

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND (AIDED) PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Pulborough

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 126048

Headteacher: Mrs A Heath

Lead inspector: Mr T Maslin

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 267879

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:	247
School address:	Link Lane Pulborough West Sussex
Postcode:	RH20 2AN
Telephone number:	(01798) 872 007
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Leese
Date of previous inspection:	14 <sup>th</sup> June 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Mary's Church of England Primary School is located in the town of Pulborough in West Sussex and serves 247 boys and girls between 4 and 11-years-old. Six per cent of pupils are registered as being entitled to a free school meal, which is low for primary schools. However, as the school serves an area where a high number of children live in social housing and where there is considerable unemployment, it is likely the percentage would be higher if all those entitled were registered. Overall, the pupils' attainment on entry to the school has fallen since the time of the last inspection and is now well below average, with many children having very poor skills on entry in reading, writing and mathematical understanding. Most pupils are white British by birth, with just a few from other heritage backgrounds, and two for whom English is an additional language. Fifty-nine pupils are on the special educational needs register, seven of whom have a specific statement for their provision. This is above average. Most pupils on the register of special educational needs have difficulties with their learning, but a few have either behavioural difficulties or difficulties with using language for communication. The number of pupils joining the school other than at the usual times is comparatively high, with few leaving. In 2002, the school was given a School Achievement Award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3669	Mr Tony Maslin	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics Physical education History Geography
9646	Mrs Geraldine Osment	Lay inspector	
32456	Mr David Musty	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Information and communication technology French
22452	Mrs Mary Farman	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science
30669	Ms Margaret Sandercock	Team inspector	Art and design Music Design and technology

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**St Mary's Church of England Primary School is an effective school where pupils achieve well.** The school is led and managed very well and this has brought about many improvements over the past two years. Teaching and learning are good. A strong determination to do the very best for each pupil is central to the school's philosophy and practice. It provides good value for money.

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

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and the vast majority of pupils achieve well. The pupils get a particularly good start to their education when they enter the Reception class.
- Standards in science are very high.
- The ethos for learning is very good and this stems from the very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development.
- Very good governance, together with the outstanding and inspirational leadership of the headteacher, gives an extremely clear direction to the school's work. Senior teachers contribute significantly by providing very good role models and leadership for their colleagues.
- Relationships between the school, its local community and its parent body are excellent.
- Standards in mathematics and English are not as high as they are in the other subjects.
- A very few pupils with significant emotional and behavioural needs are not always well managed and sometimes this affects their learning.

Improvement since the last inspection in 1999 is very good. All the key issues have been successfully met so that the school now knows its pupils very well and uses this knowledge to provide a very good and imaginative curriculum which meets their needs. The quality of teaching, of which 12 per cent was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection, has improved very significantly.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	C	C	E
mathematics	A	C	C	E
science	A	B	B	C

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

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

**Pupils' achievement is good and they make good progress throughout the school.** Overall, their attainment on entry to school is well below that of children of a similar age, with many having very poor skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Because of the very good teaching and care they receive, they quickly settle into school life and become interested learners. Pupils of all abilities achieve well, but by the end of Reception few attain the goals children are expected to reach and overall standards in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development remain low.

In many subjects, standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2. Overall attainment in English and mathematics is still below average and this is reflected in the results in the Year 2 national tests in 2004, though results look likely to be better this year.

By the end of Year 6, standards in many subjects are above expectations, with very high attainment and achievement in science. Standards in English and mathematics are average. Inspection evidence indicates that the test results for 2005 should be higher in both subjects than last year and that the school will compare much better with similar schools. Most pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. There is little difference between the achievement of boys and girls and the few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve equally as well as their peers.

**The development of pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.** The pupils show very good attitudes to their work and are keen, confident and enthusiastic learners. They behave well, with the older pupils showing a very mature approach to their schooling. Attendance and punctuality are very good, which means that the pupils have full access to the school's good provision.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a good education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are good** throughout the school, with very good teaching in Reception. Teachers monitor the progress of their pupils very well and use this information to plan subsequent work at the correct level to help pupils develop their knowledge and understanding at a fast pace. Classrooms are almost always well managed, but just occasionally the inappropriate behaviour of a very few pupils with significant needs impacts on their own learning. The curriculum is very well organised to make learning interesting and exciting for the pupils and they respond with commitment and perseverance. Support from parents and links with the local community contribute positively to the pupils' good achievement.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Overall, the leadership and management of the school are very good.** The headteacher's leadership is outstanding and inspirational. She is very well supported by the other senior staff, who provide very good role models for their colleagues. The governors are very effective in the way they carry out their responsibility to give the best possible education for the children. They ensure the school complies with all statutory requirements. This results in a school with an extremely clear and highly appropriate vision of where it wants to go and very well defined and effective management structures to see that it gets there.

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

Parents hold the school in very high esteem and consider it is giving their children a good education. The pupils are extremely proud of their school and consider it is a very good place to be. They love talking to visitors and showing them around. They say that their views are listened to and acted upon.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in English and mathematics further.
- Develop more effective strategies to manage the behaviour of the very few pupils who are not matching the very high standards of behaviour and commitment demonstrated by the rest.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils of all abilities achieve well throughout the school. However, because most children come with very low attainment on entry, few pupils reach the goals expected for children at the end of their Reception Year and, overall, standards are still well below those expected. At the end of Year 2, standards in mathematics and English are below average, and standards in science are as expected. At the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics and English are average and those for science are well above average. By age 11, the standards in the other subjects are above the national expectations.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has high expectations of all of its pupils, irrespective of gender or ethnic background, so that they achieve well. Those with special educational needs achieve very well.
- During the Reception Year, children achieve particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development.
- By Year 6, standards in science are well above national expectations.
- By the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are in line with expectations but could be higher.

#### Commentary

##### *Foundation Stage*

1. Most of the children start school with standards which are well below those expected, with very poor standards in reading, writing and mathematics. During the Reception Year, the school concentrates on developing the childrens' personal, social and emotional development because it regards this area as the foundation for other learning. The very good teaching the children receive enables them to make very good gains in this area so that, by the end of the Reception Year, their attainment is appropriate for their age. In the other five areas of learning, the children's standards improve quickly, although at the end of the year they are still well below those expected in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, and below expectation in physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development.

