the results were well above average for writing, above average for reading and below



average for mathematics. Where weaknesses occurred in the Year 2 results, it was in the number of pupils achieving at the higher levels in reading and mathematics, which was well below average when compared with similar schools.

2. The findings of the inspection are that standards in English, mathematics and science are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. The school has successfully improved the achievement of higher attaining pupils in science throughout the school and in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. It has not yet raised the achievement of higher attainers in mathematics in Years 1 and 2. The difference between the Year 6 standards and those of the 2004 test results can be explained by the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 group. Standards in Year 2 in English, mathematics and science are judged to be average because few pupils are attaining at the higher levels, either in lessons or in the work seen. Standards in ICT, art and design, geography and history are also average in Year 2, but above average in Year 6.
3. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well overall. Most achieve the standards expected by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. This is as a result of the individual support that they receive in lessons and the well targeted additional support which is given to individuals and small groups of pupils outside whole class lessons. Higher attaining pupils achieve well overall. In Years 3 to 6, they achieve well as a result of the high expectations that their teachers have of them and the high level of challenge in the work set. They do not always achieve as much as they should in Years 1 and 2 because of insufficient planning for their needs and capabilities. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well overall and very well in Years 3 to 6. The school makes good use of the services of the local authority advisory team to ensure that their English language needs are met.

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

Pupils' attitudes and personal development are **good** and have improved since the last inspection. Behaviour is good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school fosters a very strong sense of community based on Catholic values.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning because of the wide range of opportunities that are offered in the curriculum.
- Most pupils behave well, although some silly behaviour occurs in minority of lessons.
- Pupils have a well developed sense of their responsibilities towards those less fortunate than themselves in the wider world, but are not sufficiently aware of their responsibilities in the smooth running of the school.
- Pupils' spiritual development is a strength of the school.

### **Commentary**

4. Pupils' good attitudes to learning and the school have been maintained since the last inspection. The sense of belonging to a caring Catholic community is promoted very well in all aspects of school life. The parish priest makes a significant contribution to this. Pupils are proud of their school and all that it has to offer. Year 6 pupils talk confidently and with evident pleasure of their friendly and supportive teachers, their

favourite lessons and the wide range of interesting activities that they take part in. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities in the wider world as a result of taking part in events to raise money for charities. However, they are rarely consulted about issues that affect them or the school and are not sufficiently involved in the school's work.

5. Pupils develop a very good understanding of right from wrong as a result of the many opportunities that they have to consider moral dilemmas that they may have in their own lives and also when considering the moral dilemmas faced by characters in literacy or in history. Most pupils are polite, talk confidently to visitors and mix well with each other. This contributes to the family atmosphere which pervades the school. Most pupils behave very well in lessons and get on with the tasks they are given to do because they know what is expected of them. However, in some lessons in Years 1 and 2 a lack of consistency in the management of behaviour and the lack of match of work to the varying capabilities and needs of pupils result in some silly and thoughtless behaviour by a minority of pupils. On the few occasions when pupils behave thoughtlessly in Years 3 to 6, it is quickly checked to avoid disturbance to lessons. Pupils and parents alike do not consider bullying to be a problem in the school and most say that any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with very effectively.
6. Spiritual development is very well promoted through the clear Christian aims and ethos of the school. Religious education lessons and the daily acts of prayers and worship, plus the 'Here I Am' religious education programme, provide a very firm foundation for pupils' spiritual development. Opportunities to consider matters beyond the 'here and now', and for reflection on feelings and the wonder of world about them, are provided in most subjects and these contribute to the standards achieved.
7. Pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils are highly respectful of their own values and traditions and they also have a good level of respect for ways of life and traditions that are different from their own, for example when learning about the way of life in countries such as Nicaragua or learning about the traditions of other faiths such as Hinduism.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.3	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

8. Pupils are happy to come to school and arrive punctually and enthusiastically. Recently implemented procedures ensure that the school effectively monitors attendance and punctuality and, where necessary, involves the Educational Welfare Service. There have been no exclusions.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are good overall. The curriculum is good and the school provides a good standard of care for its pupils. There are very good links with parents and good links with the community.

#### Teaching and learning

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6, where some very good teaching also occurs. Good teaching also occurs for reception-aged pupils.
- Weaknesses in planning result in a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2, where there are also weaknesses in behaviour management in some lessons.
- Assessment in English, mathematics and science is very good, but there are weaknesses in assessment in other subjects and in the use of assessment in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by skilled teaching assistants.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6	9	11	1	0	0

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

9. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection.
10. In Years 3 to 6 teaching and learning are good overall and some very good teaching was seen during the course of the inspection. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and this makes a significant contribution to their achievement and the standards that they reach. They use their very good subject knowledge to plan relevant, interesting and well-structured tasks that engage pupils' interest and systematically develop their skills and understanding in some depth. English and the humanities are good examples of this. In a very effective Year 6 English lesson, for example, pupils' understanding of characterisation was extended by the use of practical tasks in which pupils were required to draw inferences from objects, illustrations and text and to draw on all their understanding of how authors used language and illustrations to create meaning. Teachers' skilled questioning encourages pupils to think for themselves and helps them to work at the edge of their capabilities. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 make very good use of visits and the expertise of visitors and teachers from other schools to capture pupils' interest and make learning come alive. This is particularly evident in the humanities. For example, during the inspection, an expert on Nicaragua enthralled the pupils in Years 3 to 6 with a very good presentation which captured pupils' interest on a personal level because of the detailed information that he was able to give, not only about the country, but also about a particular family he knew. Years 5 and 6 pupils also respond very well to the good teaching of French by a visiting teacher from the secondary school.
11. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is more variable, but is satisfactory overall. Where weaknesses occur it is because planning is weak and learning objectives lack

precision. As a result, the activities planned do not meet the widely differing needs of children in the class. There is a particular lack of challenge for higher attaining children and they do not achieve the standards of which they are capable because of this, sometimes engaging in silly behaviour when they become bored. In the unsatisfactory Year 1 and 2 lesson seen, weaknesses in planning and poor management of behaviour meant that time for learning was lost and pupils did not achieve as much as they should have done.

