

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **STAPLEFORD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Cambridge

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110619

Headteacher: Mrs Suzanne Stokes

Lead inspector: Mrs J'Anne Robertson

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> April 2005

Inspection number: 267985

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	248
School address:	Stapleford Community Primary School Bar Lane Stapleford Cambridge Cambridgeshire
Postcode:	CB2 5BJ
Telephone number:	(01223) 508 720
Fax number:	(01223) 508 721
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Simon Harris
Date of previous inspection:	24 <sup>th</sup> November 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Stapleford Community Primary School, with 248 on roll, is an average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are from a white British background. Over the past three years there has been an increase in the number of pupils with English as their second language, and currently there are 14 such pupils. At 2.5 per cent, the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (13.1 per cent) is below the national average. The majority of these have emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties. Currently 1.5 per cent of pupils have a statement of special educational need and 0.4 per cent are in the looked-after category. The children's attainment on entry is broadly average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
13158	J'Anne Robertson	Lead inspector	Art and design Design and technology Religious education Science
19578	Ted Worby	Lay inspector	
27447	John Sweet	Team inspector	English Geography
32611	*Ralph Cross		English as an additional language
10780	David Orsborne	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Music
34078	*Margaret Broad		Foundation Stage
32163	Mary-Jane Edwards	Team inspector	History Mathematics Physical education Special educational needs

\* *Replacement inspectors - due to ill health of team members during the inspection week.*

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal Education  
1 - 4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637 833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 5</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>6 - 9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>9 - 16</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>16 - 17</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>18 - 31</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>32</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **good** standard of education with many **very good** aspects. It gives **good** value for money. Standards are **good** and the pupils achieve **successfully**. The headteacher provides a strong sense of educational purpose for the school. The governors have clear plans to move the school forward. Teaching is **good** overall. The school's improvement plans need to be made more rigorous at senior and middle management levels. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and has the capacity for good improvement.

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

- Teachers and support staff work well together to help all pupils succeed and feel valued.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is **good**.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good** and has been maintained since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is **good** overall.
- Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy their lessons; their attitudes and behaviour are **very good**.
- Attendance is **good**.
- The yardsticks for judging how effective teaching, learning, planning and improvement are need to be clearer.
- Monitoring of lessons does not focus enough on what pupils have learnt.
- Tracking of pupils' learning within subjects needs to be made more efficient and user friendly.

Overall, the school has improved **satisfactorily** since the last inspection but some areas have shown **good** progress. There is now **no unsatisfactory** teaching. Provision for special educational needs is now **good**. Lesson planning has improved and now shows a greater match to pupils' needs. Teachers' expectations of pupils are now **consistently high**. Assessment is still an area for improvement but this is in the light of a new staff team and changes in recognised good practice nationally.

### 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	B	B	D
mathematics	A	A	C	D
science	A	A	A	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 achieve well in Years 1 to 2 and in Years 3 to 6. The school's results in the tests for seven-year olds over time have been improved at broadly the same rate as results nationally. In the 2004 national tests, pupils' performance in Year 2 matched the national average in reading and writing, whilst pupils did better in mathematics than pupils in most schools. Year 6 pupils' performance was above the national average in English, notably so in science. In mathematics it matched the national average. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

In 2004, the results of national tests for pupils in Year 2, when compared to similar schools', were below average in reading and writing and above in mathematics. The results in Year 6, when compared to similar schools were below average in English and mathematics and average in science. The results in the tests at the end of Year 6 have not kept pace with the results nationally. High levels of special needs in varied cohorts effected some of these results.

Inspection evidence shows that overall, pupils' achievement is **good** and standards of work seen are **above average**. Children enter the Foundation Stage with broadly average attainment. By the end of Reception and beginning of Year 1, the majority are working at levels **consistently beyond** the early learning goals<sup>1</sup>, especially in mathematical development. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well and reach standards that are **good** in reading and writing and **above average** in mathematics. **Good** quality teaching across all classes is leading to effective learning for all pupils, which in turn is enabling standards to rise further. In Years 5 and 6, standards are **above average** in English, mathematics and science.

**Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good.** Attendance is **above the average** for primary schools.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **good** standard of education with some **very good** aspects. Teaching is **good overall**. In the best lessons pupils learn well because teachers plan lessons with their needs in mind. Teachers make lessons interesting and as a result there are high levels of interest. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The school's commitment to ensuring all pupils are included in every aspect of school life results in good provision for those with special educational needs. Relationships between staff and pupils are friendly and warm. Pupils are cared for and supported well.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. At the previous inspection, they were judged to be **good**, but the school currently has a new leadership team and many new staff who are yet to fully develop their roles. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and provides **successful** leadership for the school's inclusive approach. The governors are committed to ensuring the school's future success. They ensure all statutory requirements are met and understand the school's strengths and provide appropriate challenge and support.

Some important aspects of school improvement planning and school self-evaluation are underdeveloped; this is because the current school improvement and development plan and subject plans do not describe what the benefits should be for pupils in relation to their learning. There are no clear links between the plans and school self-evaluation.

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

Parents' opinions about their children's progress are positive; they say that their children enjoy coming to school, are well behaved and are well taught. Some parents queried whether or not behaviour was effectively managed. Inspectors found no incidents of bullying and consider the school's procedures for dealing with behaviour effective. Pupils' views of the school are positive; they feel cared for and secure.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Develop the roles of subject leaders so that they ensure effective delivery of their subject across the school.
- Ensure that the School Improvement Plan is an effective strategic tool that is supported by monitoring at all levels and has a strong focus on measuring how well pupils learn.
- Increase the headteacher's and governors' effective use of self-evaluation in order to support school improvement and development planning.

<sup>1</sup>Nationally defined targets for children to achieve by the end of the Reception Year.

- Share the effective assessment that already exists in the school and make recording more efficient.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Throughout the school, pupils achieve well and reach standards that are above average.

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

- Overall, pupils' achievement is good throughout all year groups.
- By the end of Reception and beginning of Year 1 the majority are working at levels consistently beyond the early learning goals.
- Standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average throughout the school.
- Achievement in mathematics is good overall in all year groups.
- Standards in science are above average by Years 5 and 6.
- The good teaching is raising standards.

#### **Commentary**

1. National tests in 2004 show that by the age of seven pupils reach standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to all schools.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.2	15.8
writing	15.2	14.6
mathematics	17.7	16.2

*There were 33 pupils in the year group.*

2. Standards for 11-year-olds in the 2004 national tests were well above average in English and science and average in mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8 (27.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.5 (28.9)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.0 (30.2)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

#### **Years 1 and 2**

3. The majority of this year's seven year-olds are achieving at least average and above average standards in speaking, listening and reading. There is a significant group of more able pupils who demonstrate well above average standards, especially in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are generally good and this is likely to help them to improve their writing. However, spelling is not secure in all cases. There is no difference in standards of work seen between girls and boys in spite of some classes having significantly higher numbers of boys. All share positive attitudes to learning in English and

<sup>1</sup>Nationally defined targets for children to achieve by the end of the Reception Year.



achieve well. Pupils make good progress in mathematics and by the end of Year 1, they can read, write and order numbers to 20, recognise shapes and solve simple problems. Older Year 1 pupils work with Year 2 pupils. Year 2 pupils can solve complex problems and use strategies such as doubling and separating tens and units. The school has introduced arrangements for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This information is beginning to be used to set targets for the next stages of pupils' learning but is in a form that lacks ease of access and thus does not inform planning sufficiently. Standards and in science are average and achievement is satisfactory. In religious education, information and communication technology and other subjects seen, standards are broadly average.

