

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WELLS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Woodford Green, Redbridge

LEA area: Redbridge

Unique reference number: 102831

Headteacher: Ms Diane Brereton

Lead inspector: David Whatson

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> July 2005

Inspection number: 268212

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	306, plus 31 part-time in the nursery
School address:	Barclay Oval Woodford Green Essex
Postcode:	IG8 0PP
Telephone number:	(0208) 798 0500
Fax number:	(0208) 870 0501
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Linda Porter
Date of previous inspection:	March 22 <sup>nd</sup> 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Wells Primary School is bigger than most other primary schools. There are 306 pupils plus a further 31 who attend the nursery part-time. Some of these pupils are taught in classes that contain pupils from two year groups (mixed-age classes). The school is situated on the outskirts of London where nearly all of the accommodation is in owner-occupied housing. The economic circumstances of most families in the area are well above the national average; the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. Pupil mobility at the school is higher than the national average. Overall, there are more boys than girls, although this varies significantly from year to year. There is a small group of pupils who are in public care. The school is very ethnically diverse; there are 17 different ethnic heritages represented at the school, although by far the largest consists of those from a White British background. Although a higher proportion of pupils than average do not have English as their first language, none of these are at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average, although the percentage of those with statements of special educational needs is above. Most of these pupils have either specific learning difficulties or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Children's level of attainment on entry to the nursery is above that expected. The school has experienced difficulties recruiting and retaining staff over a lengthy period, and during the period 2000 to 2002, standards fell, as did pupils' achievement. Since the last inspection, most of the staff have changed, including the headteacher (appointed September 2002) and deputy head (appointed January 2005).

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23494	Mr David Whatson	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage Curriculum Science Religious education
9092	Mr Ron Elam	Lay inspector	
5565	Mrs Bimla Thakur	Team inspector	Mathematics History Geography Art and design Design and technology
20893	Mr David Curtis	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Music Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>7 - 10</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>10 - 15</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>15 - 16</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>17 - 29</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>30</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Wells Primary School provides a **satisfactory** level of education. Standards are in line with those expected, and all pupils achieve satisfactorily. The quality of teaching and learning is sound. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

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

- Overall, standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Years 2 and 6 are above, and sometimes well above, those expected.
- Pupils underachieve in a few subjects, and standards in these are below those expected.
- School self-evaluation is not firmly established and development planning is not sharply focused.
- Assessment is not used well enough to change the lesson plans so that all pupils make progress or are involved in their own learning.
- The Foundation Stage provides a good start to children's education.
- Pupils' good moral and social development promotes good attitudes, relationships and behaviour.
- Links with parents are unsatisfactory; good relationships have broken down.
- There is a good range of opportunities outside the classroom to enrich pupils' learning.

All of the issues identified in the last inspection have been satisfactorily addressed. However, shortly before the appointment of the current headteacher, standards and achievement, especially at the end of Year 2, were falling and were lower than at the time of the last inspection. Since 2002, there have been some good improvements, but because of acute problems with recruiting and retaining staff over the last six years, there remain pockets of underachievement, and the rate of school improvement has been slow. Improvement, therefore, has been satisfactory.

#### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A\* - very high; 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.*

Overall, pupils, including those with English as an additional language, achieve **satisfactorily**. Attainment on entry to the nursery is above that expected. Overall, children in the Foundation Stage achieve well, and it is likely that most will exceed, and sometimes far exceed, the expected goals for the end of reception. Standards at the end of Year 2 are improving at a faster rate than in most other schools. Standards at the end of 2004 were well above the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. All pupils achieved very well, except in reading, where achievement was good. Current standards and achievement are similar to those of 2004, except in reading, where as a result of underachievement, standards are now in line with those expected. Over the last five years, pupils' performance in Year 6 has been declining; in the last two years, this has been dramatically reversed in mathematics and science. Overall, standards in the 2004 national tests were well above the national average and all pupils achieved very well, except in English, where achievement was good. In English, current standards are similar to those of 2004 and in

relation to their prior attainment, pupils achieve well. Standards in mathematics and science are currently above those expected, and in relation to their prior attainment, pupils achieve well. Standards in these two subjects are lower than those of 2004 due to higher number of pupils with special educational needs. There are differences in the attainment of boys and girls, but there is no pattern to this and it is due to the differences in the number of boys and girls in each year group and their ability. All pupils achieve satisfactorily, irrespective of ethnicity or how long they have been in the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily. Gifted and talented pupils do not achieve as well as they could because of a lack of identification and provision.

Standards in music (in particular, singing) are good across the school, as they are in personal, social and health education; pupils achieve satisfactorily in both. Standards in information and communication technology, history, art and design, and physical education are in line with those expected in Years 2 and 6, and in relation to their prior attainment, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards in religious education are above those expected in Year 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily, but they are below in Year 6, and pupils underachieve. Standards and achievement are also below those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6 in design and technology and geography.

Pupils' personal development is **good**. Pupils' moral and social development is good, and their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**.

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is often good, as it is in some subjects. Here, teachers use their good knowledge and confidence to plan lessons that contain interesting and well-resourced activities that engage all pupils. However, in many subjects, teachers do not use their knowledge of pupils to provide sufficiently challenging activities for all pupils. Assessment is unsatisfactory. Pupils' progress is satisfactorily tracked in some subjects, but in many subjects there is no whole-school approach to assessment. Pupils are not closely involved in their own learning and do not therefore always know how to improve.

The curriculum is satisfactory and well enriched by new initiatives and out-of-class activities. Both the accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The school provides well for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety. Pupils benefit from satisfactory levels of support and guidance in both their academic and personal development. Pupils' involvement in the life of the school is good. The links with parents are unsatisfactory; those with other schools and the community are satisfactory.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher, and key staff, is sound. The headteacher has been effective in bringing about some improvement. The school's system of self-evaluation and its development planning, although successful in promoting some school improvement, are not as accurate or as sharply focused as they could be. Governance is satisfactory; the governors have tried to reduce staff mobility. They fulfil all their statutory duties.

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

Overall, most parents are satisfied with the school, but a significant minority are dissatisfied about a number of issues, in particular, how their views are gathered and acted upon. Most pupils state that they are happy with the school and that teachers are fair and trusting.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards and achievement in those few subjects where pupils are either underachieving or where standards are below those expected.
- Make the school's system of self-evaluation and the school improvement plan more comprehensive and rigorous.
- Make greater use of assessment information to inform teachers' planning in all subjects and involve pupils more in their own assessment in order to increase their knowledge of how they can improve.
- Re-build the good partnership that they had with parents in the past.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, and standards are above those expected.

