

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CHERRY ORCHARD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Worcester

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116749

Headteacher: Mr Jeremy Harwood

Lead inspector: Parveen Raja

Dates of inspection: 16<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> May 2005

Inspection number: 268307

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:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	602
School address:	Timberdine Close Worcester Worcestershire
Postcode:	WR5 2DD
Telephone number:	(01905) 352 787
Fax number:	(01905) 767 637
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	David Thorpe
Date of previous inspection:	22 <sup>nd</sup> March 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school is much bigger than other primary schools and is situated on the south side of Worcester City. Most pupils come from the surrounding areas, which represent a mixed socio-economic background. Pupils' attainment when they start school is mostly average with a significant minority starting at below average levels of attainment. Most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school has an increasing number of pupils from minority ethnic families who are mainly of Pakistani heritage. There are five pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The school has registered 135 pupils (22 per cent) who have special educational needs, including eight with a statement of special educational need. This is above the national average. The range of special educational needs include speech or communication as well as social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There have been some changes in teaching staff and currently there are five newly-qualified teachers working in school. The school received the Educational Continuity Award in 2003 and the Ecoschools Bronze Award in 2004.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6282	Parveen Raja	Lead inspector	Science Special educational needs
12682	James Griffin	Lay inspector	
29261	Penelope Ward	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Foundation Stage
28686	Elizabeth Walker	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Physical education
33564	Judith Pemberton-Bennetts	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Geography History Music
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The school makes **satisfactory** provision for the education of its pupils. School governance is good. The school ethos is good with high emphasis on pupils' personal development. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good and satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Standards are satisfactory throughout the school. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some positive features and examples of very good practice. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards are above average in art and design and religious education throughout the school and also in science at Year 2 and design and technology at Year 6.
- In the Foundation Stage provision is good. Children are taught well and as a result achieve well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and English as an additional language (EAL) is good and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted well and as a result they have good attitudes to learning, behave very well and relationships in the school are very good.
- Some of the higher attaining pupils do not achieve well enough in English and mathematics because activities are not consistently varied to match their needs.
- Procedures for self-evaluation are not rigorous enough to ensure better consistency in the quality of teaching and learning.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in 1999. There has been good improvement in the provision for EAL pupils and for children in the Foundation Stage. Parents now receive two good quality reports on their children's progress each academic year. The school continues to improve the consistency in good practice across the year groups, and although well-established procedures are applied to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and its performance overall, the issues identified are not followed up rigorously enough.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

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

**Achievement is satisfactory overall.** Standards have been maintained in Years 1 and 2 and tend to fluctuate between average and above average in Years 3 to 6. This is mainly due to the nature of the cohort. Standards have risen well in art and design and in religious education, and are above average throughout the school. In science, achievement is good at Year 2 and standards are above average. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve average standards in science and above average standards in design and technology. Standards are average at Years 2 and 6 in English, mathematics and ICT. In Years 3 to 6, some of the more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could because, on occasions, activities work is not sufficiently challenging to match their abilities. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the effective additional teaching offered by support teachers and other staff. The few pupils identified at an early stage of EAL make good progress. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good due to the recent improvements in the quality of provision. Most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals, with most

children likely to exceed the goals for personal, social and emotional development and for physical development.

Pupils' personal development is **good** overall. Their behaviour is very good and they have good attitudes to learning and school. Pupils make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and develop confidence and self-esteem well.

## **QUALITY OF TEACHING**

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory overall**. Teaching is **satisfactory**. A good number of lessons seen were good or very good, however, pupils' progress over time is satisfactory. Teaching is consistently good in the Reception classes. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and EAL is good. In all the classes teachers work well with the support staff, who contribute effectively to pupils' learning. Staff set high standards of conduct and, as a result, pupils behave very well. In Years 3 to 6, sometimes teachers do not have high enough expectations for the more able pupils. There are good systems for checking children's progress in Reception. Assessment practice is satisfactory overall. However, marking does not consistently help pupils to know what they have done well and how they can improve. The curriculum is broad and balanced and enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils' participation in music and sport activities is particularly good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall leadership and management are **satisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher and senior managers is satisfactory. The headteacher provides a good lead in creating a school climate in which all individuals feel valued, resulting in very good relationships and enhanced pupils' confidence. The governing body provides good governance for the school. Governors have a very clear vision of where the school is heading, they fulfil the critical friend role well and finances are managed prudently. There are effective systems in place for checking the quality of teaching and learning and keeping a check on pupils' progress. However, whilst senior managers and other subject managers have regular opportunities to monitor the work in school, subsequent action lacks rigour. The school meets all the statutory requirements.

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

Parents are satisfied with the school, and the majority have no significant concerns. Pupils in Years 1 to 6, whose opinions were sought, feel that the school is good and particularly enjoy the very good range of after-school activities.

### **There are a number of significant aids to raising achievement within the school:**

- The very good practice by some individual teachers who can provide very good role models for colleagues as teachers and subject leaders.
- The year group accommodation enabling teachers to work closely together in small teams developing more consistent practice across parallel classes.
- The positive attitude by almost all the pupils who are interested in their schoolwork and want to learn.

Among the main barriers to raising achievement are the lack of consistency in practice across the school, the relatively low expectations by some teachers of more able pupils, and insufficient challenge related to these pupils' current levels of understanding.

## **IMPROVEMENT NEEDED**

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

- Ensure consistency in the quality of teaching and learning to match the best practice in school.
- In Years 3 to 6, enhance teachers' expectations of the more able pupils to ensure that work in English and mathematics is well-matched to their abilities.
- Improve marking so it is consistently thorough and informs pupils what they have done well and how they can improve their work.
- Self-evaluation procedures should be refined, extended and applied rigorously with sharp focus on raising standards in English, mathematics and science.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** and standards are average overall. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in art and design and religious education throughout the school.
- Achievement is good in science at Year 2 and in design and technology at Year 6 and, as a result, standards are above average.
- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage.
- Some of the more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could in English and mathematics.
- Standards in handwriting and presentation are not consistent in Years 3 to 6.

#### Commentary

1. Children enter the Reception classes with average levels of attainment. A significant number start with underdeveloped language skills. Children make good progress in most of the areas of learning and very good progress in personal, social and emotional development and physical development. They are on course to exceed the learning goals in these two areas. In communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical and creative development, children are likely to reach the early learning goals. Overall, the Reception Year gives children a good start to their education.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.7 (17.3)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.3 (15.9)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.9 (17.7)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 86 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year 2003.*

2. The table above shows that in 2004, standards in national test results in Year 2 were above average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to all schools. These results were not as good as the previous year when standards were well above average. This is because of the nature of the cohort. A high percentage of pupils achieved a higher than expected level (Level 3) in reading. In writing, a much higher number than the national percentage of pupils achieved Level 3. In mathematics, the picture was similar to that in reading. Teacher assessments in science also show standards to be above average. The school's trend in the national tests for this age was broadly in line with the national trend. Currently, standards are average in Year 2 and pupils are making satisfactory progress in English and mathematics. Progress is better in science, art and design and religious education and pupils are achieving above average standards. Progress and achievement are satisfactory in ICT. In other subjects there was not enough evidence to make judgements about standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (27.7)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.1 (27.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.9 (29.5)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 90 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year 2003.*