##### *Years 1 and 2*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.1 (16.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.3 (16.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.4 (17.1)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. Standards in English and mathematics rise from well below those expected at the start of Year 1 to below those expected by the end of Year 2. The results of the national tests at the end of Year 2 reflect this. One of the school's priorities during the last academic year has been to ensure that as many pupils as possible gain the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and



mathematics in the 2005 tests. Early indications show that it has been successful, with many more pupils attaining these higher levels than in 2004. By the end of Year 2, standards in the other subjects are as expected. This represents good progress in all subjects. The pupils achieve well because of the rich and varied programme of activities that is arranged for them and also because of the good quality of the teaching. They receive many opportunities to practise their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills, which develops their confidence to use these skills in other subjects.

#### Years 3 to 6

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.5 (27.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.3 (27.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.9 (29.4)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. Pupils in Year 6 attained average standards in the 2004 national tests in English and mathematics and above average standards in science. Inspection evidence indicates that the number of pupils attaining Level 5 will be considerably higher in 2005 than it was in 2004. It also shows that attainment in science is well above average. There are indications that in 2005 in all three subjects the test results will compare much more favourably with similar schools than they did in 2004. Standards in the other subjects are consistently above those expected by the age of 11. This represents good progress throughout Years 3 to 6, and very good progress in science. The pupils achieve well, very well in science, but standards in English and mathematics are lower than the other subjects and could be higher still. The pupils' speaking and listening, information and communication technology and numeracy skills are well developed across the curriculum. However, subjects such as history and geography are not yet making sufficient contribution to the development of the pupils' writing skills.

#### *General points*

4. The school has high expectations of each and every pupil. Boys have performed less well than girls in the past and raising the attainment of boys has been high on the school's agenda. It has been successful and no significant differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well overall, and very well in the older years, so that many of them attain the expected levels in the end of Year 6 national tests. This is because the individual learning plans are of a very high quality and the pupils receive very good support in class from both teachers and teaching assistants.
5. The few children from ethnic groups achieve well and the few pupils who are in the early stages of English language acquisition are very well supported.
6. The current good achievement of the pupils owes much to the very high quality of the leadership of teaching and the curriculum provided by the headteacher and the school's senior managers over the past two years. The school is well placed for standards to continue to improve.

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

Pupils' attitudes are very good and their behaviour is good. Pupils' personal qualities are developed very well. The pupils arrive at school on time and their rate of attendance is well above the national average.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The vast majority of the pupils behave very well in classrooms and around the school.
- There are a very few boys who have difficulty controlling their behaviour.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted very effectively and as a result they are enthusiastic and keen to work hard.
- The attendance rate is better than reported in the last inspection and regular attendance has a positive impact on the standards that the pupils achieve.

### **Commentary**

7. Through the pre-inspection questionnaires and meetings with parents and pupils, the inspectors were alerted to some concerns about behaviour in the school but during the inspection no instances of unpleasantness or bullying were seen in the playground or in classrooms. The school has very good procedures for preventing bullying and for dealing with any, should it occur. Parents and pupils say these work effectively on the very few occasions that it does. Sometimes, a very small minority of boys are unable to exercise self-discipline and this affects their own learning. It does not affect the other pupils, because they are very interested in their work and do not allow this misbehaviour to affect their concentration. The teachers work hard to plan interesting and varied activities that fully engage the vast majority of the pupils and as a consequence the pupils are achieving well.
8. The nurturing of pupils' personal skills has a very high priority in the school. This begins in the Foundation Stage where the children are learning to share and take turns and it continues throughout the school. The success of this work can be very clearly seen in the maturity of the oldest pupils. Pupils' very positive attitudes to school and learning are reflected in their good standards of achievement. Pupils' spiritual awareness is promoted extremely well in assemblies and in many lessons. Pupils are given many opportunities to reflect on what they are learning through the sharing of the learning intentions; for example, when teachers ask 'tell me two things you have learned in this lesson'. Pupils' awareness of social and moral issues is promoted through personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) lessons, assemblies and the opportunities that the school provides for pupils to take responsibility for themselves and others. These include being members of the school and class councils, monitors for jobs in classrooms, as team captains and prefects, and as head boy and head girl. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to appreciate their local heritage, including visits to St. Mary's Church, Amberley Working and Brighton Toy museums, Portsmouth Dockyard, Fishbourne Roman Palace, Pulborough village centre and Arundel Cathedral. Pupils' understanding of how people live in other countries is very well promoted in history, geography and through the naming of the classrooms where pupils learn a great deal about their 'country'. Although the school has very few pupils from other ethnic backgrounds, the school is developing pupils' awareness of life in multicultural Britain very well.

### **Attendance**

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	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.*

9. The school has very good systems in place to monitor and promote attendance. Parents are supportive of the school's high expectations and because of this pupils attend school regularly and lessons start promptly.

## Exclusions

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Chinese
Parent/pupil preferred not to say

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
120	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
122	4	1

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

10. The school is assiduous at attempting to obtain all the data for all sections of the annual school census. However, many parents elect not to provide information concerning the ethnic background of their children. Although the school does exclude pupils for instances of unacceptable behaviour, these are handled sensitively by the headteacher.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good education for its pupils. Pupils are well taught and receive a very varied and well organised curriculum. They are cared for and supported very well and benefit from the school's excellent links with their parents and the community of which the school is a part.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Very effective assessment systems help teachers set work at appropriate levels to meet the needs of different pupils.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is especially good in the Reception class.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in class.
- Homework is well used to reinforce and develop pupils' learning.
- Assessment systems are very effective and mean that teachers can set work at appropriate levels for pupils.
- Teachers question pupils effectively to make them think and to draw out their understanding.
- The vast majority of pupils apply themselves to their work with purpose and enthusiasm; they are keen and confident learners with a healthy desire to know more.
- In a very few cases, pupils' behaviour is not managed well enough and this can affect their own learning.