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

- In recent years, overall standards in both Years 2 and 6 have been improving; the results of the 2004 national tests were well above the national average.
- In the national tests in 2004, pupils achieved very well in both Years 2 and 6; this is an improvement upon previous years.
- At times, pupils do not achieve as well as they could in their reading or writing.
- Overall, achievement in the Foundation Stage is good, and standards of attainment at the end of Reception are above those expected.
- In a few subjects, pupils underachieve, and in these subjects, standards are below those expected.
- Gifted and talented pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

#### **Commentary**

1. Attainment on entry to the nursery is above that expected. Due to good leadership and teaching and learning, children achieve well in the Foundation Stage. It is therefore likely that children currently in reception will far exceed the expected goals in their personal, creative, and physical development by the time they start Year 1, because of particularly good provision in these areas of learning. However, in their language and mathematical development, and their knowledge and understanding of the world, it is possible that most will exceed the goals. Here, their achievement is only satisfactory as some children do not always do as well as they could in the development of their reading and writing.
2. The results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to all schools. Because the school has made raising achievement a priority in these subjects, the results are significantly higher than in the previous three years, and improvement in pupils' performance is above the national trend. In English, the strongest performance was in writing, and the weakest was in reading. In relation to the results of pupils at other schools with similar backgrounds, pupils in this year group achieved very well in writing, mathematics and well in reading; a few pupils did not achieve as well as they could have done in reading. Teacher-assessed science results in 2004 were well above the national average, and achievement was very good.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.5 (16.2)	15.8 (17.7)
writing	16.5 (15.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.0 (17.5)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 44 pupils in the year group (27 boys and 17 girls). Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. The overall high standards attained in 2004 in Year 2 have been maintained. Current standards in writing, mathematics and science in Year 2 are well above those expected, and in relation to their prior attainment, pupils have achieved well, especially in writing and

mathematics. But in reading, pupils' performance has been unsatisfactory and standards are in line with those expected.

4. The trend in overall performance in the national tests at the end of Year 6 over the last five years has been below that of the national trend because of the decline in standards in English. The school has been more successful in reversing the downward trend in mathematics and science. The 2004 results in mathematics and science were a great improvement upon the 2003 results; they were well above the national average in both mathematics and science. However, in English, they remained above the national average for the third consecutive year. Overall, in comparison with the results of pupils at schools with similar prior attainment, pupils' achievement in 2004 was the best out of the last four years. This was because pupils performed exceptionally well in mathematics and very well in science. Achievement in English was good because high attaining pupils only achieved satisfactorily.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (28.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	29.7 (28.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.6 (29.0)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 43 pupils in the year group (21 boys and 22 girls). Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

5. Overall standards in the current Year 6 have fallen. In mathematics and science, although most pupils are performing at the expected level for their age, there are fewer pupils working above that level when compared to the previous year. This is because there are considerably more girls than boys in the year group, and a significant proportion of the girls have special educational needs. Standards in mathematics and science are above those expected. In English, standards remain above those expected. However, because of the school's continued focus on pupils' achievement, in relation to their prior attainment, overall achievement in mathematics and science has been good. It is good overall in English, because although pupils achieve very well in reading and standards are well above those expected, standards in writing are only above expectations.
6. Over the last few years, there have been differences in the attainment of boys and girls at the end of both Years 2 and 6. There is no clear pattern to this as there have been significant differences in the gender balances of each year group.
7. Due to the correct focus successfully given to the main subjects of the curriculum, some other subjects have not been developed and standards and achievement are often lower than they should be. In recent years, there have been great improvements in provision for information and communication technology, and pupils now achieve satisfactorily in both Years 2 and 6, which was not the case at the time of the last inspection. Standards in music (particularly singing, the only aspect of music seen during the inspection), and in personal, social and health education, are above those expected, and in relation to their prior attainment pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards in history, art and design, and physical education in both Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected, and in relation to their prior attainment, pupils achieve satisfactorily. In design and technology and geography in both Years 2 and 6, standards are below those expected and pupils underachieve. Standards in religious education in Year 2 are above those expected and pupils achieve satisfactorily, but in Year 6 standards are below expectations and pupils have underachieved.
8. Overall, pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily, although when measured against the targets on their individual education plans, they make good progress. The school's analysis of the performance of the many pupils who, although competent in English, have English as an additional language, indicates that they achieve as well as their class-mates.

Overall, gifted and talented pupils underachieve. They have not all been identified or provided for. In its own self-evaluation and improvement planning, the school has identified the urgent need to improve the provision for these pupils. The school is very ethnically diverse, but the number of pupils from any one particular ethnic group within a year is very small. The school's analysis of its data indicates that there is no noticeable or consistent difference in the achievement of any particular group. Because of the school's caring ethos and pupils' good attitudes, pupils who join the school after Year 2 achieve as well as their classmates in all subjects.

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

Overall, pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are good. Pupils' personal development is good; their moral and social development is good, their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Almost all pupils have a positive attitude to school and behave well; this supports their learning well.
- Pupils respond well to the good opportunities for their personal development.
- Pupils take responsibility seriously. They develop good levels of maturity by the time they reach Year 6.

### **Commentary**

9. As at the time of the last inspection, most pupils like school and are keen to do well; they arrive in school attentive, curious and well behaved. It is only when set challenging tasks that pupils respond very well; on most occasions, they are attentive but not enthusiastic, as the teaching often fails to engage them fully. Standards of behaviour in lessons and around the school are good, as they were at the time of the last inspection. All staff insist on high standards of behaviour in lessons, and there is a good system of rewards and sanctions that results in pupils clearly knowing right from wrong. Although there are occasional instances of bullying and racist comments, these are dealt with well when brought to the attention of the staff. Only one pupil was excluded during the last school year for extremely poor behaviour.

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No. of pupils on roll	No. of fixed period exclusions	No. of permanent exclusions
White – British	211	1	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – Other	20	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	5	0	0
Mixed – Other	10	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	12	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	9	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Other	9	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	7	0	0

Black or Black British – African	10	0	0
Black or Black British – Other	11	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0
Other	15	0	0

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

10. Relationships are harmonious and pupils work well together in groups and in paired discussions, maintaining the good relationships noted at the last inspection. Pupils' relationships with their peers and with adults contribute well to the quality of work in lessons and to the progress they make. Through the playground committee and the recently established school council, pupils take seriously their responsibilities of living in a community, and have been instrumental in changing the school environment. However, the school does not use all the opportunities available to maximise pupils' personal development.
11. Pupils' spiritual awareness is satisfactory. In most cases, religious education lessons successfully help pupils to gain insight into the values and beliefs of others. The regular celebration of pupils' academic and personal achievement during assemblies develops well a sense of community, self-esteem and confidence as well as providing an adequate period of reflection. Some lessons spontaneously result in pleasant surprises and a pride in their work but other more formally planned opportunities are not fully utilised to support pupils' spiritual development. There are now many good activities within subjects such as geography and history through which pupils develop a satisfactory awareness of national, western and modern British culture in all of its diversity.

### Attendance

12. The level of attendance is at a similar level to that seen at the last inspection and is satisfactory. Even though the school makes adequate efforts to promote good attendance, some parents insist on taking their children out of school for holidays during term time. A few pupils are late in the mornings, though usually by only a few minutes.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.0	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Both teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessment is unsatisfactory. The curriculum is sound and supported with many good activities that enrich pupils' learning. The accommodation and resources are adequate. The arrangements for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are good. The support, advice and guidance provided to pupils for both their personal and academic development are satisfactory. Pupils' involvement in the life and work of the school is good. Links with parents are unsatisfactory. Those with other schools and the community are sound.

#### Teaching and learning

Both teaching and learning are satisfactory; assessment is unsatisfactory.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- In many instances, pupils want to learn because lessons are interesting, well paced and use stimulating resources.
- Teachers do not use assessment well enough to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities.
- Pupils learn well because teachers encourage and engage well with them.
- There is a lack of assessment in many subjects.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and provides well for all children.
- Pupils are not fully involved in evaluating their own progress and do not always know what to do to improve.