3. The table above shows that in 2004 tests, standards in Year 6 were average in English, mathematics and science when compared to all schools and to schools with similar prior attainment at the end of Year 2. Although standards are not as good as the previous year when these were above average in all the subjects, it represents very good improvement in relation to this cohorts' prior attainment at the end of Year 2. The trend in the rate of progress over the last five years in the National Curriculum tests was above the national trend. In English, the school exceeded its target of 72 per cent achieving the expected Level 4 by four per cent, but missed its target of 51 per cent achieving the higher than expected Level 5. In mathematics, the school exceeded its target of 68 per cent by 12 per cent and met the target percentage of 32 per cent achieving Level 5.
4. Currently in Years 3 to 6, although achievement is satisfactory overall, some of the more able pupils' achievement is uneven. The main reason for this is that the quality of teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Pupils' progress in some of the lessons was good and achievement in some of the lessons was very good. Standards in art and design and design and technology and religious education have risen to above average levels since the last inspection because the school has focused on developing its provision for the creative arts, and the leadership and management of these subjects is good and particularly very good in art and design. Standards in science are improving because of the focus on experimental and investigative science and the specialist support from the local high school. Standards in English, mathematics and science are average and achievement in these subjects is satisfactory for most pupils. However, on occasions, work in lessons is not well matched to the needs of some of the more able pupils and this over time results in these pupils not achieving as well as they could. Focus on improving standards in writing has been successful in raising standards in narrative writing but this is not extended to other forms of writing as yet. In mathematics, achievement in mental arithmetic has improved as a result of consistent and concerted efforts at whole-school level.
5. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs often achieve well in relation to the targets within their individual education plans and, where relevant, their statements. Many of these pupils have low attainment levels, but sensitive support from teachers and other adults ensures progress and a sense of success. Pupils with English as an additional language are provided with additional support and achieve well.

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

Pupils have **good** attitudes to learning and behave **very well**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also **good**. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils behave very well around the school and in classrooms, and are keen to learn.
- Pupils are considerate and relate very well to others.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is good and contributes well to their academic progress.
- There are limited opportunities for older pupils to exercise responsibility for others.

## Commentary

6. The school regards pupils' personal development as important. The provision for the development of pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities is good. Pupils are happy, confident and eager to learn. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is consistently of a very high standard because of the high expectations by adults that are evident around the school. Almost all pupils say that they like their school and enjoy attending. Nearly all pupils get on well together and form very good relationships with adults in school. In lessons, pupils share equipment sensibly and work co-operatively in a range of situations. The school promotes racial harmony effectively so that pupils from different ethnic backgrounds get on well with each other.
7. Pupils move around the school in an orderly way, showing awareness of others. For example, they hold doors open for adults and are kind to one another. They offer to help if other pupils are struggling with their work. They are very willing to please and readily take on responsibility, carrying out jobs around the school when given the opportunity; for example, by being members of the school's council or becoming library monitors. There are, however, limited opportunities for the older pupils to exercise responsibility for younger pupils. Teachers encourage pupils' ideas and value their responses in lessons. Pupils learn to value each other and their achievements. They are encouraged to celebrate the success of others. Assemblies contribute well to this aspect of pupils' development, especially those that focus on celebrating pupils' achievement. Most pupils and parents do not see bullying as a problem. No incidents were noted during the inspection period and there is good evidence that any concerns are dealt with very swiftly and firmly.
8. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on issues, for example, about who are the special people in their lives. The good ethos in school is reinforced in assemblies and in personal, social and health education lessons, where, for example, pupils are encouraged to empathise with those less fortunate than themselves. The arts contribute significantly to pupils' good spiritual development. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about the diverse cultural traditions of people living in Britain and around the World through visits and visitors to the school. Other cultures are also reflected in pupils' work in other subjects across the curriculum, for example, in the Aboriginal and African art on display. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

### **Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2004 - 5 (95.2%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	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.*

9. Attendance has improved well over the past year and is above the national average for the previous year. The improvement in the percentage of unauthorised absence is particularly good. Nearly all parents deliver on their key responsibility to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and on time. The criteria relating to unauthorised absence are rigorously applied.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but varies throughout the school, 60 per cent is good or better. Good and very good teaching was seen in all the year groups. Most of the satisfactory teaching occurred in Year 5. Parents' support for their children's learning is satisfactory.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in the Reception classes.
- In Years 3 to 6, sometimes the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in English and mathematics.
- Throughout the school, teachers use very effective behaviour management strategies, which help pupils to maintain very good standards of behaviour.
- Marking celebrates good effort but does not consistently inform pupils of what they need to do to improve their work.
- Pupils with SEN and EAL are taught well.
- Teachers make effective use of a range of good quality learning resources, which make lessons interesting.

## Commentary

10. The table below shows the quality of teaching seen across the school. The very good lessons seen were spread through all the phases in the school. Two-thirds of lessons seen in Years 1 and 2, and over half of the lessons seen in Years 3 to 6, were good or better. However, analysis of pupils' work showed that teachers' expectations, particularly in English and mathematics were sometimes not high enough and this resulted in pupils making only satisfactory progress over time. Therefore, teaching overall is satisfactory.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 69 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	17 (24%)	25 (36%)	26 (38%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

11. In the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2, most of the lessons seen were good or better. Teachers provide well thought-out motivating activities that are well supported by quality resources. These provide opportunities to learn through first-hand experiences, which capture children's imagination and, as a result, most children work with enjoyment and concentrate on activities for long periods. Teachers maintain good pace in lessons and most children learn well.
12. In Years 3 to 6, teachers generally effectively plan activities, which are interesting and challenging. They set tasks to match the needs of their pupils, with at least three sets of group work planned for different attainment levels in the class. However, too frequently, in English and mathematics in particular, the more able pupils have to complete the easier main task before they can move on to do extension work and, consequently, have insufficient time to do the more advanced work. Whilst the planned activities for the three classes in each year group are generally good, sometimes, and particularly in Year 5, these are not modified to match the specific needs of the more able pupils in each class. Consequently, some pupils do not engage in the lesson and do not achieve as well as they could. Where teaching is very good, expectations are high, very good questioning is precisely targeted to encourage pupils with different abilities to give a response and so participate fully in the lesson; activities are well supported by interesting resources and the lessons move at a brisk pace. These features were well illustrated in a Year 6 religious education lesson focused on *The Salvation Army in the Community*. Teachers' expectations of standards in handwriting and how well pupils record their work are not consistently high enough in some classes. There is a lack of systematic development in handwriting style and a general inconsistency in promoting good presentation habits. This results in carelessness in some pupils' approach to their work and some of the work seen was not tidy enough.
13. There are positive features in teaching throughout the school. Teachers set high expectations of pupils' behaviour and self-discipline and use effective behaviour management strategies to

maintain high standards. This results in pupils concentrating well on learning. Daily routines are used well to promote independence in learning. Teachers ensure that all the pupils actively participate in the work they provide. Open questions are used well to check pupils' understanding and extend their ideas. In all the classes, teachers use the interactive whiteboards and software programs effectively, which increases the pace in lessons, makes teaching interactive, improves pupils' ICT skills and generally makes lessons more fun. Good support from learning support assistants helps pupils to gain in knowledge and understanding in small groups and individually with an adult, which raises their confidence.