### *Years 3 to 6*

4. Year 6 pupils are achieving above the standards expected for their age in speaking and listening, reading and writing, mathematics and science. This represents a significant improvement since last year and is a direct result of the governors' and headteacher's actions to focus extra teaching support on this group of pupils who are now achieving well. Pupils of all abilities are challenged and supported well.
5. By Year 6 pupils read fluently and can describe a character well. They write to a purpose and show understanding of matching to an audience. Standards achieved in Year 3 are above average overall in English and mathematics and the more-able pupils are approaching the levels expected for older pupils. By Year 4, pupils understand different methods of addition and make the right choices of method so that they solve problems quickly and efficiently. In Years 5 and 6 standards are good in English, mathematics and science. Most pupils can recognise place value up to four decimal places and can convert fractions to the decimal equivalents. In Year 5 they successfully explore how sound travels through different materials and learn to design simple and complex string telephones to test this. By Year 6 they effectively explore useful micro-organisms. Standards in science are above average and achievement is good. In religious education, information and communication technology and other subjects seen, standards are broadly average.

### *Whole-school matters*

6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, apply their literacy skills well in other areas of the curriculum; for example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils are able to use their research skills to write reports of the fire of London in the style of Samuel Pepys. By Year 6, pupils can adopt a formal style in their writing when considering solutions to the problems of tourism in the Lake District. They also make good progress in learning through speaking and listening, for example, in the use of talking partners to consider problems set in all subjects, school council meetings, drama and singing. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in speaking and listening and reading for English. However, at times they lack the higher levels of comprehension of English as a spoken language and of instructions and this impacts on their written responses.
7. Opportunities for pupils to use mathematical skills in other subjects are less well developed in comparison to literacy. Where these occur they are effective; for example, Year 6 pupils record rainfall and temperature using line graphs and bar charts.
8. In information and communication technology, pupils make satisfactory progress and, overall, attain the standards expected for their age. Some classes do not have opportunities for the regular, systematic teaching of information and communication technology skills.
9. Overall achievement is good across the school.
10. Pupils with special education needs achieve well as a result of the good teaching and support they receive. Pupils' individual education plans set out clear targets for improvement in basic

skills and other personal targets relating to behaviour. These help pupils by giving them a clear picture of where and how they need to improve their work.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their moral, social and cultural development is good and their spiritual development is satisfactory. This results in good personal development overall. Attendance is above average but arrangements for following up absences need improving.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are keen to participate in all the school has to offer and take on responsibilities willingly.
- Most pupils' behaviour in lessons is very good.
- The school helps pupils in forming strong relationships with one another and with staff.
- Pupils are confident and keen to learn.
- Pupils' spiritual development is less strong than their moral, social and cultural development.

### **Commentary**

#### *Attitudes and behaviour*

11. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and they enjoy the wide range of clubs and activities that are provided for them. They are polite and confident and in most lessons they behave very well. Pupils are eager to learn and they work hard and persevere with the challenges set for them. Pupils co-operate readily with one another and settle to work in pairs and small groups without any fuss. A good example was seen when pupils sorted items into living and non-living categories during a science lesson. There were no incidents of bullying seen during the inspection and there was a happy atmosphere at playtimes with pupils thoroughly enjoying using the equipment set out especially for them. There have been no exclusions this year.
12. Pupils with special educational needs respond well in lessons and group activities. They are well motivated and the quiet and skilful support of teaching assistants enables them to take a full part in lessons. Teachers and other adults working in the school provide very good role models of caring and fair-minded behaviour. This is particularly supportive for those few pupils who struggle to behave well in lessons.

#### *Taking responsibility*

13. Pupils are very keen to join in school activities. There are many after-school and lunchtime clubs, which are well attended. Pupils are willing to take on responsibilities, for example Year 5 pupils are monitors, supervising the use of playground equipment, and boys and girls in Year 6 help to organise younger pupils in the dining hall. The school council is a good example where pupils show a willingness to take responsibilities very seriously and this is having a growing impact on school life.

#### *Relationships*

14. Pupils build very positive relationships between themselves and staff and other pupils. The youngest pupils have settled well and move around the school and the playground confidently. Older pupils report that they like their teachers and feel safe. Pupils respond well to the various opportunities provided to work in small groups or pairs. They listen to each other and, as they move through the school, learn to offer supportive critique of each other's suggestions. Pupils' attitudes towards their peers who have difficulties are of a highly inclusive and sensitive nature especially in Year 2. This supports vulnerable children with emotional and behavioural difficulties in a very positive way. The calm relationships that exist between staff and pupils help to create a positive learning environment in which pupils develop confidence and self-esteem.

### Personal development

15. Pupils' personal development is strong because staff know their pupils very well and they help them to recognise one another's strengths and to show respect for each other's views. Pupils are listened to carefully by teachers who treat their opinions seriously and value their comments during lessons. The strength of relationships between pupils and adults helps pupils to take risks in their learning and gives them the confidence to explore new methods to solve problems. Moral development is strongly promoted within the curriculum and around the school. Pupils are involved in setting up class rules, and assemblies reinforce their growing understanding of what is right and wrong. During the inspection, pupils explored the importance of teamwork during assemblies. Attractive displays around the school celebrate and reflect different cultures and the choice of library books helps to raise pupils' awareness of cultural diversity. Assemblies regularly celebrate pupils' achievements although these events do not regularly involve parents or carers. Some assemblies during the inspection missed opportunities to improve pupils' spiritual development by fostering a sense of self-awareness.
16. Most pupils with special educational needs are keen to learn and enjoy coming to school. Pupils who struggle to behave well in class are very well managed by staff, who deal quickly and calmly with any disruptions. Because staff know pupils very well, they are able to help them improve their social skills, especially in working alongside others in class. This in turn limits the impact of their behaviour on the learning of others in the class.

### Attendance

17. The attendance rate at the school is above average and unauthorised absences are broadly in line with those nationally. During the inspection, some registers were not returned promptly to the office so that unexpected absences were unable to be quickly followed up. Pupils arrive promptly so that lessons can begin on time.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Curriculum provision is good. The support, advice and guidance offered to pupils is good. Partnership with parents is good.

#### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall. As a result most pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and know their pupils well.
- Teachers plan carefully and devise interesting and appropriate activities for their pupils.
- The assessment system whilst satisfactory is unwieldy.
- Pupils lack sufficient opportunity to use information and communication technology to support their learning.

## Commentary

18. The quality of teaching is good for all pupils, with the highest proportion of very good teaching being seen in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The proportion of good and better teaching has been maintained since the last inspection, and the unsatisfactory teaching seen during that inspection has been eliminated. Sixty-four per cent of teaching seen during the course of the inspection was good or better.
19. There are a number of young and relatively inexperienced teachers on the staff, including one newly-qualified teacher. They are well supported by their colleagues, and the whole staff team works well together. Teachers and support staff are enthusiastic, work effectively as a team and know their pupils well.
20. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory overall, and is good where staff have specialist qualifications (for example, in music). This enables them to plan interesting and appropriate lessons, which they do thoroughly and carefully. Teachers in those classrooms equipped with interactive whiteboards make satisfactory use of them, for example, by using interactive teaching programs to support mathematics teaching, for sharing learning objectives and modelling outcomes or by creating interesting presentations to introduce work in a way that motivates and engages pupils.
21. Children in the Foundation Stage are very enthusiastic and become very involved in their work. Older pupils also have positive attitudes and take part whole-heartedly in their lessons, except when overlong sessions or limited access to resources make it difficult for them to be actively involved. In these circumstances, they find it hard to sustain their concentration and behaviour is not as good as it should be. This lack of focus means that pupils do not learn as well or make as much progress as they should. Some teaching sessions are too long, and this results in small blocks of 'dead' time in some timetables.
22. Teachers have access to a range of appropriate resources and use them effectively. Availability of information and communication technology equipment is limited in most classrooms. Younger pupils do not have ready access to interactive whiteboards or to a suitable cluster of computers, and this limits the opportunities for pupils to learn and practise skills, or to support and extend their learning using these resources. The school has plans in place to enhance provision for the youngest pupils.
23. Teachers have appropriately high expectations for most pupils.
24. Literacy (including phonics) and numeracy are taught effectively. There are some opportunities for pupils to develop and extend aspects of numeracy and literacy across the curriculum, and pupils apply their basic skills effectively in other subjects such as history, geography or science. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their information and communication technology skills in the same way.
25. Teachers encourage support staff to be fully engaged in lessons, involve them fully in planning and brief them well. Relationships between staff, and between staff and pupils, are very good. Teachers and support staff work well as a team and this makes a very positive contribution to the way pupils learn. The quality of relationships and the effective teamwork also mean that pupils enjoy their lessons and know what is expected of them; most behave well and work hard, and lessons are generally relaxed yet purposeful. Another result is that pupils learn to appreciate and value the work and efforts of the others in their class. Pupils contribute confidently to lessons, offering ideas, answers or suggestions, confident that these, and the work they produce, will be treated with respect.
26. The school has systems for collecting assessment information, but these are often quite unwieldy and time consuming. The school makes insufficient use of information gathered to