### Commentary

#### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (5%)	17 (42%)	19 (46%)	3 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

11. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Teaching is very good in Reception, which means the pupils get a very good start to their schooling.
12. The school's strategic plan is based firmly on improving the quality of teaching and learning. This is an unrelenting focus of the headteacher, governors and senior managers. All staff are fully aware of this and respond very well to the demands this puts on them. The school's very good management systems ensure that teachers' work is regularly and rigorously monitored and effective feedback given on how they can improve their practice. Great emphasis is put on continuing professional development and the time is created to make sure it happens. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning has improved very significantly since the last inspection. The percentage of very good or better teaching has more than doubled and there is no unsatisfactory teaching, compared with 12 per cent unsatisfactory at the last inspection.
13. Teaching in Reception is consistently very good because adults have an extensive knowledge of the needs of young children and use this to provide a wide range of stimulating, relevant and well-targeted activities to learning in all six areas of learning. Each child's progress is thoroughly and comprehensively monitored on a daily basis, so that any necessary adjustments to the programme can be incorporated into the next stages of planning. This leads to very good learning and achievement in the pupils' personal, social and emotional development, so that they feel happy and confident in school, know the routines and can begin to expand their knowledge in the other areas. Although they receive very good teaching all the time, their learning is inhibited in the other five curriculum areas because of the low level of learning skills they bring on entry to school. This means that their achievement and learning in these areas is good rather than very good.
14. The curriculum planning and assessment weaknesses identified at the last inspection have been comprehensively addressed. There are very good assessment systems for monitoring and recording pupils' progress in the key subjects and the school has plans to extend this to cover all subjects. However, very good classroom practice involving continual feedback from pupils to their teachers means that the teachers know their pupils well and lessons are routinely very well planned with work that is very well matched to the pupils' needs. This means that work is set at different levels to enable all pupils to make significant gains in their learning; for instance, in a Year 3 history lesson where some were working independently to convert their interview notes to a small book and others were working with the adults to create a collage of their ideas.
15. Lessons begin with a clear statement of the objective and what the pupils are expected to know by the end. Constant reference to this ensures that the pupils remain fully aware of what they are to learn and contributes positively to the progress they make. Good questioning skills, which probe pupils' understanding, are well used to move their learning on; for instance, in a very good Year 6 mathematics lesson where the teacher insisted on precision with the way percentage discount was explained so that there was no confusion about which number belonged where. Teachers and their assistants work very well together to give very good support to pupils with special educational needs and to the pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition, so that learning for these pupils is very good and they keep up with the main pace of the lesson. Pupils' individual education plans are very effective at helping teachers provide appropriately, but, just occasionally, a pupil with a special plan for emotional and behavioural needs finds the work too challenging and responds with inappropriate behaviour, which a few staff find difficult to manage.
16. Classrooms are effectively organised and work is imaginatively and creatively presented. The pupils' finished work is carefully displayed to create a vibrant learning environment, which they fully appreciate. They clearly enjoy working in this challenging and colourful environment and respond with enthusiasm and commitment. They are used to using the information displayed on the walls and hanging from the ceilings for reference and this makes a positive contribution

to their work. Many have targets available for prompts, which they fully understand and can use to help them improve what they do.

17. Homework is set consistently and contributes positively to the pupils' understanding. A wide range of tasks is given, from simple reinforcement of the lesson's work to extensive research, such as that undertaken by Year 6 into life in Victorian Britain. Most pupils tackle these well.

### **The curriculum**

The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum are very good. A very good range of additional activities supports pupils' personal and social development very well. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Accommodation and resources are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There has been very good improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection.
- Provision for pupils' personal and social development across the curriculum is very good.
- Opportunities for enrichment are excellent.
- The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The accommodation and resources support pupils' learning very effectively.

### **Commentary**

18. The headteacher and senior managers have completely reviewed the curriculum so that pupils receive their full entitlement and do not repeat activities. The weaknesses highlighted in the previous report in both art and design and physical education (PE) have been fully addressed. Art and PE specialists now support the teaching of these subjects. The school provides a stimulating and innovative curriculum. For example, the teachers use drama and role-play very effectively in many subject areas to enhance pupils' speaking and listening skills. This is particularly strong in history and older pupils were able to recall many historical facts because of their personal involvement in dramatic reconstructions of events. French is offered to pupils in Years 3 to 6 and enhances their cultural development. The curriculum for the Reception children is very well planned and provides a very good range of challenging and stimulating activities that are well matched to their needs. The outdoor garden has been very imaginatively developed and is very well used to enhance the learning of the youngest children.
19. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) has improved since the previous inspection and all of the pupils benefit from the very good programme that is in place. Drugs, sex and health education are delivered through PSHCE and other areas of the curriculum, including science and physical education. The school uses outside agencies well to support the delivery of PSHCE, including the community police officer and the school nurse. PSHCE is having a very positive impact on pupils' personal development and its success is reflected in the very good attitudes and relationships evident throughout the school.
20. The headteacher's enthusiasm for extending pupils' learning through a wide range of experiences inspires and motivates them. For example, a visit to St Mary's Church, where the pupils studied patterns in the church and used their findings as a stimulus to investigate patterns further, using information and communication technology (ICT) when they were back in school. Through Investors in Careers, the pupils have opportunities to link their schoolwork to the world of work, including visits to Pizza Express and taking part with their fathers in the Goblin Challenge. Many visitors from the local and wider community are welcomed into school to support learning in many subjects. These include, for example, an accordionist to support literacy; Peter Collington, author of *A Small Miracle*; 'a medieval knight'; a willow maker; and a representative from the RSPB to launch an anti-litter poster campaign. There are many extra-curricular clubs for pupils from all year groups. Staff, parents and outside agencies run them

and they are very popular with and well attended by the pupils. All of these excellent opportunities promote pupils' personal development very effectively.

21. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. They are given in-class support wherever possible and on the occasions when they are withdrawn from lessons, great care is taken to ensure that the work they are given to do is in line with the learning objectives being followed by their peers. There is similarly very good provision for those pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition.
22. There is a very good match of teachers and teaching assistants to meet the needs of the curriculum. Teaching assistants are greatly valued by teachers and pupils. They contribute strongly to the very good achievement of pupils with special educational needs. Resources are very good in most subjects and greatly enhance pupils' learning experiences. The computer suite, together with interactive whiteboard technology in the classroom, has raised the profile of, and pupils' learning in, ICT throughout the school. The creative and interesting displays in classrooms and corridors add to the vibrancy of the school and really show how proud the school is of itself and its pupils.