14. Pupils with special educational needs and those with EAL are taught well. Teachers plan pupils' work that is matched to their individual education plans. The effective support they receive from learning support assistants enables the pupils to take part in whole-class lessons and to work on individual programmes at planned times each day. Teachers know the needs of pupils with EAL and skilfully vary their questions and responses to make sure they understand the activity. Pupils who receive additional support under the Specific Programme for Learning Difficulties (SPLD) are taught very well and make good progress in developing basic reading skills and spellings. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the co-ordinator for the specialist programme are very supportive of staff and provide good guidance. However, the time allocated for the management of these aspects which is more than 0.5 full-time equivalent, as well as time for the support assistant assigned to the specialist support programme for participating in reviews and preparation, overall, is too generous. This reduces the time used for direct teaching of pupils to further increase the pace in learning.
15. Teachers and senior staff use a range of assessment procedures and activities to monitor pupils' achievement. Although assessment procedures are satisfactory, in English, mathematics and ICT, assessments of the more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not used rigorously enough to ensure that the work provides sufficient challenge for them. In the Reception classes, assessment practice has developed well and staff have good understanding of where children are in each of the areas of learning. Generally, staff give good verbal feedback in lessons but the marking of work varies in how well pupils know what they have to do to improve. Target-setting as a strategy to involve pupils and their parents in improving standards is at a very early stage of development. Homework is used satisfactorily to consolidate and extend learning throughout the school.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements. The quality of the curriculum is **satisfactory**. Opportunities for enrichment are **very good**. Accommodation, staffing and resources are **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- Provision for pupils with SEN and EAL is good and improving.
- Opportunities for curriculum enrichment and enjoyment are very good.
- The very good initiatives are not yet having a sufficient impact on raising overall achievement in the infant and junior stages.

### **Commentary**

16. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum leading to satisfactory learning opportunities. Pupils with EAL are now provided with specialist support and because staff have been trained in recognising and meeting their individual needs, work is well matched and results in these pupils making good progress. The school has successfully increased the additional support in the classrooms by well-trained teaching assistants. This has enabled the lower attaining pupils and pupils with SEN and EAL to have good access to the curriculum and achieve well. The curriculum in mathematics is well planned to meet the needs of pupils. The increased focus on mental arithmetic has had a positive impact on improving pupils' skill

in mental calculation strategies. In English, pupils' are given insufficient opportunities to develop their writing skills across other areas of the curriculum, for example, when recording their work in science.

17. Since the previous inspection there has been good improvement in the Foundation Stage curriculum planning. The school is now following the guidance in the recommended Early Learning Goals to effectively meet the childrens' needs. There is a good balance between teacher-directed activities and opportunities to learn through structured play. The increased opportunities for children to develop their investigative skills are having a positive impact on the quality of learning because children work and play with motivation and concentrate on activities for long periods.
18. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and fully meets the guidance in the Code of Practice. Teachers and support staff set clear and realistic targets and make good assessment of pupils' needs. Pupils follow the same curriculum as other pupils through tasks that are well adapted to their individual needs. There is effective inclusion of pupils with special educational needs into every aspect of the school's life.
19. The school introduced SPLD programme two years ago. This programme is aimed at providing targeted support for the development of underachieving pupils' reading and spelling difficulties. Currently, about 45 pupils receive this support each week for 45 minutes. This work is based on effective strategies to develop pupils' skill in spelling, enhance their confidence and self-esteem and, consequently, raise their self-expectations. A very skilful and knowledgeable support teacher and support assistant have effectively implemented this initiative. This has had a positive impact on pupils' learning and these pupils are making good progress.
20. The initiative is given a very high profile. All the pupils in the school have been screened to identify any specific spelling difficulties. Those identified for support are registered as having special educational needs. At this stage, there is some lack of clarity between pupils who are not achieving well enough and those with special educational needs and as a result, about a third of the pupils in Years 3 to 5 are on the SEN register. Pupils are withdrawn for this support during literacy and numeracy sessions and miss out on sharing valuable experiences with their classmates.
21. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. There is a wide range of sporting and musical activities and this is a strength of the provision. These are mainly, but not entirely, for older pupils. The curriculum has been further broadened by the introduction of an inspirational and innovative arts week where pupils throughout the school participated in a rich and exciting programme of artistic and cultural workshops. The extensive range of lunchtime and after-school clubs and activities, including a fencing club, enable pupils to further develop their skills. Participation in competitive and non-competitive sport is very good. Visitors frequently contribute to lessons, adding a valuable dimension to the day-to-day curriculum. In addition, a wide range of visits help pupils to appreciate the wider world. For example, pupils have visited a number of local museums, art galleries and Worcester Cathedral. The residential visits to France and to Malvern, and the good curriculum links with secondary schools, contribute well to pupils' personal development.
22. The accommodation and resources are good. Since the last inspection there have been some good improvements to the building and the outdoor provision. There has been some refurbishment of the school building to provide comfortable and stimulating classrooms, which are appropriate for the primary curriculum. All but two of the mobile classrooms have been replaced with modern accommodation. The large playing fields and hard play area are utilised well for games teaching and sports clubs. Plans to further enhance the accommodation for the Reception children are at an advanced stage of development. The high quality new building programme to be undertaken in the next academic year will provide a dedicated outdoor play area and enlarged classrooms, which will offer opportunities for a wider range of learning experiences. The environmental area is a valuable resource enabling pupils to increase their

investigational skills and develop respect for the environment. All areas of the curriculum are well resourced.

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

The school cares **well** for its pupils. Pupils receive **satisfactory** support, advice and guidance. Measures to involve pupils in the school's work and development, through seeking and acting on their views, are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is a happy and welcoming community in which pupils are well cared for and this helps them to concentrate on their work.
- Pupils' views are effectively sought on most aspects of their wellbeing.
- Pupils have very good and trusting relationships with adults and feel valued because they are listened to.

### **Commentary**

23. The school provides a safe and caring environment. The standard of individual care, support and guidance provided for pupils enables them to feel happy, confident and secure. Staff and pupils are well known to each other and interact well together both inside and outside the classroom. Pupils are confident that they can approach their teachers should they have any problems either of a personal or academic nature, and that the appropriate support and guidance will be forthcoming. The school has a clear grasp of the types of health and family problems experienced by a small minority of its pupils. The additional needs of these pupils are adequately supported.
24. There are effective arrangements in place to settle pupils into school. The practice of having different playtimes for different year groups makes playtime inherently safer as the numbers in the playground are lower. Consequently, levels of minor accidents, mainly in the playground, are low. First aid and health and safety arrangements are clear and effective. Good arrangements are in place for child protection. Pupils also say that they generally feel fairly treated. However, the practice, in some classes, of applying class or group sanctions in the event of misdemeanours by individuals, is rightly considered unfair and reduces pupils' confidence in those members of staff.
25. Year 6 pupils are well prepared for their transfer to secondary education. Teachers effectively monitor the personal development of the pupils and provide good support through the personal, social and health education programme. There are clear procedures for tracking pupils' progress so that those with special educational needs are identified early and are supported from an early age. The school works very well with specialist support agencies. The parents of pupils who have special educational needs value the commitment of the staff in the care for their children. Parents attend the annual reviews of their child's progress. However, the school does not consistently ensure their presence at the termly reviews, neither are pupils involved in these reviews. This means that parents and pupils do not have the opportunities to evaluate progress and contribute their ideas about next steps in learning. The advice and guidance to pupils based on the monitoring of their academic progress is satisfactory.
26. The school has a regular, formal system for taking pupils' views into account through the school council. Younger pupils do not take part in this forum as yet but their views are sought during discussions in classes at circle time and the personal, social, health and citizenship lessons. The school council consultation procedures are well regarded by pupils. For example, the council has contributed views about toilet improvements and the introduction of a 'buddy bench', in the playground. However, the school does not seek pupils' views in a systematic way about schoolwork.