### Commentary

13. Although overall teaching and learning remain similar to what it was at the time of the last inspection, when it was also judged to be satisfactory, this time no unsatisfactory teaching was observed and the teaching in Years 1 and 2 is generally much better than it was then. There were also examples of good and very good teaching and learning, of which a high proportion were in the Foundation Stage, especially the Nursery.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	9 (21%)	15 (43%)	19 (44%)	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.*

14. A real strength in nearly all the lessons observed was the quality of relationships and the good management by teachers of pupils' behaviour. There is a pleasant and supportive rapport between pupils and teachers so that lessons are orderly and safe; pupils behave well and have the confidence to ask questions and participate in all aspects of the lesson. This includes pupils from different ethnic minorities and those new to the school. The good working atmosphere that this creates builds on pupils' good attitudes and behaviour and encourages them to be attentive and productive.
15. In most lessons and in most year groups, teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject and how to teach it; this is particularly true in the Foundation Stage where a well-planned learning environment that covers all six areas of learning in an interesting way engages children well. In most cases, teachers organise lively, interesting, and well-resourced activities that encourage pupils' development of skills and knowledge. The good use of questions by teachers encourages pupils to think and develop their spoken language. Many lessons frequently include paired, group and practical work, which, because of pupils' good attitudes, makes a valuable contribution to their learning. These, along with a good variety of teaching strategies, often capture pupils' interest and help them deepen their knowledge and understanding. Not enough use is made of computers to assist teaching and learning. Work is soundly supported by the homework that is regularly sent home and the support provided by parents. However, teachers are not as secure in the teaching of reading to younger pupils and reception children or in the teaching of writing to the older pupils, and this adds to pupils' underachievement in these subjects.
16. Learning support assistants are briefed and deployed well to support pupils with special educational needs. Their sensitive and informed direction, based on pupils' good individual education plans, supports their good learning in relation to their own objectives, and involvement by pupils in the lesson. Generally, the support offered by teaching assistants is satisfactory. Some provide great support to both pupils and teachers. However, on a few occasions in reception, because of their lack of involvement in the planning and assessing of children's learning, support staff do not always offer enough challenge in their interactions with children. Such interactions are often very good in nursery and contribute well to the good equality of opportunity found there. Further up the school, the lack of additional adults in a few

lessons occasionally slows the learning of older pupils, as they do not have quick or direct access to guidance when they are in difficulty.

17. Although lesson planning ensures the steady development of skills as well as content, planning is overall unsatisfactory. It is good in the Foundation Stage, particularly in the nursery, where there is a close link made between assessments and planning. However, elsewhere, teachers do not clearly identify the appropriate learning intentions for pupils of different abilities in their plans. Therefore, pupils in the same class, irrespective of age or ability, may be working towards the same goal; for some, it is too complex and for others, too easy. Pupils do not, therefore, learn as well as they could.
18. Assessment is unsatisfactory and has deteriorated since the last inspection; it is satisfactory for those pupils with special educational needs. It is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, mainly because, although the nursery frequently assesses children and uses this to identify the next step in their learning, this is not the case in reception. Further up the school, although most of the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and computing are regularly assessed and monitored, there are some subjects where formal assessments or the tracking of pupils' progress do not take place. Where there is assessment information, as in reading, teachers do not use this well to identify challenging tasks for pupils of different abilities. Overall, pupils are rarely involved in their own learning and do not know how to improve. This is because only in the best lessons do teachers return to the learning intentions that they gave pupils at the start of a lesson and use them to involve pupils in evaluating their own work to identify what they need to do next. In most subjects, pupils do not have their own targets and are not always clear about what they need to do next to improve. The marking of pupils' work does not help this; although work is regularly checked, marking does not identify how a pupil could improve.

## **The curriculum**

Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are good. Overall, the accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A weakness in the planning of the curriculum hinders pupils' academic development.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities in the Foundation Stage are good.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to benefit from enrichment of the curriculum.

## **Commentary**

19. Since the recent review of the curriculum by the headteacher that identified it as being too narrow and not meeting the needs of the pupils, the curriculum has been strengthened. Overall, it has improved significantly since the last inspection, when it was judged as unsatisfactory. Sufficient time is allocated to each subject of the National Curriculum and to religious education to give the curriculum satisfactory breadth. Acts of collective worship comply with statutory requirements. Although the use of computers in the suite is now carefully planned, opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills are not. To invigorate the curriculum, pupils' academic learning and personal development, the headteacher has recently introduced two key new initiatives that have been warmly welcomed by pupils; firstly, the production of an opera and secondly, the development of a more multicultural curriculum.
20. The curriculum is well planned in the nursery and reception classes and supports children's good achievement, providing them with a firm base on which to build. The curriculum is satisfactorily planned in Years 1 to 6. The school has appropriately modified national and local guidance so that the curriculum provides for the steady development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. But some classes contain pupils from two year groups; the deciding factor is their age. The current termly or half termly planning does not always

explicitly state what pupils of different ages are expected to do. Therefore, in some classes, pupils from two different year groups are covering the same work at the same level.

21. The school enriches the curriculum well by organising many relevant trips out of school and arranging visitors to the school. There is a good number of lunchtime and after-school clubs, including ones open to the younger pupils. These extend sporting and other experiences, although some are only available if families are prepared to pay.
22. There is satisfactory equality of opportunity. All pupils are included in all aspects of the school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Individual education plans provide a clear focus for matching learning opportunities to pupils' specific needs. Together with the assistance of well-informed support staff, the tasks provided help these pupils to achieve as well as the other pupils in the school. At times, the school provides insufficient differentiation for the more able, and gifted and talented pupils are not always provided for.
23. The provision for personal, social, health and moral education is satisfactory. The school sees pupils' personal development as an important part of its work. The range of opportunities for this subject is soundly planned and includes key aspects on health, drugs and sex education that are appropriate to pupils of primary school age.
24. There is an appropriate number of well-qualified and experienced teachers to provide for the needs of the pupils and to support the curriculum. However, over the last six years, this has not always been the case, and a high staff turnover has hindered both pupils' learning and school improvement. All the additional staff play an important part in supporting both teachers and pupils. But at times, there are not enough of them to meet the needs of some pupils, and in these instances, pupils' learning is hindered. Committed learning support assistants play an important role in working alongside teachers and in meeting the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs. The school, with the support of the parents, has worked hard to improve the quality of the accommodation. The facilities are now generally satisfactory, although children in reception do not have good access to a well-equipped outdoor area. Resources overall are good, especially for English, information and communication technology, and the Foundation Stage, and they support pupils' achievement well.

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

The arrangements for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is satisfactory. The involvement of pupils in the school's work through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils trust the teachers and other staff and know there is always someone to whom they can turn.
- The adults in the school are caring and know the pupils well.
- The school provides a good variety of opportunities for pupils to express opinions about life in the school.

### **Commentary**

25. As at the time of the previous inspection, staff show good concern for the needs of the pupils. Children are well supported when they first come into the nursery. However, arrangements for children who start at other times of the year are not as effective and these children do not always settle in as well. Relationships are good and pupils state that they know who they would go to if they needed help. Pupils' views are frequently gathered and valued, for

example, this is seen in the improvements in the playground suggested by the playground committee.

26. The school follows the local procedures for child protection well and ensures that all staff know how to deal with any concerns that may arise. The arrangements for first aid are good, with several trained staff and appropriate records kept. The school has satisfactory procedures to ensure health and safety in the school.
  