12. The evidence from children's work in the reception class indicates that the basic skills of literacy are soundly taught and that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. However, during the inspection some good teaching was seen when good account was taken of children's capacity to learn through well-planned and purposeful play and practical activities which engaged their interest and imagination. For example, the children's faces lit up on the arrival of a 'lost' parrot in the classroom. This was effective in promoting discussions about where he might have come from and how they might go about finding its owner and mending its 'broken wing'.
13. There is good support provided for pupils with special educational needs in speech and language, literacy and numeracy. This is characterised by skilled intervention by teaching assistants, support provided by outside agencies and carefully devised programmes of work in some classes. The overall monitoring and assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good. Statements of need are reviewed well; however, the targets on individual plans are not sufficiently specific for accurate assessment of pupils' progress. Parents and pupils are involved well in knowing the areas of focus for development. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are also well supported and good use is made of the specialist advice from the local authority. Their first language is valued whenever possible, for example, during the inspection, when a Spanish speaking visitor addressed a pupil in fluent Spanish. She replied with pride in her first language, to the obvious amazement of her classmates, who were quite in awe of her ability to understand and speak two languages so well.
14. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall, which is similar to the findings of the last inspection. They are very good in English, mathematics and science and are used well to plan for the different needs of pupils in Years 3 to 6. Teachers use a variety of effective strategies, such as questioning, observing and reviewing work, to find out what pupils understand and can do in lessons. In Years 3 to 6 this information is regularly shared with pupils and, through marking and discussion, provides guidance that helps them to know what they should do in order to improve. However, the use of assessment to inform planning in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory and results in a lack of challenging work for higher attaining pupils and pupils in these year groups do not have sufficient advice on how to improve their work so that they can reach a higher standard. Pupils are involved in target setting and self-assessment of their progress in Years 3 to 6, although their understanding of what the different levels of attainment mean is weak. In ICT assessment procedures are satisfactory and are being reviewed to formalise a more consistent approach. However, in other subjects in all year groups, assessment systems are unsatisfactory because they still too informal, as they were at the time of the last inspection.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum provided by the school is **good** overall. There are very good opportunities for enrichment. The accommodation is satisfactory. Resources are good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides an innovative curriculum with good links between subjects and very good use of visits, visitors and theme days.
- There is good attention to literacy and numeracy.
- There are weaknesses in planning for the development of skills in design and technology which have not been addressed since the last inspection.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language.
- Provision for higher attaining pupils is very good in Years 3 to 6, but is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2.
- Opportunities for disabled access to the school buildings are unsatisfactory, although governors have a disability access plan to deal with this.

## **Commentary**

15. The curriculum is good overall, which is similar to the findings of the last inspection. All statutory requirements are met, including those for personal, social and health education and citizenship, and pupils are well prepared for their secondary schooling. The curriculum is innovative and planned links between subject areas offer a wide range of opportunities for learning, including good provision for the learning of a modern foreign language. As a result, pupils are eager to participate with the activities planned and talk enthusiastically about their work, within a thriving learning culture. The lack of formal development of the progression of skills in design and technology has not been addressed since the last inspection, however. It is not possible to give a judgement about provision for personal and social education because no lessons were seen.
16. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, have full access to the curriculum. There is very good provision for higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6, although a lack of planning results in their needs not being fully met in Years 1 and 2 and so they do not always achieve as much as they should.
17. The enrichment of the curriculum is very good and greatly enhanced by the very good use of visits, visitors and theme days, which supports the teaching of a broad and balanced curriculum and makes learning meaningful for the pupils. Very good use of visiting experts adds depth and interest to the curriculum, particularly in the humanities. Very good links with the National Trust are examples of this. Another good example occurred during the inspection when a visit from charity workers, who worked in Nicaragua, was very effective in enabling older pupils to compare environmental, physical and social factors in the United Kingdom to those in a developing country. A good range of after-school clubs is well attended by pupils and contributes well to their learning and achievement by extending their skills and knowledge of art, books, music and sport. During the inspection, the French lessons seen offered good opportunities for language learning for the older pupils.
18. The school building enables the teaching of the curriculum, although access for disabled pupils and staff is currently unsatisfactory. Good use is made of all the space available for learning and the spacious ICT suite makes a significant contribution to learning. The library is housed in a corridor at the back of the hall and is kept in very good order by a skilled and enthusiastic governor who is a librarian. Older pupils

enjoy selecting books to take home. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not allowed to do this and this limits the development of their reading skills, particularly for the more able. The lack of space in the school means that the library area is often in use for small group intervention work. This constrains opportunities for other pupils to use the resource for their own independent research. Spacious school grounds and developing features, such as the pond and butterfly garden, support the teaching of the curriculum well.

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

Procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare and safety are **good**. The school's provision of support, advice and guidance is satisfactory, but the steps taken to involve pupils in the work and development of the school are unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff know pupils well and this leads to very close relationships and an overall ethos of care in the school.
- Good induction arrangements ensure that children happily and quickly settle into school.
- The views of the pupils are not currently sought or acted upon.
- Variations in monitoring academic progress mean that pupils do not always receive the guidance that they need to improve their learning.
- Some of the school's procedures and practices relating to child protection and health and safety rely on informal systems, which could impede their effectiveness.