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

Procedures to ensure the care, guidance and welfare of the pupils are very effective. Achievement and personal development are monitored very well. Excellent opportunities are provided for pupils to be involved in the work of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school takes very good care of the pupils.
- Pupils' personal and academic development is monitored very closely.
- Pupils are given excellent opportunities to be involved in the work of the school.

### **Commentary**

23. Parents commented very positively on the arrangements for helping their children settle in when they start school. For example, children in the Foundation Stage produce a child-friendly prospectus for the next year's entrants to the Reception class. Parents consider that their children are well cared for and respected as individuals. Very good procedures are in place to ensure the safety of both pupils and members of staff and this was clearly seen in action because of the building work that is taking place on site. Arrangements for first aid and child protection are very well organised and lunch and break times are well managed and supervised appropriately. Health, sex and drugs education is very well planned and through the very good personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme the pupils are learning to keep themselves safe and healthy. Pupils support each other very well in many lessons. Another very good example of support is when the Year 5 pupils become 'SATs' Angels' for the Year 6 pupils and provide little gifts and treats for them during the week of the national tests.
24. During the inspection, the teachers consistently shared the lesson intentions with the class. This helps the pupils to understand what they will be learning and why and, when teachers revisit these at the end of lessons, the pupils have a very good idea of how much they have learned. Teachers plan tasks that are challenging and matched to the needs of individuals and they assess their academic progress well during lessons. Teaching assistants are very well used to ensure that pupils get the most out of their lessons. Personal and academic targets are discussed with the pupils and are used successfully to help pupils understand how much they have achieved. Teachers' thorough marking of class and home work is helping pupils to understand what they need to do next to improve. There are very good systems in place to monitor pupils' personal development and the awarding of team points, stickers, merits, the

achievement board and mentions in the Happy Book are helping pupils to be proud of their efforts, both in and out of school.

25. The pupils are encouraged to express their opinions and ideas via questionnaires and the class and school councils. The school council is currently working with parents, the headteacher and governors to make the school mission statement more interesting and fun. The class councils asked if the toilets could be redecorated and this has taken place using the pupils' ideas. The pupils were asked to design a logo for the school rules; one was adopted and is displayed with the rules in all classrooms. Teachers listen very well to pupils during lessons; they value pupils' contributions, which helps to build confidence. All of these opportunities are very good for the pupils' personal development.

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

The school has an excellent partnership with the parents and the community. Links with other schools are very effective.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school very successfully encourages parents to be full partners in their children's education.
- Parents are very well informed about what is happening in school and how well their children are doing.
- Excellent links with the local and wider community greatly enhance the school's provision.

### **Commentary**

26. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and the parents' meeting were very positive. They show that the parents have great confidence in the school and the headteacher and feel that the school has improved considerably since the headteacher took up her post two years ago. The headteacher and class teachers are very accessible to parents and very willing to spend time talking through any concerns they have about their children. Parents show their support by fundraising for the Friends of St Mary's; helping in classrooms and on trips; running extra-curricular activities; developing the school grounds; and the day-to-day maintenance of the swimming pool.
27. The headteacher canvasses the views of parents through questionnaires and always responds to their suggestions. For example, they asked for a more personalised annual report, so the school changed the format and parents can now recognise their own children within it. The reports are issued during the spring term and they inform parents very clearly of how well their children are achieving and what they need to do next to improve. Parents are invited to formal consultations with teachers to discuss progress towards the targets and what they can do to support their children. Very detailed school and year group newsletters are sent home plus homework guidelines so that parents can easily see what is expected of them and their children. Some parents use the home/school diaries and reading logs as communication tools very well. The prospectus and governors' annual report contain all of the required information.
28. Through the Weald family school networking group, pupils have opportunities to take part in sports against other schools, for example, football, netball and cricket. There are very strong links within this Weald School network to help pupils' transition. Trainee teachers and students on work experience are welcomed to the school, and make a positive contribution to the pupils' experiences. Members of St. Mary's Church link successfully with some pupils as buddy reading partners and the school uses the church very effectively to enrich many curriculum areas, including art and design, history, geography and ICT. The choir entertains senior citizens and performs in Arundel cathedral. Members of the community support pupils' learning, for example, in history when a senior citizen talked to them about her experiences of

World War II. All of these opportunities very effectively enhance pupils' personal and social development.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher's leadership is excellent. Leadership of other key staff is very good. Management is very good. The governance of the school is very effective and all statutory requirements are met.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher is excellent.
- The headteacher receives very good support from other key staff.
- The leadership and management of special educational needs is excellent.
- Governors know the school very well and make a significant contribution to its success.
- The school is very well managed, ensuring that it runs smoothly and is well organised.

### **Commentary**

29. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and is relentless in her pursuit of that vision. Her commitment to the success of the school is much valued by parents and inspires her staff team, both teaching and support staff, to share her aspirations. In the two years since her appointment, the effect of her leadership has been to establish a very positive ethos where everyone is valued and there is a sustained focus on high pupil achievement. This has brought about very significant improvements throughout the school and gives it the capacity to improve further.
30. Very effective support is given by other key staff, who work in partnership with the headteacher to ensure that the school achieves its aims. The two senior teachers, who have responsibility for the work of the younger and older pupils, complement each other well and make distinctive contributions to the leadership and management of the school; they carry out their responsibilities very well. They have established very effective staff teams and help to ensure that all remain clearly focused on the main aim of ensuring that pupils achieve as much as possible. The strength and effectiveness of the senior management team is a significant improvement on that found in the school at the time of the last inspection.
31. Overall subject leadership throughout the school is very good. There are effective mechanisms for enabling subject leaders to monitor the quality of teaching and standards within their subject and using the information so found to bring about improvements. The school's senior managers work tirelessly with the subject leaders to ensure they have the knowledge and time to undertake their responsibilities and to verify the accuracy of their findings.
32. An important factor in the school's success in helping pupils to achieve well is the quality of the support provided for those pupils with special educational needs. Excellent leadership and management of this support is provided by the highly regarded special educational needs coordinator, who is also a member of the senior management team. She has a clear understanding of the needs of the identified pupils and works closely with class teachers, support assistants and external agencies to ensure that these needs are met. The effect of this provision is that many pupils who have special educational needs achieve very well and attain standards which are in line with their peers. All special educational needs records and documentation are very well managed.
33. Governors are very committed to the school and make a significant contribution to its success. They work in close partnership with the headteacher and have a very clear view of the school's relative strengths and weaknesses. They play an active role in formulating and reviewing the plans for improving the school and ensure that all statutory requirements are



met. Many governors play an active role within the school and are regular visitors during the school day. This helps to ensure that the governing body has a very real understanding of the day-to-day working of the school, which helps them to shape, with the headteacher and key staff, its strategic direction.