27. The monitoring, support and guidance of pupils' academic and personal development are satisfactory. The tracking of pupils' progress in their basic skills, and in science and information and communication technology, is organised well, although many of the procedures and records are relatively new. But in the remaining subjects of the curriculum, such systems are virtually non-existent. Where information is available, it is used to identify pupils who may need additional support and the achievement of individuals and different groups in the school, but it rarely refers to those pupils who are gifted or talented. The staff have a good understanding of pupils' attitudes to work and their social skills. They consistently and appropriately use praise and rewards to raise pupils' self-esteem and to develop their personal qualities. Pupils with behaviour needs are particularly well supported with the effective help of a specialised behaviour support teacher. However, there are few formal records used to track pupils' personal development.

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

Links with parents are unsatisfactory. Links with the local community and other schools are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A significant minority of parents are dissatisfied with what the school provides.
- The school provides a good range of information about school life.
- Not enough is done to consult parents fully and involve them in shaping the direction of the school.

### **Commentary**

28. In the past, there have been good relationships between the school and parents. However, in the last year, there has been a significant fall in parental satisfaction. Although the majority of parents are satisfied with what the school has to offer, a significant minority are deeply concerned about how the governors consulted them on changes to the school day. The headteacher has sought to involve and act on parents' views about other aspects of the school, such as improving homework. But, in changing the times of the school day, although the governors broadly met their basic statutory duties, they did not consult widely enough on their initial ideas or seek the parents' wider views of the school and its future; it is this that has upset so many parents. There has therefore been a significant breakdown in trust between the school and parents, and although the school's complaint policy is followed, some parents now feel that on a personal level their complaints and concerns are not adequately dealt with.
  
29. Generally, the school sends out a good range of information to parents, showing an improvement since the last inspection. News and other letters about administrative matters and events go home regularly, as well as termly letters that outline what is to be taught in each year group. Regular meetings are held, either to explain the curriculum or discuss pupils' progress. These are well attended and supplemented by more informal contacts between staff and parents before or after the school day. The annual reports on pupils' progress include a



very good summary of what the children know and can do in each subject and what they need to focus on to improve.

30. Parental involvement in school life and their children's learning is satisfactory. Parents provide extensive support through the parent teacher association that organises both fundraising and social events. A few also help regularly in school, with more supporting school trips. Many parents support their children's learning at home, but the feedback from the school on this work is inconsistent.
  
31. Links with the community and other schools make a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' academic and personal development. For example, a secondary school provides mathematics and science challenges to more able pupils and the local vicar and speakers from a Christian charity contribute well to the assemblies. But as the school has had to focus on developing some of its more essential aspects, such as the curriculum, it is not currently outward looking. The arrangements it does have are not extensive and do not add noticeably to pupils' achievement or the leadership of the school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall, the quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is satisfactory, as is the management and governance of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher's leadership has had a positive impact on the school.
- Difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff have greatly hindered school improvement.
- School self-evaluation and improvement planning, although useful, are not always accurate or sharply focused.
- The governing body is knowledgeable but has not always supported the school effectively.
- Many key staff are new but all share a clear and common vision.

### **Commentary**

32. Upon her appointment, the headteacher had a clear vision for the future development of the school, but the national test results of 2002 (the summer before she was appointed), especially in Year 2, indicated serious underachievement at the school. The headteacher's priority was to put in place many basic elements of good practice in order to raise achievement and develop an ethos whereby all pupils, and their different languages and cultural backgrounds, could be included and valued. In this, there has been some success; it has been slower and more problematic than hoped for because of difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers. However, this vision and the strategic planning needed to achieve it, are not clearly understood by all members of the school community, particularly some parents. This has fuelled some parents' uncertainty about the school's future.
  
33. There has been a considered approach by the headteacher and governors to appoint the best person to key positions in the school; this has added to the high turnover of staff. However, because of good appointments and induction procedures, there is now greater staff stability and greater cohesion amongst the staff. There is a greater commitment to a shared vision because staff are aware of the headteacher's expectations and the promotion of this is being well supported by the monitoring of teachers' performance and good support for their professional development. However, there remain inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning and achievement because many staff are new to the school and subject co-ordination has, at times, not been consistent or strong enough.

34. Leadership and management of key staff are satisfactory, including those of the deputy headteacher. The co-ordination of special educational needs is also satisfactory. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage and mathematics is good, as the co-ordinators have been at the school for a few years. Most other co-ordinators, such as for information and communication technology, are newly appointed, and have not had time to have a significant impact upon either the school or their subject. They are all, however, keen and enthusiastic, and offer good role models, especially those for science and mathematics. Most staff have had opportunities to monitor their subjects and this has provided them with a sound understanding of the quality of education. However, a lack of continual co-ordination in some subjects, such as religious education, has meant that the monitoring of the school's effectiveness has been weakened, and areas of underachievement have not been identified or acted upon with sufficient rigour.
35. Overall, the school's self-evaluation is satisfactory. There is an established cycle of review and the school carefully monitors its performance in a few subjects. In some areas, therefore, the school has an accurate view of itself, and this has helped promote improvement, most importantly of pupils' achievement in their basic skills. But this is not true of all areas. There is a lack of effective co-ordination of some subjects; many of the school's good systems used to collect information about its effectiveness are in their infancy, and some aspects of school evaluation are not accurate enough. In turn, therefore, although school improvement planning has had some noticeable successes, such as raising standards, it is not comprehensive enough, and does not give a clear enough direction.
36. Financial management is satisfactory and the school places the impact on pupils' achievement at the centre of its financial decisions. The school continually searches for best value in its spending. Within a tight budget, the governors have used what financial resources they have to promote greater staff stability.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	982,254
Total expenditure	986,105
Expenditure per pupil	3,067

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	29,560
Balance carried forward to the next year	25,709

37. Overall, the governance of the school is satisfactory. It has not always been effective in holding the school to account and the school had reached a precarious position by 2002. However, learning from this, they have established a good system by which they now soundly monitor the school. They now have a secure role in forming and reviewing the school improvement plan and have a sound understanding of why the school has started to improve. However, they do not use this to help them identify the most important areas for school improvement. Governors have taken a clear role in the strategic development of the school; for example, suggesting the change in the school day. The governors fulfil all their statutory duties.

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

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

Arising from the **good** provision in the Foundation Stage, particularly in the nursery, children achieve **well**. Attainment on entry to the nursery is above that expected. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have a good understanding of most areas of learning and how to teach it. Teachers know their children well and focus on developing their knowledge, understanding and skills. Children with English as an additional language achieve well because of the focus placed on developing their communication skills. Lessons are often delivered in a lively, enthusiastic and imaginative way so that children are immediately interested and maintain their concentration. A good level of praise, and many resources and activities, encourage children to be both independent and develop their academic skills. The children respond with very good attitudes and are willing and enthusiastic learners. Relationships are very good. Support staff, especially in the nursery, are well deployed to support children's learning, including those with special educational needs. Because of good support, these children achieve well. As all adults are aware and supportive of each child, including those from different ethnic minorities, all are fully included in each aspect or activity. There is very good teamwork in the nursery, and support staff are well deployed and very effective in working with different children. However, this is not always as true in reception, and because of this, children's learning there is not as fast as it could be. The arrangements to assess and monitor children's achievements are satisfactory. They are continuous and detailed but often the process, especially in the reception classes, does not involve support staff and is not used well to inform teachers' planning. Overall, it is likely that many children will exceed the expected goals in each area of learning.