### **Commentary**

19. All school staff demonstrate a very high degree of concern for the care and welfare of pupils and their families. This starts with careful monitoring and supervision of the car drop-off situation at the start of the day, continues through the school day and extends into ensuring that all pupils leave the school grounds safely at the end of the day. Effective communication ensures that all children are known to all members of staff, which creates a strong ethos of care in the school. Effective relationships are built between staff and pupils, ensuring children quickly settle into school when they join reception class and gain in confidence and self-esteem as they move through the school.
20. Good induction arrangements, built upon the strength of the links with the pre-school attached to the site and the warm welcome given to the parents of children new to the school, play a significant part in ensuring children are very familiar with the school, its staff and their peers and contribute to creating a happy and secure learning environment. Pupils trust members of staff and feel fully confident in approaching them with a problem.
21. Pupils do not currently have a voice in their school. There is no school council and there are very limited opportunities for pupils' views to be sought or for their opinions to shape the development of the school. When interviewed during the inspection, pupils could only cite requesting certain books to be added to the school library as an example of their involvement in decision-making. There are many opportunities when the school could consult pupils and involve them in shaping the future of their school, rather than decisions always being taken by staff.

22. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory, although it relies heavily on informal systems and is made possible by the school's small size. Pupils have individual targets, which are well known to them, although they are not made aware of how these relate to National Curriculum levels. Although pupils in Years 3 to 6 generally receive very good advice on how to improve their work in English, mathematics and science, insufficient use is made of assessments in Years 1 and 2 for this purpose and there are inconsistencies in the monitoring of academic progress in other subjects because procedures have not been formalised. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are clearly identified at an early stage, with many pupils' needs being identified prior to joining the school. Their progress is carefully monitored, as is the progress of those pupils who speak English as an additional language. The progress of higher attaining pupils is monitored very well in Years 3 to 6, but is not sufficiently monitored in Years 1 and 2.
23. Overall the school has satisfactory procedures in place for health and safety, risk assessment and child protection and staff are fully trained. However, although the new headteacher has implemented many changes to improve procedures and practice, a small minority of staff are not fully aware of some areas of both child protection and health and safety procedures. There are also areas in the school grounds that do not consistently ensure pupils' safety.

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

The school has a **very good** partnership with parents. Links with the community and with other schools are **good** and have a positive impact on children's learning and personal development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are actively involved in all aspects of school life.
- Procedures to deal with parents' concerns are very good.
- Links with local people and organisations create a strong sense of community at the school.
- Links with partner schools ensure smooth transition in and out of the school.
- Progress reports do not provide parents and carers with information on the steps that pupils need to take to progress their learning.

### **Commentary**

24. Links with parents are very good. The school's open-door policy makes it very accessible to parents and carers. Parents are warmly welcomed into all aspects of school life and many help in the school. The school has a thriving 'Friends' organisation which raises significant amounts of money for school projects. As a result, parents make a significant contribution to their children's learning and personal development. The school's accessibility to both parents and carers contributes to the very good procedures to deal with parental concerns. The headteacher and teachers are always available at the end of the school day and parents find that everyone in the school is very approachable if they are worried. Parents report that any issues are taken seriously and dealt with promptly.
25. Parents receive regular, good quality information from the school. Regular newsletters, termly consultations and annual reports keep parents informed as to how their children are progressing. However, progress reports do not consistently provide parents and carers or their children with information on the steps their children need

to take next in order to improve their learning and some reports do not give subject-specific information on history and geography in the humanities section. Although parents share their children's targets for improvement in core subjects, neither they nor the pupils are provided with information on which National Curriculum level they are working at or aiming towards in tests.

26. The school actively promotes community life and, through a variety of events and activities linking the school with the parish and the town, instils in pupils a strong sense of identity and creates an effective community feel to the school. Participation in the local music festival, the town's drama event and visits to local care homes creates in pupils a real appreciation of the benefits and responsibilities of belonging to a community.
27. The school has a very impressive record of raising money for a wide range of charities and it has deliberately chosen to support a range of international charities, which have in turn made a valuable contribution to pupils' appreciation of other cultures. The school raised money for the recent Tsunami appeal and has forged effective links with a development charity in Nicaragua.
28. The school's links with its partner schools are many and varied and make a very strong contribution to the transfer to secondary school. Strong links with other primary schools make it possible for the school to participate in a wide range of sporting competitions, to organise joint staff development and training sessions and to benefit from sharing technical support for ICT. There are good links with the on-site pre-school, where shared grounds, resources and activities ease the transfer of pupils into school. Pupils' transfer to their secondary schools is supported well by the good provision for the teaching of modern foreign languages, shared use of design and technology workshops and careful co-ordination of the Year 6 and Year 7 curriculum.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The headteacher provides **good** leadership. The leadership and management of other key staff, including subject leaders, are **satisfactory** overall. The governing body provides **good** governance.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear strategic vision and is very ambitious for the school.
- The distribution of key roles and responsibilities is unsatisfactory.
- Staff work together well and share a common purpose.
- Governors are well informed and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- The school's finances are managed well.

### Commentary

29. The headteacher has only been in post since January, but already provides good leadership. She has a very clear vision and high aspirations for the school that are shared by staff and the governing body. The headteacher has been successful in the way in which she has led the school forward since her appointment and has identified key areas for improvement. These include improving the morale of the staff, building a strong team with staff, governors, parents and children, improving the achievement of higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 and adding enrichment and enjoyment to



learning. An effective school improvement plan is being developed for the start of the new academic year in September.

30. The leadership and management of key staff are satisfactory overall. Subject coordinators in English, ICT and the humanities have a good overview of their subjects, have developed these areas well and have a clear and accurate view of where improvements need to be made. Good informal systems and teamwork, particularly in the upper part of the school, have been effective in ensuring good achievement and standards overall. However, these systems do not ensure sufficiently consistent practice across the whole school and the uneven delegation of roles and responsibilities, which has resulted from staff changes over the last three years, means that some staff carry a heavy work load and other staff have no subject responsibility at all. Inconsistencies in subject development have resulted, such as the lack of development in design and technology and assessment since the last inspection. The headteacher, who took over a large number of key areas herself upon her appointment, is aware of these issues and is in the process of reviewing the management structure of the school and formalising systems.
31. The school's commitment to inclusion for all pupils, including those with special educational needs or specific medical needs or those for whom English is an additional language, is good. The management of these aspects is good and ensures that both teachers and support assistants meet these pupils' needs well so that they achieve well. However, there is not enough attention given to the needs of higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 and they do not always do as well as they should. Governors are aware of the limited access for disabled pupils and have plans to put this right.
32. The governing body provides good levels of governance. Governors are effective in carrying out their responsibilities and have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for improvement. The previous report identified weaknesses in the role of the governing body in its evaluation of progress and links with long-term planning. Governors' role in monitoring the school's work is now securely established. They make frequent visits to the school, noting future actions that need to be addressed. They have a good grasp of how high standards are in relation to the national picture and in comparison with similar schools, and educational priorities are firmly linked to raising standards and the continuing improvement of provision. The governing body complies fully with all statutory requirements.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	319,954
Total expenditure	330,087
Expenditure per pupil	2,599