shape teachers' planning and to ensure that pupils are challenged and supported to make the best possible progress, especially able pupils.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	7 (19.4%)	16 (44.4%)	13 (36.1%)	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.*

### **Inclusion**

27. During lessons, teachers plan tasks which help pupils with special educational needs build on what they already know and provide materials which enable them to take part in all activities. For example, writing frames are used to help pupils organise their writing and choose appropriate language. Teaching assistants support pupils by rephrasing and repeating questions and adapting tasks. This means that pupils can succeed in lessons and the warmth of the praise they receive helps boost their self-confidence. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in speaking and listening and reading. Currently their higher-level comprehension skills are underdeveloped because staff do not focus sufficiently on this aspect of their learning and this impedes their understanding of technical details in subjects across the curriculum.

### **Leadership**

28. The headteacher has a good understanding of the range of experience that exists in the teaching team. She provides effective and practical support for staff during their induction to the school. She has identified the need for autonomy in the role of subject leaders and has rightly encouraged teachers to take a role in monitoring and evaluating subjects. This is at an early stage as many are new to their role.

### **The curriculum**

Overall the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. This is further enriched through a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Accommodation and resources are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The accommodation is in very good order and this enhances the range of learning opportunities available to pupils.
- Resources for information and communication technology are good in Years 3 to 6.
- The school's commitment to ensuring all pupils are included in every aspect of school life results in good provision for those with special educational needs.
- Literacy is used effectively across the curriculum.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work hard to offer a wide range of learning opportunities to all pupils. Volunteers from the parents and community ably support them.
- There is not sufficient understanding by teachers of the second stage of English as an additional language requirements.

### **Commentary**

#### *Planning*

29. The curriculum fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Individual lesson plans provide for a range of activities that match the broad ability ranges of pupils, including those who have special educational needs. They contain clear learning objectives to support pupils' progress. Development of lessons to

cater for pupils with English as an additional language is at an early stage. Subject plans however lack a sufficient focus on pupils' learning outcomes to support teachers readily.

30. The school has yet to engage fully in the use of core training for the Primary Strategy to develop teachers' subject knowledge and leadership, for example, the five-day mathematics courses. Subject leaders, many of whom are new, have received generic training for their core responsibilities. This means that monitoring of the curriculum is at a very early stage.
31. The planning frameworks provided by the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are used well to ensure that lessons have a clear purpose. Teachers find good opportunities for pupils to use their reading and writing skills in other curricular areas, for example, in Years 1 and 2 writing recipes and shopping lists during a food week topic. Opportunities for the use of mathematical skills in other subjects are good where systematically planned.

#### *Inclusion*

32. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school has a strong commitment to ensuring all pupils are included in every aspect of school life. This is evident in the way that skilled teachers and teaching assistants enable pupils of all abilities to enjoy full involvement in all lessons. They devise activities that are carefully linked to pupils' individual education plans, and teaching assistants, through their sensitive support and praise, encourage pupils to work hard and achieve well. This is particularly evident in one Year 2 class where pupils with a wide range of learning and behaviour needs exist. Management of these pupils by the class teacher is excellent and ensures all pupils make appropriate progress. There are close links with outside agencies and support services, which provide valued assistance when required. There is not sufficient understanding by teachers of the second stage of English as an additional language requirements in order to ensure that these pupils build on the very good progress they have made as they move through the school. The English co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop teachers' understanding of English as an additional language and ways to support these pupils across the curriculum.

#### *Curriculum enrichment*

33. The school provides a good range of lunchtime and after-school activities. These include sports, art, drama, Latin, music and a French club. These are enthusiastically attended, especially by the older pupils. Educational visits and visitors to the school are used effectively to supplement the basic curriculum.

#### *Staffing*

34. The school has gone through a period of high turnover of teachers. From this process the headteacher and governors have been successful in appointing a young and enthusiastic team of teachers who have the capacity to take the school from strength to strength. There are enough experienced teachers and teaching assistants to teach the curriculum completely. They have had access to a range of in-service training opportunities and are developing their skills in areas such as information and communication technology and generic subject leadership. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure continuing progress in pupils' learning.

#### *Accommodation and resources*

35. Accommodation is very good and resources are good overall but shortages exist in mathematics, science and geography.
36. The school makes very good use of its varied accommodation. Displays of pupils' work ensure that walls and corridors are attractive and welcoming. Effective use is made of wide corridor space to provide additional teaching and information technology opportunities for groups of pupils. There is spacious provision for indoor and outdoor physical education. The outdoor

provision is about to be developed further through long-standing links with the local football team. The school has recently developed a computer suite in each main block, which means that key staff and Years 3 - 6 pupils have opportunities to practise new skills. This provision has been further enhanced through interactive whiteboards in the junior classes. Outdoor play facilities for the under fives are good and have been developed with the on site playgroup and the Parents' and Teachers' Association (PTA). This means that the youngest children are able to explore sand, water and environmental experiences in an independent manner. Their opportunities for developing physical control over large pieces of apparatus are enabled through access to a further play area shared with Year 1 pupils in the main.

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

Care, guidance and support for pupils are **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school takes care to ensure that pupils are safe and secure.
- Staff know the pupils well and there is a strong sense of trust between staff and pupils.
- There are good induction arrangements for pupils who join the school in Reception and those who join at other points in time.
- There are good opportunities provided for pupils to express their views and shape the school.
- Lateness and absence are not followed through.
- Tracking of pupils' progress in English and mathematics is secure but this information is not used to identify whole school priorities for learning linked to the School Improvement Plan; this is because systems are overly cumbersome and do not enable easy extraction of key information.

### **Commentary**

37. Arrangements for ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare are comprehensive and well known to all staff. There are good relationships between the school and external agencies such as police, the local health authority, educational psychologists and social services that lead to good support for pupils who have special educational needs or are vulnerable. Child protection procedures are effective and the headteacher and staff are vigilant in their application. Arrangements for dealing with first aid are up to date. Access to the premises is controlled well. Regular health and safety audits are carried out and acted upon.
38. Teachers make it their business to get to know pupils and their personal circumstances well. This enables them to respond to pupils' personal, emotional and academic needs. Very positive relationships mean that pupils feel they have an adult they can turn to and trust with their confidences. The negative comment from the pupil questionnaires regarding being able to speak to an adult were followed up by the headteacher and inspection team and it was found that children had misunderstood the term adult and had seen this as someone other than a teacher or parent. Those interviewed, including the school council, were happy that they could talk to someone in confidence.
39. Pupils are encouraged to believe in their own ability to succeed and feel confident in seeking support and advice when faced with difficulties. Any learning or behaviour problems are identified at an early stage and staff liaise closely with parents. Parents of pupils with learning and behaviour problems are very appreciative of the support they and their children receive.

