

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **THE ROEBUCK SCHOOL**

Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119237

Headteacher: Mr R G Beecham

Lead inspector: Mr A V Calderbank

Dates of inspection: 11 – 13 April 2005

Inspection number: 268093

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 3 to 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 449

School address: Inkerman Street  
Blackpool Road  
Preston  
Lancashire  
Postcode: PR2 2BN

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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Cllr Mrs Jean Al Serraj

Date of previous inspection: 25 January 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Roebuck Primary School is larger than most other primary schools, with its own Nursery, for boys and girls aged three to 11 years. It draws its pupils mainly from the northern inner suburbs of Preston but many travel from other districts. At the time of the inspection there were 449 pupils on roll in the main school including 38 children attending the Nursery part-time. Children are organised in single age group classes with two classes in each age group apart from Year 2, which has three classes. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is broadly average. Ten pupils have a statement of special educational needs. These cover a range of difficulties including moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Around ten per cent of the school's population is made up of pupils from non-white backgrounds, including some from minority ethnic groups. The majority groups are mixed white and black Caribbean, mixed white and Asian and Indian. The percentage of pupils, whose first language is not English, is higher than in most schools. Twenty-eight minority ethnic pupils receive extra support and eight are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The most common language spoken by these pupils is Gujarati. The socio-economic circumstances of the school are below average. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is below average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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13459	Mrs E Mills	Lay inspector	
2465	Mr G Yates	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education
23453	Mrs C Cressey	Team inspector	Geography History Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage English as an additional language
21372	Mr K Hobday	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Physical education
28320	Mr R Willey	Team inspector	Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Roebuck Primary School is an effective school.** Pupils in the Foundation Stage make very good progress and achieve very well. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Attainment in mathematics is well above average and above average in science. Though standards in English are improving they are below average in speaking and writing by the end of Year 6. Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour and personal development are good. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in mathematics are well above average and above average in science and design and technology by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Standards in writing and speaking are below average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' work is not always well presented.
- Children are given a very good start to their schooling in the Foundation Stage.
- Teaching is good overall. However, the school's marking and handwriting policies are not being implemented consistently throughout the school.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good.
- Assessment procedures and the use made of the information are very good in mathematics and science.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour and the provision for their moral, social and cultural development are good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who speak English as an additional language is good.
- The school's links with the community are very strong and the induction arrangements for children starting in the Nursery are very good.

While improvements since the previous inspection have been **satisfactory** overall, the rate of progress since the appointment of the new headteacher has been good. Standards and pupils' achievements in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved significantly and are now average. Very good procedures have been put in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Though appropriate action has been taken to improve pupils' achievements in English, it has not had sufficient time to impact fully on standards. Community links have been developed well and are now very good.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	C	E	E
Mathematics	A	B	A	A
Science	A	D	B	B

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Pupils' achievement is good overall.** Children start in the Nursery class with below average attainment. However, attainment in language and communication and personal

and social development is well below average. The children make very good progress and achieve very well in the Foundation Stage. As a result, most children are on track to attain the expected goals in all

the areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Standards in Year 2 are average in reading but below average in speaking, listening and writing. However, pupils' achievements in mathematics are very good and attainment is well above average. Pupils achieve well in science and standards are above average. Good progress continues to be made in Years 3 to 6 in mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement is good in these subjects and standards are well above average in mathematics and above average in science by the end of Year 6. Inspection findings show that though standards are beginning to improve in English they are still below those found in most schools in writing and speaking. However, pupils achieve well in reading and listening, reaching average standards by Year 6. Standards in ICT are average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and above average in design and technology and pupils achieve well in both subjects. Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus. No significant difference occurs between the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their moral, social and cultural development, are good overall.** Spiritual development is satisfactory. Though pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall, pupils do not always take sufficient pride in how they present their work. Attendance is in line with the national average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a good quality of education.** The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage. Teachers plan well and make appropriate links between subjects. Teaching is very good in mathematics and good in science. The teaching of English is satisfactory overall but there is still a need to raise teachers' expectations especially with regards to the development of pupils' writing and speaking skills. Teachers make very good use of assessment information in mathematics and science to track pupils' progress and to identify strengths and weaknesses in provision. Pupils receive good verbal feedback during lessons but teachers' written comments when marking pupils' work do not always include targets for improvement. Teachers do not consistently apply the school's policy with regards to handwriting especially in Years 3 to 6. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning through the effective support they give to groups and individuals including those with special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The school's curriculum is organised well and is enhanced by visits to places of interest, the teaching of French and pupil participation in a very good range of sporting activities. The school takes very good care of its pupils. There is a successful partnership with parents and links with the local community are very good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The quality of the school's leadership, management and governance is good overall.** The headteacher leads the school very well with a very clear sense of purpose. He has been very instrumental in ensuring that the school has moved forward significantly since his appointment. The governing body plays a full part in helping to improve the school's effectiveness. It fulfils its legal responsibilities conscientiously. The governors and the headteacher keep a close eye on spending to ensure the school gets the best value possible for all initiatives.

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

Parents have confidence in the school and are satisfied with the quality of education provided. Pupils enjoy coming to school and most find the lessons interesting.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in speaking and writing.
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking so that pupils understand what they need to do next in order to improve their work.
- Ensure that the school's policies with regards to handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work are implemented consistently throughout the school.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Pupils' achievement is **good overall**. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well. Standards are well above average in mathematics and above average in science and design and technology by the end of Years 2 and 6. Though attainment in English is below average overall by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are improving and achievement in reading is good. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in physical education and music.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well in the Foundation Stage.
- Standards are high in mathematics and above average in science and design and technology by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Standards in writing and speaking are not high enough by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils achieve well in listening, reading and ICT.
- Handwriting and the presentation of work are unsatisfactory by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well.

#### Commentary

1. When children start in the Nursery, attainment is below what is expected for their age. It is well below in communication, language and literacy and their personal, social and emotional development. During their time in the Foundation Stage children achieve very well and make very good progress in all the areas of learning. As a result of very good teaching and learning, most of the children are on course to meet the goals set out for them to achieve in all the areas of learning. This is much better than the attainment of children in schools in similar circumstances. These judgements are an improvement on those made at the time of previous inspection.
2. Under the leadership of the new headteacher, teachers and support staff are working hard to bring about improvements to standards in English throughout the school. Following an internal audit of teachers' needs an action plan has been put into effect and training in the teaching of the Joint Primary Strategy has just been provided. The initiatives undertaken are beginning to impact positively on standards and inspection evidence shows that standards and pupils' achievements are improving.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.7 (15.7)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.0 (14.2)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.3 (17.8)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests and assessments taken at the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment was average in reading, below average in writing and above average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools (those with a similar

number of pupils eligible for free school meals) standards were below average in reading and in writing but well above average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science indicated that standards were broadly average. The trend in the school's results over the previous five years has been broadly in line with the national trend.