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	23,297
Balance carried forward to the next year	13,164

33. The school has developed well-structured financial procedures that effectively support the educational priorities. The school's finances are well managed and monitored, and spending is clearly linked to the targets in the school development plan. Resources acquired are used effectively to support teaching and learning. The school takes care to ensure that best value for money is secured. The school's day-to-day financial controls and procedures are good, enabling the close monitoring and evaluation of spending decisions. The most recent financial audit, two years ago,

made some minor recommendations, which have been responded to. Taking into account pupils' overall good achievement, the good quality of education provided and the average unit costs, the school provides good value for money.

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall and it is **satisfactorily** led and managed. Children's attainment when they start school covers the full range and is broadly average. They start school in the September following their fourth birthday and attend part-time for the first term. They attend full-time from the following January. There are good links between the reception teachers, parents and the local play group, enabling children to experience a smooth start to their education. Most children have attended the play group, which is on the same site, and they are regularly invited into the school. Assessment is satisfactory and is used appropriately to track the children's achievement and to guide planning for the next steps in learning. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some strengths. Teaching is shared by two part-time teachers. They work together well, sharing information to enable planning to be relevant to the current needs of the children. Good interaction by the teacher, the teaching assistants and other helpers ensures that children's learning is systematically advanced. Interesting weekly themes provide meaningful links for activities. The recent improvement in provision for learning through play and practical activities is having a positive effect on the children's attitudes to school and their work. However, these activities are not yet sufficiently embedded into the curriculum.

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

Provision for personal and social development is **satisfactory**.

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

- The reception children are cared for well and gain in confidence as a result.
- Teaching assistants provide good support to help children learn.
- Resources are used effectively to engage pupils' interests.
- There are limited opportunities for children to develop the skills of independent learning.

#### **Commentary**

34. In their personal, social and emotional development, children achieve satisfactorily and increasingly gain confidence and self-esteem to achieve average standards by the end of the reception year. Good levels of care and support in the early stages help the children to settle quickly into the routines of the school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Well-established routines help the children to settle quickly in lessons and good relationships are soon created. The positive approaches and strategies used by all adults encourage children to take high levels of interest in activities. Children are supported effectively and motivated to learn. As a result, children of all capabilities are keen to attempt new tasks. They have a developing respect for their own culture and beliefs and those of others. Children play well together, sharing and taking turns amicably. However, limited opportunities to use their initiative and develop their own ideas through purposeful, well-planned play result in weaknesses in the development of their skills of decision making and independent learning.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The basic skills of reading and writing are soundly taught.
- There is good use of a range of teaching methods to capture children's interest in reading and writing.
- There are limited opportunities for children to develop their literacy skills through play.

### **Commentary**

35. In communication, language and literacy, children of all capabilities achieve satisfactorily and standards are broadly average by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and some good teaching and learning was also seen during the inspection. Early reading and writing skills are soundly taught. Reading is very well supported by parents and all children show good levels of interest in books. Children are encouraged to listen attentively and to talk about their learning, which helps them to develop their use of language for thinking and extends their vocabulary. Good links were made between reading, writing and speaking and listening during the inspection in a lesson which made learning meaningful to the children. Letters from two 'local residents' who had each lost a parrot were opened and discussed. The teacher worked well with the children to compose a letter of reply to the likely owner of the parrot that had been found in the classroom. Where weaknesses occur, it is in the opportunities that children have to use their early literacy skills in the course of activities that they initiate themselves and in the course of well-planned play. This limits the development of their imaginative ideas and their skills in using language for thinking.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The basic skills of numeracy are soundly taught.
- There are limited opportunities for children to consolidate their numeracy skills through play.

### **Commentary**

36. In their mathematical development children achieve satisfactorily and standards are average. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and formal activities are well supported by teaching assistants and other helpers to reinforce children's understanding of number and shape. From the outset, children are encouraged to take an early interest in mathematics. During the inspection, children counted up to ten objects accurately and matched pairs of shapes such as triangles, squares, rectangles and circles and created sequenced patterns with them. Most children have a satisfactory knowledge of the order of numbers and their understanding is soundly enhanced by an appropriate range of indoor and outdoor activities, which include

play. However, these are not yet fully integrated into the wider curriculum to help the children consolidate their mathematical understanding.

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

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Weekly themes are used effectively to engage pupils' interest.
- The school is aware that there are not yet enough opportunities for pupils to explore the outdoor environment for themselves.

### **Commentary**

37. In their knowledge and understanding of the world achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children of all capabilities are keen to learn and their understanding is enhanced on occasions by working alongside the older Year 1 pupils. Many activities relate to the weekly theme, are interesting and provide suitable levels of challenge. Spoken language is also developed effectively as the children explain their ideas to adults and to each other. A satisfactory balance is achieved between children finding things out for themselves and the direct teaching of key skills such as the use of computers. For example, small groups of children were observed developing early skills of using the mouse control to indicate their answers to on-screen challenges about matching shapes in links with mathematical development. The school is currently updating its outdoor provision for pupils in the reception class in order to enhance the curriculum and give more opportunities for the children to explore the environment for themselves.