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

Links with parents are **satisfactory**. Links with other schools and colleges are **very good**. Links with the local community make a **good** contribution to pupils' academic and personal development.

## MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Good information is provided on individual pupils' progress.
- Strong links with the local community contribute to pupils' social development.
- Links with other schools and colleges bring curricular and practical benefits.

## Commentary

27. Parents consider that their children like school. A few parents, through the questionnaires and at the meeting, expressed concerns about bullying. However, from discussions with pupils and observations in the playground and in lessons no evidence of unkind behaviour or harassment was seen during the inspection. Parents organise successful fundraising and social events, through the Cherry Orchard School Association (COSA). These funds are used well to improve resources for learning. The events also contribute to pupils' personal development and engender a positive sense of belonging to the community. Pupils' social development is enhanced, as they take an active part in COSA's events, including discos and fairs.
28. The school has made a good start in introducing mechanisms to find out what parents think about its work. Two parent governors have taken the initiative to seek parents' views on a range of school matters in order to strengthen links with parents. They have organised a recent survey and analysed parents' responses, which has given the governors and the school as a whole a good insight into parents' views. However, consultation with parents is not a regular feature as yet. As a result, the school is not as well informed about issues that concern groups of parents as it might be. Parents' collective views or suggestions are not yet a key part of the school's review of its work or improvement plans. A significant minority of parents rightly say that there is a lack of consistent challenge for more able pupils. Parents would like more workshops similar to those recently held in mathematics, the use of a home-school diary throughout the school and brief curriculum information at the start of each term. The school is taking steps to address these concerns.
29. Parents have appropriate opportunities for updates on pupils' progress, through parents' evenings and receive two reports in each academic year. In the reports, pupils' strengths and areas for improvement are effectively summarised. Some targets are set on the reports but these are not consistently reviewed against progress in many classes. The headteacher takes effective action to ensure that the school deals with parents' concerns or complaints promptly, thoroughly and sensitively. Parents valued the recent workshop on mathematics. Whilst there are important areas for improvement, parents are satisfied with what the school provides and achieves.
30. Links with the community are good. The school plays its part as a resource for the local community. Local rounders and scouts groups use the field, whilst the school hosts a Worcester music weekend and cluster meetings, organised by the education authority. These activities contribute effectively to pupils' social and cultural development. There are close links with two local churches. A church minister takes assemblies regularly and provides valued support with the religious education curriculum. The school choir gives performances at local retirement homes, which helps pupils to become aware of the needs of others. A wide range of visits to nearby places of interest in the local community enhance pupils' educational experiences well. Many visitors come into the school to talk to the pupils. Grandparents and other community members share their experiences with the pupils and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
31. There are very good links with other schools and colleges. A fruitful partnership is enjoyed with other schools in the local cluster, which is proving mutually beneficial, in both curricular and practical terms. This has resulted in collaborative teaching and learning programmes through



day exchange visits between teachers for literacy and numeracy. Headteachers meet regularly to work on common issues, such as workforce remodelling. The school is also part of a local partnership with two pre-schools and a local crèche. There are strong links with the two local high schools in the areas of science, numeracy and literacy and a sports college in another town. Reciprocal visits by teachers contribute towards ensuring continuity of teaching when pupils move into the secondary phase. For example, more able pupils, in Years 5 and 6, attend 'Able Challenge Days', where they gain significant insights into thinking and problem-solving skills. The transfer arrangements for Year 6 pupils are good; for example, pupils begin bridging units in English and mathematics in the final half term. There are close links with the education department of the local university. Student teachers, from University College Worcester, take part of their teaching practice at the school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. Governance of the school is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The governors play a significant role in successfully helping to shape the vision and direction of the school.
- The headteacher provides an effective lead in establishing a caring and inclusive ethos in which all are valued members.
- Day-to-day administrative procedures are well organised and good use is made of information and communication technology enabling this large school to operate smoothly.
- The whole-school approach to the school's self-evaluation is not rigorous enough in monitoring teaching and learning and taking subsequent effective action.

### **Commentary**

32. The headteacher, in close collaboration with the staff and with support from governors, is effective in creating a caring and purposeful environment. As a result, the school is successful in fostering a positive ethos, which is reflective of its aims and values, and relationships throughout the school are very good. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher, who has a number of key responsibilities across the school. The deputy has been effective, in particular, in supporting the substantial group of newly-qualified teachers, in drafting and implementing the school improvement plan and in developing the use of information and communication technology to gather, store and share information about the school. This last aspect has helped to reduce workloads and increase efficiency across the school. Creative arts and personal and social development have been improved but there has not been enough focus on raising the expectations and achievement of the more able pupils in English, mathematics and science. Consequently, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher than expected level at Year 6 is not as high as it could be.
33. Management of the school's longer-term planning is of variable quality, reflecting a lack of specific direction to raise standards in some subjects. The school's monitoring systems are not consistently applied across all subjects. In addition, some subject action plans are also of variable quality. Where they are stronger, as in English and mathematics, specific, concise steps to raise attainment in writing and in mental mathematics, for example, are clearly identified and over the last year, standards have been rising. This approach is not always replicated in other subjects. The school's self-evaluation procedures lose effectiveness because they are not always tied closely to identification of the school's key educational priorities. Moreover, the areas identified for development from monitoring of teaching and learning are not always followed up consistently to ensure that appropriate action is taken to address the issues. As a result, there is some inconsistency in the quality of teaching and in the management and leadership of the subjects. Professional development of all staff is seen as a priority and is mostly effective.

34. The management of pupils with special educational needs is good. Support assistants are well trained, enabling them to approach their work confidently. The headteacher ensures that staffs' individual skills and expertise are used effectively. Good use is made of visiting professionals who provide effective input to staff training. The governor for special educational needs is knowledgeable and plays a strategic role in the school's provision.
35. Governance of the school continues to be good; governors are very committed to the success of the school and work hard to successfully implement all their statutory responsibilities. The chair of governors leads the governing body well. He and a number of other key governors have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and a good understanding of the challenges it faces. As a consequence, the governing body as a whole is effective in helping to shape policy and strategic decision-making, which it does very well. It has led a recent consultation exercise with the parents and been instrumental in developing plans for building programmes. From time to time it challenges the headteacher and other senior managers and takes its role in scrutinising draft policies seriously, in particular, helping to ensure that all policies reflect the school's aims towards full inclusion for all pupils. The chairs of committees operate effectively and, for example, the finance committee works very diligently to set and monitor the budget, which it does well.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,567,561	Balance from previous year	165,083
Total expenditure	1,356,890	Balance carried forward to the next year	210,670
Expenditure per pupil	2,603		

36. The funds available to the school are used well. The headteacher and governors are particularly effective in their planning and management of the school's finances and ensure that these are linked to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The expenditure per pupil recorded in the table above is below the national average. The balances carried forward were part of a planned contingency for the scheduled major building programme to improve the facilities within the Foundation Stage. These were delayed as governors and the senior management team rightly sought to improve initial plans. The budget for the current financial year, taking into account the planned building work, indicates an appropriate carry forward to 2006 in line with the governors' own policy of an eight percentage point ceiling. Given the satisfactory teaching, learning, standards achieved and curriculum, alongside the relatively low cost per pupil, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

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

The provision in the Reception classes is good and is a strength of the school. It is led and managed well. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection and further planned improvement for outdoor provision is at an advanced stage of implementation. The curriculum covers all the recommended areas of learning and planning has been thoroughly revised to ensure that there are more opportunities for children to investigate ideas and materials. Children's attainment on entry to the school is broadly average, though a significant minority of children start with underdeveloped language skills. The quality of teaching, learning and achievement is good. This is because learning activities are well planned, prepared and organised. Children therefore enjoy all areas of learning that lead into the National Curriculum. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well as an effective team and provide a safe, welcoming and stimulating learning environment.