34. The administrative team works very effectively to ensure that day-to-day management of the school is efficient and that the school's resources are very well utilised. The appointment of an efficient business manager has been very effective in maximising the financial resources available to the school, as well as allowing the headteacher more time to concentrate on her main priorities of improving teaching and learning.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	701,865	Balance from previous year	56,414
Total expenditure	642,646	Balance carried forward to the next year	59,219
Expenditure per pupil	2,601		

35. The balance carried forward to the next year above is larger than would normally be expected. The school is working, as recommended, towards a three-year strategic budget-setting cycle and is taking steps to be proactive in managing a period where it is predicting a reducing number of pupils available in the area to come to the school and possible rising teacher staffing costs as the age profile of the teachers rises. The school is also clear that these funds would be made available, should its routine monitoring procedures identify an urgent need to support the teaching or learning of current pupils. On this basis, the balance carried forward is judged to be justified.

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is **very good**. This is very good improvement since the previous inspection and reflects the very good leadership. The school eases children very smoothly and sensitively into the Reception class from a large number of pre-school providers. All children, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well in their personal and social development and well in their academic development. This is because of the very good teaching, the very thorough monitoring of individual needs and abilities and the wide range of stimulating and relevant activities that are thus provided. Many children enter the Reception class with very poor skills in communication and mathematics development. Although the quality of teaching is consistently very good in all areas, children's low levels of learning skills on entry means that their achievement and learning is good rather than very good. Children receive very good preparation for entry into Year 1. In all aspects of their learning, the adults' very good teamwork, which includes the many volunteer parent helpers, gives the children very good examples to follow and helps them realise the benefits of working together. The stimulating and vibrant classroom and the exciting outdoor learning area are very effectively used and make a very strong contribution to children's very positive attitudes.

Improvement since the previous inspection in all areas of provision for the Foundation Stage children is very good because of the improved teaching, classroom and outdoor environment and level of care, which, together, result in an improvement in the children's attitudes and achievement.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

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

- Children achieve very well because of the consistently very good teaching.
- Very good relationships and teamwork helps children become confident and secure.

#### **Commentary**

36. Most children's personal, social and emotional development meets the expectations for their age by the time they leave the Reception class. This is very good achievement because many children are well below expectations in this area when they enter the school. The teacher and nursery nurse work tirelessly to increase children's ability to understand classroom and school routines. Very good teaching of social skills enables children to settle to work with very high levels of eagerness and concentration. They quickly learn to become independent and, for example, change for physical education sessions promptly and without adult help. Adults make their high expectations of behaviour very clear and children respond very positively. The children know to put their hands up to attract attention and when answering questions and speak politely to each other and adults. The consistently patient, firm and very good teaching helps all children, including those with special educational needs, to have confidence in their achievements. By the end of their Reception Year, the vast majority of children meet the expectations for their age.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching by all adults ensures children achieve well.
- Stimulating work helps children develop very positive attitudes to learning.

### **Commentary**

37. Many children enter the Reception class with skills that are well below those expected. Many have poor speech patterns and very poor reading and writing skills for their age. Consistently very good teaching ensures all children, including those with particular learning problems, achieve well. The teacher, nursery nurse and parent helpers insist on children speaking clearly, listening carefully and forming letters correctly. They make learning fun and children thoroughly enjoy the interesting activities. Attractive and stimulating books make children want to handle, look and talk about them. There is a very strong focus on increasing children's knowledge and understanding of vocabulary. For example, children use their imagination to think of and use descriptive words about mini-beasts in their speech and writing. However, the standards of the majority of the children are still well below the goals by the end of the Reception Year.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children of all abilities achieve well because of the very good teaching and teamwork.
- Very good use of the outdoor learning area ensures children have ample opportunities to explore number and shape.

### **Commentary**

38. All children, including those who have difficulties with learning, achieve well in recognising shapes and working with numbers. The very good and skilful teaching ensures children respond positively to the probing questions, which challenge them to think carefully about how to solve problems. Children clearly enjoy the interesting activities in the classroom and in the outdoor learning area, where, for example, a buzz of concentrated thinking accompanied the counting of the number of legs on different mini-beasts. Many children have very low mathematical skills for their age when they start school. This makes their good achievement even more significant. The standards of the majority of the children are still well below the goals by the end of the Reception Year.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All children achieve well because all staff encourage them to explore and ask questions.
- Very good use of the stimulating grounds makes a very positive contribution to children's learning and attitudes.

### **Commentary**

39. Consistently very good teaching and enthusiasm for the natural world from adults encourages the children to be curious about the world around them. This makes them want to ask questions and they soon become independent in using books and computers to look for answers. Adults answer all questions honestly and, if they are not sure, point children to where they can find out. Children achieve well as they increase their skills in carrying out independent investigations. The school grounds are used very well to increase children's awareness of natural events, change and how creatures live. Children thoroughly enjoy their visit from an 'ornithologist' and are eager to talk about their own 'Society for the Protection of Bugs'. They carry out bug hunts and pond dipping sensibly and follow safety instructions carefully. This increases their awareness of the need to be safe and take care of themselves, others and creatures. Most, however, are still working below the expected levels for their age by the end of the Reception Year.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching and planning give a clear focus to all activities.
- Children achieve very well in learning to move safely and with control because all work builds on previous learning.

### **Commentary**

40. All adults work very hard to improve children's physical skills. The very good planning for indoor and outdoor activities ensures work is carefully structured to improve skills and techniques. Children use the outdoor learning area regularly and this enables them to gain confidence in moving with control and co-ordination as they manoeuvre wheeled vehicles and move safely around the area. Children achieve well and develop good control of their limbs and bodies. Their skills in using tools and equipment when they enter the Reception class are well below average. Although adults take every opportunity to increase the children's ability to use everyday tools, and they achieve well, many still have below average skills in using tools such as scissors and pencils when they leave the Reception class. This has a negative effect on their ability to form letters accurately.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well because of the consistently very good teaching.
- Very good imaginative areas interest both boys and girls.