- The survey of work and discussions held with pupils indicates that attainment in English, in the current Year 2 classes, is below that found in most schools in speaking, listening and writing. Pupils are achieving well in reading and standards are similar to those found in most schools. Standards in mathematics have improved since the previous inspection and are well above average. Owing to better teaching and a greater emphasis on investigations, pupils' attainment has also improved in science and is now above average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.4 (26.6)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.1 (28.0)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.5 (27.9)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 52 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- In the 2004 national tests, pupils in Year 6 achieved well below average standards in English. However, their attainment in science was above average and well above in mathematics. When the results are compared with those achieved by the same class at the end of Year 2, they seem to indicate that the progress made by the pupils was well below average in English but well above average in mathematics and above in science. The school did not meet the target it set for the percentage of pupils to attain Levels 4 and 5 in English. The trend in the school's results over the past five years has been below the national trend.
- A scrutiny of work and information from lesson observations and from discussions held with pupils demonstrates that though standards in English are improving because of the action taken by the school, pupils' attainment remains below average in speaking and writing. However, attainment in listening and reading is similar to that found in most schools and this represents good achievement in these areas. The approach to the development of handwriting in Years 3 to 6 is inconsistent and pupils do not take a pride in the presentation of their work.
- Standards in mathematics are high and pupils' achievements are well above those found in most schools. The teaching of mathematics is very effective, especially in Year 6, because leadership of the subject is very good at identifying what is working well and what needs improving, building on the strengths and remedying the weaknesses. The speed and accuracy at which pupils recall basic number facts and apply them to solving problems are a strength. Standards in science are above average in the current Year 6 and pupils are achieving well.
- Owing to improved teaching and better provision, the standard of pupils' work is better than it was at the time of the previous inspection in ICT when standards were not high enough. Pupils now achieve well in ICT and standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. Appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to use computers to support their work in most other subjects and so enhance their learning. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- There are strengths in design and technology where standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. From the work seen, standards and pupils' achievements

are satisfactory in art and design, history and geography. Insufficient music and physical education was seen to make an overall judgement on standards.

10. The school is firmly committed to equality of opportunity and during the inspection no significant differences were noticed between the achievement of boys and girls. Although the majority of pupils with special educational needs attain below average standards they generally achieve well against their targets. This reflects the good support they receive from teachers and classroom assistants. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid progress in becoming fluent in English because of the very good support they receive. This has a positive impact on their attainment in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve well.
11. The school maintains a register of gifted and talented pupils and makes sure that they are suitably challenged especially in mathematics and science.

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

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work are **good**. Attendance is **satisfactory**. Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning.
- The school's efforts to promote and reward good behaviour are effective.
- The staff effectively promote pupils' personal development and encourage them to become responsible and caring individuals but pupils are not given enough opportunities for independent learning.
- Pupils do not always present their written work with enough care.
- Assemblies do not always make sufficient contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

### **Commentary**

12. Parents agree that their children enjoy coming to school and the pupils themselves confirm this view. In the vast majority of lessons, pupils behave well, listen attentively to their teachers and take part enthusiastically in all aspects of school life, including extra curricular activities. They settle well to their tasks and work hard. Only in a few lessons, where pupils' interest is not held, do a few pupils fail to pay attention and some low-level chatter occurs which adversely affects progress. Although pupils are keen to learn and to do well, they sometimes lack care in the presentation of their work and teachers' expectations for clear, neat writing are not always high enough.
13. Under the leadership of the new headteacher, the school is working hard to develop pupils' independent learning skills. As soon as children enter the Nursery they are encouraged to choose their own tasks and activities and by the time they transfer to the Reception class they are very independent learners who are able to work alone or in groups. However, the school is aware that more opportunities should be provided in lessons for older pupils to organise their own work and to develop personal study skills.
14. Children in the Nursery quickly learn routines and very soon know what is expected of them. Throughout the school there is an emphasis on the praising and rewarding of good behaviour. Pupils appreciate the 'Golden Awards' and classes vie for the prestigious 'Class of the Week' award. The promotion of social and moral

development is strong and pupils are encouraged to become responsible. Some Year 6 pupils have undergone training as playground 'buddies', helping to supervise younger children. Behaviour in lessons is mostly good and pupils treat each other and their teachers with respect and courtesy. Pupils of different ethnic backgrounds work together and socialise well. In the playground there is sometimes boisterous behaviour and despite the efforts to improve playground equipment, the playground is barren and difficult to supervise effectively. Instances of fixed term exclusion are relatively low, involving only four pupils last year. Racist language is very rare indeed.

15. The school's programme for personal, social and health education is effective in the promotion of pupils' self-esteem and the responsibilities of living in a community. Assemblies are successful in reinforcing moral and ethical messages. However, the school does not always create an appropriate atmosphere or sense of occasion for assemblies and these assemblies do not make sufficient contribution to the spiritual development of pupils. The school has made improvement in the promotion of pupils' awareness of cultural and religious differences and the preparation of pupils for living in a multicultural society.

## Attendance

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 94.6 %

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	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.

16. Attendance rates at the school are around those achieved nationally. The school has good systems in place to encourage and reward good attendance and to ensure that any absence is explained. Punctuality is satisfactory and the school has good contact with the Educational Welfare Service.

## Exclusions

### Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
301	6	1
10	1	0

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

### Teaching and learning

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

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 51 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	20 (39%)	24 (47%)	7 (14%)	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.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and is very good in the Foundation Stage.
- The teaching of English is not as effective as the teaching of mathematics and science.

- The marking of work does not always make it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve.
- Expectations with regard to the presentation of pupils' work are not high enough.
- Pupils' handwriting skills are not developed well in Years 3 to 6.

- Assessment procedures are very good in the Foundation Stage, mathematics and science.
- Teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is effective.

## Commentary

17. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Inspection findings demonstrate that the percentage of good or better teaching has almost doubled. As a result teaching is now good overall with almost 40 per cent of teaching being very good. The weaknesses identified in ICT have been rectified.
18. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently of a high standard and there is very good teamwork between the Nursery class and Reception classes ensuring continuity in learning. Staff use the resources and accommodation well, making the best use of the limited space. Teaching assistants and specialist teachers for those children with English as an additional language are very well deployed. This has a positive effect on the rapid progress children make.
19. Throughout the school the combination of good teaching and the very good care shown for pupils provides a positive environment for learning. Though pupils respond well to this overall, they do not take enough pride in the presentation of their work. Most lessons are usually prepared to a good standard and are interesting. Teachers make good use of a range of teaching styles to interest and motivate pupils. Consequently, learning is good and often very good. Because of this, pupils are keen to extend their knowledge and understanding. This is especially so in mathematics.
20. Staff are working hard to improve the quality of teaching in English. Following an internal audit of teachers' needs an action plan has been put into effect and training in the teaching of the Joint Primary Strategy has now been provided. The initiatives undertaken are just beginning to impact positively on standards. During the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning was good, although sometimes the teacher's input is too long, leaving little time for developing pupils' speaking and writing skills. However, the examination of pupils' completed written work indicates that teaching and learning over a longer period of time is only satisfactory. Though teachers has begun to develop literacy skills through a broader range of subjects, they do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to undertake more extended writing in subjects such as history or religious education. Moreover, in Years 3 to 6 teachers do not ensure that pupils' handwriting skills are consistently developed.
21. Teaching in mathematics is very good overall. The quality of teaching in Year 6 is of a particularly high standard. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and question sharply. The quality of teaching in science is good and has improved in Years 1 and 2 because of the emphasis being placed on scientific investigations, which enhances the quality of learning. As a result pupils now have a better understanding of what makes a test fair.
22. Assessment is very good in the Foundation Stage and is used effectively to plan what children are to learn, based on perceptive observations of learning. Assessment practices within the rest of the school, though satisfactory overall, are variable. The means of assessing pupils' achievements are very good in mathematics and science and provide good information that helps the school to recognise where common improvements are needed. In these subjects

pupils' individual attainments are carefully tracked and enable the school to set attainable targets for groups and individuals. Assessment procedures have improved in English and are good overall. The information is now being carefully collated in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in provision. However, more needs to be done so that the results of the assessment can be used effectively to indicate to pupils what they need to do next to improve especially in their writing. Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not help pupils to identify their individual strengths and weaknesses, and move their learning forward. It rarely indicates to pupils what they need to do to improve.

