

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **TOWNHILL INFANT SCHOOL**

Southampton

LEA area: Southampton

Unique reference number: 116132

Headteacher: Mrs P J Orme

Lead inspector: Eileen Chadwick

Dates of inspection: 17 – 19 January 2005

Inspection number: 268139

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Type of school:              | Infant                      |
| School category:             | Community                   |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 – 7                       |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                       |
| Number on roll:              | 243                         |
| School address:              | Benhams Road<br>Southampton |
| Postcode:                    | SO18 2FG                    |
| Telephone number:            | 023 80474835                |
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| Appropriate authority:       | The governing body          |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Rev David M Turner          |
| Date of previous inspection: | 1/2/99                      |

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is about the same size as most other infant schools nationally. It is a three-form entry infant school for pupils aged 4 to 7, with 243 pupils. Many pupils live on the Townhill estate, which consists of a mixture of owner occupied homes and those that are rented from the local council or housing association, although, the school also attracts pupils from further afield. The school is situated on the outskirts of Southampton and includes a substantial minority of families who are at a social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, at 32 per cent. Most pupils are White British, although a small proportion is from ethnic minority heritages. A few speak English as an additional language although very few are at early stages of learning the language. The main language spoken, other than English, is Cantonese. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register, at 24 per cent, is above average although the proportion with statements of special educational need is below average. Most of these pupils have speech, literacy or emotional and behavioural difficulties. A substantial proportion of children starting Reception have delayed speech and behavioural difficulties. Pupils' overall attainment on entry is well below average but ranges from above average to low. This includes the significant number of later entrants. The level of pupil mobility is above average with nearly twice as many pupils joining the school than leaving at times other than the normal entry or leaving points.

Attainment on entry is lower than that at the last inspection and more pupils are eligible for free school meals. In 2002, the school gained a Basic Skills Quality Mark Award. The school is currently involved in the Primary Leadership Strategy and Healthy schools and Investors in People awards.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team |                    |                | Subject responsibilities   |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|--|
| 19115                          | Eileen Chadwick    | Lead inspector | Science<br>Information and communication technology<br>Design and technology<br>Foundation Stage |
| 1311                           | Barry Wood         | Lay inspector  |  |
| 19115                          | Christopher Bolton | Team inspector | Mathematics<br>Geography<br>History<br>Religious education<br>English as an additional language  |
| 32153                          | Maureen Panichelli | Team inspector | English<br>Art and design<br>Music<br>Physical education<br>Special educational needs            |

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Townhill Infant School is a very good school**, where all pupils achieve very well. Standards are rising because there are high expectations that all pupils can do well, regardless of their starting point. The quality of teaching and the school's leadership and management are very good. The school ensures pupils are very well prepared for their junior education and it provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Year 2 pupils' achievement is excellent in reading, writing and mathematics because of very good teaching in these subjects throughout the school.
- Children are given a flying start in Reception, which provides a strong foundation for their later learning.
- The headteacher is a very effective leader who, in partnership with her deputy and other senior staff, enables teachers and pupils to achieve their best.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress.
- The school nurtures and cares for its pupils very well. This helps pupils to feel secure and make the best of their time in school.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory because a significant minority of parents do not ensure their children attend regularly.
- The development of pupils' scientific enquiry skills is inconsistent in Years 1 and 2.
- In Years 1 and 2, computers are not always used frequently enough for helping pupils learn.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Standards in English and mathematics are higher, standards in science are similar but standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are now average whereas they were previously above average. The school has maintained and built upon the strengths found in Reception at that time. The overall quality of teaching has improved with a higher proportion of very good and excellent teaching. Areas for improvement, highlighted in the last inspection report, have been addressed very well. However, pupils' attendance and punctuality are not as good, despite the school's good procedures for promoting these.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

**Pupils achieve very well.** This table shows that standards improved in 2004 for Year 2 pupils and there has been an overall rising trend compared with national trends. Year 2 pupils did very well in their 2004 national tests as they reached well above average standards in reading and writing and above average standards in mathematics compared with similar schools.

The inspection finds that standards are continuing to rise and, for the current Year 2 pupils, are above average in reading, writing and mathematics and average in science. Pupils reach above the expected standards in art and design and the expected standards in ICT, religious education, physical education and music. Pupils' overall achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good

in literacy and numeracy. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 build very well on the work started in Reception, enabling pupils to achieve very well in English and mathematics. Children in Reception achieve very well. When children start school their overall attainment is well below average because of the substantial number who enter with below average attainment. By the end of Reception, children reach the goals for their age in personal development and physical development although they are still below the goals in other areas of learning. Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve very well throughout the school.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good** as a result of the school's very good provision for all areas. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. The school promotes very good relationships between pupils and has successful procedures for ensuring they behave well. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory because of the poor attendance of a substantial minority of families.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is very good.** Overall, **teaching and learning are very good.** They are very good in Reception with excellent features. In Years 1 and 2, the overall quality of teaching and learning are good and very good in literacy and numeracy. There is some good teaching in every class with some that is excellent or very good in each year group. Teachers make learning exciting and fun, which encourages pupils to want to learn. Assessment is very good. Teachers carefully match work to pupils' needs and ensure they all have equal chances to do well. In Reception, teachers provide the right balance for children to learn through talk, practical activity, play and focused teaching. They teach literacy and numeracy very successfully. The curriculum provided is very good. It is broad and of a high quality in English and mathematics. Extra-curricular activities are very good. The school takes very good care of its pupils. Links with parents and the community are good and very good with other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Overall leadership and management are very good.** The headteacher provides very strong, well-organised leadership. Senior staff set very good examples by the high quality of their own teaching. They lead well and give very good support. Governance is good. Governors provide good support and challenge for improving the school and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents have very positive views about the school. They are very pleased with their children's progress and with the way the school is led and managed. Pupils like school, say they enjoy their lessons and are proud of their school. Inspectors agree that these views are justified.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the attendance rates and punctuality of the minority of families who are at fault.
- Ensure that all aspects of pupils' scientific skills develop evenly in Years 1 and 2.
- Ensure that teachers make full use of computers in Years 1 and 2 to help pupils learn.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils achieve very well. By Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics and average in speaking, listening, science and ICT despite pupils entering school with well below average attainment. Pupils' achievement in English and mathematics is excellent by Year 2 because teaching and learning are very good in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Very rigorous provision for pupils with special educational needs from Reception to Year 2 is also a key factor in raising attainment from a low base.