Generally, links with parents are satisfactory. Induction for those who join the nursery is good, but for those who start at different times of the year, especially in the reception, induction arrangements are not as robust and children do not always have such a positive settling in period. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good; it is planned well. Accommodation is satisfactory. It is good internally, and good use is made of the outside area, especially in the nursery. However, children in reception do not have frequent access to a well-equipped or challenging outdoor space. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is good and management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has brought about many good improvements in the last few years, especially in terms of assessment and the curriculum. There is a clear vision and firm ideas about what needs to be done next, especially in appreciating the need to develop a strong Foundation team. But these are not always explicitly expressed within the school improvement plan. Overall improvements from the last inspection have been satisfactory.

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

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

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

- There is a wide range of opportunities for children to select their own activities, use resources and interact independently.
- Children are very keen to learn, and work and play together very well with high standards of behaviour.

#### **Commentary**

38. Supported by good teaching and good teamwork amongst staff, children achieve well. Because routines are well established and staff provide good role models, children share and care for the equipment they use, and play, work and socialise together in a very good manner. All staff have high expectations of children's behaviour, and their constant praise and

encouragement bring out the best in each child. Standards of behaviour are very good; racial integration and harmony are a particular strength. The good relationship between adults and children helps to create a very purposeful and caring learning environment that supports children's happiness and good learning. Due to the individual care and attention given to each child, they are all made to feel very welcome, irrespective of their ethnic background or ability. It is likely, therefore, that many will far exceed the expected goals for their age by the end of reception.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are many opportunities for children to develop their communication skills.
- Reading sessions are not sufficiently well planned for children to achieve their best.
- Children benefit from a learning environment rich in language and available resources.
- In writing, there is a lack of challenge for the more able children in reception.

### **Commentary**

39. Supported by good teaching that puts a great deal of emphasis on oral work and provides good examples of it, children, including those with English as an additional language, quickly gain confidence to communicate clearly their needs and express confidently what they are thinking. Children's love of stories and the written word is promoted well by adults frequently reading them stories and acting them out. In the nursery, they also have the benefit of a wonderful reading space. Although stories are read to children in reception, they are not used well to encourage children to contribute their own ideas or develop their reading skills. Teachers keep careful records of children's progress in reading, especially during the group reading sessions. However, they do not always identify what book needs to be read next or what skills need to be developed. As a consequence, children's learning is not as good as it could be. Children regularly take books home to read, and parental support for this is a key factor in their progress. There are frequent and well-structured sessions that focus on the use of letter sounds, and children have easy access to the tools (including computers) they need to begin to write and are often encouraged to do so. This has helped them develop their confidence well. Children enjoy their work because much of it is based on a theme, for example, fairy tales. Through regular practice, children learn their key words well, but they, especially the more able, are not encouraged to spell new words correctly; plausibly correct spellings are often accepted. This, therefore, often limits the learning of the most able. Overall, however, as teaching is satisfactory, children achieve satisfactorily and many, on account of their good prior attainment, are likely to exceed the expected goals for their age.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Well-planned and relevant activities promote children's interest in learning.
- Assessment information is not used well to inform teachers' planning.
- Across the curriculum, a good range of opportunities exists for children to use their mathematical skills.

## Commentary

40. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Across the Foundation Stage, good displays and easy access to a good range of resources and games provide a stimulating learning environment where mathematics is made to look interesting and fun. All adults, especially the teachers, interact well with the children, encouraging them to explain and describe their work. As many of the activities are closely linked to real life experiences, such as cake making, children's learning is deepened well. The continual reinforcement of the basic skills of number and shape during the school day supports their learning well. In both the nursery and reception, teachers assess children well, but only in the nursery is this used effectively to sharply focus on what a child is supposed to be doing, and what they are expected to do next. This makes the assessment in the nursery more rigorous and therefore more useful, and children achieve well here. However, overall achievement is satisfactory and, on account of their good prior attainment, it is likely that most will exceed the expected level for children at the end of the Foundation Stage.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of well-planned activities effectively builds on children's sense of curiosity.
- Good direction is given to supporting adults, but they are not closely involved in assessing children's development.
- Information and communication technology is used well to develop children's skills.

## Commentary

41. Supported by good teaching, children learn and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, and it is likely that many will exceed the expected goals for the end of reception. Teachers carefully plan many activities that appeal directly to the children. Teachers use challenging questions well to stimulate children's interest and thinking during these activities. In their follow up work, children are encouraged to use their basic skills, especially of communication, to describe their work. The involvement of additional adults is often good as they use well the prompt sheets that are regularly given to them to guide their interactions with the children. Because of this, sound use is often made of the outside area as an extension of the learning environment. However, support staff are not directly involved in assessing children's progress and they do not therefore always know how best to support an individual's learning. Good use is made of the school's computer suite where children have access to a good range of computers and interesting and entertaining programs that both excite them and hold their concentration. A wide range of interesting visits and visitors is used well to make the children's learning more relevant.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the nursery have the benefit of a well-equipped and challenging outdoor area.
- Good teaching of reception children in the hall builds well on their skills.
- Reception children's outdoor experiences are not challenging enough.

## COMMENTARY

42. Because of good teaching, many children achieve well and are likely to far exceed many of the expected goals at the end of Reception. In the Nursery's well-equipped outdoor area, interesting and challenging activities and equipment, plus good levels of direction and support from adults, promote the good development of children's skills and confidence. Good teaching of reception children in the hall builds well upon children's good control and imagination. Teachers' good levels of control and high expectations of behaviour ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved and achieve well. Children in reception have limited access to the outdoor area and when they do, the activities are not sufficiently challenging and there is insufficient adult direction for the children to achieve their best.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teacher expertise in music promotes very well children's musical development.
- A good range of well-planned opportunities promotes children's good learning.
- Good displays celebrate well each child's success.

### Commentary

43. The quality of teaching and learning is good. There is a well-planned range of activities in which children experience a wide range of media and materials that they use both in the classroom and in the outdoor area. To deepen the children's learning, and make it more relevant, much of this work is carefully linked to other areas of learning, such as computers. Children's creative flair is celebrated well around the classroom, giving them pride in their work and a keen desire to do more. Children enjoy the well-equipped play areas, especially those in the nursery that are frequently used to develop both their imagination and their language skills. The importance placed upon music in the Foundation Stage brings a great deal of joy to all and helps promote a happy learning environment. Frequent and well-conducted singing sessions in the nursery are well built upon in the reception. Here, teachers have good subject knowledge, musical activities are lively and fun, and children enjoy the opportunity to explore and use different musical instruments. It is likely that many children will far exceed the expected goals for their age by the end of the Foundation Stage.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in writing in Year 2 and in reading in Year 6 because of good teaching.
- Pupils underachieve in reading in Year 2 and a few in writing in Year 6 because of a lack of challenge and opportunity.
- Due to a high level of oral work, pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good by the end of Year 6.