23. Support assistants work very closely with class teachers and are directly involved in working with pupils with special educational needs to ensure they meet the targets set on their individual education plans. They are well briefed about their roles within lessons and report on outcomes and pupils' achievement daily, usually in discussion with class teachers. The role they are to fulfil is often outlined in lesson plans. Excellent practice was seen in one lesson where the teacher's planning referred to the specific target the support assistant was to focus upon, but this detailed approach was not in evidence generally. Teaching assistants have appropriate training to enable them to work with pupils both in and outside the classrooms. Group teaching outside the classroom is well structured and planned to meet pupils' targets.
24. The specialist teacher for pupils with English as an additional language offers very effective support which is appropriately focussed on those pupils who have the greatest learning needs. There is an expectation that pupils can be high achievers and work is challenging, exciting and interesting. Teaching provides the pupils with the tools to be successful and is very well matched to their abilities. As a result pupils are eager, hard working learners who work to capacity and achieve well. Appropriate additional resources are available to ensure pupils understand the subject specific vocabulary they will need in a particular task or for a series of lessons. The assessment procedures for pupils for whom English is an additional language are very good. The teacher sets clear targets for pupils and as a result most are successful in moving to independent learning. Staff carefully monitor and record the attainment and progress of pupils both in their acquisition of English and the standards they reach in English mathematics and science. The information is used very effectively to identify where pupils need additional support to achieve as well as they can.
25. Classroom assistants are well briefed and make a valuable contribution to the quality of learning in lessons, ensuring that targeted individuals and groups of pupils receive appropriate support and remain on task. However, the school does not have the resources to provide classroom support all the time and some younger pupils not under the direct control of the teacher can become distracted. Class teachers are also well supported in lessons by numerous volunteer and student helpers. In a morning session, for example, two parent helpers and a volunteer from Age Concern were seen working with pupils between Year 1 and Year 6. All felt their contributions were valued. This is reflected in the on-going commitment of volunteers and the number of parents who subsequently undertake training to become classroom assistants within the school.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **good** overall and meets all statutory requirements. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. The range of additional activities that enrich the curriculum is **good**. The overall quality of resources and accommodation is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum requires some adjustments to ensure pupils make more progress in English.
- The very well-planned programme in the Nursery and Reception classes gives children a very good start to their education.
- Provision for ICT has improved significantly.

- National guidance for mathematics has been implemented very effectively.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.
- Extra activities, particularly in sport, supplement the curriculum well.
- Facilities for physical education are excellent in the new sports hall but unsatisfactory on the main school site.

## Commentary

26. The school's curriculum provides sufficient time for all the required subjects and in most respects is well balanced. Religious education is provided in accordance with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils attend a daily act of collective worship. Additional breadth is achieved by giving pupils in Years 5 and 6 a valuable introduction to French, in partnership with a local secondary school. Recent improvements have included the implementation of a consistent programme of personal education, including health and social education, through regular weekly lessons in all classes. There is a good range of extra activities taking place out of school hours, with very good provision for sport. The school is careful to ensure that pupils have equal opportunities to participate in all activities, for example, ensuring that no pupil is unable to take part in the extensive programme of visits or to learn to play a musical instrument because of financial difficulties. These activities play an important part in developing pupils' personal, as well as academic, skills.
27. In all subjects, effective use is made of national guidance documents to plan programmes of study, with good adaptations to meet the particular needs of the school. In particular, the Joint Primary Strategy has been implemented effectively and this contributes to the sustained high standards reached in mathematics. The school was slow to implement the corresponding strategy for literacy and to evaluate how effectively it was being used. Since the arrival of the present headteacher, considerably better progress has been made. Teachers are now using and sensibly adapting the Joint Primary Strategy to provide a good programme in English. However, there remain some areas of imbalance. In some classes more extra time is spent on mathematics than literacy, in spite of children's lower levels on entry and slower progress in the area of language.
28. Provision in ICT has significantly improved since the previous inspection, when much of the national programme of study was not covered and resources were poor. All statutory requirements are now met. The new computer suite is large enough to accommodate a whole class and includes an interactive whiteboard. Good use is made of these facilities. There are adequate numbers of up-to-date computers in classrooms, mostly networked to the school system. However, these are insufficiently used to consolidate pupils' skills.
29. Provision for children under the age of five is very good. Their programme is well balanced and provides very good experiences in all six areas of learning. Together with the consistently high standard of teaching, this contributes to children's very good achievement by the time they enter Year 1. Accommodation in the purpose built Nursery is good, although it has the disadvantage of being on a separate site. Accommodation for Reception children is not as good and has its limitations. Classrooms are small and there is no designated outdoor area specifically for the use of Reception children.
30. Provision for pupils' with special educational needs is good. They have clear targets set for them and both support assistants and class teachers know these and jointly review them regularly. The willing and dedicated team of support assistants attends a wide range of courses to improve their knowledge and expertise. Their skills, expertise and time are very well deployed within the school and have a good impact on pupils' learning. The school has increased expenditure from year to year on classroom support but is currently unable to afford support for initiatives such as "Springboard" in mathematics and "Additional Learning Support" in literacy. Those

pupils who receive one-to-one support, including those with physical handicaps, are especially well cared for.

31. The curriculum for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. Emphasis is placed on developing pupils' communicative skills and the acquisition of appropriate language to help them access all the subjects of the curriculum. A high priority is given to teaching pupils to be confident and fluent users of English. The school is flexible in providing

appropriate support which means withdrawal groups are in place for some older pupils while in class support is available for the younger pupils. Support is not always confined to those pupils at the early stages of learning English. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are withdrawn to help them develop identified weaknesses such as reading comprehension. Emphasis is rightly placed on supporting pupil's development in literacy and numeracy skills but support is also available for pupils to fully extend their thinking and understanding in other subjects, such as design and technology.

32. The curriculum is enriched through very good links with local schools and colleges that provide, for example, science, French and drama lessons. In addition, links have been established well with nearby churches, a temple, local emergency services, barracks and charitable organisations such as Fox Street Shelter, Age Concern and a local home for the blind. There are effective links with commercial enterprises including a local supermarket and café. The community makes good use of the school's facilities especially the sport's hall and computer suite. The latter is run in conjunction with Preston College for the Community.
33. Overall, the school has satisfactory accommodation and resources. There are sufficient teachers with a good range of both experience and expertise to cover all areas of the curriculum. Good arrangements are made to share this expertise across classes. The new sports hall is an excellent facility, used very well by pupils from Year 3 to Year 6. However, the hall in the main building, used for physical education for younger pupils, is unsatisfactory because their learning is disrupted as other pupils walk through. Library facilities, poor at the previous inspection, have recently been improved and further development is planned. The school has adequate resources to teach most subjects, but resources for design and technology are unsatisfactory.