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

- By Year 2, pupils' achievement is excellent in reading, writing and mathematics through very good teaching in these subjects throughout the school.
- By Year 2, pupils have achieved very well in speaking and listening through very good achievement in Reception and good achievement in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress in Reception and very good progress in Years 1 and 2.
- In Reception, children achieve very well because relevant practical work underpins all their learning and the steps in basic skills are very well matched to their needs.
- In ICT, pupils achieve very well in Reception but only satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils' scientific investigative skills have weaker aspects because skills are not always consistently taught.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children start school with overall attainment that is low. Very good provision throughout all Reception classes begins to raise their attainment and enables all to achieve very well. By the end of Reception, children attain standards similar to those in most schools in personal, social and emotional development and physical development although standards are still below expectations in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. This is because a significant minority still have poor language and literacy skills despite the very good progress made.
2. Standards in the 2004 Year 2 national tests were average in reading, writing and mathematics. Assessments made by teachers showed standards in speaking and listening were average. Compared with similar schools, pupils reached well above average standards in reading and writing and above average standards in mathematics, indicating very good achievement. Pupils' results in national tests are shown in the table below.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading       | 16.3 (14.7)    | 15.8 (15.7)      |
| writing       | 14.9 (13.3)    | 14.6 (14.6)      |
| mathematics   | 16.5 (15.2)    | 16.2 (16.3)      |

*There were 87 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. The school's improvement trend over the last five years has been above the national trend. Inspection shows standards are continuing to improve and, for the current Year 2, are above



average in reading, writing, mathematics and art and design and average in science, ICT, music and physical education. Standards are in line with the agreed syllabus for religious education. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve very well in reading, writing and mathematics and well in all other subjects, except ICT where achievement is satisfactory. Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening. Their achievement is very good in English and mathematics although good in the rest of the curriculum. Overall, pupils achieve well in science in Years 1 and 2. Although there is much relevant practical work, pupils' scientific knowledge is stronger than their independent enquiry skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their observation skills very well but do not so consistently develop their ability to suggest ideas for finding answers to simple problems, predicting results or using mathematics for recording and explaining patterns.

4. The few pupils with English as an additional language achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress in Reception and very good progress in Years 1 and 2. Their personal development is prioritised. They are provided with rich language and practical experiences, especially in Reception, which improve speaking and thinking skills. From Reception to Year 2 the steps in reading, phonics, writing and numeracy are very carefully matched to pupils' stages of development and are rigorously taught. Pupils who are behind are given systematic extra help to enable them to catch up. More capable pupils make very good progress and, by Year 2, higher proportions reach higher levels of attainment than on entry to the school in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy.
5. In national tests, over the last few years, boys have done better than girls in reading, writing and mathematics. However, in 2004, improved standards for girls were a major reason for the good improvements in standards compared with previous years. During the inspection, no significant differences were observed between the achievement of girls and boys.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good although their attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In Reception, provision for children's personal development is excellent and provides a strong foundation for all their other learning.
- The school very successfully develops pupils' will to learn and achieve, which helps them make the most of their time in school.
- Pupils develop very good relationships, which help them to grow in confidence and enjoy school.
- The school has very high expectations for pupils' conduct and very skilfully helps the minority of pupils with challenging behaviour to improve.
- The school's strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision leads to pupils' good personal development.
- Some pupils have poor attendance and punctuality despite the school's thorough procedures for improving these.

### **Commentary**

6. Children enter Reception with very varied personal development. A substantial minority are socially and personally immature with very short attention spans, and some children have challenging behaviour. Teachers and assistants are very skilled at managing young children. They are sensitive to their needs and provide calm, well-organised classrooms where they can feel secure and quickly learn school routines. Relationships between all adults and children in Reception are very good and this helps the children to thrive and enjoy learning. Teachers have an excellent understanding of the children's different personal needs and provide the right experiences to ensure that they quickly settle and develop the ability to take

some responsibility for their own learning. The school's excellent provision helps most children to achieve their goals in personal, social and emotional development by the end of their reception year.

7. In Years 1 and 2, pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. Their behaviour in and out of the classroom is usually good and, by Year 2, sometimes very good. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the school's very high expectations for their behaviour and want to do their best. Pupils with special educational needs or those with English as an additional language are well integrated and their work is well matched to their learning needs. As a result of this sensitive and successful provision these pupils also want to learn and try to achieve their best.
8. Pupils respond very well to the high quality care and understanding they are shown and build very good relationships. They are very confident that their teachers will listen with a sympathetic ear. Pupils' behaviour in the playground is now good whereas there were shortcomings at the time of the last inspection. The school has made very good progress in eliminating the problems identified with playground behaviour at the last inspection. They learn how to play and interact with each other and adults and relax and play safely together without bullying or harassment. Pupils are learning to value each other and make real friendships through the school's 'Friendship Monitor System' on the playground.
9. All staff are well trained to deal with pupils who show challenging behaviour or have emotional problems and, consequently, there are few interruptions in lessons. From the earliest days in Reception, pupils are given personal behavioural targets and these are very effective in helping them understand, manage and improve their own behaviour. Staff strategies, such as intervening discretely in situations, both inside and outside the classroom, help pupils to learn to calm their anger and frustration. The school has not needed to exclude any pupil during the last three years.
10. The school ethos focuses on improving pupils' self-esteem and confidence and developing their pride in belonging to a well-ordered community. Lessons are very strong in their reinforcement of pupils' moral and cultural education and, throughout, pupils are encouraged to understand their emotions. Pupils' spiritual development is good and developed well through assemblies. From Reception to Year 2, pupils develop a sense of wonder in the natural and made world, particularly through English, art and design and science. The school's good links with the community give pupils a sense of pride and belonging. Visitors to the school promote pupils' interest in sport, music, and art. There is good promotion of the understanding of cultures from other lands through role-play, visitors and celebrations.
11. Pupils' attendance has declined since the last inspection and is well below the national average. The school's good efforts and procedures have not had enough impact as a third of the school's pupils have poor attendance, which affects their progress. Authorised and unauthorised absences are high. The education welfare officer gives good support to the school and together they are trying to change some parents' poor expectations for their children's attendance. Many pupils and parents arrive early to settle in the classroom at the start of the day, but the punctuality of some pupils is unsatisfactory. Progress is slow in gaining the co-operation of a hard core of parents and the attendance level remains stubbornly well below the national averages.

## Attendance

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

| Authorised absence |     | Unauthorised absence |     |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data        | 6.3 | School data          | 0.7 |

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| National data | 5.4 |
|---------------|-----|

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| National data | 0.4 |
|---------------|-----|

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

## Exclusions

There were no exclusions in the last academic year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning are very good. The school provides a very good curriculum, which is very effectively enriched by visits and extra-curricular activities. The care, guidance and support given to pupils are very good. The partnership with parents is good and links with the community are good. Links with other schools are very good.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good in Reception. They are good in Years 1 and 2, with very good teaching in literacy and numeracy. Assessment procedures are very good and used very well to respond to pupils' needs.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- All staff are dedicated to evaluating and improving their teaching in order to raise achievement.
- There is a high proportion of very good and excellent teaching in Reception.
- Some excellent and very good teaching was seen in both Years 1 and 2.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good throughout the school, which leads to pupils constantly making very good progress.
- Very good use of assessment in English and mathematics leads to very well matched work for all pupils, including the more capable as well as those with special educational needs.
- Computers are not used with the same degree of rigour in all classes in Years 1 and 2.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good     | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor   | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 5 (14%)   | 10 (27%)  | 16 (43%) | 6 (16%)      | 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.*

12. The overall quality of teaching is very good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be good. The school has significantly increased the proportion of good and better teaching. All lessons are now at least satisfactory whereas, at the last inspection, a small proportion was unsatisfactory. The weaknesses observed then have now been eliminated.
13. A major reason why teaching and learning are so very good in Reception is that all teachers have a very good level of expertise in teaching all areas of learning. Teachers and support assistants are sensitive to both the personal and academic needs of these young children. Teaching methods are very effective; especially for developing speech, reading, writing, mathematics and personal development such as enjoyment of school and independent learning skills. A rich, practical curriculum underpins children's learning throughout. Very good planning and management of the curriculum ensure all children are given equal opportunities to do well, whatever their starting point. Transfer of records at the end of the reception year is comprehensive and there is good continuity between Reception and Year 1. Some high quality role-play opportunities continue to be provided in Years 1 and 2.