## Commentary

44. In the national tests of 2004 at the end of Year 6, standards were above those expected. In the current Year 6 group, standards are slightly higher. Standards in reading are well above those expected, but in writing, they are closer to being in line with expectations. Overall, pupils' achievement is good. All pupils achieve very well in reading, but achievement in writing is not as good, as some pupils do not do as well as they could. In Year 2, current standards in writing are well above average, just as they were in the 2004 national tests, and pupils continue to achieve well. Standards in reading in 2004 were well above the national average and pupils achieved well. Standards have fallen and are now currently above those expected; many pupils are underachieving.
45. Across the school, there is no significant difference in the achievement of pupils with special educational needs or of those from different ethnic minorities. Because all those pupils who have English as an additional language are competent in English by the time they start school, they achieve similarly to their classmates. Although there are differences in the attainment of boys and girls, there is no pattern to this, and they are due to the differences in the number of boys and girls in different year groups.
46. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In general, teachers and support staff provide a lot of positive encouragement. This builds well on pupils' good attitudes and their desire to learn so that they do try hard, including those from different ethnic minorities. These good relationships and levels of trust give all pupils the confidence to ask for help. All adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, so lessons are well controlled, and the learning atmosphere is quiet and purposeful. Consequently, pupils concentrate well and are in the main productive.
47. The teaching of speaking and listening is generally good. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well because of the school's involvement in a national project to support pupils learning English as an additional language. All teachers include a good level of discussion in their lessons. Much of this is done at the start of the lesson, or in pairs, and as pupils are supportive and considerate, all pupils, irrespective of their gender or ethnicity, are fully involved. All pupils, therefore, achieve well, and standards by the end of Year 2 are above those expected and by the end of Year 6 are well above expectations.
48. The teaching of reading is satisfactory overall. Younger pupils do not achieve as well as they could because in their classrooms they do not have sufficiently interesting reading corners or displays about books that would stimulate their interest. In addition, the planning for reading sessions is unsatisfactory. There is a general purpose teaching plan that does not take into consideration pupils of different abilities; there is therefore little challenge for some pupils. In the actual reading sessions themselves, although teachers work satisfactorily with some pupils, there is a shortage of adult support to work with the rest of the class. During this time, the pupils often undertake simple comprehension exercises rather than undertake any sustained reading. The teaching of reading to the older pupils is good. Pupils have regular opportunities to undertake research from books or from the Internet. In addition, there is often good support, especially for pupils with special educational needs, from adults both in class and in out-of-class groups. In the good lessons, teachers' challenging questions about the text and pupils' comprehension are used skilfully to include all pupils and promote pupils' good learning.
49. The teaching of writing is satisfactory. Good displays about writing, especially in Years 1 and 2, often provide pupils with a good level of guidance to support their good achievement. In addition, when available, support staff are used well to work with particular groups of pupils, for example, those with special educational needs. On these occasions, these pupils achieve well in relation to the targets on their individual education plans. Older pupils are often given good support by their class teacher, especially in Year 6, but occasionally there are insufficient additional adults to offer more personalised learning. Whilst most pupils reach expected levels in writing, those with potential to attain even higher fail to do so because

teachers do not provide them with enough time to draft or redraft longer pieces of writing. In addition, there is no consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting across the school or clear expectations about how pupils are to present their work. As a result, overall standards in handwriting are below those expected.

50. Generally, lesson planning is unsatisfactory. Lesson planning takes into consideration national guidance about the teaching of literacy, but does not focus sharply on what is expected from pupils of different ages; pupils for two different year groups can therefore be doing the same work. Overall, assessment is satisfactory. Pupils' work is regularly assessed and tracked using a computerised system that enables the quick identification of pupils, or groups of pupils, who need additional support or challenge. However, teachers do not use this information to plan challenging work for pupils of different abilities. Similarly, when marking pupils' work, teachers do not assess their work rigorously enough to identify the errors that pupils make and to clarify their next steps. Pupils do not, therefore, always have a clear idea about how to improve.
51. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is currently in a caretaking role pending the arrival of a new co-ordinator in September, and has helped raise standards, particularly at the end of Year 2. Self-evaluation correctly identified areas for development, but the school improvement plan is not sufficiently sharply focused on pupils' achievement to bring about rapid change. This, coupled with frequent changes in staff, has meant that inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement exist, and overall improvement since the last inspection is only satisfactory.

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

52. The opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects are satisfactory. Pupils have regular planned opportunities to read when undertaking independent research in subjects such as history. There are similarly planned opportunities for pupils to write in science and history, but on such occasions teachers' expectations are not high enough and pupils, especially the more able, do not write in sufficient depth.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- In the last two years, standards have improved considerably at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Teachers use a good range of strategies to deepen pupils' learning.
- Teachers do not use assessment information well enough in their lesson planning.
- Pupils are not always fully aware of what they need to do to improve.

#### **Commentary**

53. Standards in the 2004 national tests in both Years 2 and 6 were well above the national average; standards were higher than the year before. All pupils achieved very well, particularly those in Year 6. Current standards in Year 2 remain high, as has pupil achievement. In the current Year 6, standards are lower but are above those expected. This is because, even though all pupils achieved well, the general ability of the year group is lower than last year because of a higher percentage of pupils with special educational needs amongst the girls. In relation to their prior attainment, however, both boys and girls achieved equally well. Pupils who started at the school after Year 2 achieve as well as their classmates.



54. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is good. Occasionally, it is very good, and then pupils make great gains in their learning. Good behaviour management, positive relationships and pupils' good attitudes promote good levels of concentration and hard work. This positive ethos also promotes the involvement of all pupils, irrespective of their ethnic background.
55. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do, and offer interesting activities and strategies that are particularly chosen to engage and stimulate them. Teachers give confident demonstrations, explaining new work and asking questions skilfully, thus fully involving pupils in the discussion. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and how to teach it; this is particularly true of number. Standards in number work are particularly high because lessons often start with lively introductions when pupils' mental agility is pressed and because pupils have a great deal of opportunity to practise their basic skills. Problem solving opportunities are offered in a variety of situations, and teachers give helpful strategies to enable pupils to solve multi-step problems. As a result, pupils show positive attitudes and work very well on their own, in groups, and as pairs. Planned activities make a good contribution to enhancing literacy skills, particularly speaking and listening. This is of benefit to all pupils, but particularly those with English as an additional language. Computers are used satisfactorily to develop pupils' mathematical skills. Homework is used satisfactorily to consolidate pupils' learning, especially for the older pupils, although pupils do not receive quick or frequent feedback about their work.
56. Overall, both planning and assessment are satisfactory. Assigning work in ability sets helps to provide appropriate challenges to all pupils, but assessment information is not used well to ensure that work is sufficiently challenging for pupils of different abilities. The marking of pupils' work is generally good. In the best examples, teachers' comments tell pupils what they need to do to improve. However, except in the very best lessons, pupils are not closely involved in their own learning. This is because time at the ends of lessons is not always used well as an opportunity for pupils to review their learning and identify what they need to do next; this is often compounded by pupils not always having their own targets.
57. The deputy headteacher is the subject co-ordinator, and has been since before her appointment as deputy; her subject leadership is good. Through a careful evaluation, she has a firm idea of the aspects of the subject that need developing, including assessment. Through her own very good role model as a teacher, and the monitoring, support and guidance of teachers' performance, she has brought about a satisfactory level of consistency in both teaching and learning. Overall management is satisfactory. There is an analysis of pupils' performance, and this has on the whole been used satisfactorily to identify patterns of performance and set targets. However, this is not always robust enough. The improvement plan is satisfactory. It has helped raise standards, but it is too general, and does not specifically address the key points and the impact that they would have on pupils' achievement.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

58. There is a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum; these tend to be more incidental than formally planned. For example, pupils use their mathematical skills when handling data in their computer studies, or when taking measurements in their science experiments.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Because of higher expectations, standards and achievement have improved in recent years.
- Teachers do not always use assessment well to provide sufficient challenge in their lessons.
- A new co-ordinator is providing a renewed energy to the leadership and management of the subject.
- Pupils' good attitudes and basic skills support their good achievement.
- Pupils do not always know how to improve their work.