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

The school has **very good** procedures in place to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils. **Satisfactory** support advice and guidance is provided for pupils. The school's measures for taking pupils' views into account are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school places a very strong emphasis on the welfare and care of pupils and has very good systems in place to support this including the provision of care outside the school day.
- Children starting in the Nursery and those moving to Reception are helped to settle in very well.
- Pupils develop good and trusting relationships with staff and know where to find help if they need it.
- The school does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning or for involving pupils in whole-school decisions.

### **Commentary**

34. The school has maintained the safe, caring environment found at the time of the last inspection and has improved the policies and procedures which support this. The school places great emphasis on the welfare of its pupils. Procedures to ensure the health and safety of pupils are fully in place and the school has produced the necessary risk assessments for all visits out of school, including the short trip to the

nearby sports hall for physical education lessons. In response to parents' wishes, the school has been instrumental in setting up before and after school clubs which cater well for the children of working parents. Healthy living is promoted effectively and the school has good links with agencies which support the welfare and safety of pupils.

35. Children joining the Nursery are helped to settle in very well. The induction for pupils to the Nursery is very good and is very much appreciated by parents. Nursery staff carry out a programme of very useful home visits prior to the start of the school year when parents are able to pass on any information which is relevant. As a result, staff know pupils, their families and their personal circumstances well. They are sensitive to their needs and are, therefore, able to provide very good personal support. As pupils move through the school, this support continues and parents report that they are happy to approach teachers and feel that any concerns are taken seriously. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are good and this contributes positively to pupils' achievement. Pupils feel secure in school and know that help is available should they need it.
36. Efforts to involve pupils in the work of the school have been made, especially in Year 6 where pupils have been consulted about the school's approach to behaviour. Pupils have been involved in devising the school rules and the school is in the process of setting up a School Council. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to make decisions about their own learning or to become more independent in their studies. Pupils are not aware of any individual targets and are not always informed clearly about what they need to do next in order to improve their work.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good relationships have been established with parents and parents support the school well.
- The school has been very proactive in establishing very good links with the community.
- Local High Schools provide very valuable curriculum support.
- Some parents would like more information about their children's progress.

### **Commentary**

37. Parents expressed strong support for the school in the questionnaire for parents and in discussions with parents during the inspection. They feel that the school caters well for their children's needs and are particularly appreciative of teachers and support staff, who they feel are committed and caring. The only area about which many parents have any concerns is in the amount of information on pupils' progress which is provided by the school.

Arrangements for consulting parents were changed during the last school year. The school has recognised that parents were less satisfied with these arrangements and have already made plans to revert to the previous system. Parents are provided with clear, detailed information in annual written reports and teachers make themselves available to talk to parents at the end of the school day. This informal opportunity to exchange information ensures that any problems which may affect pupils are quickly made known to the school.

38. Parents and other members of the community support the school well in a number of ways. Some provide very useful help in classroom activities, organising resources and helping on out of school visits. The school allows parent helpers to gain

qualifications by encouraging the enrolment in a 'Parents as Educators' course. Some families have long-standing links with the school and their loyal support is evident in the help they provide. The Friends Association raises considerable funds which are used well for resources as well as providing social events.

39. The school has recently extended its provision for community learning and involvement. For example, it has been extremely proactive in the initiative which has resulted in the building of the nearby sports hall, which is used well by the school and by the local community.

Members of the community make good use of the new information and communications technology suite for adult learning. Local businesses provide sponsorship and the local football club operates an initiative, 'Playing for Success', which helps some pupils in Year 5 to improve their numeracy and literacy skills.

40. There are strong links with other schools which are used very well to develop learning in a variety of subjects. For example, three local high schools with specialist status provide expertise and resources in science, design and technology, modern foreign languages and physical education. Staff from one high school visit weekly to teach French to pupils in Years 5 and 6. Science facilities of another high school are available for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and a local arts college provides tuition in creative and expressive activities for the school's gifted and talented pupils. The school has very good sporting links with other schools and colleges and is part of the School Sports Co-ordinator Programme, which is a national initiative to improve physical activity. This connection enables the school to participate in sporting and artistic events such as the recent Dance Festival and Mini Olympics. The very strong curricular links with other schools and colleges and the good arrangements for transition to secondary school, have a positive effect on pupils' progress and on their preparation for the next stage of education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The leadership and management of the headteacher are **very good**. Governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weakness**

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school. He has moved the school forward by putting in place initiatives to begin to remedy weaknesses.
- Very good leadership of the Foundation Stage ensures high quality provision for the youngest children and a good start to their education.
- Co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in ensuring that agreed policies with regards to marking, handwriting and the presentation of work are put into practice.
- Very good use is made of assessment information in mathematics and science to improve standards but not in English.

### **Commentary**

41. The new headteacher, with very good support from the deputy headteacher, leads the school very well. Within a very short period of time, he has put in place several initiatives that are already helping to improve the quality of education. For example, provision in the Foundation Stage is much better than it was and provides a high quality start to children's schooling. He has created a strong management team structure that is proving to be effective. His experience and collaborative style of management is being very successful in driving the school forward. For example, all members of staff are now consulted with regard to the school development plan. As a result there is a real sense of ownership and the targets identified are firmly focused on 'what matters'. The headteacher makes very good use of the considerable strengths, not least in mathematics, of the assistant headteacher in maintaining and attempting to raise standards. For example, he is currently involved in monitoring the quality of pupils' writing in subjects other than English.

42. Governors are increasingly more involved in all aspects of school life and carry out their statutory duties well. An effective committee structure has been established. All governors receive very good information from the school bursar who is also a school governor. The school improvement plan clearly identifies the main priorities for the school to address. The school's policy for performance management of staff is being implemented effectively and is

helping to improve standards. Appropriate objectives are set which reflect both whole-school priorities such as improving standards in English and individual teacher's needs. All staff have ample opportunities to benefit from training. Co-ordinators of most subjects have improved greatly their involvement in curricular development and have been given good opportunities to monitor and evaluate standards in their curriculum areas. As a result they have a good understanding of the strengths and possible weaknesses in their subjects but do not yet ensure that agreed school policies with regards to marking, handwriting and the presentation of work are carried out consistently.