## **PERSONAL SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve very well and are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals.
- Children are encouraged to grow in independence and develop positive attitudes to learning.

### **Commentary**

37. Teaching and learning are very good. All staff quickly establish very positive relationships with all the children and set high expectations of behaviour. Teachers and teaching assistants encourage children to gain independence. For example, children quickly get ready for lessons at the start of the day. Children co-operate well together and learn to play together through the very good role model of the adults working harmoniously with each other. They are well behaved, respectful of each other and adults, and demonstrate a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The content of religious education is thoughtfully planned and contributes well to their spiritual development. Children make simple but thoughtful choices of activities, ask questions and follow instructions responsibly. As a result, children grow in self-esteem and confidence.

## **COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well in listening, speaking and early reading skills.
- Listening and speaking are incorporated into every aspect of learning.
- A carefully structured approach to teaching effectively promotes early reading and writing skills.
- On occasions, opportunities for developing writing skills are missed.

### **Commentary**

38. Teaching and learning are good and lead to good achievement. Almost all children are on course to exceed the early learning goals in listening and speaking. Nearly all children know the letter sounds and use this knowledge in their reading. Planning for the development of listening, speaking and reading are incorporated into every aspect of learning, therefore children listen attentively and speak clearly. In reading, children are on course to achieve the recommended goals and a significant minority to exceed them. When sharing books, teaching staff and volunteers read with very good expression. Children follow the text in their individual readers, show good understanding of the new vocabulary introduced and progress well in

reading skills. Higher and average attaining children are able to read fluently from their first readers. Children are also on course to achieve the early learning goals in writing. When in small groups, the quality of teaching is very good; there is a high emphasis on letter formation and sentence structure. However, at times, the organisation of independent activities do not present sufficient motivation for writing because children are engaged in play. The children with special educational needs as well as those for whom English is not their first language, receive good quality additional help in reading and the correct formation of letters to enable them to achieve well. Parental support is effectively enlisted in helping children to learn to read and maintaining the daily reading diary.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers use their good understanding of the subject and of the need of young children to plan interesting and stimulating practical tasks.
- Number games are used very effectively to add enjoyment and enhance learning.
- Incidental opportunities to consolidate skills are wisely taken across the curriculum.
- Sometimes the use of worksheets presents insufficient challenge to the higher attaining children.

### **Commentary**

39. Overall, teaching and learning are good and at times very good. This enables achievement to be good. Almost all children are on course to achieve the expected standards and a significant minority of children to exceed the recommended goals. The opportunities for children to sort, count, match, weigh and use money as well as the provision of stimulating resources and the effective use of computers, successfully promote learning. However, on occasions, worksheets used to record work by the children are not well matched to the needs of the higher attaining children because the tasks lack sufficient challenge. Nearly all the children are able to sort objects accurately by colour, shape and size. They can count correctly to ten and many way beyond this. Higher attaining children confidently and correctly complete simple addition and subtraction problems. The exciting games and challenging activities broaden children's understanding of mathematical language and operations. Children thoroughly enjoy the activities. Skills are consolidated successfully throughout the day in singing rhymes, counting the children during registration and activities such as counting pancakes as the teacher flicks them in the pan.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good opportunities for children to investigate for themselves.
- Opportunities provided for children to use computers enhance their skills and promote learning in other areas.
- Sometimes teachers take too long to explain activities and some children lose concentration.

### **Commentary**

40. Teaching and learning are good. Children achieve well and are on course to meet the early learning goals. In class, there are good opportunities where children are encouraged to be curious, for example to observe tadpoles growing. Children have planted bean seeds. They demonstrate good knowledge of the parts of a plant and what is needed for growth. The great majority of children show very good knowledge of the life cycles of a butterfly and a frog.

Children are proficient in using computers. They confidently control the mouse to drag and click on screen and are competent in use of the smart board. Visitors to the school including the recent visit of Flamenco dancers, and celebration of Chinese New Year, have successfully increased children's cultural awareness. The good support of a parent, who took time to bring her new baby to school, enabled children to learn about the changes in people. Making and tasting of jam tarts generated great fun and an exciting way to learn about the change to pastry when it is cooked. Adults use skilful questioning which makes children think and inspires them to investigate further. However, sometimes they spend too much time giving instructions or setting the class on tasks, which leaves less time for pupils to do activities and some of the lower attaining children especially lose concentration.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are taught to do things safely.
- Very good challenge enables children to develop their physical skills.
- Good use of praise and encouragement enables children to become confident.
- The outdoor play area is not as well developed as it could be.

### **Commentary**

41. Teaching, learning and achievement are good. Almost all children are already exceeding the recommended learning goals. Achievement is good overall because activities are varied, stimulating and well organised. Children make good progress in using tools such as brushes, crayons, scissors, pencils and markers safely and with growing precision. When practising for sports day, children eagerly steered balls with good control weaving in and out of the cones. In dance, the teacher and teaching assistants participated with the children to encourage children with special educational needs to join in the physical activities. Very good attention is given to ensure children understand the need to keep healthy. Warm-up activities are well planned and children are encouraged to feel their heart pumping and to understand what happens when they exercise. Children happily dance, run and skip with good agility. The school is aware that the outdoor area provides limited opportunities for outdoor play and has planned to improve play opportunities by creating a dedicated outdoor play area, which is spacious, attractive and well resourced.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make good progress in their creative skills and are on course to exceed the early learning goals.
- Children are given good opportunities to develop their own ideas.

### **Commentary**

42. The wide variety of activities enables children to participate effectively in imaginative play. They are helped to make choices and decisions, for example, when dramatising Jack and the Beanstalk. When singing songs from memory they maintain a steady rhythm and play their musical instruments with good control. Staff constantly talk to children whilst they work, providing encouragement and support where required. Children proudly show visitors their drawings, paper folding, paintings, collage work and models. Teachers and teaching assistants take great care in displaying this work to celebrate childrens' good achievement.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Achievement is good at Year 2.
- There is too much variation in the quality of teaching and whilst most of the lessons seen were good, the quality and range of pupils' work in books show that pupils make steady progress over the year and that teaching overall is satisfactory.
- Reading and writing tasks do not sufficiently challenge some of the higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Marking is inconsistent and does not always tell pupils what they have done well or how they might improve.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and enjoy their work.