## **Physical development**

Provision for physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good opportunities for children to develop their skills of control and co-ordination.
- The children are taught how to use pencils and scissors correctly and this benefits their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

38. In physical development children achieve well and standards are above average. Teaching and learning are good and there is good use of an interesting range of activities to stimulate children's learning of physical skills. The children benefit from regular access to an outside play area, where they have good opportunities to develop their control and co-ordination skills and their spatial awareness using large toys and other equipment. Good examples were observed of children working together in small groups of two or three, discussing together how to move as different animals and then performing creatively as those animals to other children. Finer control skills are also encouraged and are developed well. Children of all capabilities develop increasing control of pencils, crayons, small toys and equipment and

construction kits. Good achievement was evident when children worked well together using scissors carefully and safely to cut different shapes of material to assemble on a collage.

### **Creative development**

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Specific skills are taught well.
- There are not enough opportunities for the children to explore their own creative and imaginative ideas.

### **Commentary**

39. In the area of creative development children's achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with strengths in the good range of resources provided and the taught activities which focus on the development of specific skills. For example, during the inspection, children were observed working productively under the direction of adult helpers, making a fabric collage of leaf shapes. There are, however, insufficient opportunities for children to initiate their own ideas through well-planned play and this constrains the development of their creative and imaginative thinking.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

#### English

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good and is a major factor in the good standards that the school achieves in English.
- Higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not achieve as much as they should because of insufficient use of assessment to plan for their needs.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to make use of their literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum.
- The subject is well led and managed.

#### Commentary

40. The results of the 2004 national English tests for pupils in Year 6 were in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. The overall Year 2 results were in the top 5 per cent for writing and were well above average in reading. The findings of the inspection are that standards in reading and writing are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. This is not as high as standards found in the last inspection. The difference between test results and inspection findings can be explained by variations in the proportions of special needs and higher attaining pupils in the year groups involved. However, a lack of planning for higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 is also a contributory factor. Pupils with special educational needs, as well as those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well as a result of the good support that they receive from well trained teaching assistants.
41. Teaching and learning are good overall. They are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good overall in Years 3 to 6, where there are some considerable strengths in teaching. Some very good lessons indeed were seen during the course of the inspection. Pupils' achievement in reading is good overall. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. There is an emphasis on the teaching of reading throughout the school. Sessions in which the teachers in Years 1 and 2 focus on the basic skills that pupils need to work out new words and to understand how stories are constructed ensure that pupils acquire these skills systematically. In Years 3 to 6 the teachers have designed their own very good quality materials to ensure that pupils learn higher order reading skills and extract deeper meaning from the books they read. As a result most pupils become skilled and avid readers by the time they reach Year 6 and confidently discuss their favourite books and authors. Where weaknesses occur in the teaching of reading it is in Years 1 and 2 where more able readers do not always have access to the more challenging literature they need because their choice of reading matter is limited to the reading scheme.
42. Pupils' achievement in writing is good overall. In Years 1 and 2 it is satisfactory and in Years 3 to 6 it is good overall. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 ensures that pupils become increasingly independent in their writing by applying their phonic knowledge to unknown words. However, there is insufficient focus on developing the skills of more

able pupils to a higher level. In Years 3 to 6, teachers use their very good subject knowledge to structure interesting lessons and ask challenging questions that ensure learning in depth. Very well chosen, good quality literature is presented in lively and interesting ways which capture pupils' attention and interest them in learning. It is often the starting point from which pupils learn the techniques and strategies that can be used to structure story lines, develop characterisation and make their own writing interesting to the reader. As a result, pupils learn to develop quality and depth in their work. There is very good attention to broadening pupils' general vocabulary. For example, Year 6 pupils enjoy 'Thesaurus challenges', which encourage them to look for as many different words as they can find which mean the same thing. This increases their stock of words and so benefits the quality of their writing. Where weaknesses occur in writing it is in the variable quality of handwriting throughout the school and in the accuracy of spelling. Punctuation is a weakness in Years 1 and 2, where more able pupils rarely succeed at the higher levels because of a lack of planning for their needs.

43. The systems used to assess English are very good. Their use to inform planning to meet pupils' different needs in Years 3 to 6 is also very good. However, in Years 1 and 2, where not enough use is made of assessment to meet the different needs of pupils, its use is unsatisfactory overall. Targets are set and regularly reviewed. Although pupils are aware of what their targets are, they do not always understand the meaning of them in terms of National Curriculum levels.
44. The subject leader is skilled and knowledgeable and sets a very good example by the quality of her teaching. She has a very accurate overview of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and a clear view of how to move the subject forward.

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

45. Pupils' skills in using language and literacy in other subjects of the curriculum are good, overall. They use speaking and listening skills well, both in drama and discussions, to widen their vocabulary. Opportunities for them to write in a range of different styles are used well to consolidate their understanding of how to structure their writing for different purposes. Although there is very good attention to the use of books for research in the humanities as pupils get older, the books used are often from a classroom collection chosen by the teacher. Throughout the school pupils' library skills are underdeveloped because of insufficient opportunity to use the library for their independent research.

### **French**

Provision in modern foreign languages is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a good range of experiences for pupils to gain early experiences of a modern foreign language.
- The teacher has good command of the French language and accent.
- The pace of lessons is good and pupils are keen to be involved in oral exchanges.