43. While improvements since the previous inspection have been satisfactory overall, the school has made good improvement since the appointment of the new headteacher. However, standards in English need to be improved further. Very good improvements have been made to the interior of the building and as a result the learning environment has been improved. The quality of teaching is significantly better than it was at the time of the previous inspection with almost 90 per cent of the teaching seen during the week of the inspection being good or better. The school now has a very rigorous approach to tracking pupils' achievements that is co-ordinated very well by the assistant headteacher.
44. The school is fully inclusive. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is effective and has a clear vision of how provision can be improved. She has established good relationships with parents and outside agencies. Good procedures have been established for early identification of need and the quality of pupils' individual learning programmes is good. However, further improvement could be made if the criteria for judging when targets have been achieved were more clearly identified. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well. The procedures would be Support assistants have regular training opportunities to update their knowledge and expertise and are fully involved in setting and reviewing targets for pupils. Some also attend formal review meetings with parents. The school supplements the direct funding it is given for pupils with special educational needs from its own budget.
45. An underlying principle of the school is the inclusion of the community in all aspects of school life. The school has been very successful in fostering local links and continues to look for new opportunities and initiatives to develop them further. This work is overseen by the co-ordinator for community provision who has produced a policy document to cover this area of the school's work. This identifies all established links and gives clear direction to future developments. Many former pupils continue their contact with the school through the Friends of Roebuck and in some instances family contact now covers several generations. As a result the school is held in high regard within the locality.
46. A major strength of the school is that, despite being spread over four separate buildings every effort is made to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to take part in a range of activities that are firmly aimed at fulfilling their needs. For example, unlike the position found in most schools pupils receives free tuition in learning to play orchestral instruments. A further example is the many and varied opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting activities.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,044,121
Total expenditure	1,030,311
Expenditure per pupil	2,335

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	37,978
Balance carried forward to the next	51,788

47. Good procedures are in place to ensure that services and resources provide good value for money. The recent audit report did not identify any major weaknesses. The school is fortunate in having a very experienced bursar who serves the school's need very well and plays a major part in its smooth running. A great deal of the balance brought forward has been committed to additional staffing costs and to the development of a dedicated outside play area for children in the Reception classes.

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

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

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

Provision has improved since the last inspection and is a strength of the school. About 10 per cent of the children entering the school are from ethnic minority backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. When children enter the Nursery class their attainment is below that found typically. Children's communication and literacy skills and personal and social skills are particularly delayed and are well below those expected. Consistent and very effective teaching in all areas of learning enables children to achieve very well and as a result, almost all of the children, including those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs, make very good progress and achieve well. About 90 per cent of children are on course to attain the national goals for early learning before the end of the Reception year. This is better than that seen in other schools and provides children with a very good start to the next stage of their education.

Teaching is consistently of a high standard resulting in confident, well-motivated learners who learn quickly. Very good teamwork between the Nursery class and Reception class ensures continuity in learning. All staff use the available resources and accommodation well, making the best use of limited space and organising sessions effectively to benefit all children's learning. Teaching assistants and specialist teachers for those children with English as an additional language are very well deployed. This has a positive effect on the rapid progress these children make. Assessment is very good and is used effectively to plan what children are to learn, based on perceptive and regular observations of learning. Provision for outdoor play for those children in the Reception classes is still restricted by the limited space available but the school has plans in place to provide a dedicated well resourced area in the immediate future.

Management of the Foundation Stage is successful in creating a very strong team. Staff are committed to providing children with a high quality education which challenges and extends children's learning through a wide range of practical experiences, well thought out play activities and high quality adult support and interactions.

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

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

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

- Children are very confident, independent and eager learners who behave very well.

#### **Commentary**

48. Most children come to Nursery with immature personal and social skills. The very good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes results in very good achievement and the majority of the children will reach the national goals for early learning by the end of the Reception year. Challenging tasks are carefully planned for the different levels of attainment, maturity and experience. As soon as children enter the Nursery they are encouraged to choose their own tasks and activities and are given time and support to develop their play. As a result, by the time children transfer to the Reception class they are very independent learners who are able to work alone or in groups for sustained lengths of time at challenging tasks. Because tasks and activities

are always exciting, fun and challenging children are

eager learners who enjoy working hard and show considerable pride in their achievements. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour and are constantly encouraging children to have good attitudes and behave well. As a result behaviour is invariably very good and children show mature levels of courtesy and good manners.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good use is made of play and other planned activities to promote language skills.
- The teaching of basic skills is very good.

### **Commentary**

49. Children achieve very well and almost all are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Teaching is very good. To accelerate children's progress and ensure they achieve as well as they can, the teaching of literacy skills is given a high priority and is a feature of most of the children's activities. The very high quality role-play situations contribute significantly to the promotion of children's language development. Members of staff consistently exploit opportunities to stimulate conversation or extend children's vocabulary. New vocabulary is constantly introduced and all staff check that children, including those with English as an additional language, understand new words and phrases. Younger children in the Nursery are provided with a wealth of vocabulary as they search for small garden creatures during outdoor play. Higher attaining pupils in the Reception class become explorers and use very mature and interesting vocabulary such as 'camouflage'. Children are learning to solve problems and they express their ideas with confidence and clarity. Staff systematically introduce letter sounds which provide children with the tools they need to be independent readers and writers. Because of this children make rapid progress in learning to read and write. In the Nursery, children begin to recognise letters and sounds and most make very good attempts to write their own names. The Reception staff build very effectively on this good start and all children are very eager to write independently. Higher attaining children write their own sentences, which usually include appropriately placed capital letters and full stops. Simple words are spelt correctly and more complex ones are phonetically justified using familiar words. Children use their knowledge of sounds to write more complex words, capital letters and full stops with increasing accuracy. Children are enthusiastic to read and most are well launched into reading simple books for themselves.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Basic number skills and mathematical vocabulary are reinforced at every opportunity.

### **Commentary**

50. Children make good progress and almost all are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Teaching is very good overall. The adults encourage counting, matching objects and number recognition as children play independently, when in teacher directed group times and through class routines. Number lines, displays, pictures, ICT and counting and sorting good quality objects are all used to extend children's understanding of number to

twenty and beyond. Higher attaining children can order random numbers to twenty and understand the language of addition and subtraction. Challenging activities are well planned to provide a range of experiences for the children to solve simple problems in a practical setting. Nursery children learn about partitioning and early addition as they share seashells between two friends. Staff in the Reception classes carefully limit the resources in the role-play to develop children's problem solving skills as they work out if there are enough 'back packs' for each child who wants to go 'exploring in the jungle'. Over half of the children in the Nursery can recognise and name two-dimensional shapes. Older children in the Reception class use correct mathematical vocabulary to solve problems of size, shape and position as they play with two and three-dimensional shapes and small world toys. Children who are learning English as an additional language are given additional help to learn new words and are eager and keen to practice their skills.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers plan a very good range of activities and experiences which fascinate the children and develop their scientific knowledge well.

### **Commentary**

51. Teaching is very good. The natural curiosity of young children is enhanced as staff continually encourage them to talk about their discoveries and experiences, to ask questions and to explore a wide range of made and natural materials. Children achieve well and are in line to attain the early learning goals. They are developing very good scientific skills, as they excitedly look through magnifying glasses to examine small garden creatures and foliage. They search for similarities, differences and observe changes and patterns in nature. Children work independently with a wide range of construction toys discovering how things are made and move. A wide range of materials is available to help children develop their skills of cutting, folding and sticking. Advice is always on hand to help them make the appropriate decision as to which is the most suitable material to use for a particular purpose. However, the final decision is always left to the individual child, helping them to learn by their mistakes and promoting good thinking skills and a sense of independence and responsibility for their own learning.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have very good opportunities to develop all aspects of their physical skills.