### **Commentary**

41. Consistently very good teaching ensures that children achieve well in developing their creative skills. This is a significant achievement because many children enter the Reception class with well below average skills in using their imagination and have poor hand/eye co-ordination. The teacher, nursery nurse and parent helpers give children a wide range of different opportunities to develop their skills and techniques and they respond with very positive attitudes to their learning. Their finished artwork shows secure skills in mixing and using paint to create pictures and patterns. The very good use of imaginative areas helps children develop and increase their imagination and act out different scenarios. Very effective teaching of musical skills enables pupils to sing acceptably melodically and learn many songs from memory. They

clap accurate rhythmic accompaniments to songs and clearly enjoy these activities. However, standards overall are below those expected for the children's age by the end of Reception.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.

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

- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school which results in standards being in line with national expectations overall by the end of Year 6.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Recent improvements in the teaching of English are having a positive impact and raising standards.
- Target setting is used well to help pupils know how to improve their work.
- Leadership and management in English are good.

#### **Commentary**

42. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average in speaking and listening and below average in reading and writing. This is because a large proportion of pupils enter Year 1 with well below average levels of early language and literacy skills. The good teaching, which the school provides, ensures that they achieve well and make good progress. Similarly, by the end of Year 6, the good teaching results in standards being average overall and above average in speaking and listening. This represents good achievement. In the 2004 Year 6 national tests, standards of the higher attaining pupils were well below those found in similar schools. During the inspection, scrutiny of the work in books, including those of higher attaining Year 6 pupils, indicates that standards are now in line with national expectations.
43. The achievement in English of pupils with special educational needs is very good. These pupils are helped to achieve in lessons through the work of sensitive and skilful support provided by teaching assistants. Although teachers regularly ensure that the work of the class is adapted to make it more appropriate for these pupils, there are times when this adaptation could be improved still further. The very good achievement of these pupils helps the school to ensure that its standards in English overall are in line with national expectations. Pupils who are at early stages of English language acquisition receive good support with work that is appropriately adapted to their needs and they achieve well.
44. Teaching and learning in English overall is good. The school has recently made significant changes to the way in which it teaches English. These changes are aimed at making pupils more enthusiastic and motivated readers and writers. More active and enjoyable learning methods are used, and frequent opportunities are provided for speaking and listening. During the inspection, these approaches were seen to be having a very positive impact. For example, in a very good Year 2 lesson on non-fiction reading, a real sense of excitement was created as the class anticipated the arrival of Sid the Spider. This puppet helped pupils to learn technical language related to non-fiction books, such as 'contents page', 'heading', 'text' and 'illustration'. Many opportunities were provided within the lesson for pupils to incorporate their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills in an integrated manner, which helped them maintain their interest in their work. Similarly, in a Year 6 lesson on paragraphs, leading to pupils planning to write their own extended novels, frequent opportunities were provided for them to discuss, with talk partners, aspects of their work such as the best sequence of provided sentences to make a paragraph or the overall meaning of a paragraph. Other evidence seen during the inspection confirmed that these new approaches to teaching the subject can already be seen to be having a positive impact on learning.

45. The school has also recently invested in a new reading scheme, which includes fiction and non-fiction material. Pupils enjoy reading these books and are developing appropriate skills, including strategies for working out unknown words using phonic skills. New school-devised reading journals were seen to provide, not only a method of recording reading events, but also a very useful manner of encouraging parental involvement in their child's reading. All of these improvements to the teaching of English are likely to have continued impact on future standards.
46. Target setting is used very effectively to involve pupils in their learning. Throughout the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, were seen to have personal targets in literacy, which identified the next aspect that needed to be improved. Older pupils were able to speak with confidence and enthusiasm about their targets.
47. The leadership and management of English are good. The new co-ordinator, who is just taking over the role, has a clear view of what needs to be done to continue to raise standards. She is committed to ensuring that the recent innovations are monitored in order to continue their development in line with evaluations from this monitoring.

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

48. Language and literacy skills are well used in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils use reading and writing skills to record investigations in science and evaluations of designs in design and technology as well as in work in history and geography. However, because of the emphasis which the school places on more active learning methods, more opportunities are provided to use speaking and listening skills across the curriculum than other literacy skills, particularly those needed for effective writing.

### **Modern foreign languages – French**

49. Since September 2004, a visiting specialist teacher has taught French in the school. No lessons were seen during the inspection, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision. A discussion took place with the co-ordinator, pupils were interviewed and displays in classrooms were inspected. Pupils are very positive about their French lessons and clearly enjoy them. Methods used are primarily practical and oral, including games, songs and chants. The co-ordinator, together with the specialist teacher, is planning how the work will continue in future years once pupils become more competent and a greater variety of capability emerges among them.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. This results in standards at the end of Year 6 that are in line with national expectations.
- Target setting is well used to help pupils know what they need to do next to improve their work.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and this leads to their very good achievement.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good and have a positive influence on teaching and standards.
- There is a very good curriculum, which results in very well planned lessons with clear objectives.
- On occasions, a very few pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties lose concentration and a few teachers do not always manage this well.