14. In Years 1 and 2, teachers' consistently good subject knowledge is a strong factor in the high quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics. Another important factor is the very good assessment systems used to monitor pupils' progress in English and mathematics so that extra support is provided where needed. Systematic teaching of the right steps in reading and writing is underpinned by the development of pupils' speaking skills and lessons are always made meaningful. In an excellent literacy lesson in Year 2, there were relevant links with science when the teacher enabled pupils to read and explain cyclical illustrations in scientific fact books. The use of role-play to 'act out' how a caterpillar turns into a butterfly enabled pupils to understand and brought the book alive. Excellent use of resources and a close match of reading and writing activities to the needs of all pupils ensured all achieved excellently.
15. The school has recently introduced interactive whiteboards into every year group which teachers use very effectively to bring learning alive. In an excellent ICT and literacy lesson in Reception, for example, the selection of a program, 'Tizzy's Toy Box', for teaching children to chose from a menu of opportunities on the screen, captivated children from the start because of the joyful and colourful presentation. The teaching of basic skills to the whole class made very effective use of the available teaching time in ICT, successfully preparing children for their own individual computer work. In Years 1 and 2, skills are not taught so systematically and teachers sometimes miss opportunities for pupils to use computers within their lessons.
16. In other subjects, the teaching seen in Years 1 and 2 was mainly good. However, it varies more than in literacy and numeracy. In science, for example, it ranged from very good to satisfactory. This is because teachers' subject knowledge is not as good in science as in literacy and numeracy. In recent years, of necessity, the school's strong focus has been raising standards in literacy and numeracy. In science, teachers consistently provide good quality practical opportunities for pupils to develop their scientific knowledge but are not all so adept at teaching the full range of skills needed for investigative science. The school is making excellent use of professional sports coaches for improving the quality of teaching athletics. The rigorous teaching of subject skills is boosting standards in this aspect of physical education.
17. Assessment is very good in literacy and numeracy and good in all other subjects. Individual targets for pupils in literacy, numeracy and, where needed, for improving behaviour are shared with pupils and have given them a good understanding of how they can improve. Good marking and homework play an important part in the raising of standards and achievement.
18. Procedures for assessing pupils' special needs are very good and their progress is monitored effectively. Individual education plans contain realistic and achievable targets, and are regularly reviewed to meet pupils' changing needs. Parents are involved in each term's reviews when targets are identified and reviewed. There is close and effective liaison between the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers, teaching assistants and outside specialist agencies. Assessments are analysed to inform future provision and lesson planning. Learning tasks are well matched to pupils' prior attainment, including behaviour, ensuring the appropriate progression of skills. Teaching assistants work closely with class teachers; their teaching skills and high expectations help pupils to achieve very well. The setting of Year 2 pupils in ability groups in writing has had a positive effect on the achievement of pupils with special educational needs as well as that of more capable pupils.
19. The quality of teaching and support for pupils with English as an additional language is very good. The informed guidance of the co-ordinator enables teachers and teaching assistants, including the bilingual assistant, to develop the pupils' linguistic skills very effectively.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a very good curriculum for its pupils throughout the school. There is very good enrichment through activities that extend pupils' experiences outside normal lessons. The school's accommodation is satisfactory and resources are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum in Reception provides a very good structure for helping teachers to teach and children to learn.
- In Years 1 and 2, provision in literacy and numeracy is very effective; systems for teaching reading are rigorous.
- There are some very effective links between English, science, art and design and design and technology which make learning relevant for pupils.
- Aspects of pupils' scientific enquiry skills are not systematically built in Years 1 and 2.
- The small reception outdoor play area is of good quality, but lacks equipment for climbing and balancing.
- Playground space is limited for pupils when they cannot play on the grass.

### **Commentary**

20. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Better provision for literacy and numeracy has contributed to higher standards and the senior management team monitor the quality of the curriculum on a planned basis. The rich curriculum provided throughout Reception, including literacy and numeracy, prepares children very well for entering Year 1. Children achieve very well from a low starting point because of many first-hand experiences and very well planned opportunities to work and play together. However, although the school makes very good use of the space available in the safe outdoor area, the outdoor play accommodation is not big enough to contain large equipment for climbing and balancing.
21. In Years 1 and 2, the curriculum is good. It is rich, with a good breadth of learning opportunities. The school is beginning to successfully link areas of the curriculum to enable subject barriers to be crossed, whilst ensuring the rigour of subject teaching remains. For example, there are some very good links between reading and science and also between art and design, science and textile and food technology. These examples help teachers to make very good use of curriculum time.
22. The curriculum is lively and interesting and based on national guidance that has been well adapted so pupils of different abilities rapidly learn. Literacy and numeracy are priorities although the school has ensured overall good quality provision in other subjects. However, in science, although investigative science is given priority, teachers need further guidelines to help them systematically plan and teach all the different aspects. Whilst teachers include very good opportunities to reinforce aspects of literacy in other subjects, numeracy skills are not used so well in science. There is also some variation in the effectiveness of the use of computers in different classes.
23. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good and underpins the whole curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very effective and promotes very good achievement because of the systems for extra support for pupils with emotional, behavioural and literacy difficulties. Pupils for whom English is an additional language have access to the full curriculum, enabling them to achieve very well.
24. A very good range of extra activities and experiences enrich the curriculum. For example, a very successful 'Maths Village' week has given a considerable boost to pupils' numeracy skills. The school welcomes and makes effective use of a number of visitors. Visits to the seaside and a museum, for example, contribute positively to pupils' learning. Out-of-school

clubs such as maypole dancing and sports coaching, all contribute to pupils' interest and enjoyment. There are good links with the community. The very good links with local schools, including the junior school, ease the transfer of pupils to their next school.

25. Staff make good use of the open-plan classrooms. They work very well together as teams and pupils soon learn to listen carefully to their own teacher even though other activities are going on close by. There is a good range of well-qualified teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. They are very well deployed across the school to enhance pupils' learning. There is a strong ethos of supportive professional development for all staff, which has a positive impact on both the quality of staff and recruitment. Teachers present pupils' work attractively in good quality displays, which add to the welcoming atmosphere of the school and stimulate pupils' interest. There are good resources to teach the National Curriculum programmes of study which are used well.

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

The provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is very good. The school provides pupils with very good support, advice and guidance and is highly effective in involving pupils and seeking their views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is very effective in nurturing pupils so that all can enjoy school.
- The school receives very good support from outside agencies in implementing highly effective support, guidance and welfare procedures.
- The headteacher, staff and governors are very vigilant to the dangers to pupils both inside and outside school.
- The school uses its limited playground space well, with very good levels of supervision, but it is still too crowded.