### **Commentary**

52. Children make good progress and achieve well because of very good teaching. Reception staff compensate well for the limitations of the outdoor play facilities and as

a result children's physical development does not suffer. Children's natural exuberance and energy is developed very effectively through well-planned lessons, topics and routines, which provide regular opportunities for children to move in both a creative and controlled way. Well organised sessions in the sports hall promote an awareness of space, obstacles and other

children. Staff interact well with the children, participating in activities and encouraging them to try to develop their bodily control and co-ordination. Children are given very good help and support to develop dexterity when handling pencils, scissors, brushes, modelling tools, construction toys and jigsaws. Children are competent in using different computer programs to support their learning in mathematics and language and literacy.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Creative play is a central part of the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

53. Teaching is very good in this aspect. Children enjoy taking part in the high quality role-play situations provided in the Nursery and Reception classes and achieve well. Older children develop their imagination and extend their language skills very well. In their 'jungle encampment' they work out how to get someone who has been bitten by a poisonous spider to hospital. After thoughtful discussions the problem is solved when one child produces a mobile phone from his back pack. A very good range of music, songs and rhymes helps children learn about sound, rhythm and pattern. Children are encouraged to choose different materials to create their own high quality designs, pictures, models and collages. They are good at making choices and often stick at a task for extended periods, joining in well with their friends.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards overall are below average at ages seven and eleven.
- Pupils achieve well in reading, reaching average standards in this aspect by Year 6.
- Handwriting skills are taught well in Years 1 and 2 but not consolidated in Years 3 to 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning during the inspection was good.
- Insufficient use is made of other subjects to provide vehicles for extended writing.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported.
- There is insufficient attention to the development of speaking skills.
- The marking of pupils' work requires improvement.

### **Commentary**

54. Standards in Year 2 are average in reading but below average in speaking, listening and writing. This reflects the results of national tests in 2004, when standards were average in reading but below average in writing, although below average in both when compared with pupils in similar schools.



55. In Year 6, standards are average in listening and reading, but below average in speaking and writing. In 2004, pupils reached standards in English that were well below average, when compared with national results or with those of pupils in similar circumstances. The current Year 6 pupils have reached a higher standard than this, but standards have declined since the previous inspection, when they were judged to be above average.
56. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in English. Their needs are carefully assessed and they are taught well by expert teachers. Those learning English as an additional language, a few of whom are at an early stage of acquiring the language, also make good progress.
57. The school has examined carefully its results in national tests to discover the reason for the steady decline. It has made good use of the expertise of external advisers and has implemented a number of strategies to help it to improve its provision. The inspection indicates that many factors contribute to unsatisfactory standards, including:
- A failure to implement the Joint primary Strategy effectively until recently.
  - Some teachers lack the skills to link reading and writing.
  - Expectations about writing are too low.
  - Speaking skills are insufficiently developed.
  - Pupils are not informed about how they can improve their writing.
  - The status of literacy is not as high as that of numeracy.
58. In several age groups, pupils have experienced well-constructed and balanced lessons for only two years, at most, because of the late implementation of national guidance. Monitoring of teaching has improved since the appointment of the new headteacher and the current co-ordinators. Weaknesses in the subject knowledge of some teachers and the use of inappropriate resources were discovered. The inspection indicates that these weaknesses have all but disappeared, but more time is required for new strategies to have their full effect. Better standards in the current Years 4 and 5 confirm that standards are improving.
59. There are weaknesses in the links between aspects of the subject. Insufficient time is spent on developing good speaking skills. In most classes, pupils spend a considerable amount of time listening to the teacher. When questions are asked, they tend to require only brief answers. Pupils have little opportunity to speak in a logical sequence of well-constructed sentences and to transfer these to writing. In Years 1 and 2, the need has been identified for teachers to make better links between reading and writing.
60. During the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning was good, but examination of pupils' completed written work indicates that teaching and learning over a longer period of time is only satisfactory. A feature in almost all classes is the good relationships teachers have with pupils and their good management and control. This ensures good, and often very good, behaviour with only minor interruptions to the process of learning. In better lessons, teachers maintain a lively pace and use questions skilfully to extend and consolidate pupils' understanding. Occasionally the teacher's input is too protracted, leaving little time for a writing activity.

61. A scrutiny of pupils' writing indicated that expectations about the quality and quantity of pupils' writing are too low, particularly in Year 6. Not enough substantial pieces of writing are attempted, so that pupils have insufficient practice in structuring and organising text into series of sentences with appropriate punctuation. Pupils' presentation of work is unsatisfactory. In particular, handwriting skills are well taught in Years 1 and 2, but in Years 3 to 6 teachers fail to ensure that pupils consistently use the good, joined handwriting most have learned by the end of Year 2. Teachers' marking informs pupils whether they have achieved what the lesson intended, but fails to tell them how they can improve writing.

62. In this school with commendably very good achievement in mathematics, the status of literacy has inadvertently been lowered. Far more pupils, when questioned, enjoy the former subject. In some age groups, more extra time is devoted to numeracy than to literacy. The school has begun to redress the balance through initiatives such as the 'Excellence in Literacy' shield, but there is the potential to promote the subject more actively.
63. The joint co-ordinators provide satisfactory leadership in the subject. They are aware of strengths and weaknesses through their observations of lessons and the analysis of data, and have implemented a suitable action plan. There are not enough teaching assistants in English lessons. As a result, pupils of lower attainment, but above the level identified to constitute special needs, receive insufficient support. Resources are mostly at least adequate. New sets of books have been purchased for pupils to read in groups, but many dictionaries need replacement.

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

64. The school is rapidly improving the links between literacy and other subjects which are now satisfactory overall. In history pupils undertake substantial pieces of well-structured writing and historical texts are studied in the daily Literacy Hour. However, teachers do not take enough advantage of literacy lessons to teach specific vocabulary for other subjects. Science and religious education are under-used to support progress in literacy. Little use is made of ICT to reorganise and structure text.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average and pupils achieve very well.
- Teaching and learning are very good overall and of an exceptionally high quality in Year 6.
- Assessment is very rigorous and pupils of all attainment levels are challenged to do their very best.
- The subject co-ordinators provide very good leadership.
- Pupils do use their mathematical skills in other subjects but the level of challenge could be higher.

### **Commentary**

65. Mathematics is rightly seen as one of the school's main strengths. The results of the 2004 national tests taken at the end of Year 6 showed standards to be well above all schools nationally and well above similar schools. Overall standards this year remain very high but not quite as high as in the previous year because of the ability of the pupils. Pupils achieve very well because teachers have clear and high expectations for all groups of pupils. This is especially so in Year 6 where one of the subject co-ordinators teaches both classes. His subject knowledge is excellent and his whole approach to teaching motivates pupils of all attainment levels to believe in themselves and achieve highly.
66. During the inspection both boys and girls talked about how much they enjoyed numeracy lessons. This is down to one factor, the high quality of teaching they receive and very high quality in Year 6. It was a delight to see pupils giving up their lunch breaks to take part in a

'drop-in' mathematics club. All pupils including those with special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language achieve very well because the school's rigorous approach to the use of assessment information ensure that work is matched well to

their needs. Higher attaining pupils achieve very well because all teachers provide challenging work. For example, during the inspection, higher attaining pupils in Year 6 were challenged to work out algebraic equations. Evidence from previous work clearly demonstrates that pupils can solve equations and plot coordinates in 4 quadrants.