### *Inclusion*

40. There are good arrangements to identify and assess pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans and statements are regularly reviewed and parents, teachers, support staff and, where appropriate, pupils are involved in the process. Most individual

education plans have specific and measurable targets; these are reflected in teachers' planning across the curriculum.

41. The school has an inclusive approach to all pupils in the broadest sense. This is supported admirably by links with other agencies, and by the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the children. Effective support, advice and guidance are given to particular individuals both within and outside of the classroom. Some parents expressed concerns about the impact of inclusion and therefore feel that the inclusion of less-able or vulnerable children impacts adversely on their own children's education. The inspection does not find that there is any adverse impact.
42. Teachers use regular reviews of individual educational plan targets to monitor progress. Targets include improvement in personal development and social skills and all pupils are involved in reviewing their own progress and deciding on future challenges.

#### *Induction and transfer*

43. There are good arrangements for pupils to get to know the school and staff before they start in the infant classes. The youngest pupils quickly become confident members of the school community. Pupils in Year 6 moving to the village college have suitable opportunities to become familiar with their new school.

#### *Involving pupils*

44. The school council provides an effective forum for pupils to express their opinions. Pupils are proud to be chosen as representatives and they take their responsibilities seriously. The headteacher and staff promptly follow up issues raised by the pupils. An example of this is the 'worry box' system. The pupils expressed concerns that 'worries' could be removed from the box and then others could ridicule individual pupils. This system is now under review.
45. The school council is providing good opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of individual and collective responsibility and influence the actions of the school as a responsible community.

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

Overall, partnership with parents, and other schools is good, and with the community very good.

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

- Links with other schools and the community are good.
- The school provides informative written reports to parents that enable them to support their children's learning.
- Some parents wished to be supported further in helping with their children's learning, especially reading.
- Parent evenings are found to be informative and helpful and are appreciated by the parents.
- Parents feel welcomed into the school and have easy access to staff, who they consider to be friendly and co-operative.
- Parental concerns are promptly acted upon.

#### **Commentary**

##### *Links with parents*

46. The headteacher makes effective use of parent questionnaire returns and acts promptly on concerns and questions raised. Recent examples have included increasing newsletters home, teachers writing letters to their class parents to share the work to be covered in the next



period of teaching, and provision of curriculum information sessions such as a six week course for parents on literacy and a mathematics curriculum evening.

47. Some parents were concerned about the change in reporting style for annual reports. The school is meeting reporting requirements, and written reports provide parents with a good picture of their children's progress in all areas of the curriculum. Parents appreciated the sharing of targets for learning in order to help their children, especially those shared with them in Years 3 to 6 through the homework diaries. Their desire to support their children's reading skills is appropriate especially for those whose children are bilingual but a more structured approach would help parents further.
48. Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in the school. They support learning in the classrooms and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Newsletters are informative and provide useful updates on the life of the school. Parents appreciate the increase in the number of formal parent consultation evenings available to them and the opportunities these provide to discuss their children's progress. Assemblies regularly celebrate pupils' achievements although these events do not regularly involve parents or carers in sharing this celebration.
49. Given parental concerns regarding possible poor behaviour at play and lunchtimes these times of the day were observed and pupils interviewed. No incidents were observed and pupils reported that they felt safe and secure.

#### *Links with other schools*

50. Links with other schools are good. Links between teachers and other schools through local networks are beneficial in sharing expertise that actively supports the pupils' learning. Links with the local playgroup are especially effective as this is housed in a wing of the school next to the Reception classes. Children in the playgroup receive regular opportunities to be part of the school and there is therefore a sense of 'going along the corridor' rather than a fear of a new building and set of people to meet. This ensures they have a very settled start to school life and join the school with confidence. Links are made for older pupils through cluster activities across the local primary schools and this supports their transition to secondary school well.

#### *Links with the community*

51. There are very good links made with the local community. The school fully embraces its community role through providing access to children and adults for after school and holiday activities. It acts as host for numerous community groups and shares its additional resource of a swimming pool during the long summer break. There is a very active 'Umbrella Association' which works hand in hand with the school to promote full use of the premises. This in turn has enhanced the physical resources available for pupils and widened their learning opportunities, especially for sports and the arts. The local churches and clergy provide active support to the school through visits and leading assemblies. The PTA is very active and valuably supports the school with the purchase of additional equipment.

#### *Links with other agencies for education support programmes*

52. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are informed and involved in the plans the school establishes to meet these needs.
53. There is good communication between teachers and parents about progress made by pupils with special educational needs. Parents are involved in setting and reviewing individual improvement plans and speak warmly about the progress they see their children making at school. Effective relationships exist with external agencies and specialists. For example, the sight impairment team visit regularly to assess the needs of a partially sighted child.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is satisfactory. The governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well, including playing an active role in identifying priorities for the School Improvement Plan.
- The headteacher provides capable leadership overall. She is active in developing a cohesive approach to school improvement and offers good leadership for the care and wellbeing of both staff and pupils.
- The school has good procedures for induction and performance management.
- School self-evaluation and school improvement planning are insufficiently developed.
- There is a need to develop further leadership and management training for staff with key responsibilities.

### **Commentary**

54. The governors provide good support and challenge to the leadership team, particularly in relation to the curriculum. Each governor is linked to a subject area and the curriculum committee takes an active role in identifying priorities for the school development and improvement plan. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well, and the annual report to parents is comprehensive and informative. School policies are regularly reviewed and updated. School performance data are discussed by the whole governing body and the progress made by different year groups is considered. The chair of governors is a regular visitor to the school and is aware of the next steps the school needs to take to secure further improvement.
55. The headteacher and the leadership team are well respected and have the capacity to improve the school further. This capacity for improvement stems from the headteacher's vision of a cohesive staff team. Her support for the wellbeing of all in the school, staff and pupils, is an essential element in taking the school forward. While there is no formal policy, there are good procedures for inducting new staff (including newly qualified teachers) and they are encouraged to visit leading teachers in other schools and attend courses to continue their professional development. The leadership team provide good role models for staff and children and are effective in communicating their high expectations of behaviour and achievement. The headteacher has ensured that the performance management policy is in place and teachers have targets linked to pupil progress. The school is making good progress with workforce reform and the planning and preparation time required for teaching staff is in place ahead of schedule.
56. The headteacher has implemented a regular lesson monitoring programme. This has been effective in identifying the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and bringing about improvements. However, there is a limited focus on how effectively pupils learn as a result of teaching seen and this does not help to inform on where improvements could be made for learning.
57. Some important aspects of school improvement planning and school self-evaluation are underdeveloped; this is because the current school improvement and development plan and subject plans do not describe what the benefits should be for pupils in relation to their learning. There are no clear links between the plans and the school's self-evaluation.
58. Many subject co-ordinators are new to their roles and will benefit from training and support in their leadership roles. Presently, a consistent approach to monitoring by subject leaders is lacking. Monitoring and evaluation by all staff with leadership responsibilities do not focus sufficiently on the impact of teaching on learning and the curriculum. Consequently, the school

does not have good information about the achievement of different groups of pupils in lessons.

*Inclusion*

59. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good support across the school. She maintains contact with other professionals who work with pupils and makes sure that programmes of work help them to make good progress. She is aware of the need to develop a separate tracking system for pupils with special educational needs, including those who have been identified as gifted and talented. She has been active in providing additional challenges for the most able pupils including recently a visit from a specialist mathematics workshop group. Currently responsibility for English as an additional language; sits with the English coordinator.

**Financial information**

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	675,465	Balance from previous year	79,342*
Total expenditure	620,827	Balance carried forward to the next year	54,638
Expenditure per pupil	2,460		

\* This figure from 2004 closure is included in the total income for 2004-2005.