### Commentary

59. Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were well above the national average. These were higher than those reported in the last inspection and higher than when the present headteacher was appointed in 2002. In relation to their prior attainment, both boys and girls and those pupils with special educational needs achieved well. Current standards are above those expected but lower than those of 2004 because this year group has more girls than boys, and a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Due to the school's recent efforts, standards at the end of Year 2 have improved significantly upon those at the time of the last inspection when they were well below the national average. Standards at the end of 2004 were very high. Standards are currently at a similar level and all pupils achieve well, just as they did in 2004.
60. Across the school, those pupils whose first language is not English make similar achievements to the rest of the school and attain similar high standards. There are no differences in the attainment or achievement of the small number of pupils from different ethnic minorities or who started at this school after the start of Year 2.
61. Generally, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers often use their pupils' natural attentiveness and good behaviour to undertake a good level of oral work, when pupils work either in pairs or in groups. These activities stimulate pupils' interest and thinking well. Teachers have high expectations and on the whole manage their classes well, although expectations about written work are not as high. Pupils' knowledge of scientific facts is very good and underpins their high standards. Teachers are confident in teaching this aspect of the subject, and satisfactory use is made of computers to support pupils' learning. However, teachers are not as secure in the teaching of scientific skills of enquiry through practical activities. Over the last few years, this has been recognised by the school, and recent staff training on how to improve the achievement of all pupils is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. In lessons observed, pupils were engaged in their practical work, and in discussions many had clear ideas about fair tests. Pupils' good literacy and numeracy skills are used well to support this aspect of their learning. It is only in the very good lessons, where the teacher's own expert knowledge and understanding provides the confidence and skill to deliver challenging and exciting work for all pupils, that pupils make great gains in their learning.
62. Assessment is satisfactory. There are good termly systems by which pupils are assessed and analysed in order to inform future decisions about support, and predict future achievement. However, teachers do not use this information well enough when planning lessons; at times, activities are not challenging enough for pupils of different abilities. Pupils are closely involved in their own learning at the start of a lesson, as the learning objectives are clearly shared with them. However, their understanding of how they can improve their work is unsatisfactory. The objectives are rarely returned to at the end of the lesson so that pupils can assess their own learning, and although their work is regularly marked, marking does not usually inform them of what they need to do next to improve.

63. Leadership and management are satisfactory. For a long period of time, there was no subject co-ordinator and this contributed to the decline in standards. Since the current headteacher was appointed, two years ago, she has, even without a co-ordinator, raised teachers' expectations and pupils' achievement through her own monitoring and leadership. However, the recently appointed co-ordinator is exhibiting particularly good leadership and management. She has undertaken a thorough evaluation of the subject, and has already taken decisive and effective action to improve teaching and learning. There is a sound development plan for the future, but it is not always sharply focused upon key aspects or pupils' achievement. Improvements in science since the last inspection have been satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The support technician makes a significant contribution to teaching and learning.
- Pupils achieve well in the computer suite because of good teaching and resources.
- Because of a lack of assessment, teachers' planning is not always sharply focused on pupils achieving their best.

### **Commentary**

64. Overall standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations, and all pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. In some aspects, such as the use of the Internet in Year 2 and the use of multimedia presentations in Year 6, standards are above those expected, and pupils achieve well. There is no significant difference in the standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs, between boys and girls or among those from different ethnic minorities. Due to a new computer suite and up-to-date computers, the appointment of a highly effective technician and greater confidence in teaching, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection.
65. Teaching and learning are good, and have a positive impact on the significant improvement in standards. Due to good support, guidance, and good curriculum planning provided by the co-ordinator and the technician, teachers are both competent and confident in their teaching. Teachers now teach the subject with confidence, and use the interactive whiteboard to demonstrate and explain new learning. Teachers often use useful strategies, for example, in paired work, to give pupils the confidence to develop their key skills, such as logging on and off using the school's network. The technician makes a significant contribution by supporting the teaching of these key skills and by being there to deal with any technical difficulties, thereby releasing the class teacher to concentrate on supporting pupils' learning. In many aspects, the curriculum is well planned, with satisfactory links to other subjects.
66. Leadership and management are good and have had a major impact on the very good improvement made since the last inspection. The subject leader and the technician work in close partnership to support teachers' and pupils' learning. As a result of good curriculum planning, teachers have a far greater understanding of what pupils need to be taught. Although there are good systems in place to involve pupils in assessing their own progress, assessment is unsatisfactory. Because of this, many teachers do not plan different activities for pupils of different abilities. At times, therefore, pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

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

67. Opportunities for pupils to use their computing skills are satisfactory. There are good well-planned opportunities for pupils to use computers in subjects such as religious education and history when in the suite, but teachers rarely plan to use computers in class-based lessons to support pupils' learning.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography and History**

68. Due to the structure of the timetable, insufficient teaching in geography or history was observed to make an overall judgement about the quality of provision.
69. Evidence indicates that standards in history are in line with those expected in Years 2 and 6, and all pupils achieve satisfactorily. In geography, pupils' attainment is below the expected level in both year groups and, given their prior attainment, pupils underachieve. Standards in both geography and history remain similar to what they were at the time of the last inspection. Expectations of what pupils should know and be able to do by Year 6 in geography are not high enough, especially as pupils have good basic skills.
70. The curriculum is satisfactory in history, but unsatisfactory in geography. In history, the curriculum is planned with sufficient depth and breadth of experience to promote the steady development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. In geography, recent improvements in the curriculum in the last couple of years have ensured that the basic requirements of the National Curriculum are covered, but the coverage remains thin and pupils have gaps in their knowledge due to a weaker curriculum in the past. Curriculum planning is appropriate in both subjects and takes into consideration the needs of pupils from different year groups, but does not explicitly identify what the expectations are for them. Over time, this hinders pupils' achievement.
71. Due to recent good initiatives, such as a more multicultural curriculum, both subjects make positive contributions to pupils' learning. In both history and geography, satisfactory use is made of computers to support pupils' learning. Pupils also have a sound range of opportunities to use their numeracy skills, but in both subjects pupils, especially the more able, do not have sufficient opportunities to write in depth or at length, and this slows their learning. Assessment in both subjects is unsatisfactory, and on many occasions so is planning. Lesson planning stems from teachers' termly and mid term plans, and does not take into account the different abilities or prior learning of pupils. This is, in part, because teachers do not have a good knowledge of their pupils' attainment, as assessment and record keeping systems are in their infancy.
72. Leadership and management are satisfactory in history but unsatisfactory in geography. This is mainly due to a lack of consistency in experienced and knowledgeable leadership, and the whole-school need to focus on improving achievement in the basic skills. There is a generic 'Humanities' policy, which lacks detail and is not sufficiently focused on either subject. The co-ordinator has undertaken some initial monitoring of both subjects and has a secure understanding of some of the strengths and weaknesses in each of them. These are reflected in the 'Humanities' action plan, but in this there is not enough emphasis on raising standards. The action plan has been about improving the curriculum and resources, and this has only been partly successful in history.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is not consistent across the school, and standards by the end of Year 6 are below those expected.
- There is no effective leadership or management of the subject.
- There is a lack of depth and consistency in the delivery of the curriculum.
- There is no formal assessment, and planned activities do not meet the needs of pupils of different abilities.