67. Inspection evidence demonstrates that standards are well above average in Year 2 and have improved since the previous inspection when they were found to be average. In Years 1 and 2, pupils understand the principles of place value and repeated addition well. They have a very good command of basic number. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to use their numeracy skills to solve problems. Pupils are able to explain how they arrived at a particular answer. One pupil explained his calculation by saying; 'I put 12 in my head and added on in two's until I came to 16.' Pupils in most classes make good use of ICT to consolidate their number skills.
68. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are very confident in solving practical mathematical problems, for example when asked to use percentages to work out the reductions in price of goods in a sale they do so quickly and accurately. This enhances their learning, resulting in well above average standards. In Year 4, pupils are able to use multi-data accurately in solving problems. In Year 5 they demonstrate good use of partitioning skills. During the inspection no significant differences were noticed in the achievements of boys and girls or pupils from ethnic minority groups.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 has improved well since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching in Year 6 is of a particularly very high standard. Teachers provide challenging work and give encouraging feedback such as "I'd back this class against another from any school round here". Such comments spur pupils on, encourage them to maintain their concentration and try their best. The strong combination of very good teaching methods and very good pupil attitudes leads to high standards and very good achievement. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They question sharply and encourage pupils to think through their answers carefully. In the best lessons, teachers are highly skilled in targeting questions at specific pupils, in order to challenge all levels of attainment. Where there is additional classroom support it is of a good quality.
70. The subject co-ordinators are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They provide very good leadership, monitor planning well and have a very good overview of strengths and weaknesses across the subject. Very good use is made of the school's assessment systems to ensure pupils are provided with appropriate strategies which help them improve.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

Overall, satisfactory use is made of mathematics to support other areas of the curriculum. However, pupils have very good mathematical skills and opportunities are missed for them to be used well in other subjects such as in science.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching and learning.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Teachers plan good opportunities for investigations but better use could be made of pupils' ICT and mathematical skills.
- Marking does not help pupils to improve the quality of their work.

## Commentary

71. Standards achieved in science are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. These judgements are an improvement on those made at the time of the previous inspection when pupils' attainment was found to be in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2. In 2004 teacher assessments showed pupils' attainment to be broadly average. However, inspection evidence indicates a better picture, with standards improving in response to more emphasis being placed on experimental and investigative science. In three of the last five years, around 90 per cent of the pupils in the Year 6 classes attained Level 4 and above and about 50 per cent achieved Level 5. Inspection evidence shows that whilst standards are above average this year and pupils achieving well, not as many pupils are expected to gain the higher level as last year.
72. The good achievement of girls and boys from all ethnic backgrounds, including pupils with special educational needs and those pupils who speak English as an additional language, is the result of good teaching and learning across the school. Teachers emphasise strongly the investigating aspects of the curriculum, and give pupils frequent opportunities to practise their skills. For example, pupils in Year 6 displayed a very good knowledge of what makes a test fair when explaining how they would go about setting up an experiment to show that mould on bread is caused by micro-organisms and that different conditions can effect the rate at which it decays. Throughout the discussion they emphasised the importance of changing only one variable at a time.
73. In a very good lesson, higher attaining pupils in Year 5 investigated the effect that surface area has on the rate of evaporation. They drew upon their mathematical skills well when working out the surface area of various containers. However, in general pupils could be provided with more challenging opportunities to use their very good mathematical skills in science. Pupils in Year 2 have been investigating forces and undertook an experiment to see which toy car would travel the furthest distance. Prior to undertaking the investigation the teacher noted down pupils' predictions and their reasons. For example one thought car 4 would travel the furthest "because it had big wheels" whilst another chose car 2 "because it has fast wheels and it is shiny". The information gathered from this assessment of the level of pupils' understanding was used to good effect in the planning of the investigation. The use of ICT in science has improved since the previous inspection. Software and hardware has been purchased to further develop the skills of scientific enquiry. However, there is no evidence of pupils using ICT to record the results of their investigations.
74. As at the time of the previous inspection, the marking of pupils' work varies in quality. Teachers give pupils constructive verbal feedback during lessons but written comments in books, whilst being usually positive and supportive, rarely identify what pupils have to do next in order to improve their work, particularly the quality of their writing.
75. The good quality of teaching has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and enjoyment of the subject. Pupils are well motivated, show genuine interest and are keen to answer questions. However, some pupils find it difficult to co-operate with each other sensibly in practical work and do not take sufficient pride in the presentation of their work.

76. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator provides a good role model for other teachers to follow and has monitored the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school in order to identify strengths and weaknesses. Action taken has helped to improve teaching and raise standards particularly in Years 1 and 2 by successfully promoting a more practical approach to the subject. The school has improved arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment since the previous inspection and the systems are now very good. Very effective use is being made of the information to track pupils' progress over time very closely, in order to identify any pupils who are falling behind or would benefit from greater challenges. Resources are good and organised very well.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and standards have risen to average levels throughout the school.
- All classes regularly use the new computer suite.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- The use of classroom computers for work in other subjects is underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

77. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They are better than they were at the previous inspection, when they were below average. Pupils' achievement is good because they have made considerable progress, particularly since the new computer suite came into use in September 2003. All classes use the computer suite weekly. It is equipped with sufficient computers for a whole class and an interactive whiteboard. Standards have also improved because the whole of the programme of study is now covered, whereas at the previous inspection aspects were omitted.
78. Teaching and learning are good and are leading to rapidly improving standards. Most teachers teach their own classes and have good subject knowledge to enable them to do so. A few teachers unavoidably missed training opportunities and require their skills and confidence to be improved. This is in hand, but in the meantime teachers with a higher level of expertise teach their classes. This is a sensible arrangement leading to good learning by all pupils.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is good and all teaching observed was good or very good. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and ensure time in the computer suite is used efficiently. Pupils enjoy the well-organised and managed lessons and are keen to display their growing skills. For example, Year 6 pupils were eager to demonstrate the Power Point presentations they are compiling as part of their work in geography. Pupils display good levels of concentration and persistence. Their progress in lessons is sometimes limited by the spread of ability in the class. This is a result of the inequality of pupils' access to computers at home. Consequently, some pupils require more individual help and the shortage of teaching assistants makes it difficult to provide this.
80. The co-ordinator makes a positive contribution to raising standards by his good leadership and management. He has initiated a large number of new strategies to improve provision and monitors their progress well. Together with other senior staff, he has ensured that new equipment and software is of the highest possible quality and that resources are used effectively. He has observed teachers in action in the computer suite but is aware of the need to examine how the computers in classrooms are used. These machines, most of which are networked to the school system, are not sufficiently used to allow pupils to apply a range of their ICT skills in everyday lessons.