### **Commentary**

26. The care of pupils has been strengthened since the last inspection and all aspects of the care and welfare of pupils are at a very good level. The headteacher and staff are very mindful of the many disadvantaged parents and pupils they serve. The pastoral care of all pupils is a major priority and its high quality makes a fundamental contribution to pupils enjoying school and making progress. The headteacher and staff are diligent in supporting pupils and providing them with a calm haven of stability and security. Parents appreciate the school's very good levels of care, and feel very comfortable in approaching the headteacher and staff with any concerns.
27. The headteacher and governors have developed a wide range of well-written policies. They are consistently implemented by very well trained staff and supported by a responsible governor in most cases. The school is very welcoming to the many outside professional agencies who assist their delivery of all aspects of the care agenda and it feels very well supported at case conferences.
28. There are very good child protection procedures. Health and safety procedures are very thorough. Risk assessments are in place and the local authority plays a supportive role. The school is part of a 'Safe Schools Initiative'. There is an above average rate of minor bumps due to the limited hard playground space when the weather prevents the grass areas being used. The school has compensated by creating structured-play zones, which pupils respect. Staff are very well trained in the school's very effective behaviour procedures. Pupils' behaviour is very well tracked and vulnerable pupils are well supported inside and outside the classroom by either support assistants or through professional agencies.

29. Arrangements for assessing, monitoring and improving pupils' academic attainment and progress are very good. They are very good in Reception, in Years 1 and 2 in English and in mathematics and for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. They are good, overall, in other subjects. The tracking of pupils' personal development is very good through the rigorous recording and monitoring of key aspects of their development. There are good opportunities for feedback and discussion of issues between all staff and the agencies at staff meetings, which allow the school to develop individual tailored strategies appropriate to the pupil.
30. The induction of pupils new to the school is very good. Parents and children in Reception enjoy a home visit from the staff with the purpose of trying to smooth entry into the school. Parents are positively welcomed in the school. They are knowledgeable about routines. The headteacher is very caring and supportive of pupils joining later in the school year so they are integrated into school life quickly and sensitively. Parents greatly appreciate the school's efforts in giving their children a successful start to school lives.
31. All staff treat pupils with respect and pupils feel that teachers are fair and want to listen to them. Teachers help the 'pupil voice' by giving pupils time to share their ideas in classroom discussions. They seek pupil feedback on personal and social education lessons through satisfaction questionnaires. Although there is no school council, the headteacher listens to pupil's views when holding regular tea parties for small groups. Pupils contribute to the setting of their individual targets in academic subjects and in their personal development and feel that they can influence their performance.

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

The school has worked very effectively to develop a good partnership with parents. Parents are highly satisfied with the school and the education it provides. The school's links with the community are good and links with other schools are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are highly satisfied with the way the school nurtures and develops the full potential of their children.
- The partnership with most parents effectively contributes to pupils' very good progress.
- A significant minority of parents do not take advantage of all the school offers or ensure their children attend school regularly.
- The school's very good links with its feeder pre-schools and junior school help to bridge the gap when pupils start or change schools.

### **Commentary**

32. The headteacher, staff and governors give a very high priority to developing positive relationships with all parents. They make every effort to ensure parents feel comfortable in school and have good relationships with the staff, so they can play a full and vital part in the education process. The school has excellent systems for encouraging parents to share their children's learning at the start of the school day. The first ten minutes of each morning are 'informal' when parents join their children in class for reading and spelling activities, which develop from homework. However, a significant minority of parents still do not take advantage of all the school offers. The questionnaire sent to parents prior to the inspection had a low return although discussions with parents at the parents' meeting and at other times showed parents are highly satisfied with all aspects of the school. Parents' satisfaction levels with the school are significantly stronger than at the last inspection.



33. The partnership with parents makes an important contribution to most pupils' learning. Most parents support their children well with homework and have an effective dialogue with teachers. Some parents help in the school or fundraise and parent governor positions are enthusiastically filled. Parents turn out well for progress evenings or events that are child focused.
34. The school's communications with parents are effective. Parents feel very comfortable with the verbal feedback opportunities they have with the school. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents contain all statutory information. They present the welcoming character of the school well and are easy to read. Annual reports to parents are satisfactory. They give good informative of pupils' achievements in all National Curriculum subjects but do not say how well past academic targets have been achieved although they do give future targets in the core subjects and in personal development.
35. The school makes very good use of the classrooms' window spaces to communicate teachers' planning and inform parents about school life. The good school website is increasingly useful in communicating information. The school has good procedures for finding out and acting on parents' views. However a significant minority of parents, despite signing the home-school agreement, do not support the school well through ensuring their children's attendance and punctuality. Consequently, their children's progress is slowed.
36. The school is highly regarded by the community and the good links formed enhance the pupils' development. The school has developed a solid relationship with the local church and the vicar is a regular visitor. Many visitors to the school enhance the staff and pupils' appreciation of sport, art and music.
37. The school has built very good relationships with local pre-schools. Relationships with the adjacent junior school on the same site are very effective in easing transfer to junior school. The headteachers have established easy communications and subject co-ordinators meet regularly to discuss the transfer of pupils, support teachers' personal development, or to develop new initiatives. The school is part of a 'network learning' group of schools, which has focused on developing pupils' speaking and listening with success and encouraging the greater involvement of lunchtime assistants in improving behaviour and lunchtime activities. The school's relationship with Missouri State University has assisted the development of multicultural education for all pupils through the regular visitors from America.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher leads the school very well. The leadership provided by other senior staff is very good and subjects are very well managed. The school's governance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides very strong, well-organised leadership.
- The deputy headteacher and other members of the senior management team provide her with very good support and set high standards through the quality of their own teaching.
- The management of the Foundation Stage, for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is very good.
- The management of English and mathematics is very good.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

### **Commentary**

38. The headteacher gives a very clear direction to the work of staff and pupils. The staff respond to her high expectations and the school has improved teaching and learning and pupils' achievements well since the last inspection. The headteacher has clarified and strengthened

the roles of the senior management team and the way the curriculum is managed. These aspects of leadership had weaknesses at the time of the previous inspection. The responsibilities of the senior managers and curriculum leaders are now very clear and all play a full part in improving the school.