60. The school has a higher than average carry-forward. However, this is appropriately accounted for against future requirements in ICT. The school gives good value for money.
61. Some newer members of the governing body are less clear about best value principles, whereas more experienced members show greater understanding.

**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 is very good and has been maintained since the last inspection.

Attainment on entry to the Reception class is broadly average but children achieve well throughout the Foundation Stage because the teaching is good, and the curriculum is appropriately planned to provide a wide range of interesting and relevant activities which are well matched to their needs. As a result children are in line to reach the expected goals by the end of the Foundation Stage, with the majority exceeding them and working at early Year 1 levels as appropriate for this time of year.

The children enter the Reception class in the September of the year in which they will be five. Good induction arrangements, including home visits, ensure that the children are appropriately provided for and settle quickly. This year, there are 31 Reception-age children: 25 are in one class and six are in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. This arrangement works well, partly because the staff work well as a team. They monitor the children's progress carefully, provide high levels of care and ensure that the learning needs of all the children are well met.

Students and other adults complement the regular staff team in the Foundation Stage classes and make a valuable contribution to the children's learning and development. Staff provide very good role models for the children and, as a result, children work well together, and treat each other with kindness, courtesy and respect.

Classroom accommodation is bright and attractive and resources are good. A courtyard garden and a secure outside play area are shared with the pupils and facilities are good.

Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good although the relative inexperience of the teaching staff means that the development planning process is not yet as effective as it should be in identifying and addressing key priorities for improvement.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve very well and make good progress in becoming confident, enthusiastic and independent because of the good teaching, the care and support they receive and the high expectations set by staff.

### **Commentary**

62. Most children are in line to reach the expected goals in this area of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage, with the majority working at levels consistently beyond the early learning goals. This is a higher than expected standard as overall attainment is about average when children first start school and represents very good achievement.
63. In both classes with Reception-age children, the staff provide clear boundaries and good role models so that the children know what is expected of them and quickly become confident and independent. The children know the routines well, settle to tasks with a minimum of fuss, and behave sensibly. They show real interest in what they are doing, concentrate well (even when not directly supervised) and are eager to learn. Children are encouraged to feel confident about what they achieve, and are reminded of the high standards that the adults expect. They are friendly and take a pride in their work. Children are encouraged to share and take turns amicably and to listen carefully to others. When children do not conform they are dealt with firmly but fairly, so that they learn to appreciate and respond to the needs of others within the group.

64. The adults give the children good role models for co-operation, and a calm but thorough approach to work. The very supportive relationships between adults and children ensure that the children feel secure and confident to offer ideas, to manage their own needs and their work and to seek help when required.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers and support staff employ a wide range of strategies, and teaching is good.
- Children are very confident when talking about their work and other things that interest them.
- Children make a good start on early reading and writing skills and some higher-attaining children reach well above average standards.

### **Commentary**

65. The children in the Foundation Stage learn well as a result of the many opportunities they are given to talk, listen and explore early reading and writing activities. In the Reception classes, the majority of children are on target to achieve the expected outcomes in this area of learning by the end of the year, and the majority working at levels consistently beyond the early learning goals. Overall, this is higher than the expected standard and represents good achievement.
66. Staff take every opportunity during activities to develop the children's speaking and listening skills by asking questions, by getting children to explain and by encouraging them to listen to what others have to say. For example, when children were playing a game with an inflatable globe, the teacher talked to them about their experiences of other places and asked them questions, so that they had to think about what they knew, and choose appropriate words to explain.
67. Relationships between adults and children are very good and this means that children have the confidence to talk, offer ideas and ask questions.
68. Teaching is good and the staff plan interesting things for the children to do. They also make good provision for reading, writing and speaking to occur as part of other learning activities. For example, the role play area in one classroom was well-equipped with writing materials and classrooms have a wide variety of labels and other text on display that encourage both reading and discussion.
69. The children enjoy books, treat them carefully and enjoy listening to and retelling stories. Having read 'Jasper's Beanstalk' with the teacher, for example, the children were very keen to re-read and retell the story themselves. Most children in the Reception class knew the sounds of most, and the names of, many letters. Higher attaining pupils formed the majority of letters correctly and were able to write several well-formed and more-or-less correctly spelled and punctuated sentences about experiences they had enjoyed, for example, a visit to the florist. Attainment for these children is well above average. Children with English as an additional language show similar attainment but in a few cases have difficulty in identifying groupings of objects accurately.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff plan a wide range of activities to support mathematical learning and, as a result, children achieve well.
- Opportunities to promote children’s mathematical development are well embedded in classroom practice.

### **Commentary**

70. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding. In both classes with Reception-age children, most children are working at or above the levels expected for their age.
71. Adults use a variety of number rhymes and songs to help children count and take every opportunity to introduce and reinforce mathematical language and ideas, such as sorting and sequencing, into other activities.
72. The range of practical mathematical activities is very appropriate for the children’s stage of development. They learn to work together, to share and to take turns, and this also enhances their personal and social skills. As a result of this good teaching, all children (including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language requirements) make very good progress and achieve well. They are interested and enthusiastic about their work, have positive and independent attitudes and are well prepared for future learning.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Adults use questions very effectively.
- Children are given very good opportunities to observe, talk, explore and investigate and respond to the world around them.

### **Commentary**

73. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve very well. Most are working at levels above those expected for their age. A range of appropriate and interesting activities is planned to stimulate children’s curiosity and enhance their understanding.
74. The adults are effective at using questions to clarify and extend the children’s knowledge and understanding of the world around them. For example, the teacher’s very good questioning skills helped children make the most of a session where they discussed, described and compared different seeds and plants. Well-planned and appropriate activities with the teacher and teaching assistant enabled the children to follow this up, and resulted in very good development and use of appropriate vocabulary. As a result, the children were involved in a range of meaningful activities, and learning was good for all. Children use simple tools effectively and make models and other constructions using a range of materials. The use of information and communication technology is limited, but makes a satisfactory contribution to this area of learning.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers make good use of the facilities available, including the playground, the courtyard and the school hall.
- Children achieve well across the whole of this area of learning.
- Provision for learning outdoors is good.

### **Commentary**

75. Children are on target to meet the expected goals by the end of the Foundation Stage and many will exceed them. Their achievement is good.
76. In both classes with Reception-age children, teaching is good and children learn well. They develop their manipulative skills well by handling materials and by using scissors, brushes and other tools, which they control well. They manipulate small construction toys and use information and communication technology equipment with dexterity, including the computer mouse and the keyboard. When working outside and in the hall, children move safely and with confidence. They use their imagination and travel on, over, under and through the equipment and show awareness of and consideration for the other children. There is an appropriate focus on healthy eating, the importance of exercise and 'keeping clean'.
77. The courtyard garden is attractive and the enclosed playground has a range of suitable equipment which is shared with the infant pupils.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

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

- Staff make good links between different areas of learning and encourage children to respond creatively.
- There are good opportunities for children to take part in role-play and, through circle time, to explore thoughts, feelings and emotional responses to their experiences.

### **Commentary**

78. In both classes with Reception-age children, teaching is very good and children learn well. Children are on line to meet the expected goals by the end of the Foundation Stage and the majority working at levels consistently beyond the early learning goals. Their achievement is good.
79. Adults provide good opportunities for the children to think and talk about their ideas, thoughts and feelings. Through circle time they are encouraged to take turns to talk about what they have been doing and why, to offer their views, to explore ideas and listen carefully to others.
80. Children play instruments, know a range of simple songs, and use a wide variety of materials to create pictures, collages, paintings and drawings. The classrooms, and the areas outside, contain a wide range of examples of the children's imaginative work, large and bold as well as small and detailed, and demonstrate their very positive creative responses to things they have experienced.