## Commentary

50. Standards by the end of Year 2 are below average in mathematics, with a high proportion of pupils who did not attain the expected Level 2 in Year 2 national tests last year. This is because a large proportion of the pupils enter Year 1 with standards in numerical calculation that are well below those expected. However, one of the school's priorities during the last academic year has been to ensure more pupils attain the higher Level 3 in 2005 than did in 2004 and early indications are that they have been successful. The good teaching in Years 1 and 2 ensures the pupils begin to make good progress and catch up. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can talk about many aspects of the subject with confidence. For example, they have experience of place value to one thousand, working with numbers up to 20 and taking steps in jumps of two. The higher attaining pupils are secure in their application of these skills, whereas the middle attaining pupils are still developing this security. There are, however, a significant number of pupils who are at the early stages of addition and subtraction, using physical objects to add within 20 and subtract within ten.
51. The good teaching continues in Years 3 to 6 and the pupils continue to achieve well, so that, by the end of Year 6, their standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils present their work carefully, paying attention to detail. They cover all aspects of mathematics and continued reinforcement ensures they can work with numbers accurately and confidently, for example, being able to add, subtract, multiply and divide and find fractional amounts of a given number. The higher attaining pupils can work confidently to one thousand, interpret graphs accurately and use measures of dispersion in statistics. In the 2004 end of Year 6 national tests, the majority of the pupils with special educational needs attained the expected Level 4, which represents very good achievement. However, the standards of the higher attaining pupils were well below those of similar schools and few attained the higher Level 5. Increasing the performance of the higher attaining pupils has been a key feature of the school's work in the last year, and there are strong indications that these pupils can attain a Level 5 in this year's national tests. There were no observed differences between the attainment and achievement of the boys and girls.
52. Teaching and learning are good overall. The school has recently adjusted its mathematics curriculum so that it provides a very appropriate structure for learning in all year groups and includes good use of ICT. This enables teachers to plan very well, so that both they and the pupils are absolutely focused on what it is that the lesson is about. Frequent checks along the way mean that the pupils know how well they are doing and know what to ask when they need help. This very good assessment practice is combined with personal targets so that the pupils have a clear idea of how to improve their work.
53. Lessons are effectively managed, with good questioning skills challenging pupils for an explanation. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 6 lesson on percentage discounts where a clear presentation enabled all pupils to understand the concept of a discount and work out how much to pay, once it had been applied. They were then given a clear model of how to set out their work and all were able to use this model to keep track of their working. The pupils respond very well to the care the teachers take with the preparation and presentation of lessons and apply themselves diligently, working with enthusiasm and perseverance. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the manner in which the work is adapted to meet their needs and because of the skilful support they receive from the teaching assistants. Very occasionally, this adaptation could be better and a very few pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties then lose concentration. A few teachers do not always manage this well. The pupils with English as an additional language are well provided for and achieve well. Homework is used well to reinforce pupils' understanding.
54. The subject is very well led and managed. The school makes good use of guidance from the National Strategy for teaching mathematics and has recently looked at how to improve teaching. The changes and improvements introduced can already be seen to having a positive impact on the pupils' learning and the school's plans for the future include further work in this

area. Teaching and standards within the subject are very well monitored and the findings used very effectively to direct the focus of future action for improvement.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

55. The pupils' skills in mathematics are often used well in other subjects. This helps make the learning relevant and reinforces their mathematical skills and understanding. For example, in science, pupils measure their results and draw tables and graphs of their findings, often using information and communication technology to process the data. They measure and construct accurately in design and technology when making their models and understand scale when working with maps and models in geography.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection.

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

- Pupils of all abilities achieve very well by Year 6 because of the overall very good quality of teaching.
- The very strong emphasis on the use of specific scientific vocabulary and the investigative element of science make a very positive contribution to pupils' achievement and attitudes.
- Effective support for pupils with English as an additional language enables them to achieve as well as their classmates.
- The very good assessment and tracking systems are used very effectively to ensure all pupils' work matches their abilities.
- Very good use of the school grounds and pupils' effective use of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, supports their learning very well.

#### **Commentary**

56. There is a very significant improvement to standards in Year 6 since the previous inspection. Standards are now well above average. In the 2004 Year 6 national tests, standards were above average, although the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 was below those of similar schools. Standards look as though they will be better this year, with many more pupils gaining the higher level than last year. This is very good achievement and reflects the high quality of the teaching. The school provides very good coverage of the science curriculum and enriches it very effectively through use of the stimulating school grounds. Pupils handle scientific experiments very confidently. They have a thorough knowledge across each of the aspects of the science curriculum. This very good achievement is a direct result of the very good quality teaching in Years 5 and 6. Standards by Year 2 are at the expected levels. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Achievement is good and pupils of all abilities make good progress across Year 1 and Year 2. They write simple reports and use a scientific framework regularly. The overall good quality of teaching makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and achievement.
57. All teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs get extra help in lessons. Well-trained support staff give these pupils good quality individual help to ensure they understand any new learning.
58. The co-ordinator is placing a very strong focus on the use of specific scientific vocabulary. This, along with the very good use of the investigative element of science, is having a very positive effect on standards and achievement. She has provided very clear guidance for teachers. This is making a positive contribution to teachers' confidence and the very good quality teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6. Her very good leadership ensures all teachers have good subject knowledge and use this very well to enliven lessons. All teachers give clear



explanations, which introduces new learning well, and contributes very effectively to pupils' achievement, standards and very positive attitudes to learning.

59. Teachers and support staff constantly emphasise the practical nature of science. This helps pupils who speak English as an additional language to increase their understanding through the visual element of the subject.
60. All teachers use marking effectively to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work. This increases pupils' interest in their achievements and makes them eager to do better. The school uses its very thorough analysis of pupils' achievement to plan the next steps of learning. This, and the detailed tracking of achievement and progress from Year 1 to Year 6, ensures pupils' work moves their learning on very well. Staff have a clear understanding of pupils' needs and make sure all pupils have opportunities to evaluate their own learning.
61. All teachers make very good use of the stimulating school grounds to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding. The pupils thoroughly enjoy these lessons and quickly develop very positive attitudes to their work. Pupils develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills well in science. Teachers expect written work to be produced carefully and pupils use accurate technical vocabulary. By Year 6, pupils use their numeracy skills effectively to present their findings and give accurate measurements. The use of ICT is good across the school. By Year 6, pupils understand the use of sensors in measuring and use spreadsheets to record findings.
62. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. Standards in Year 6 have risen very significantly and there has been a marked improvement to the curriculum and the quality of teaching.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- By the end of Year 6, standards are above average.
- Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching that they receive.
- Significant investment in the new computer suite is having a positive impact on learning.
- The monitoring role of the subject co-ordinator is underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

63. There has been good improvement in ICT since the last inspection. Pupils now achieve well throughout the school, resulting in standards which are above average by the end of Year 6. This good achievement comes about because of consistently good teaching. Lessons are very well planned and presented, so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those in the early stages of English language acquisition, are appropriately challenged and helped to learn and apply a good range of skills. These skills cover all aspects required by the National Curriculum. Pupils respond with very good attitudes, showing good behaviour, enthusiasm and commitment.
64. Over the past year, the school has made a significant investment in providing a networked computer room. This has had a positive impact on teaching, making it considerably easier for teachers to instruct and demonstrate to the whole class. It has also improved pupils' learning by giving them more ready access to reliable and robust technology.
65. The subject co-ordinator, who took over the subject at the beginning of the current year, is enthusiastic and provides good support for her colleagues by helping to suggest ideas and

build confidence in the subject. She is a member of the school's ICT Committee, along with the headteacher, two governors and the business manager. Together, this committee ensures that the resources are available to provide for the identified teaching and learning priorities in ICT. This body is in the process of providing interactive whiteboards so that ICT can extend the range of approaches available to teachers. As yet, the monitoring role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped so that, at present, the leadership and management of ICT is satisfactory with the potential to become better.