39. The headteacher has created a very good sense of teamwork amongst all staff. She has promoted a climate where teachers can teach and learning can flourish so the barriers faced by a significant number of pupils, who start school at an educational disadvantage, can be overcome. She has created a school which objectively and accurately evaluates its own performance in order to improve. This is a school that is still moving forward and one which is constantly looking for ways of engaging pupils and their parents in learning so that all pupils can do as well as possible, regardless of their starting point.
40. The deputy headteacher and other members of the senior management team lead by example, and, through their own high quality teaching, provide very good role models for the rest of the staff. They share the headteacher's pursuit of quality in the broader curriculum as well as in literacy and numeracy, although the school has rightly, been focusing in recent years on the need to raise standards in English and mathematics. Initiatives for improving basic skills have been very well managed and the impact of this can be seen in improved standards in both English and mathematics. Management decisions reflect the need to develop the skills of staff and arrangements for the performance management of staff are very good. Subject leaders are given a full range of responsibilities and these include the regular monitoring of performance of teachers and pupils. However, whilst teachers' subject knowledge is good in English and mathematics it is not consistently so in the rest of the curriculum. This is reflected in the wider variation found in the quality of teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics. The management of English, mathematics, the Foundation Stage, special educational needs and for pupils with English as an additional language is very good whilst it is mainly good in other subjects.
41. The governing body purposefully supports and challenges the work of the school. Many governors know the school well. They have curriculum responsibilities, have established links with subject managers and are actively monitoring the curriculum. They provide both support and challenge.
42. Financial management is good. The school prudently manages its resources and governors are well placed through their good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses to make the right financial decisions. Day to day arrangements for the administration of the budget are very good. The above average contingency fund at the end of the 2003/4 financial year was due to reserves being held for the completion of the pre-school special centre which has only very recently been completed. The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant is used well to support pupils with English as an additional language and funds for pupils with special educational needs are very wisely used. The school strives to obtain resources and services at the most competitive rates. It evaluates the school's performance against that of other schools and makes good use of the principles of best value.

## Financial information

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

| Income and expenditure (£) |         | Balances (£)                        |        |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income               | 674,151 | Balance from previous year          | 31,811 |
| Total expenditure          | 658,807 | Balance carried forward to the next | 47,156 |
| Expenditure per pupil      | 2,815   |                                     |        |



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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage and its leadership and management are **very good**. Progress since the previous inspection is good. The school has maintained its strengths and built further upon them. For example, provision is now excellent for children with special educational needs and for children's personal development whereas these areas were very good at the time of the previous inspection.

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

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **excellent**.

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

- Children's personal development is given high priority and this underpins all other learning.
- The school provides exceptionally good opportunities for links with parents, which help children to settle into school and feel happy and secure.
- There are excellent opportunities for children to develop independent learning skills.
- Assessment of individual needs is excellent and children are given high quality support, regardless of their initial starting point.
- Children are given very clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour.

#### **Commentary**

43. Children enter Reception with a wide range of social skills, although many have immature personal skills and a significant minority have emotional and behavioural difficulties. By the end of Reception, most will have met the Early Learning Goals. A few will not and are still likely to have special needs in their personal development. Overall, standards are average. All children achieve very well because of consistently high quality provision throughout all Reception classes. The school works very hard and effectively to promote close links between home and school, involving parents in their children's learning. Teaching and learning are excellent overall. Planning is very thorough and ensures that the school day contains a very good balance between teacher-directed and child initiated activities. At the time of the inspection, most children were successfully learning through whole-class teaching, guided group work or guided play. The very systematic teaching of 'plan, do and review' leads to the children making great strides in developing their independent learning skills. Excellent teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants underpins the consistent approach to very good relationships, behaviour management and the teaching of school routines. Children with difficulties are set careful targets and given excellent support for achieving them.

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

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

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

- High quality practical experiences enrich and underpin the development of children's speaking and thinking skills throughout the curriculum.
- The quality of role-play is very good throughout Reception.
- Early reading and writing skills are very well taught and the curriculum is excellently planned.
- The rigorous teaching of letter-sounds is made enjoyable and very meaningful to children.
- Children who are behind are given excellent extra help in developing speaking and early reading skills.

- More capable children are given challenging work and achieve very well.

### **Commentary**

44. Children achieve very well, including those with English as an additional language. Children with special educational needs make excellent progress. Teaching and learning are very good and sometimes excellent. By the end of Reception, overall standards are likely to be below those normally found at this age. Although most children have a sound vocabulary and speak confidently, a significant number are still limited in these areas despite the rapid progress they have made. Special attention is given to these children and they make excellent progress as a result of the enriched experiences provided. Children enjoy sharing a Big Book with the teacher and do very well in learning keywords, sounds and letters. A significant minority are below average in their understanding of phonics despite the rapid progress made. The children become very interested in learning to read in Reception and, by the time they leave, most recognise simple key words and a few more capable children read simple texts. The children make very good progress in learning to write although a significant minority are below average. A key strength is the way children's attainment is assessed and their experiences carefully planned to take learning forward whatever their initial starting points. Provision for children with special educational needs is excellent because of the sensitivity and rigour of the extra support provided for developing speaking and early reading skills. Teachers are very adept in developing pupils' love of language and use music excellently for 'singing' the words of class Big Book stories and rhymes. Role-play areas, for example 'The Townhill Shop', 'Changing Rooms' and 'The Weather Window' are used very effectively for developing language and literacy. Teachers and assistants show much skill when they intervene to move learning forward and are very effective.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very well planned practical activities underpin children's mathematical learning.
- Mathematics is made relevant because of the way it is related to every day experiences.
- Role-play and mathematical games are used very effectively for developing children's interest and understanding.

### **Commentary**

45. Children achieve very well because the quality of teaching and learning is very good. However, standards are likely to be below those expected by the end of Reception as a significant minority will not reach the Early Learning Goals, despite their rapid progress. Teachers take all opportunities throughout the curriculum to develop children's mathematical understanding. Children often count to at least ten, are beginning to order numbers to ten correctly and most have an awareness of higher numbers. More capable children are beginning to add numbers to ten correctly. A small minority have very low standards on entry. These children are interested in numbers but can only count a small number of objects, despite their very good progress. Computers are used very effectively to reinforce mathematical understanding. Children learn songs and rhymes and they are encouraged to count in many situations. Children develop their understanding of two- and three-dimensional shapes by using shapes to make wall paper patterns for the role play area 'Changing Rooms'.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well in developing their scientific enquiry skill and their understanding of computers.
- Role-play is used very effectively for developing children's understanding of people's jobs.

### Commentary

46. Children achieve very well because the quality of teaching and learning is very good. Standards are likely to be below those expected by the end of Reception as a significant minority will not reach the Early Learning Goals, despite their very good progress. Planning is very good and the children are given a very secure foundation in science, ICT and geography within the Foundation Stage curriculum. There is a very good balance between different ways of learning, for example exploring and discovering as well as focused group and class teaching. In science, 'Wow Boxes' contain high quality resources and children show much inquisitiveness when exploring the artefacts in these boxes. The right intervention by adults leads children to greater understanding. Focused teacher-led scientific enquiry is also very well planned, for example when the children tested different cars on ramps to find out how they moved. Children are confident when using computers, using a good range of programs competently, including ones with pictures, words, sounds and numbers. They achieve particularly well when creating pictures using graphics, and standards in ICT are likely to be similar to those in most schools by the end of Reception. Very good role-play areas enable children to learn about jobs, for example that of the decorator in 'Changing Rooms'.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good opportunities to use small apparatus and toys to develop co-ordination skills.
- Children achieve very well during physical movement in the hall but the safe outdoor area is small and does not have balancing and climbing equipment.