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

#### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lessons are well planned, teachers are enthusiastic and their subject knowledge is good; there are good links to other subjects and work previously undertaken and effective use of paired work. There are high standards of speaking and listening.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils in literacy lessons.
- There are good opportunities to develop writing across the curriculum.
- The subject leader does not have a sufficiently good understanding of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and the infants.
- Teachers' understanding of English as an additional language is insufficiently developed.
- There is more good teaching than at the time of the last inspection.
- Progress of pupils with English as an additional language slows when dealing with technical language; this is because their comprehension skills at the second stage are not securely developed.

## **Commentary**

81. In the 2004 national tests, pupils' performance in Year 2 matched the national average in reading and writing. The pupils' performance in reading and writing was not as good as that of pupils in similar schools. In Year 6 the results were above the national average. The results were below average when compared with similar schools.
82. Challenging targets have been set for pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2005. Inspection evidence suggests they should meet or come close to achieving these targets. Pupils in Year 5 are also working at above average levels. This indicates a future upward trend in standards. No differences were observed between the performance of boys and girls in English.
83. Teachers work hard to ensure that lessons are interesting and enjoyable. Lesson plans are well structured and include the key vocabulary to be taught, lesson objectives and clear, varied and appropriate objectives for different groups of pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic. They use a range of strategies to ensure that lessons are interesting and enjoyable. The use of information and communication technology, as seen in a Year 5 literacy lesson, is one of a number of techniques used to ensure that pupils learn effectively. Other successful techniques include the use of paired work, modelling and demonstration of techniques and 'mind mapping'. Teaching assistants are deployed very well to support pupils. They often have good subject knowledge and this enables them to question and challenge pupils.
84. The quality of teaching overall is good, with no unsatisfactory teaching seen. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
85. Teachers keep records of the progress that pupils make. Work in books is marked regularly and pupils are often given good feedback in relation to what they have learned. However, the process of setting improvement targets is not embedded across the school and practice varies from class to class. Where teachers note relative strengths and weaknesses and use this to inform their teaching, pupils make better progress and act on comments made by the teacher.
86. Lower attaining pupils in Year 6 are working towards group targets for punctuation. This ensures that they are aware of the goals set for them and how they are progressing towards these goals.
87. Overall, achievement of pupils is good across the school. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs are challenged and supported well. Pupils with English as an additional language make rapid progress in achieving the ability to read, speak and write English in general terms. However, their progress slows when dealing with technical language in other subjects of the curriculum. This is because their comprehension skills at the second stage are not securely developed. The school is aware of the need to work on this.



88. Throughout the school, standards reached in speaking and listening are above average. Most pupils are confident when conversing with each other or adults. In Year 6, pupils are able to discuss a range of texts and offer thoughtful responses. They work in pairs well and are keen to take part in class discussions.
89. Standards in reading across the school are also above average. Pupils show positive attitudes to reading and are interested in books. Year 2 pupils can accurately retell a story and are developing a range of strategies to tackle new words. Year 6 pupils read fluently and can describe a character well. They have access to a wide range of reading material and enjoy reading. Throughout the school, the provision of guided reading groups is having a positive impact on standards of achievement, through giving pupils the opportunity to use the skills they are developing and time to discuss what they are reading. This is a key strategy to ensure that pupils understand what they read and is especially important for those pupils for whom English is not their home tongue.
90. Standards in writing have improved since the last inspection because there are now more opportunities to write for a purpose in other subjects. The school is aware that better use of speaking and listening should also have a positive impact on writing standards.
91. Some parents would welcome more guidance in how to support their children reading at home. Inspection evidence indicates that most pupils are making good progress in reading, but that some parents may indeed be able to help pupils make better progress if they were well informed about the teaching methods that the school uses and knew how to support less confident readers.
92. The subject leader for English is enthusiastic and has identified appropriate areas for improvement. These are set out in the development plan for the subject. However, the plan does not show what the outcomes would look like for pupils, nor are there clear actions relating to the monitoring and evaluation of areas identified for improvement. As an example, there are plans to establish a consistent approach to the teaching of writing across the school, but at present, it is not clear how successfully the plans are being implemented.
93. The subject leader is very knowledgeable about the provision for the older pupils and is aware that her knowledge of the Foundation Stage the infants and pupils with English as an additional language is not sufficient This limits the impact she is able to make with regard to ensuring consistent practice and good progression between key stages.

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

94. The good skills that pupils acquire in English are used well across other areas of the curriculum. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are further developed. For example, in science they confidently propose ideas and explain their thinking. Pupils' technical vocabulary is developed well in other subjects, such as science, mathematics and geography.
95. Reading and writing skills are developed through research and report writing in history. A good example was seen where Year 4 pupils wrote newspaper reports on events from the time of the Vikings.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average.
- There is more good teaching than at the time of the last inspection.
- Pupils are encouraged to explain their methods and to use mathematical vocabulary with confidence.
- Teachers make lessons relevant by using real life situations.
- Some sessions are longer than is needed.

### Commentary

96. Standards achieved in the 2004 national tests by seven year-olds were above average and a high proportion of pupils achieved the higher levels. This is a similar picture to the time of the last inspection. Results achieved by 11-year-olds were in line with national averages but below those of similar schools and have been following a downward trend over several years. Boys did slightly better than girls in both age groups.
97. The school has identified a number of actions in order to raise standards. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are grouped by ability so that their particular needs can be met. As teachers have high expectations of what can be achieved, pupils make good progress. Challenging targets have been set for pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2005. Inspection evidence suggests that they should meet or come close to achieving these targets. Pupils currently in Year 5 are also working at above average levels and therefore it is likely that the downward trend in standards will be reversed. During the inspection, no significant differences were observed between girls' and boys' attainment.
98. An analysis of the way pupils answered questions in mathematics tests helped teachers to highlight the need for pupils to tackle problems systematically. This has led to a school-wide approach to improvement in this important area.
99. Overall achievement is good across the school. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are challenged and supported well and could be challenged further if assessment data was more accessible. Pupils in Year 1 are able to add numbers in their heads up to ten and the most able can do so up to 20. Lesson observations show that pupils are making good progress in number work because teachers create real life situations of buying and paying for items. For example, Year 2 pupils were encouraged to think about spending money on sweets at the junior disco. By Year 3, able pupils can round four digit numbers to the nearest ten or 100.
100. In Year 5, pupils use the interactive whiteboards to help them reflect two-dimensional shapes along a horizontal and vertical axis and to recognise parallel lines. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are achieving well. When working with decimals, pupils can recognise the value of digits up to the fourth decimal place. They are confident at converting fractions to their decimal equivalent, using calculators where necessary. In calculating fractions of three digit numbers, pupils are encouraged to explain their methods so that teachers can deal quickly with any misconceptions.
101. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well across the school because they have good attitudes to learning and are well supported by skilled teaching assistants in lessons.
102. The quality of teaching is good overall. There is now a higher proportion of good or very good teaching and no unsatisfactory teaching. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The strength of the teaching lies in careful planning based on National Numeracy

Strategy guidelines. This ensures that pupils of all abilities make good systematic progress in their mathematical understanding. The most significant features of good teaching are:

- the sharing of learning objectives with pupils;
- tasks that are well matched to pupils' needs;
- the brisk pace of lessons and pupils' ability to sustain concentration;
- teachers' insistence that pupils explain their methods using mathematical vocabulary;
- the use of interactive whiteboards as an effective resource; and
- the way teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs.

103. Where teaching is less successful, it is because sessions are occasionally overlong and the needs of the most able pupils are not met.

104. In the best lessons, teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' learning and adapt the tasks they set for them. The most effective marking uses precise comments to explain how pupils can improve their work but this practice is not consistently applied. The use of pupils' own targets is becoming established and has the potential to raise standards as teachers encourage pupils to reflect on their own progress.