#### **Commentary**

43. By the end of Year 2 and 6, pupils' overall standards are in line with those expected for their ages. This represents good achievement in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory achievement in Years 3 to 6. However, a significant number of more able pupils by the end of Year 6 are not achieving the higher levels. This is because there is inconsistency in teachers' expectations and the demands made of the higher attaining pupils. Too frequently, these pupils finish the same tasks as others before moving to extension activities.
44. The school has made writing a priority for improvement. This has resulted in raising the quality of pupils' imaginative writing but is not yet reflected in other forms of writing such as note-taking and recording information. The quality of the imaginative writing of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is good. They take pride in their presentation, and extended pieces of writing are supported by the good use of interesting contexts for writing that guide and challenge pupils. Pupils' handwriting skills are effectively promoted in Years 1 and 2 and letter formation and cursive style is well developed by the end of Year 2. However, this is not sustained systematically through Years 3 to 6 and, by the end of Year 6, handwriting styles impede the fluency in independent writing.
45. Standards in speaking and listening are average. As part of the school's emphasis on raising standards, teachers provide opportunities for discussions with partners in lessons, which is effective in the sharing of ideas and clarifying understanding with each other. Pupils now participate more confidently in discussions, especially in smaller groups, and share ideas enthusiastically when motivated in lessons. Role-play and drama are used well by some teachers, which results in pupils' vigorous response to express their opinions, ideas and feelings. Pupils engage in speaking and listening related activities with maturity and a shared sense of humour and are beginning to develop a good understanding of the conventions of discussion.
46. Standards in reading are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy reading stories and are able to retell and review books. There is a well-organised programme for younger pupils who work through a published scheme. Phonics and word-building skills are taught well. Older pupils with special educational needs sometimes use texts that do not motivate them to read and would benefit from reading more of the good quality books, which are available to other pupils in the school. Younger pupils are enthusiastic about their reading, responding well to the interesting ideas in shared texts. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboards to promote reading skills throughout the school. Younger pupils share their reading books very well with parents and other adults. Good use is made of the reading diaries and these are effective in measuring

progress between home and school. Older pupils do not share reading as frequently with adults, which limits the opportunities for extending their reading skills. Inconsistent use is made of the good library provision. Some opportunities to research for information on the Internet are provided for other subjects, but research skills are not developed systematically through the junior years, which impedes progress in the development of advanced reading skills.

47. Teaching overall is satisfactory and varies from very good to satisfactory. Progress is assessed on a regular basis but is not used sufficiently to plan future lessons or raise standards of some of the more able pupils. Where teaching is very good, lessons are brisk, varied and continually challenge pupils to respond quickly and in a variety of forms, and meet specific needs of individuals and groups of pupils. Where lessons lack pace, pupils are hesitant to respond and often do not complete the tasks they are assigned. Pupils' work is marked regularly but does not consistently reflect how pupils can improve their work. For example, higher attaining pupils are often unaware of how to improve the quality of their writing in order to reach a specific target. Targets are set in a variety of forms but are not used as learning goals consistently across the school and often pupils do not recognise targets as achievable and as an aid to learning. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because support from teaching assistants is good.
48. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils in lessons is very good, the majority listen carefully and work well together. For example, the pupils with EAL were totally engaged in a poetry session. Teaching was successful because of the short measured steps and the choice of the poem, which challenged the more able pupils as well as pupils with special educational needs.
49. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has managed well the recent initiatives to raise standards in writing. A clear action plan is in place and is shared with other staff. Staff are well supported by good opportunities to train and make effective use of the good quality and range of resources. There has been satisfactory progress since the time of the last inspection.

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

50. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is generally satisfactory. This is an area that needs extending further so pupils have more opportunity to practise the skills learned in literacy lessons. This is because there is more emphasis on the oral aspect of language use and opportunities to develop writing are missed. For example, in religious education there was a limited amount of recorded work. The use of ICT as a tool to record pupils' ideas and present their work in different styles has been introduced well, but not applied consistently across all the classes.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Whilst the achievement of most pupils is satisfactory, too few of the more able pupils exceed the national expectations by the end of Year 6.
- The subject is very well led.

- Good use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning in lessons.
- Very good information is given to parents about the mathematics being studied by their children.

## Commentary

51. Standards attained by pupils in Years 2 and 6 are currently in line with national average. This represents a similar picture to the findings in the last inspection at Year 2, but standards are not as high at Year 6. Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is mostly satisfactory, except more pupils are of the more able pupils achieve as well as they could at year 6. Pupils with special educational needs, who make up a significant proportion of pupils in Years 3 to 6, receive good levels of support and make good progress in relation to their capabilities. The school is on course to achieve its statutory targets for the proportion of pupils meeting the national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6, but is likely to miss the targets for the proportion of pupils exceeding national expectations.
52. Work covers a broad range of activities and provides a good balance in the National Curriculum areas of study. It is recorded accurately and neatly, providing opportunities for consolidation of new learning and shows pupils' pride in their work. Most pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons, although in some classes, a surprisingly high proportion of pupils are relatively reluctant to offer their ideas in discussion, and lack confidence in describing mathematical strategies using correct terminology. They behave well and collaborate well in small groups and with partners. School focus on mental calculation strategies is paying dividends in improving pupils' understanding and increasing their mental agility in calculating at speed in different number operations, although some of the older pupils are less secure in their understanding of units of measurement and their ability to estimate.
53. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The shared planning within year groups is good and it ensures that broadly similar mathematical activities are taught in a consistent way. Nevertheless, the quality of delivery by teachers remains variable, as does the consequent learning by the pupils. In some lessons, both teaching and learning are very good. For example, in a very good Year 4 lesson on subtraction the teacher carefully built on assessment from the previous lesson in which some pupils had struggled with a particular method. Her very good subject knowledge underpinned clear explanations. The activities were very well matched to each group's level of understanding so that all pupils gained in confidence and made very good progress. The lesson ended well with a brief plenary in which the teacher focused on two key strategies demonstrated by specific pupils, helping to reinforce learning. In too many lessons some pupils, particularly the more able, are not challenged enough. This is because in some lessons they do not reach the planned extension activities, the introduction or the plenary are not demanding enough, or on occasions not all pupils actively participate in the lessons.
54. Pupils whose understanding is a little below the national average for their age are provided with very good additional support through the Springboard programme by a highly skilled teacher. These extra teaching sessions help pupils to make good progress, catch up with others and achieve satisfactory standards. Additional support for pupils with special needs is good; most of this is within the classroom, often working with the support of teaching assistants. Good assessment strategies are frequently used during lessons, checking pupils' understanding of new ideas and concepts. Whilst teachers conscientiously mark most recorded work, there is little indication of what pupils need to do to improve or of evidence of follow up work done by pupils. Setting of mathematical targets as a strategy for improving achievement is not used consistently across the school. In some classes, pupils are unclear about what their targets are and work in this area has a low profile overall. Where these are used effectively, pupils develop independence and strive to improve their work. A good example was seen in a Year 3 class where group targets were suspended above tables as a constant reminder to the pupils and referred to by the teacher during the course of lessons.



55. The mathematics co-ordinator provides very good leadership of the subject. Her own teaching is a very good model for colleagues. She has good subject knowledge and, together with her predecessor, has developed very good systems for evaluating practice and monitoring standards across the school, the outcomes of which have been used to change ways of teaching certain aspects of mathematics addressing previous weaknesses. These developments have not directly influenced pupils' levels of achievement as yet because there have been many changes in the teaching staff in the past two years. She has produced some excellent guidance for parents of each year group and led a number of well-structured and helpful staff sessions and parent workshops.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

56. The principles of the National Numeracy Strategy have been developed and are fully embedded throughout the school. The focus and improvement on mental arithmetic skills has enhanced pupils' learning in other subjects, such as science and design and technology, and their understanding of time lines in history. Links with ICT are good. Pupils have good opportunities to be actively involved in the regular use of interactive whiteboards in the classrooms. These significantly increase the pupils' motivation and the visual impact enables a number to learn well, for example, in the work on symmetry and co-ordinates.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

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

- Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good because teaching is good and pupils attain above average standards.
- Focus on investigative and experimental work is having a positive effect on raising standards.
- In Years 3 to 6 the quality, quantity and range of work is variable in year groups and in classes within a year because there is variation in the quality of teaching.
- Work with the local high school, awarded specialist science college status, is effective in strengthening links and improving the quality of the provision for the subject.
- In Years 3 to 6 insufficient emphasis is given to develop a formal reporting style for writing up investigations.