### **Commentary**



46. Although not a statutory requirement for this age group of pupils, the school has chosen to give pupils an experience of learning the early skills of a modern foreign language, namely French. Evidence gathered from lesson observations indicates that teaching and learning are of good quality and pupils achieve well in speaking and listening. In addition, to the teaching of French to Year 6 pupils to prepare them for secondary schooling, pupils in Year 5 are introduced to early language skills when pupils respond briefly with single words and short phrases to what they see and hear. By Year 6, pupils' listening, responding and speaking skills are above those normally seen at this age in similar circumstances.
47. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The visiting teacher attends through an arrangement with the local secondary school. Strengths include the good command of the language and accent and the provision of good modelling for pupils to imitate. A good range of resources, including games, is used to make learning interesting. As a result, pupils understand and use a range of simple phrases accurately and adapt them to meet the needs of communicating with their teacher. The teacher encourages pupils to listen carefully and insists on high standards of intonation and pronunciation. Pupils listen and respond well with correct phrases and answers, using generally accurate recall of memorised words and phrases and passages of short dialogue. Regular practice increases the confidence of pupils and their sense of enjoyment.
48. In sessions observed, learning was made fun and the pace of new learning was good. Pupils understood the conventions of repeating phrases using different tones of voice in a way that improved their accents and expression. They replied to a good range of different questions and challenges and adapted them well to meet the needs of communicating with their teacher and one another. This was demonstrated well in the session which revised the names of different articles of clothing and when they were seen to be too big or too small, 'trop grand ou trop petit' when worn by selected pupils. Provision is also successful in helping pupils learn about the culture of French speaking countries.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for higher attainers in Year 6 has improved since the last inspection and is very good, but there is insufficient challenge for higher attainers in Years 1 and 2.
- ICT is now used effectively to support the teaching of mathematics to older pupils.
- Very good assessment systems are used well to inform planning for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Insufficient use is made of them for the different needs of pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- The role and responsibility for the further development of mathematics require review.

### **Commentary**

49. The results of the 2004 tests for Year 2 pupils were above average when compared with schools nationally, but below average when compared with the results of similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels was well below average when compared with similar schools. The results of 2004 Years 6 tests were in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally and well above average when compared with similar schools. The results for higher attaining pupils were also well above average.

50. The findings of the inspection are that pupils' achievement is good overall. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average in Years 1 and 2. Achievement is good and standards are above average in Year 6. The difference between last year's results and the inspection findings can be partly explained by the differences in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year groups involved. However, weaknesses in planning for the needs of higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 are also a factor. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support that they receive, as do pupils who speak English as an additional language. Standards and achievement in the subject have improved overall since the last inspection. However, the achievement of higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 has not improved enough.
51. Teaching and learning are good overall and sometimes very good in Years 3 to 6 where the needs of all the pupils, including higher attainers, are met effectively. Carefully planned lessons, informed by prior knowledge of the pupils' understanding, clear lesson objectives, the use of ICT to support learning and varied activities which provide appropriate challenge and extend pupils' thinking, capture the interest and enthusiasm of pupils. As a result, by the time pupils are eleven, their understanding of mathematical ideas is greater than expected for their age. They can calculate using decimals to solve problems, are able to talk about the properties of three-dimensional shapes, measure angles to the nearest degree and calculate mean averages. Teaching and learning for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory overall. Practical mathematical activities, aimed at the majority of pupils, lead to satisfactory achievement for most pupils. By the time pupils are seven, the majority are operating within the expected range for their age. They can confidently use numbers to 100, recall addition and subtraction facts to 20, are able to find halves of numbers and shapes and use simple measures. However, there is a lack of precision in planning for pupils' different needs and a particular lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils which prevents them from achieving as much as they should.
52. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but does not always indicate to pupils how they can improve. Assessment procedures are very good and they are used well to inform planning for pupils' different needs in Years 3 to 6. Their use to inform planning for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory and leads to under-achievement for higher attaining pupils.
53. The subject has been well led and managed, but interim arrangements are currently in place as a result of staff changes. Previously a thorough audit and action plan had been completed which focused accurately on areas for improvement. The headteacher is fully aware of the need to re-allocate and review the role of co-ordinator and has well-founded plans for this.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

54. Pupils' use of mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum is good overall. The strong use of cross-curricular links between subjects provides good opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in context. This helps them to understand how knowledge of mathematics is useful in real-life situations. For example, the oldest pupils have used spreadsheets to record personal times and distances in athletics events and then calculated comparisons between their performances. Other ICT packages enable pupils to use graphs to record their findings in other subjects, such as age and height ratios in science. However, these opportunities appear to occur coincidentally rather than as part of systematic planning for pupils to apply their skills.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well and have great enthusiasm for the subject.
- Teachers' planning is good and emphasises learning through investigation.
- There are good systems for checking and tracking pupils' progress.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Assessment information is used well to guide whole-school development.

## Commentary

55. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily and attain average standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and by the end of Year 6 attain standards that are above average. This is an improvement from the time of the previous inspection when progress was judged to be satisfactory and attainment by Year 6 was at average levels. The school has successfully raised the achievement of higher attaining pupils since the last inspection. It is evident from the work seen that pupils, including with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well. There is no evidence of differences between the achievement of boys and girls.
56. A significant improvement in science from the time of the previous inspection is the level of expectation and challenge for pupils of all capabilities, especially higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6. They are consistently extended to plan investigations carefully and to evaluate their evidence critically. Teachers are well supported by the school's planning in different units which ensures that pupils' learning builds systematically as they move through the school. The school's focus on increasing pupils' involvement in investigative and problem-solving activities has raised pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated good knowledge and skills when investigating materials and their properties in links with the conduction of electricity and when identifying incomplete and faulty circuits.
57. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and in Years 3 to 6 is good. Some very good teaching in Years 3 to 6 was seen during the inspection. Strengths in the classes of older pupils include the very good planning of lessons and teachers' very good knowledge of the subject. Thoughtfully planned tasks encourage pupils of all capabilities to choose apparatus for a range of tasks and plan its effective use. For each task, pupils take responsibility for specific roles such as an equipment manager and a scribe to record observations and evaluations. Tasks capture pupils' interest and develop their ability to work in small groups to solve problems. Good examples of these teaching strengths were seen during the inspection. Year 6 pupils responded well to challenges to prove or disprove the hypothesis that 'the bigger a parachute is, the longer it takes to reach the ground'. The teacher encouraged good use of the correct terminology and the need to consider different variables in turn.
58. The science curriculum is considerably enhanced by a good range of additional activities. These include the regular use of ICT links to enhance pupils' knowledge and investigative skills. Other resources of a more practical nature are of good quantity and quality and are used well by pupils to tackle problems. The previous subject co-ordinator has provided good leadership and management of the subject in

developing agreed priorities and improving teaching and learning. The temporary co-ordinator is currently the headteacher until new responsibilities can be delegated.