### Commentary

47. Children achieve well and, by the end of Reception, are likely to reach their Early Learning Goals. The quality of teaching and learning is very good although the lack of large equipment for climbing, balancing and scrambling restricts overall provision. The school is restricted in its outdoor space for Reception, although teachers make very good use of all available space and this is well equipped with trikes, bikes and cars. By the end of Reception, most children have successfully learned how to use a range of small and large equipment adeptly and have sound practical skills. Very good teaching and learning were seen during physical activity in the hall when children, pretending to be clowns, showed satisfactory awareness of space and moved freely and imaginatively during a dance lesson.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's ideas are valued and a high quality curriculum enables children to put their ideas into action.
- There is a good balance between skill development and opportunities for the children to 'create'.
- Role-play opportunities are used very effectively for stimulating imaginative play.

### **Commentary**

48. Children achieve very well although standards will be below average by the end of Reception. A significant minority will not reach their Early Learning Goals as these children are still only able to engage in imaginative role-play based on their immediate practical experiences. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and rich experiences are provided. Creative artwork is planned using meaningful themes, such as 'Colour' and 'The Big Top'. Children are encouraged to make pictures and models with a wide range of different media. Free-play activities are well organised and appealing and encourage children to use their imagination as well as exploring different materials. Role-play is very good and supported by good quality dressing up clothes and artefacts. Planning is very good and teaching assistants play vital roles in stimulating children of all abilities to imagine through role-play and acting out stories.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good, which leads to pupils' overall very good achievement.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Pupils' learning builds very well from that in Reception.
- Assessment and target setting are used very well for helping pupils achieve their best, including the more capable pupils.
- Opportunities for extended writing and for writing across the curriculum are good.

### **Commentary**

49. Standards in Year 2 have improved well since the last inspection and are now above average in reading and writing and average in speaking and listening. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 1 is below average and they achieve very well in reading and writing and well in speaking and listening. The school builds successfully on pupils' prior attainment and pupils with special educational needs and those who are more capable achieve very well. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve very well because they are fully involved in lessons and provided with very good opportunities for developing their speaking and listening.
50. By Year 2, standards are average in speaking and listening. Pupils achieve well. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening in English and mathematics whilst this area is good in other subjects. In English lessons, teachers' skillful questioning furthers pupils' thinking and probes their understanding. Teachers carefully consider pupils' views and take every opportunity to extend and reinforce their vocabulary. Pupils listen well to teachers and each other and work well in pairs and groups. Strategies such as 'talking partners' are very successfully used to help pupils share ideas and learn from each other. Teachers provide high quality practical experiences that underpin speaking and listening and subsequent literacy learning. In Year 1, a very good science lesson about scooters helped pupils to find out, through first-hand experiences, about the forces needed to make scooters move at different speeds. Subsequent discussion in class helped pupils to make very good progress in speaking in sentences and using the appropriate

vocabulary. A later writing lesson built very well upon this. Teachers successfully use drama and role-play for developing language and literacy. In the wider curriculum, opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills are less consistent than in English. The school has identified this as an area for improvement.

51. Standards in Year 2 in reading are above average after pupils have achieved very well throughout Years 1 and 2. Pupils are taught to read systematically and thoroughly, so that many read confidently, with obvious enjoyment and interest. They are given rigorous opportunities to practise their skills during shared reading in guided reading sessions. During these sessions, independent activities build on pupils' prior knowledge and effective links are forged between reading and writing. Parents are informed of individual targets and books are sent home regularly for reading practice. This furthers pupils' very good achievement.
52. Year 2 pupils' standards in writing are above average after they have achieved very well. Improvements in writing have been secured by setting into different ability groups so that pupils' work can be better matched to their wide range of attainment. There is a very structured approach to teaching writing, which includes teachers' very careful monitoring of pupils' progress in order to provide work that is well matched to pupils' needs. The effective teaching of letter sounds supports early writing and pupils are encouraged to write at every opportunity. Teachers use whiteboards very well for helping pupils to practise words and sentences. In Year 2, pupils recorded captions to explain the life-cycle of a butterfly, reflecting how well they respond to the teachers' high expectations for presentation and amount of work. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to create stories and extended pieces of writing and their handwriting and spelling skills are developed effectively through written activities and weekly tests. Computers are used satisfactorily for the reinforcement of spelling and letter sounds and for word processing.
53. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and has improved very well since the last inspection. Teachers know their pupils well and have high expectations for their success. As a result, pupils are offered tasks that are well adapted to their learning needs. They are keen to learn because teachers make the curriculum interesting and relevant by, for example, combining science or history with writing. Pupils are aware of their targets and assessment is used very well to inform future planning. Marking, which follows an agreed format, is effective and is used very well by most teachers to highlight points for development. Teaching assistants provide well-focused support and record pupils' achievements well.
54. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. Thorough analysis of pupils' achievements leads to development and improvement in each area. Monitoring and evaluation of lessons and planning focus on improving teaching and learning and the co-ordinator advises teachers and passes on information effectively. Procedures for staff training are good, and the school is constantly seeking ways in which pupils' achievement may be further improved.

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

55. Reading and writing skills are regularly used to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to write at length in history, geography and religious education and they write labels and captions in science. Teachers frequently employ drama or role-play to enrich pupils' understanding. Opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening are good overall. Speaking and listening skills are developed in all subjects. However, in different classes in the same year group, the quality of opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills is more variable in the broader curriculum than in English.



## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make very good progress throughout the school and achieve above average standards by Year 2.
- Very effective teaching ensures that pupils learn very well in lessons and are enthusiastic.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good and use all available information to identify areas for improvement.
- More capable pupils and those with special educational needs or English as an additional language make very good progress.
- The use of mathematics across the curriculum is inconsistent and ICT is not always rigorously used in numeracy lessons.

### Commentary

56. Standards in the current Year 2 are above average. All pupils' achievement is now very good as a result of consistently effective teaching. The consistent matching of pupils' work to their accurately assessed needs ensures all pupils make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Very effective assessment systems are in place, enabling staff to regularly check that pupils' progress is consistent and provide additional support for pupils if needed. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards and pupils' achievement are better and there has been good improvement in the quality of teaching.
57. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a very good grounding in number calculation, shape, space and measures, and handling information. They are provided with very good opportunities to explain how they have worked out an answer. There are very good opportunities for them to apply their learning and for solving problems within mathematics lessons, although this is not as developed in science.
58. Teaching and learning in lessons are very good. Teachers plan very effectively from the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons start with a brisk mental arithmetic session that pupils enjoy, making effective use of a variety of resources. In one lesson observed, particularly successful teaching ensured that pupils' misconceptions of the work were corrected before they built upon their learning further. Classes are very well managed and teaching assistants very effectively support pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. As a result, these pupils achieve very well. Much of the learning throughout the school is practically based, providing lots of opportunities for pupils to reinforce their understanding of a new idea in many different ways. In an extremely effective Year 2 lesson, pupils were encouraged to develop their knowledge and understanding of number through skilful questioning and use of vocabulary, ensuring all pupils were actively involved and able to demonstrate their developing grasp of place value. The use of ICT within mathematics is satisfactory, although computers are not always used to their full advantage by every teacher for helping pupils learn during group work.
59. Leadership and management of mathematics are very effective. The rigorous checking of pupils' performance and progress has ensured that any areas for improvement are identified and action is taken to improve achievement, whatever the cause. There is a detailed action plan in place to further improve the teaching of mathematics throughout the school and to ensure the current high quality of pupils' learning is maintained. A recent focus on the practical ways in which pupils can learn provided the basis for a successful themed 'Maths Village'. Staff and the local mathematics advisor worked alongside pupils in a wide variety of activities, reinforcing the idea that mathematics can be fun and learning can benefit from a practical approach. The need to use ICT regularly has been identified and software has been purchased.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

60. The use of mathematics in other subjects is satisfactory. There are some good examples, such as accurate measuring in design and technology. However, the use of mathematics in science is not as rigorous, which prevents pupils perceiving the usefulness of mathematics in their daily lives.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and there are examples of very good teaching in both Years 1 and 2.
- Relevant practical activity underpins all pupils' learning but not all teachers consistently develop specific experimental skills.
- Resources are very well organised and help teachers to teach and pupils to learn.
- There are lost opportunities for pupils to use ICT in science.