105. The subject leaders for mathematics, although relatively new to their role, are committed to raising standards. They have a clear idea of what needs to be improved in mathematics although methods of measuring success are insufficiently tight. The subject plan is based on tasks carried out by adults rather than desired pupil progress.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

106. There are some opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils used calculators to estimate the rate of reproduction of bacteria in science, and in geography they record rainfall and temperature using line graphs and bar charts. However, opportunities are not planned on a regular basis to enable pupils to use and apply their mathematics in different contexts.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

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

- Standards are above average by the time pupils reach Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils enjoy science lessons and make good progress in gaining scientific knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers plan interesting activities and provide good opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves.
- Opportunities for independent exploration are sometimes limited by lack of sufficient resources.
- Tracking of progress is carried out. However the system is cumbersome and does not provide information in a form that is useful to teachers.

#### **Commentary**

107. Pupils' standards have remained similar to 2004. Pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactorily by Year 2 in the areas of materials and their properties and physical processes and achieve above average standards for experimental and investigative science and life processes and living things.

108. In the current Year 6, standards are above average with most pupils on course to achieve the expected levels and a significant number to exceed them. This is a similar picture to the time of the last inspection.
109. Standards in Year 2 are average with most pupils on course to reach expectations for seven-year-olds. Lesson observations and the evidence of work completed over Years 1 and 2, show that pupils are making satisfactory progress in developing scientific knowledge and understanding, acquiring and using scientific vocabulary with confidence. They are also developing sound skills of investigation. For example, pupils in Year 2 carried out tests and recorded their findings when exploring which materials will allow light through.
110. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 achieve well because they undertake a balanced programme of activities, which are generally well matched to their different levels of experience and attainment. In Year 4, pupils learn simple classification skills through work on living and non-living things. In Year 5 they explore how sound travels through differing materials and they understand the need for uninterrupted sound waves for communicating with simple string telephone systems, and in Year 6 they recognise that yeast is a useful micro-organism that respire and 'grows'.
111. More able pupils have opportunities to extend their understanding through investigative challenges, as with a group of Year 5 pupils who persevered through their break time in order to design and produce a working four-way telephone. The curriculum is effectively planned for and covers all aspects of science regularly.
112. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Lessons are lively and generally practical with opportunities for pupils to work together in small groups and thus make comparisons in their findings and explore any unexpected differences. Teachers expect pupils to achieve high standards. Pupils respond enthusiastically and work sensibly. Teachers generally ask probing questions to assess and develop pupils' understanding. In return, all pupils are keen to make suggestions and offer explanations for simple scientific phenomena. For example, Year 6 were challenged to think of evidence to support their knowledge that yeast is a micro-organism and consider how to carry out a controlled test to identify the best conditions for its growth. They showed awareness of the importance of temperature control and food mediums within their investigations.
113. Teachers check pupils' understanding and offer helpful guidance in lessons. Tracking of progress is carried out. However the system is cumbersome and does not provide information in a form that is useful to teachers at points of transfer between classes and key stages or when a teacher is new to the school. There is an action plan for the subject but this lacks rigour, as success criteria are based on task completion by adults rather than on expected learning gains for pupils.
114. Subject resources are satisfactory in match to curriculum requirements but at times there are not sufficient quantities available to enable independent investigations rather than teacher modelled experiments.
115. The new co-ordinator has taken appropriate action since taking on responsibility in January to improve provision in science. She has:
- revised the curriculum to ensure regular coverage of all aspects of science;
  - audited resources to ensure that they support the curriculum adequately;
  - devised systematic arrangements for assessments; and
  - monitored the quality of teaching and learning in classes.

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

Information and communication technology was sampled.

116. No ICT lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from the analysis of work in the subject leader's portfolio, in pupils' books and on display, by talking with pupils, from discussion with the subject leaders and by observing pupils' use of ICT in other subjects.
117. By Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' ICT skills are average. This represents only satisfactory achievement for many pupils, especially those whose attainment in other core subjects is higher.
118. Although pupils are given a range of opportunities to use ICT, for example, in a Year 4 geography lesson and a Year 5 mathematics lesson, class timetables show that not every class has opportunities for the regular, systematic teaching of ICT skills. As a result, pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are patchy. Year 2 pupils had used calculators in their mathematics lessons and had used computers to write stories and play word games, had sent email and knew how to print their work. They knew much less about other aspects of the ICT curriculum such as the use of ICT to find things out, share information, model or control events. Year 6 pupils talked confidently about the use of the Internet, and about word-processing, graphics and presentation software. They had had some experience of spreadsheets and of music composition software. However, they had not used the digital cameras or the scanner in their present class. Equally, they had little experience of using ICT to control or monitor processes, to model situations using spreadsheets, or of considering the pros and cons of using ICT, both in their own work and in the world outside school.
119. Since the last inspection, provision for the subject has been improved. An audit of skills has been used to target training for teaching and support staff. The school has created two small cluster of computers, one which serves Year 6 specifically, and Years 3 to 6 classrooms have been equipped with data projectors and interactive whiteboards. All classrooms have at least one computer. The school intends installing whiteboards in the remaining classrooms. This is needed to improve provision for younger pupils, which is currently rather limited. This is recognised by the school and plans are in place to increase resources.
120. Weaknesses in assessment and in the development planning process mean that improvements have not yet led to significantly improved standards. The school makes good use of the ICT in the Schools Standards Fund, e-Learning credits and promotional voucher schemes to improve provision, but has not yet reached the DfES target ratio of one computer for curriculum use for every eight pupils. Printers, scanners, digital cameras and some control technology equipment are available for teachers and pupils to use. Computers have an appropriate range of software installed, and all pupils have access to the Internet. The school intends adding a server to the system in the near future to improve performance and to make management easier.
121. Assessment procedures are continuing to develop. The detailed record sheets provide a good overview of coverage and, to some extent, of pupils' progress. Insufficient attention is given though to ensure that this information is used to inform teachers' planning, to set targets for pupils and to provide clear evidence about standards and achievement.
122. The new subject leader took up her post in the week before the inspection so the outgoing subject leader was interviewed during the pre-inspection visit. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a portfolio of evidence setting out the current position which also contains a record of work covered by each year group, and a simple development plan. The development planning process is an insufficiently effective tool for systematically identifying and addressing key areas for improvement, although a) the purchase of technical support via the Local Authority, and b) the decision to work towards accreditation under the National Association of Advisers for Computers in Education (NAACE) Mark scheme, are good

examples of how effective strategies have been identified and used to ensure that provision continues to improve.

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

123. Opportunities for pupils to use ICT are restricted by the limited number of computers available in each classroom; this limits activities such as:

- consolidating numeracy and literacy skills,
- writing and editing;
- finding and presenting information;
- exploring, developing and testing models; and
- following up work started in the ICT suite or accessing the Internet for research.

124. During the inspection, teachers used ICT effectively in a variety of lessons, particularly to support whole-class teaching. Good examples of this were seen in mathematics in Years 3 to 5, in geography in Years 2 and 4, in science in Year 5 and in English in Years 5 and 6.

### **HUMANITIES**

History and religious education (RE) were sampled. Geography was reported on in full.

#### **History**

125. In history good links are made with other areas of the curriculum and, in particular, teachers bring topics to life by using drama to help pupils understand important historical events. Pupils in Year 2 imagined how people would have felt as they watched the Great Fire of London from boats on the Thames. They had previously built Tudor houses during design and technology lessons and so they understood how quickly the fire would take hold. Having read the diary of Samuel Pepys, pupils produced excellent writing in a similar style relating the lives of ordinary people during the fire. Year 6 pupils chose their own research methods to find out about Dr Barnardo and used their knowledge of biographical writing to organise their work.

126. The subject leader has a clear view of the strengths in history throughout the school and is enthusiastic about future developments within the subject. Although assessment arrangements are currently underdeveloped she has detailed plans in place which would help teachers monitor pupils' progress and would serve as a good model for other subjects.