#### **Commentary**

57. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been maintained at above average levels and pupils continue to achieve well. Standards of attainment at Year 6 are average and achievement is satisfactory. They are not as high as in the results of the 2004 national tests for Year 6 and tend to fluctuate between below average to above average from year to year since the last inspection. This is because teachers in Years 3 to 6 effectively plan together challenging and interesting activities for all the classes in the year groups but often deliver these lessons without careful modification to ensure that the lessons match the specific needs of pupils in their own class. Whilst this works well for most of the pupils, on occasions some of the pupils do not extend their learning as much as they could. Pupils who have special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make good progress because they are well supported.
58. Standards are improving because the school has analysed test results and taken appropriate action to address the areas of weakness. The school's links with the high school have resulted in raising the profile of the subject in the school. Science is now a key priority; high quality new ICT resources have been added and staff have been provided with training in the use of these resources and in teaching of investigations and experimental science. The high school specialist provides support for the co-ordinator and staff and access to their resources have effectively contributed to raising expectations and enhancing staff expertise. This is reflected

well in the quality of teachers' planning and the choice of activities. The use of new software programs and the interactive whiteboards is helping to extend pupils' learning well, although this improvement is too recent to effect standards achieved by pupils in Years 3 to 6.

59. In most lessons, teachers give emphasis to learning through investigation. As a result, pupils are developing sound understanding of carrying out a 'fair test' in order to ensure meaningful results but when explaining their work, pupils make limited use of scientific terms. Although this is recognised as an area for improvement and teachers identify key vocabulary in lessons, there is still a lack of consistency in insisting on the use of appropriate terminology, especially with the older pupils. All pupils recognise the importance of recording the results of investigations. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have good opportunities to record their work in different forms. In Years 3 to 6, there is inconsistency in the way pupils do this in different classes and in the importance teachers attach to it. Moreover, the use of worksheets limits the opportunities for pupils to record their work in individual ways. There are also few opportunities for the higher attaining pupils to choose the methods to record their findings or to write up their experiments using their own ideas and skills acquired in literacy and numeracy.
60. The quality of teaching varies from very good to satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 and is mostly good in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is satisfactory overall and lessons effectively capture the pupils' interest. Lessons are prepared carefully throughout the school and the practical nature of the work supports pupils' understanding of scientific ideas well. In the very good Years 1 and 3 lessons, pupils were given a lively introduction to exciting activities, there was a very good mix of practical work and new ideas were based on pupils' knowledge and experience. For example, the Year 3 pupils during their visit to the allotment next to the school observed how plants are grown for food. A few pupils proudly shared their advanced understanding with others and overall pupils made very good progress. In Years 3 to 6, there is inconsistency in the attention teachers give to standards of presentation and as result some pupils' work in books is untidy. In some classes, for example, in Year 5 classes, very little work is recorded in books which limits the opportunities for consolidating learning. Work in science supports the development of pupils' personal skills well because they learn to work effectively as groups or with a partner and cover health and safety topics well.
61. Leadership and management of science are generally good. The role of the subject co-ordinator is mostly effective in improving the provision. There is good understanding of strengths and areas for development. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge, which underpins effective planning for future developments. She is aware that assessment of science although satisfactory needs further development and has planned appropriate action.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers give good emphasis to the development of important skills to help pupils reach nationally expected levels, but more able pupils do not make the best possible progress.
- The school now has very good resources for ICT and teachers make good use of ICT as a teaching tool in other subjects.
- Subject leadership is broadly sound but some weaknesses restrict progress.

### **Commentary**

62. Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with those found nationally, which is a similar picture as at the time of the previous inspection. Progress in the development of ICT skills is satisfactory throughout the school. This is because although the facilities for ICT and teacher confidence have improved, the plans being used by the teachers are not consistently adapted to the needs of the pupils. Occasionally in lessons, teachers do not show clearly

enough what steps pupils need to take to increase the pace in their development of skills and learning. In particular, the tasks given to pupils in Years 3, 5 and 6 are not open-ended enough for the pupils to apply the skills taught within the lessons. The SEN and less able pupils are supported well by the classroom assistants, particularly when withdrawn in small groups to work on the bank of computers in the library, and therefore make good progress.

63. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The most successful lessons were characterised by lively and imaginative introductions and clear instructions given to the pupils. For example, a Year 3 lesson linked to music began with the pupils marching their way to the computer suite, enthusiastically stamping a rhythm and showing a high degree of motivation to learn. Instructions were clear and enabled the pupils to make a prompt start, replicating the beat on a computer music program. As a result, pupils of all abilities achieved well. All pupils have a weekly lesson in the computer suite and despite an overly complex logging-on procedure, even the youngest Year 1 pupils are able to log-on and locate the program required. However, some tasks given to pupils are too prescriptive, which results in a lack of challenge for more able pupils.
64. There is a strong commitment to the subject at the senior management level. ICT has been a key priority for the school over the past few years. The school has made a significant investment in hardware, software and accommodation, and consequently, its resources and facilities for ICT are now very good. There are multimedia projectors, sound systems and video links. All classes have smart boards, which are used well as teaching tools to improve whole-class interaction. This is very good improvement since the time of the last inspection. Other weaknesses noted have been addressed satisfactorily and pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a range of opportunities to develop control and monitoring.
65. Leadership of the subject is barely satisfactory. This is because the co-ordinator took the responsibility in this academic year and although the senior managers set high expectations for the subject this is not as yet translated into consistent good practice across the school. The framework for ICT planning lacks rigour and there are no formal procedures in place for assessing pupils' learning, or to track their progress throughout the school and assessment is generally left to the individual practice of teachers. The subject co-ordination is not fully effective because it does not regularly monitor teaching and learning or scrutinise pupils' work to help identify and overcome weaknesses. Although ICT is secure within the school's curriculum, whilst some areas, such as the use of the Internet to obtain information and control technology, are clearly evident, other areas are not given enough emphasis, such as the exchange of information and communication through e-mail.

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

66. Pupils do not use their ICT skills enough. Most teachers use ICT as an effective teaching tool to support learning and links with mathematics are particularly good. New software and programs to support science are at an early stage of implementation. Where it was observed being used by the pupils, for example, in a science lesson in which the pupils used data-loggers to record levels of sound, the use of ICT was good and added to the pupils' learning. In art and design and design and technology, some teachers effectively use ICT to promote skills. For example, Year 3 pupils used a digital camera to capture images of pupils posing as different characters. Inspection evidence suggests that opportunities for pupils to explore the potential of ICT in other subjects are sometimes missed.

### **HUMANITIES**

Insufficient evidence was seen during the inspection to make judgements about geography and history provision.