### **Commentary**

61. Standards in Year 2 are average and, overall, pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, when pupils' progress was satisfactory. Overall, pupils' scientific knowledge is stronger than their investigative skills. Pupils achieve very well in their understanding of the importance of diet and exercise on keeping healthy and in their understanding of properties of materials. Teaching and learning are systematically good in these aspects. When investigating, pupils carry out suggestions of how to find things out, use simple equipment satisfactorily and develop sound observation skills. However, not all pupils take responsibility for their own work when experimenting or work without direct adult supervision. Pupils' prediction skills and awareness of the fair test do not develop as consistently as they should, which particularly restricts the learning of higher attaining pupils. Examination of previous work also indicates that pupils are given inconsistent opportunities to suggest their own ideas for finding answers to simple problems.
62. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress because of much practical work and small-group discussion where they can develop their speaking, listening and thinking. There are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls.
63. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are good overall, but vary from very good to satisfactory in both Years 1 and 2. This is because teachers' subject knowledge for teaching investigative science is better in some classes than others. In all lessons, teachers provide relevant practical tasks for teaching observation skills and scientific knowledge. However, in very good lessons teachers focus thoroughly on teaching particular enquiry skills as well as providing high quality learning opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge. In a very good Year 2 lesson, for example, when pupils found out about the impact of exercise on changes in their bodies, prediction as well as observation skills were well taught. In satisfactory lessons, there is not enough planning for pupils to take responsibility for their own work and the development of particular enquiry skills is less rigorous than the development of knowledge.
64. The use of literacy and ICT within science is satisfactory. There are very good opportunities for Year 1 pupils to develop their reading when they consult simple information books to find out about the uses of different materials. However, little extended writing was seen in science for higher attaining pupils in Year 2 although there was some very good work in Year 1. The use of mathematics within science is mainly satisfactory but teachers do not make full use of the opportunities that arise for pupils to use mathematics for collecting, recording and

searching for patterns in their investigative work. When using computers, pupils use word processing and research for information. Data handling software is used but infrequently and opportunities to develop these skills are sometimes missed.

65. Overall, subject leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator is keen and has appropriate subject knowledge. She has identified the main priorities for further development and monitors teachers' work in science. However, subject development in science has been hampered recently as whole-school development has needed to focus on improving standards in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum ensures that pupils learn through practical activities, but not enough guidance is given for the systematic development of experimental skills. This, together with a lack of recent training, leaves some teachers not always sure about how best to do this. Assessment procedures are good overall. However, they are stronger for scientific knowledge than for experimental science.

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

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers use new technology well to enhance learning across the curriculum.
- There are good plans in place for enhancing all subjects through ICT with appropriate software.
- The use of computers across the curriculum is inconsistent.
- Standards and provision are not as good as at the time of the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

66. Standards in Year 2 are average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, including for those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. At the time of the last inspection provision was judged to be good and standards were above average. The school has succeeded in keeping up with new technology, such as electronic microscopes, and has recently installed interactive whiteboards in every year group.
67. Teachers teach computer skills satisfactorily but the use of the skills to support learning is not consistently supported across Years 1 and 2. The interactive whiteboards, only installed in the last half of the autumn term, are used very well to facilitate learning in other subjects, for example in English, mathematics, music and art and design. However, these whiteboards are not yet used to their full potential to teach ICT skills to the whole class.
68. Year 2 pupils use computers to generate ideas in the form of graphics well. They create Lowry style pictures in art and design and design pictures to show 'Joseph's Technicolour Dreamcoat' in design and technology. Pupils have sound word processing skills and keyboard familiarity. Pupils throughout Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactory standards when they show mathematical data in the form of simple tables, such as their favourite fruits and foods, and control the school's programmable toy 'Roamer' by creating sets of instructions.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Direct teaching of ICT was seen in lessons in English, mathematics, science and art and design. In these lessons, pupils developed their ICT skills and ICT also helped pupils to learn their subjects well. However, not all teachers always make full use of computers to help pupils learn. Although medium-term plans for all subjects show good ICT links, these are not always transferred to shorter-term planning. Overall, teachers have sound subject knowledge, with some good expertise in both Year 1 and Year 2. These skilled teachers use every opportunity to ensure pupils develop and apply their ICT skills within different subjects. Within each class, teachers keep satisfactory records to ensure pupils are given equal access to the computer.

70. The co-ordination of ICT is currently satisfactory. A good action plan has been written that emphasises pupils' use of ICT within subjects. A temporary co-ordinator is in post until the new ICT co-ordinator is able to take up her post in September. Monitoring now needs to focus on the consistency of the rigour of teaching ICT skills and the use of ICT across the curriculum in every class.

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

71. Pupils' use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. The new whiteboards are enhancing provision in subjects. Pupils often use these during group work and teachers use them effectively in whole-class lessons as well. Pupils' use of ICT in the form of graphics in art and design is good. Their use of ICT within other subjects is satisfactory although sometimes inconsistent from lesson to lesson.

### **HUMANITIES**

72. In humanities, work was sampled in history and geography as the inspection timetable did not include lessons in these subjects. It was, not possible, therefore to form an overall judgement about provision in either subject.
73. Pupils' work in **history** shows Year 2 pupils have a good knowledge of famous people, such as Florence Nightingale. Their understanding of chronology develops well through, for example, comparing 'old' and 'new' buildings. Pupils write extensively about what they have found out about these. Good use is made of visits, for example, to the Weald and Downland museum, to further develop their understanding of history. A strong feature of pupils' work in **geography** is the development of pupils' mapping skills. They draw simple maps of the locality and use keys to these. They enjoy the travels of 'Paddington Bear'. This toy bear is taken by pupils and teachers on their travels and photographed. On his return, pupils locate where he has been on atlases and globes, thus building pupils' knowledge of places further away. Good use is made of walks around the immediate area. Pupils are well able to record what they like and dislike about it and the improvements they would like to make. A straightforward system of assessment is used to track pupils' progress in both history and geography. Examinations of pupils' work and teachers' planning in both history and geography indicate that statutory requirements are met for covering the National Curriculum. All evidence suggests good leadership and management of both subjects.

### **Religious education**

Provision for religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Artefacts and opportunities for enrichment within the local community are effectively used to promote learning.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good and give teachers effective guidance.
- Good teaching leads pupils to a deeper understanding of their own and others' views.
- There is little evidence of the use of ICT within religious education.