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

127. The evidence base for religious education gathered during the inspection was limited due to timetable arrangements. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards and the quality of teaching and learning. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that tasks set are well matched to pupils' needs and cover a range of themes. The school ensures that statutory requirements are met through the use of national guidelines and the locally agreed syllabus. Assessment of the subject is underdeveloped. The subject co-ordinator has identified the need to track pupils' progress across the school in a systematic manner. She has made an effective start through reviews of pupils' progress against key objectives in the juniors and intends to extend this across the school. As yet she has not had an opportunity to observe lessons to gauge the learning and teaching.

128. Teachers use the local community well to help pupils learn about Christian and other main faiths' traditions and celebrations. Local clergy regularly visit the school to take assemblies that complement the curriculum, and help in class.

#### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching in geography was good.
- Lessons had a practical flavour which engaged and motivated pupils.
- Cross-curricular work is given a high priority.
- Resources at times do not support learning.
- Monitoring is at an early stage of development.

## **Commentary**

129. Three geography lessons were observed – one each in Years 2, 4 and 6. Overall, teaching in these lessons was good and pupils reached the standards expected for their age.
130. All lessons observed had a practical flavour which engaged and motivated pupils. They included activities such as researching the Internet to investigate transport links on the Isle of Wight in Year 6, or planning a flight from London to Malawi in Year 4, plotting mountain ranges, seas and rivers flown over en route. A lesson in Year 2 offered a wide range of opportunities to promote map work. Pupils drew imaginary maps by hand, designed a street plan using a computer program, followed directions on a map as they walked around the school site and used control technology to program a 'robot' to move around a grid using pre-set commands. The quality of teaching observed in the lessons ranged from satisfactory to good.
131. A varied range of visits is planned to support the curriculum. These include a residential visit by Year 6 to the Isle of Wight to study settlements and coastal erosion, a study of Cambridge by Year 3 and a visit to Saffron Walden by the pupils in Years 1 and 2.
132. Cross-curricular work is given a high priority and links with science, literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are all evident. Resources to support the curriculum include programs on CD Rom plus access to the Internet. There is a limited range of atlases available and these are in many cases out of date and not supporting learning effectively as a result. In one lesson, insufficient Ordnance Survey maps were provided for pupils studying a location and pupils had to wait for access to a map.
133. The subject leader has been appointed recently and offers enthusiastic support to colleagues. Already gaps in the curriculum have been identified and more time has been allocated to the delivery of geography. The leader is beginning to monitor the outcomes of teaching and learning, but systems for undertaking this are at an early stage of development. The subject leader intends to establish links with the governor identified to support geography.

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

Physical education, art and design and design and technology were sampled. Music was inspected in full.

### **Physical education**

134. One physical education lesson was seen during the inspection. In this, teaching was successful in developing skills in throwing, catching and fielding a ball because the lesson had been well planned and the teacher's explanation was clear. Pupils work well together in physical education. In the lesson seen, boy and girl partnerships co-operated well in designing their own bouncing and catching games although they would have made better progress if they had been given opportunities to reflect on their own and others' work and so improve their performance.

135. The school offers a broad range of opportunities for pupils both within lessons and outside the school day. The school has been awarded a charter mark for football and is involved in a 'quick cricket' festival.
136. At the time of the inspection, the subject leader for physical education had been in post for less than a week. The subject is well resourced with plans to improve existing football pitches using a Football Foundation grant. Plans for improving physical education are in place but they lack a clear picture of how actions will result in improved pupil performance. Monitoring of the subject is underdeveloped.

### **Art and design**

137. No lessons were seen in art and design. The attractive displays around the school and work in the pupils' books are of a high standard. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were able to speak knowledgeably about their pictures produced in the style of Van Gogh. These were of a good standard, with pupils able to make good representational pictures of a famous artist's work using varied media. The pupils' work is beautifully displayed, and pupils are rightly very proud of their achievements. Displays include pupils' weaving samples inspired by a topic on colour, photographic collections celebrating a range of international artists and recording pupils' work related to these, and work associated with history topics such as the Great fire of London.

### **Design and technology**

138. One lesson was seen in design and technology. This lesson was satisfactory and the pupils achieved well in exploring rules and moves, and then going on to make a game related to their personal, social and health education topic. They were able to produce clear instructions, matched to 'good and bad events' that involved the player in movements around a board game. Good use was made of the lesson to support pupils' literacy skills through extending their vocabulary using technical language and links were made to mathematical language, through the use of directional instructions.
139. DISPLAYS AROUND THE SCHOOL AND INTERACTIVE CORNERS INDICATE THAT PROVISION FOR DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY IS GIVEN APPROPRIATE ATTENTION. LINKS ARE MADE WITH OTHER SUBJECTS SUCH AS THREE-DIMENSIONAL MODEL HOUSES LINKED TO WORK ON SAMUEL PEPYS DIARY AND THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON. PUPILS REGULARLY MAKE WORKING MODELS FROM CONSTRUCTION APPARATUS AND FROM RECYCLED MATERIALS. OVERALL, THE WORK SEEN SUGGESTS THAT STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY ARE ABOVE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.
140. The new subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the provision for the subject and has produced an action plan outlining the main priorities for action. As yet plans do not include success criteria related to learning outcomes for pupils.

### **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Pupils have good opportunities to take part in choral and instrumental music sessions.
- The curriculum is enriched by a good range of musical activities in school and in the wider community.
- Teachers' use of information and communication technology to support learning in music is limited.



- Composition is an underdeveloped area.
- Monitoring to ensure consistency and quality of provision for all pupils is underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

141. Three music lessons were observed, one each in Years 1, 3 and 5. In these lessons, pupils reached the standards expected for their age.
142. Teaching in these lessons ranged from very good to satisfactory. Overall teaching is **good**. The subject leader has very good subject knowledge, and staff make good use of the scheme of work and other published resources to support their teaching. These enable them to give clear explanations, demonstrate what is required of pupils, set appropriate tasks and ask focused questions that keep pupils involved. This means that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, learn and achieve well. In a hymn practice, pupils in Years 3 to 6 sang well in unison and in two parts, kept good time and used their voices effectively to match the mood and style of the music. They responded well to the teacher's comments and encouragement and worked hard to improve the accuracy of their singing and their interpretation of the music.
143. Since the last inspection, good provision has been maintained. Pupils continue to be enthusiastic about music, clearly enjoy their lessons, behave well, work effectively with partners or in groups and achieve well as a result.
144. Procedures for monitoring the quality of provision are continuing to develop, and this is one of the subject leader's current priorities. This is necessary to give the school clearer evidence about standards and pupils' progress.
145. The subject leader has held this responsibility for three years. She has very good knowledge of the subject and provides good leadership and management. Strategic planning is relatively undeveloped. The development planning process is not yet an effective tool for systematically identifying and addressing key areas for improvement, although practical decisions to improve provision for certain groups of pupils, for example, higher attaining pupils, have proved effective.

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

No lessons were seen in this area of the school's work so no judgements can be made about overall provision.

146. The school gives a high priority to pupils' personal development. A good range of topics is planned into the curriculum provided for all pupils. These include talking about feelings and relationships, making choices and rights and responsibilities. An outcome of this is that pupils are able to articulate clearly their views and can make considered judgements about what is right and wrong and how secure they feel within school. The school council is supporting pupils well in developing skills of discussion and consideration of alternate viewpoints. Older pupils are given good life experiences for developing their sense of responsibility through acting as playground monitors, assisting with dining hall arrangements and acting as friends to pupils newly arrived in the school.
147. Citizenship is further developed for older pupils where they have opportunities to:
- research, discuss and debate topical issues;
  - express their opinions and give credence to the opinions of others; and
  - learn about looking after themselves and eating a healthy diet.

### **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	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

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

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