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

66. The school is making good use of ICT to support other subjects. In a Year 4/5 lesson, for example, pupils used an Internet search engine to research the island of Tobago prior to reading a story set on the island. ICT is also used to support work in art. Year 3 pupils use the Softease paint program to create pictures using the flood and fill tools, and those in Year 4 use brush and copy tools to create landscape pictures. A group of Year 6 pupils could enthusiastically describe how they use ICT to write commands to control their fairground rides made in design and technology as well as their use of the Excel program to produce graphs of their results following a science investigation timing a marble dropping through different liquids.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **History and Geography**

67. In humanities, work was sampled in **geography** and **history**. Two lessons were observed in each subject. The subjects are scheduled on an alternate basis and during the inspection no geography was being taught in Years 3 to 6 and no history was being taught in Years 1 and 2. It is, therefore, not possible to form an overall judgement about provision for these subjects.
68. From discussions with pupils and teachers and an analysis of pupils' work, there is every indication that pupils achieve well and that, by the end of Year 6, standards in both subjects are above those expected for pupils aged 11.
69. In both subjects, pupils' learning is enhanced through visits and visitors and they apply their speaking and listening skills well in order to describe their findings and plan well-structured presentations. In **history**, they are able to use a broad range of primary and secondary sources and their own research to answer challenging questions, for example, about life as a street boy in the Victorian era. In discussion, pupils were able to articulate clearly the difference between fact and opinion and identify the issues in the recording of a live interview reflecting on life in the 1950s. They demonstrated a similar high level of perception in **geography** when talking about water cycles, how other people use water around the world and the impact and importance of its management. However, pupils' written recording in both subjects is too brief and they do not yet have sufficient opportunities for using these two subjects as a vehicle for developing their writing skills. ICT is well used in both subjects, where the pupils use the Internet for research and incorporate aspects of ICT into their work and presentations.
70. Subject leadership in both subjects is good and contributes positively to pupils' achievements. The school provides a very good and broad curriculum for both subjects. The effective monitoring procedures enable the subject leaders to have a good understanding of the school's provision and a clear view of standards and achievement. The school has identified the formal assessment and recording of pupils' achievements as part of its forthcoming action plan, but, despite this lack, it is clear, both from the subject leaders' knowledge and from the four lessons observed, that the teachers know their pupils well and consistently plan appropriate work in both subjects to move them forward with their learning.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Work was sampled in **art and design**, **design and technology** and **physical education**. Pupils were interviewed, photographs and displays were considered and across all three subjects six lessons were observed. It was not possible to observe any lessons or extra-curricular activities in **music**, or to review any pupils' work. It is, therefore, not possible to form an overall judgement about provision for these subjects.

### Art and design

71. It is clear from displays, discussions, sketchbooks and photographic evidence that pupils greatly enjoy **art and design** and are given a very wide range of opportunities, because the curriculum provided is very rich and varied. This includes a very good range of extra activities, using visitors and theme days very well to support pupils' learning. In the two lessons seen, good teaching ensured that pupils could explore and use a wide range of materials. This very good provision and effective use of art materials positively supports the development of skills as pupils move through the school, and they achieve well. For their age, Year 2 pupils have a very good knowledge of materials and techniques. By the end of Year 6, pupils show a high level of care in developing their work using a range of media. Teaching carefully emphasises attention to detail so that the artwork displayed around the school is of a very high quality. The subject supports pupils' spiritual, cultural and social development very well – the very high quality displays and the time to reflect on their work contributes very well to the very positive ethos of the school; Year 6 pupils speak confidently about the work of Escher, Lowry and Van Gogh, recognising and discussing their different styles; and pupils are considerate of others' views both in discussion and when working on their tasks.

### Design and technology

72. The folders, photographic evidence and displays of work confirm that the required range of work in **design and technology** is covered well. The designs and models photographed and seen show appropriate skills for the ages of pupils in Year 2, with careful attention to detail and finish. In discussion, Year 6 pupils confirm that they have achieved a good level of skills and are very careful about the safe use of tools and ensuring a safe working environment. In the lesson observed, Years 5 and 6 pupils were very absorbed in their task and discussed the design of a roundabout or Ferris wheel thoughtfully, showing a good level of knowledge about the use of mechanisms.

### Physical education

73. In **physical education**, the scheme of work was analysed and discussions were held with the subject leader. Year 2 pupils were observed working at athletics, where standards were in line with national expectations and Year 6 pupils were observed working in an excellent dance lesson, where standards were well above national expectations. A clear framework exists within the school for ensuring that pupils are taught the full range of skills required by the National Curriculum. Although mechanisms for assessing and recording pupils' progress and achievements in physical education are not fully in place, all evidence indicates that standards in all areas are above national expectations by the end of Year 6. Subject leadership is very good and there are very good procedures for monitoring and evaluating the subject within the overall curriculum, in order to ensure that teaching and standards continue to improve. A wide range of extra-curricular clubs has been established, which complement the provision in the main school day.

### Music

74. Pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 are very enthusiastic about **music**. They enjoy participating in the wide range of musical activities provided and speak confidently about a range of listening and performing opportunities. They confirm the school's view that individual tuition,

the very good range of visits and visitors, and the strong links with the church and community significantly enhance the taught curriculum.

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

75. Provision for the pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is **very good**. The school uses the Family Links Nurturing Programme very well to plan age-appropriate personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) that is both linked to other subjects and taught in its own right. This is an improvement since the inspection of June 1999. Health, sex and drugs education is covered and supported by health education days, taking part in fund raising for the National Heart Foundation, visits to the Life Education Centre and visitors including the fire and police services and the school nurse. Very good PSHCE lessons were seen during the inspection; they covered Children's Rights and personal identity. Teachers encourage pupils to contribute to debate and discussion through their very good relationships with them. The PSHCE programme makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

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

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

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

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>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).*