### **Commentary**

74. Standards meet those set out in the locally agreed syllabus by Year 2. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The school's detailed planning and regular checks on pupils' understanding ensure that all pupils are taught well. The subject is well led and managed, with both strengths and areas for improvement being identified as a result of regular discussions between staff.

75. Much of the pupils' learning comes from first-hand experiences, opportunities for discussion and role-play. As a result, pupils are able to reflect upon and talk with meaning about what they have learnt. There are many opportunities for recording that extend pupils' literacy skills. In Years 1 and 2 they have gained their knowledge of some key aspects of Christianity from listening to stories, both in the classroom and during assemblies, visiting the local church and exploring a range of artefacts. They learn about the Hindu religion through a similar approach.
76. Pupils achieve well throughout the school as a result of good teaching. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, skilful questioning enabled pupils to reflect on aspects of friendship that were important to them. They were then able to make simple comparisons with the friendship Jesus had with his disciples. Staff deal well with pupils' questions and experiences, enabling them to develop an understanding and empathy with others' feelings and beliefs. There is limited evidence of the use of ICT within religious education.

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

77. Physical education, art and design and music were inspected in full and are reported on below. Design and technology was sampled.
78. In **design and technology**, no lessons were seen, although pupils' work was sampled and the co-ordinator's plans were examined. The subject is well led by a very keen and knowledgeable co-ordinator. Evidence from pupils' previous work indicates that an appropriate range of materials is covered in Years 1 and 2. There was evidence of high quality designing and making when Year 1 pupils designed and made fruit kebabs. The strong links with both art and design and science enhanced pupils' learning. There is also evidence of good quality textile technology in Year 2 when pupils designed a technicolour coat for Joseph. In this project, links with religious education, art and design and ICT are very good. In Year 2, pupils showed sound craft skills when they made rooms for historical characters from paper and card. However, their designing skills were limited in this project because they selected only from a narrow range of materials. All evidence suggests pupils apply their mathematics well to all their designing and making activities.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 2. Pupils' painting is a strength.
- Workshops and participation in national initiatives enhance the curriculum.
- A wide range of media is used.
- Practical skills are well taught but schemes of work are not always interpreted creatively.

### **Commentary**

79. Standards in art and design are above expectations. The achievement of all pupils is good. The school has maintained the good standards, achievement and teaching found at the time of the last inspection.
80. Teaching and learning are good and pupils are provided with a good range of artistic opportunities that link well with other curriculum areas. In Year 1, pupils were learning about textiles and their properties and effective links were forged with science. Pupils in both Year 2 classes were enthusiastic when completing detailed pictures in the style of Lowry. Techniques for using charcoal were demonstrated very effectively and the teachers' good subject knowledge encouraged pupils to observe and work skilfully. The finished results demonstrated good skills of painting and drawing with charcoal and pastels. Very good use

was made of ICT when pupils created Lowry style pictures using a computer program. By Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of the work of different artists. Pupils produced good quality work when they designed and made beach paintings in the style of Edgar Degas. The steady build up of painting skills, combined with the good opportunities for pupils to express their ideas, resulted in good learning.

81. The school portfolio shows that pupils are introduced to a range of topics that allows them to access all types of media. Work on the National Gallery 'Take one picture' project enabled pupils to develop different skills and explore ideas. 'Arts Weeks' involve artists in residence and a planned art exhibition will involve parents as helpers. Sketchbooks are used to prepare for topics although their use could be further developed with more emphasis on close observational drawing. Sometimes, topics do not develop pupils' creativity or allow for enough individual expression.
82. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who monitors lessons and displays. Assessment is linked to each topic and analysis of standards is undertaken. It is good and used well.

## **MUSIC**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and assessment are good.
- The curriculum is enhanced by visitors and community links.

### **Commentary**

83. Standards in music are in line with those expected nationally. All pupils achieve well and the needs of different groups are considered and addressed.
84. The quality of teaching and learning is good. It has improved since the last inspection. In the lessons seen, teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and had high expectations of pupils. In Year 1, pupils were given challenging activities as they investigated pitch and duration. The effective use of resources, such as large drums, motivated and encouraged pupils and their achievement was good. By Year 2, pupils handle percussion instruments well and are able to play them to good effect, with regard for dynamics and tempo. They respond well to the teachers' directions and demonstrate their developing knowledge of musical terminology. The interactive whiteboard was used to demonstrate tempo very effectively. Pupils' attitudes to music are good and they listen and respond well. In assemblies, they sing tunefully to the accompaniment of the piano or a backing tape, with good diction, pitch and dynamics.
85. Visits and workshops involving musicians, such as the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, and music weeks enhance the curriculum. Pupils sing at local and city events and parents are invited to concerts and productions.
86. Leadership and management of the subject are good and the co-ordinator monitors and analyses standards. Teachers are given support, and assessment and resources are good. They are used well to support the needs of all pupils, including the more capable. Progress since the last inspection is good.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Athletics tuition by the professional coach is very good.
- Visitors to the school and clubs enhance the curriculum.
- Assessment and monitoring are effective in improving provision.

### **Commentary**

87. Standards in physical education in Year 2 are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils achieve well, particularly in lessons taken by an athletics coach in 'the speed, agility and quickness programme'.
88. Teaching and learning are good and, where there is strong expertise, such that of the athletics coach, they are very good. Pupils responded very well in Year 2 to the challenges set by the coach and the standards reached by over half the class were above average, with pupils rapidly learning running techniques and moving through hurdles with confidence and co-ordination. In the other Year 2 lessons observed, teaching was more variable and ranged from good to satisfactory and standards were average. In good dance lessons, teachers have high expectations and their good subject knowledge enables them to teach skills thoroughly as well as providing good opportunities for pupils to respond creatively. In the satisfactory lesson observed, the teaching of skills was not so well matched to pupils' prior attainment and the lesson had a slower pace. Assessment is good overall.
89. The subject is well led and managed. Visitors include Irish and Indian dancers, who have given demonstrations and workshops, and from the maypole dancing club. There are also meaningful links with other areas of the curriculum such as literacy and personal development. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP**

90. Few specific lessons were seen in this area due to the inspection timetable. However, pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship are major parts of all the school's work and underpin all that the school does from the moment children start in Reception. Examination of provision and its impact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour shows that there is very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. PSHE is planned very well across the curriculum and includes weekly lessons in all classes. Although there is no school council, the school seeks to involve pupils in its running and takes their views seriously so they influence the school's work. Pupils' views are requested during personal, social and health education lessons and the headteacher runs regular 'tea parties' to listen to the views of pupils. Assessment and recording of pupils' personal development is very good and the staff's very good knowledge of the pupils enables them to provide high quality pastoral care. The school's emphasis on meeting the emotional needs of pupils, and helping them understand their own and other people's feelings, helps the pupils to adjust to life in school. The school employs a teaching assistant who is a trained counsellor to help pupils in their social and emotional adjustment. The school has made appropriate provision for sex education and drugs awareness. Pupils are given many opportunities to work together in pairs and small teams and, in mathematics, there are very good opportunities for them to solve problems, although this is less pronounced in science.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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



*poor (6); very poor (7).*