59. Assessment procedures are good and are well established in classroom practice. Pupils' progress is tracked regularly and the information is used to plan further challenges in the next steps in learning. Pupils are also involved in the evaluation of their own learning and progress. Cross-curricular skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are promoted well and successfully support pupils' learning in science.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and are enthusiastic to use ICT.
- Good resources are used effectively to enhance presentations.
- Pupils work together well to achieve considerable success.
- Teachers plan very good links with other subjects to make work meaningful.

### **Commentary**

60. By the end of Year 2, standards are average and, by the end of Year 6, standards are above average. This maintains the standards judged at the time of the previous inspection. Since the previous inspection, a new ICT suite has been created and the number of computers significantly increased and updated. Additional resources such as sensors, digital cameras, microscope and advanced software have been used very well to widen the range of experiences for pupils.
61. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily as they are systematically introduced to keyboard skills, the use of text and graphics to enhance their work and control technology. They carefully follow instructions from their teachers to develop artistic skills when creating repeating patterns in links with art and mathematics. Completed work is used well to support learning in a range of subjects, including science and history. Pupils make satisfactory progress at this stage and reach expected levels. Good achievement is made in Years 3 to 6 where good teaching stimulates in pupils a desire to learn more about ICT. Pupils have produced work of a good quality in a range of presentations such as newspaper-style reports, detailed graphics, mathematical graphs and PowerPoint presentations. A very good example of the latter was seen in Year 6 showing how pupils had created a computerised brochure advertising Swanage as a place for families to visit and have fun. Additional features such as sound and moving credits had been added.
62. Pupils enjoy using computers and this is clearly reflected in their enthusiasm and the way they work together to share ideas and make things happen. Teachers challenge the higher attaining pupils to explore new techniques and extend their ideas, whilst supporting those who are less skilled or have learning difficulties. Adequate assessment systems are in place and through these pupils' progress is tracked carefully to ensure that new skills are introduced and that learning is extended. The co-ordinator intends to review and improve these in the near future.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have successfully developed their own technical

skills and confidence as resources have increased and improved. Teachers plan lessons very well and make good links with current work in other subjects to make learning meaningful. As a result, activities and challenges are relevant to pupils and stimulate their interest and enthusiasm. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to explain their ideas and achievement to each other.

64. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management and has successfully monitored developments in the subject. However, assessment is unsatisfactory because accurate procedures are not in place. The co-ordinator is aware of this and has well-founded plans to improve the situation.

### **Information and communication technology in other subjects**

65. Teachers make good use of ICT to promote pupils' learning in other subjects. Pupils of all ages use word-processing software extensively in many subjects. In addition, computers are used effectively to promote learning in mathematics through handling data and producing graphs of their surveys. Other good links are made with science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history and religious education, as pupils search for information from CD-ROMs or from the Internet. They organise and present information using text and graphics for specific purposes. This enables pupils to consolidate their ICT skills and so makes a significant contribution to the standards they achieve.

### **HUMANITIES**

66. No **history** lessons were seen during the inspection and so no judgement can be made about overall provision and the quality of teaching and learning. However, the subject was sampled and the evidence from pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils indicates that pupils achieve well overall. Standards are average in Years 2 and above average in Year 6. History was judged to be strength of the school in the last inspection although no lessons were seen. The evidence suggests that its strengths have been maintained. As pupils move through the school they learn to locate different periods and events in British history correctly and use the correct terms relating to the passing of time. They acquire a good understanding of the differences between the ways of life for people who lived a long time ago, for example in their studies of life in Victorian times. Pupils make good use of a range of sources of evidence for finding out about history, including information books, computer-based data banks and visits to historical sites both locally and further afield. Older pupils apply their information finding skills well when asking their own questions about life in the past. The Year 6 projects on the rope making industry are a good example of this. They use ICT well to support their work. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills in the course of history, for example when writing from the point of view of someone who lived in the past and when using reference books to find out about the past.
67. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has developed a range of interesting and practical experiences which help to bring history alive and make it interesting to the pupils. For example, themed days, visits to place of interest and visiting experts are all used very well to enrich the history curriculum. Where weaknesses occur it is in the lack of planning for pupils' differing needs and capabilities, an overuse of worksheets in Years 1 and 2 and a lack of systematic procedures to assess pupils' progress.

## Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6 and standards are above average in Year 6 because of this.
- Visits to place of interest and visiting experts are used very well to bring the subject to life and make learning interesting.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory and there is insufficient planning for pupils' different needs in Years 1 and 2.
- Good leadership and management have resulted in improved standards since the last inspection.

### Commentary

68. Pupils' achievement is good overall. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and standards are average. Achievement is good in Years 3 to 6 and standards are above average by Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
69. Teaching and learning are good overall. They are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. By Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge of local places as a result of the very strong emphasis that is put on fieldwork and geographical enquiry in the Years 3 to 6 classes. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of environmental change and their appreciation of the application of geography to environmental, social and political issues are good. They achieve well when carrying out geographical enquiries because good teaching encourages them to pose their own questions and make decisions about how to present their findings. Pupils make use of the knowledge and skills gained in the understanding of local issues to further their understanding of more complex worldwide issues. A good example was seen during the inspection when pupils listened and watched avidly to the presentation on Nicaragua. They asked thoughtful questions and demonstrated a deepening understanding as they discussed the environmental, social and ethical similarities and differences between their own lives and those of families living in a Nicaraguan village. Pupils develop a good understanding of the physical processes involved in the shaping of land, for example, when studying their own coastal area under the guidance of experts from the National Trust. Their map skills develop well, from drawing their own simple maps in Years 1 and 2, to Years 5 and 6 when they learn the skills to interpret Ordnance Survey maps. Biannual residential visits to Leeson House are used well to develop pupils' understanding of a contrasting locality in the United Kingdom further and to give pupils opportunities to use their map reading skills on an orienteering course. Pupils make good use of their literacy and ICT skills in geography, particularly when carrying out their own research. Where weaknesses occur in teaching and learning, it is in a lack of planning for the different needs of pupils, particularly the more able. This is most evident in Years 1 and 2 where work seen was similar for all the pupils.
70. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has developed an exciting and innovative programme of work. She has a clear overview of the subject and is clear about where it needs to be improved. She is developing ways of promoting the

systematic development of skills and more specific challenges for more able pupils. However, this work is constrained by the lack of a formalised assessment system.