### Commentary

73. By the end of Year 2, standards are above those expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus, but in Year 6 they are below expectations. Standards in Year 6 have fallen since the previous inspection. In relation to pupils' prior attainment, achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 2, but unsatisfactory by the end of Year 6.
74. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good, especially in the younger classes, but the analysis of pupils' work further up the school shows that there are elements of unsatisfactory teaching and learning. Many of the lessons use time well and are characterised by good relationships. These provide pupils with the time and the confidence to express their ideas. As part of its approach to develop pupils' spoken language, good opportunities are used well for pupils to discuss their work in pairs or to give presentations to the rest of the class. Teachers also use well pupils' good attitudes and maturity, encouraging them to undertake their own research, work in groups or chair whole-class discussions. However, there is no formal assessment, and this is unsatisfactory. Because of this, teachers do not have a clear idea of pupils' standards, and their planning does not take into consideration pupils of different abilities. On these occasions, work is often unchallenging.
75. The coverage of the curriculum is satisfactory and based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus. This is accompanied by a good scheme of work that provides useful guidance to teachers. This includes satisfactory suggestions, often taken up in some year groups, for pupils to use their computing or literacy skills. Teachers, especially of the younger pupils, use these suggestions well when planning lessons. However, even here, teachers do not always provide enough direction, and lessons occasionally fail to focus on the religious element. Teachers of older pupils do not use this guidance well. Pupils' books and discussions with them show that the curriculum is not delivered to them consistently or imaginatively.
76. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Due to staffing problems, the co-ordination of the subject has been disjointed. At the same time, the school's focus on improving achievement in other subjects has led to a lack of monitoring of this subject, with no real awareness of pupils' underachievement and no plans (other than the appointment of a new co-ordinator) to improve the quality of provision.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. Due to the focus of the inspection, no direct teaching of design and technology or music was observed, so no overall judgement on provision has been possible.
78. In **music**, evidence from assemblies, together with the dress rehearsal for the school's production of the 'Rocky Horror Show', shows that, by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in singing are good, and pupils, in relation to their prior attainment, have achieved satisfactorily. Good singing is promoted well through the headteacher's vision; the curriculum is often

enriched by special events such as performing at the Royal Albert Hall or by pupils staging their own opera. Such events make a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development. The curriculum is appropriately planned to cover all aspects of the National Curriculum, but assessment and lesson planning are unsatisfactory. Weekly planning does not clearly identify what pupils of different abilities should be doing. This is compounded by the fact that there is no formal assessment of pupils' progress.

79. Standards in **design and technology** for pupils in Year 2 are in line with those expected for their age, but below expectations in Year 6. In relation to their prior attainment, pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 2, but underachieve by the end of Year 6. The subject does not have a high enough profile in the school, and even though pupils are taught about each aspect of designing, making and evaluating, this has not been done in sufficient depth, particularly for the older pupils. The older pupils, especially given their generally good levels of ability, are given insufficient challenge in the tasks that they are set. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection. Assessment is unsatisfactory; there are no tracking systems to show how well pupils are achieving. Leadership and management are both unsatisfactory; subject improvement has been seriously lacking. The new subject co-ordinator has undertaken some initial monitoring and is fully aware of the areas that need developing, but these and their impact on standards and achievement have not been made explicit in the school improvement plan.

### **Art and design**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Many pupils achieve well because good teaching encourages them to use a wide range of media and techniques in their work.
- As assessment is unsatisfactory, teachers' expectations are sometimes not high enough.
- Art and design makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

### **Commentary**

80. Standards in Year 2 are above those expected, but in Year 6 they are in line with expectations. In relation to their prior attainment, pupils in Year 2 achieve well, and those in Year 6 achieve satisfactorily. These are similar to standards noted at the time of the last inspection; improvements since then have been satisfactory.
81. Teaching and learning are good, especially for younger pupils. For these pupils, teaching is confident and enthusiastic, reflecting the teacher's secure subject knowledge. A very good feature was the sharing of the learning targets at the start of the lesson, and the return to them at the end for pupils to evaluate their own work. Pupils learn well because they are closely involved in their own learning and know how to improve. Generally, teachers plan a broad and imaginative range of activities that are linked well to other subjects and help to develop pupils' skills and confidence, step by step, in many aspects of art and design; the weakest aspect of the subject is three-dimensional sculpture and textile work. As teaching is not as secure for older pupils, and the curriculum is not delivered in as much depth or as imaginatively as it is lower down the school, pupils' learning is only satisfactory.
82. The art and design curriculum is satisfactory. Its recent review has identified a sound number of links with other subjects, including literacy, numeracy and computing. The enhancements of the curriculum's multicultural aspects also make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. This is assisted by a good level of group and paired work in many lessons and plenty of opportunities for pupils to reflect. There is no whole-school approach to assessment, and this is unsatisfactory. Because of this, teachers do not know clearly which pupils, or

groups of pupils, need additional support or challenge. Even where particularly talented artists have been identified, there is little additional support for them.

83. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There has been a satisfactory level of monitoring and evaluation, and from this staff training needs have been soundly met in the last year to give them greater skills and confidence. Future areas of development are appropriately identified in the improvement plan, but the success criteria for these revolve around the completion of tasks rather than their impact on standards and achievement.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils know the importance of taking part in regular exercise.
- There is no assessment of pupils' progress in the subject.

### Commentary

84. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards meet expectations for their age. Achievement for all pupils, irrespective of gender, ability or ethnicity, is satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
85. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, there is a rigorous warm up and the pace is challenging, with the emphasis on keeping pupils active and involved. Teachers constantly move around to support individuals in improving skills and techniques. Where teaching is satisfactory, lessons have less structure and pace, teachers are not consistent in expecting pupils to stop and listen immediately and there are missed opportunities to share examples of good work with the rest of the class. Not all lessons end with a cool down and do not therefore demonstrate good practice in physical exercise.
86. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The detailed scheme of work ensures that pupils are taught to the full requirements of the National Curriculum, including swimming. Outdoor pursuits are taught successfully as part of a residential visit. At present, there is no assessment of pupils' progress in the subject and this is unsatisfactory. This means that teachers and pupils are not sufficiently aware of the next steps that they need to make in order to improve skills further.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. Too few lessons were seen in **personal, social and health education** and **citizenship** to make an overall judgement on provision. Given pupils' attitudes, and the behaviour and knowledge gained from subjects such as physical education and science, standards are above those expected in Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. During the week, each class has specific personal, social and health education lessons that are timetabled appropriately. These aspects of pupils' development are satisfactorily embedded in the ethos of the school. Teachers always have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and reinforce their expectations well, through quiet discussion, being good role models, and the consistent application of the school's behaviour management policy. The curriculum is adequately planned; there is appropriate attention given to drugs awareness and sex and relationships education. Assessment is unsatisfactory. There is little tracking of pupils' personal development and therefore much of the planning and the formal teaching of the subject are not sufficiently geared towards pupils of different ages, abilities, or prior learning; especially those in mixed-age classes. Leadership and management are both unsatisfactory. There has been little monitoring of the subject in the last year and the current co-ordinator has little idea about the development needs of the subject.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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



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