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

81. Most ICT lessons in the computer suite use content from other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 prepared a Power Point presentation arguing the case for or against a new by-pass as part of their work in geography. Year 5 pupils used their knowledge of spreadsheets to produce charts and graphs in mathematics and Year 2 pupils studying famous artists used

ICT to produce their own artwork. However, although rapidly improving, curriculum links overall remain underdeveloped. Opportunities to use ICT in the classroom are missed. For example, work on Jenner, linking history and science with literacy, would have benefited from the use of ICT to present pupils' discoveries.

## **HUMANITIES**

82. Too few lessons were seen in geography and history to make overall judgements about provision.
83. Work was sampled in **history** and **geography**. There is every indication from pupils' work that overall the school provides a stimulating range of learning experiences to promote pupils' interests in people, places, events and happenings through the ages and across the world. Resources have improved since the last inspection. Standards appear to be broadly average. In both subjects pupils have good opportunities to build up a good knowledge base and to develop sound geographical and historical skills.
84. Through the use of well planned visits and visitors, teachers bring the subjects alive for pupils and as pupils move through the school they are encouraged to think of themselves as historians and geographers. In geography, ideas of sustainable development and pupils' responsibility to the environment are covered well as pupils consider the impact of climate, transport, housing and leisure on the well being of communities.
85. In history, pupils consider and question the authenticity of evidence and ponder the reasons for particular events. They use a range of books, video materials, artefacts, photographs, the Internet, visits and visitors to gain knowledge and understanding of past times and characters. Pupils use a wide range of literacy skills to record historical information and this adds interest to their research and helps them to improve their skills in writing for different purposes and audiences. However, insufficient attention is paid to the development of pupils' handwriting skills and the presentation their work.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.
- Pupils' attitudes are positive and this leads to an enjoyment of the subject.
- Opportunities are missed for pupils to use their writing skills.

### **Commentary**

86. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in their awareness and understanding of Christianity and other world religions. For example, they can identify religious practices and ceremonies and festivals associated with Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. They have a positive attitude to

learning about different faiths and clearly enjoy the subject but do not always pay sufficient attention to the presentation of their work and the development of their handwriting.

87. No overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching because very few lessons were seen. During the inspection teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory overall. In one good lesson, based on a story from the Buddhist religion, pupils made good use of their writing skills to produce a précis of the story. However, opportunities are missed in many

classes for pupils to use their writing skills to produce extended pieces of work. There is very little evidence of persuasive writing or of the use of ICT. However, in Year 3 good use was made of 'hot seating' in a lesson based around the biblical story of Zaccheus and in Year 2 wrote their own sentences about the Jewish festival of Sukkot.

88. The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, a poster on display in one part of the school demonstrates that all faiths have special places to worship in. The 'One World' week provided good opportunities for pupils to find out about different cultures.
89. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has steadily improved resources and provides good support. The coordinator keeps the subject constantly under review and has a clear vision of how the subject should develop. However, assessment procedures and the use made of the information to improve standards are in need of further development.

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

90. Very few lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education. It was not, therefore possible to make judgements about provision in these curriculum areas. However, the amount of art and design and design and technology work on display in classes and around the school enables a judgement to be made about standards and pupils' achievements in both of these subjects.
91. Standards in **art and design** are average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. These judgements are similar to those made at the time of the previous inspection.
92. Throughout the school pupils are offered an appropriate range of experiences. From Year 1 they are taught particular skills and given the opportunity to work with a widening range of art media as they move through the school. By Year 6, pupils have acquired secure skills and show appropriate imagination and originality for their age. They draw inspiration from the work of famous artists such as Andy Warhol and L S Lowry. For example, in a very good lesson with Year 6 pupils, the teacher made effective use of the work of Salvador Dali to give the pupils a better understanding of surrealism. The beginning of the lesson was lively as pupils were challenged to describe what they felt about his paintings. They used language such as 'unusual', 'confusing' and 'mysterious'. The pupils used the ideas generated during the discussion at the start of the lesson as in their own imaginative and surrealistic impressions of a bed or a wristwatch. Throughout the school, pupils are provided with some good opportunities to practice and develop their observational skills, which results in some work of a good standard.
93. The subject makes a valuable contribution towards pupils' personal development and the quality of the learning environment. A significant strength of the provision is in the good links made with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 have used their ICT skills well to design a piece of wrapping paper which included repeating patterns. The finished products were of a good quality.
94. Pupils' achievements in **design and technology** are good overall and standards are above average. These judgements are an improvement of those made at the time of the previous inspection when standards were found to be average and pupils were making satisfactory progress.



95. Throughout the school, pupils are provided with good opportunities to design and make a range of models and products. Their progress in developing the skills of planning and evaluating their work is better than that found in most schools. Evidence of this above average standard of work is to be found in most classes. For example, pupils in Year 2 explored ideas for repeating patterns and practised a 'running' stitch before designing and making Joseph's multicoloured coat. Pupils in Year 5 used their knowledge of healthy eating to design a pizza for a special occasion. Before making it they carried out a product analysis by sampling different toppings, noting appearance, smell and texture. The pupils produced a booklet as a record of the work undertaken which includes well-labelled drawings, baking instructions and an evaluation.
96. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The scheme of work has recently been revised and the curriculum is suitably planned using national guidelines. However, resources are unsatisfactory.
97. In **music** the standard of singing in acts of worship was satisfactory but lacked vitality. In one good lesson seen during the inspection, good opportunities were provided for Year 2 pupils to develop their skills in identifying the names of instruments and to begin to read from a graphic score. Pupils really enjoyed responding to the challenge. The school has a suitable range of instruments. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn to play brass and string instruments and unusually, tuition is free. The school has a choir that performs in and out of school when required.
98. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about provision in **physical education**. The two lessons observed, both in games, were well taught and standards were in line with expectations. Facilities have improved since the previous inspection with the construction of a spacious sports hall, which is also used well by the local community. This is on a separate but nearby site. Arrangements made to escort pupils to lessons in the new building are good. Physical education lessons for infant pupils take place in the hall situated in the main building. Because playtimes are different for juniors and infants, other pupils passing through the hall often disrupt these lessons and the quality of learning suffers as a result.
99. A broad range of clubs and sports activities enhances the curriculum in physical education. Teachers give generously of their time to run these and to train and organise school sports teams, which achieve considerable success in local competitions. There are productive links with two local colleges, providing support in dance and sport respectively.

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

102. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection in this area of the school's work. Consequently, no overall judgements are made about teaching and learning. The school has received the Healthy School Award and good attention is given to this aspect. The ethos in the school is warm and friendly. A feature of the work of the school is the way it ensures that each child is cared for very well. For example, a six weeks Social Skills Programme is currently being provided for a group of pupils from Year 4 who find it hard to control their temper and form relationships.
103. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn respect for the values and beliefs of other pupils and adults, and to develop their own self-worth and confidence. These aspects are taught mainly through planned discussion sessions (circle time) which cover a range of sensitive issues. During these periods pupils are able to state

their views in an unthreatening environment. In the one lesson observed pupils in a Year 1 class listened attentively to the story of Elmer, which was used well by the teacher to show differences and the reactions of others.

104. The school views pupils' personal development as important and addresses it appropriately. The outcomes of the school's approach are clearly seen in the good attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development of its pupils. However, there is no school council where pupils can express their views about issues that affect them and play a part in developing the school and its community into the kind of place they want it to be.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<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</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
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	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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