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

No lessons were seen in music or physical education, and only one in design and technology. It is not therefore possible to make judgements about the quality of provision in these subjects. However, where evidence was available, it was considered and appropriate conclusions drawn.

71. Only one lesson was seen in **design and technology**. It is therefore not possible to make a firm judgement about provision. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors spoke to pupils about their work, looked at pupils' work and spoke to teaching staff. The different elements of the 'design and make' curriculum are closely linked with other areas of the curriculum and cross-curricular theme days. Older pupils could describe how they had made a three-dimensional storyboard as part of work on World Book Day. Younger pupils are able to talk confidently about their work, but are less able to evaluate their work or suggest ways it could be improved. The evidence from pupils' work indicates that the teaching in some classes is good and the design process is evident in pupils' work. For example, the pupils' design of an electrical circuit to protect a diamond showed clear links to the science curriculum and the use of electrical symbols. Close links with the local secondary school have allowed Year 6 to use design facilities to design and make clocks. Due to the absence of clear guidance on the progression of skills and an assessment system for design and technology, there is no accurate picture of pupils' achievement and progression in the range of skills is inconsistent across the school. This was an area of concern raised in the previous inspection. Resources are sufficient and adequate, but the use of ICT to support learning is at an early stage. The headteacher, who has taken over the subject in the short term, is aware of the need to improve the co-ordination of the subject and of the need to provide further opportunities for extended work in this area of the curriculum.
72. **Music** was a sampled subject as it was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection. Until recently, a visiting specialist teacher had taught the subject. New planning and guidance now gives teachers guidance and greater confidence to teach their own classes. Peripatetic staff still come to the school to teach a range of individual instruments including brass, woodwind and strings to pupils who choose to learn to play them. Pupils enjoy the subject immensely and participate regularly in school productions, most recently in their version of 'Cats'. These performances are greatly enjoyed by parents. A school choir participates in festivals and local events and there are good links with the Garden Opera Company which regularly involves pupils in the choir of their productions. In assemblies during the inspection, pupils sang tunefully in unison with good tempo and dynamics to the accompaniment of a guitar. Evidence indicates that the school meets statutory requirements for the subject although there are no assessment procedures to monitor achievement and support planning for pupils' different needs.
73. **Physical education** was a sampled subject as it was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 3 to 6 during the inspection. A detailed policy places due emphasis on the provision of gymnastics, games, dance, athletics, swimming and outdoor pursuits. Discussions with pupils reveal their awareness of the need for warm-up before physical activities and their awareness of a range of safety factors both indoors and outdoors. The school has its own swimming pool and swimming records show that in the current Year 6 all pupils can already swim the statutory 25 metres. Many

swim further distances and have gained awards in survival techniques. Evidence indicates that the school meets statutory requirements for the subject. In addition, the school provides an adequate range of clubs, including football, hockey, athletics and dance. However, there are no assessment procedures and the co-ordination of the subject is at an early stage of development.

## **Art and design**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils enjoy art and design and speak enthusiastically about their learning.
- Pupils leave at the age of eleven with above average levels of attainment as a result of good teaching in the older classes.
- Famous and local artists are regularly used to inspire pupils' learning but not enough use is made of the work of artists from different cultural heritages.
- Good examples of assessment are evident for older pupils.

### **Commentary**

74. Standards of attainment have been maintained from the last inspection. Achievement is good overall with pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieving satisfactorily to reach average standards by Year 2. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well to reach above average standards by Year 6.
75. Teaching and learning are good overall. They are satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and good for pupils in Years 3 to 6. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils are able to talk enthusiastically about their work, using words such as line, tone and shade to talk about their drawings. They are able to describe the process of colour mixing, recall the work of a range of European artists, as well as describe using an ICT package 'Fresco' to support their designs. Higher attaining pupils have had their talents identified effectively and have been able to attend extra-curricular activities to support the development of their skills at a higher level.
76. The curriculum is satisfactorily managed, although interim arrangements are currently in place as a result of changes in staff. The headteacher is aware that these need to be reviewed and has plans for this. The curriculum had been organised to ensure a good range of skills are being developed across the school, together with the study of the work of local and famous artists. However, the use of art from western artists and craftspeople predominates and art and craft from other sources are underused. Assessment is inconsistent across the school and is unsatisfactory overall. As a result, the school does not have an accurate picture of pupils' achievement in a progressive range of skills.

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

77. No formal teaching was seen in this area of the curriculum so no judgement about provision is made.
78. The personal, social and health education and citizenship curriculum is soundly embedded within all subjects from Years 1 to 6. It also forms part of the religious



education programme, 'Here I Am'. Through topic work, lessons and extra-curricular activities, pupils are taught to consider ethical issues and to maintain safe and healthy lives. The 'Life Education' caravan is used annually, with all pupils, to help them learn about issues such as keeping healthy, using medicines and maintaining relationships. This work is underpinned by an agreed sex and relationships policy. Social responsibility is at the heart of the behaviour policy of the school and, in all lessons and around the school, there is a high expectation that pupils will observe the common courtesies expected of well-ordered community. Older pupils help look after younger pupils and this contributes to their growing sense of responsibility. Citizenship is not yet formally developed through a separate and coherent programme of work and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to widen their social skills through having a voice in the organisation of the school.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	5
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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