### **History**

67. In history, evidence from one lesson observation, pupils' work, teachers' planning and the work on display, indicates that the pupils' attainment is likely to be in line with expectations throughout the school. An appropriate programme of work is in place, which ensures continuity and progression of learning. The school enhances its provision to support pupils' learning by visits to historical places of interest. These experiences, and the use of artefacts, help to bring the subject alive for pupils and contribute well to developing understanding of the past. Good use is made of research for information on the Internet, such as Year 6 finding out about the Second World War. Year 5 pupils show good understanding of similarities and differences between the past and the present through identifying these features in a selection of paintings. Evidence of promoting links with literacy was evident in some pupils' books. For example, in Years 3 to 5, pupils practised writing and spelling skills well by writing letters as if from Henry VIII to a friend complaining about his wife, Catherine of Aragon.

## **Geography**

68. It is not possible to judge overall provision or teaching in geography because only one lesson was observed. Evidence from pupils' work in books, teachers' planning and the work on display, indicates that standards are likely to be in line with expectations throughout the school. Although there is currently no subject co-ordinator, there is an appropriate programme of work based on the national guidance. As part of this programme, pupils in Year 2 study the similarities and differences between Worcester and Poole in Dorset. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are provided with good opportunities to think for themselves and consider the views of others about a range of geographical issues. For example, Year 3 pupils study and express their views about the effect man has on the tropical rainforest. Pupils are given opportunities to present their work in a variety of ways, for example, by creating diagrams and posters from the information they found in their research. Pupils' work indicates that pupils of different abilities generally do the same activities with insufficient variation to provide appropriate challenge for the more able pupils.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well and attain standards above locally agreed expectations.
- The good teaching is imaginative and, consequently, pupils learn well in lessons.
- Assessment and recording procedures are good.
- The subject is led well by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator.
- The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual development.

## **Commentary**

69. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection and standards attained by pupils are above those expected locally by the end of Years 2 and 6, and pupils of all abilities achieve well in the four main strands of the locally agreed syllabus. In addition to Christianity, which pupils learn about in all year groups, they also study Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism and develop a good understanding of the important elements of these faiths, their beliefs, celebrations and how members of the faiths search for meaning and purpose in their lives.
70. The quality of teaching is good overall and leads to effective learning. It is sometimes very good. Main strengths of teaching are teachers' subject knowledge, high expectations, and the opportunities that they provide for pupils to reflect and think about their own beliefs. Teachers use imaginative strategies, which engage and motivate the pupils well resulting in good levels of thought, concentration and reflection. For example, Year 2 pupils increased their understanding of the significance of lighting candles within the Christian church after watching

a video clip about customs around St Lucia in Sweden and drawing comparisons with their local church practice. In Year 6, the teacher had invited a local minister to answer questions prepared earlier by the pupils. Many of these questions demonstrated a good awareness of the importance of faith to practising Christians. Examples included: *'If you could change one thing in the community what would it be?'* *'Why did you choose to travel around telling people about God?'* There are good assessment procedures with teachers completing end of unit statements about each pupil.

71. A broad and interesting curriculum is in place. It is enriched by art, music and dances, visits to the church and visits by the rector. The visits to Worcester Anglican Cathedral and other local places of worship contribute well to learning and makes Christianity come alive for the pupils. Pupils' recorded work in books demonstrates a good range of activities and topics covered over the year. For example, Year 3 pupils were engaged in writing modern versions of Psalms, then singing them in rousing style accompanied by their teacher on the mandolin.
72. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She carefully checks curriculum coverage in accordance with the revised locally agreed syllabus, has introduced effective assessment procedures, and monitors pupils' work in Years 2 and 6. A substantial amount of time is given to religious education across the school. Assemblies are used well to extend pupils' understanding, there are good resources in each phase and the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development as they gain an awareness of non-material aspects of life.

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

### **ART AND DESIGN**

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

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

- Pupils make good progress and their achievement is good.
- Imaginative resources are selected to widen pupils' knowledge and stimulate them to be creative.
- The enriching experiences provided through work with visiting artists and musicians from different cultural backgrounds develops pupils' awareness of the multicultural dimension in art.

#### **Commentary**

73. No lessons were observed in Year 6, therefore judgements are based on the work displayed, discussion with pupils and with teachers about their detailed planning.
74. Standards at Year 2 are above those usually expected for pupils of their age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when they were judged to be average. Year 2 pupils work with a wide range of resources to learn about collage and composition. They are inspired by information on mini beasts. They confidently use tools, glue pens and paint to enhance their individual designs of ladybirds and butterflies. Some choose to work collaboratively whilst others prefer to work independently. Whilst they work, pupils sensibly discuss the texture, colour and shape in the patterns they created. The standard of work on display in Year 3 is well above expectation. Pupils have responded very well to the high expectations. For example, they collected information about people; role-played their ideas; took turns in posing and used a digital camera to record one another's poses. They have since experimented and evaluated techniques and various media including poster paint, watercolours, oil pastels and chalk. The way higher attaining pupils have captured depth and distance in their work is outstanding. Year 6 pupils proudly talk about the three-dimensional work which was completed during a performance topic. The modelled heads of characters

from Alice in Wonderland are of a high standard and so too are the stage sets that Year 6 pupils have designed following their research of works of William Shakespeare.

75. In Year 2, teaching was very good. Skilful questioning was used very well to promote critical evaluation and discussion. The teacher and special needs support teacher worked together very effectively to provide encouragement and motivation for pupils to explore and develop their ideas. Pupils enthusiastically and proudly showed a visitor their earlier ceramic work and African scenes, which effectively showed sunsets. Pupils with special educational needs were well supported to enable them to achieve very well and be fully included. Pupils with EAL received good support to increase understanding of the technical vocabulary.
76. Teachers throughout the school, use the works of renowned artists, such as Edward Hopper and Jackson Pollock, for critical study and inspiration. The high quality displays increase pupils' spiritual and cultural development and demonstrate the pride teachers take in the pupils' work.
77. The co-ordinator provides inspiring leadership. All the pupils have been provided with opportunities to work with two resident artists in the school. The enriching experiences, including a flamenco workshop and Brazilian and African drumming sessions, are reflected in pupils' enthusiastic accounts and the large-scale co-operative artwork in displays. This also shows good development of different techniques used in creating traditional forms of artwork in other cultures.

## **Design and technology**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress and achieve well.
- Teachers plan activities that extend pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding when they are designing and making products.
- Pupils effectively evaluate the outcomes of their investigations, designs and products, identifying what does and does not work.

### **Commentary**

78. It was not possible to see design and technology being taught in Years 1 and 2, so no firm judgements are made about standards and the quality of teaching.
79. Standards are above those usually expected at Year 6. Pupils make good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress was judged to be satisfactory. Designing skills are now well developed.
80. In Year 4, pupils have good knowledge of how light switches work, and how light is reflected. They enthusiastically discussed how they would use light in their task of designing a haunted house. Work was equally challenging in Year 5 where pupils quickly responded to the challenge to design and construct a movable toy. Some pupils made good use of information and computer technology to research mechanisms and others measured cut and glued wood. Year 6 pupils successfully investigated products, which incorporated a pulley and drive belt and discussed with their teacher how they would include an electric motor in a simple circuit in their fair ground models.
81. The quality of the work on display demonstrates that pupils are taught specific, relevant skills. Teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6. Planning is detailed and effectively builds on previous learning. Very good attention is given to the teaching of making skills and the associated safety aspects. Pupils are encouraged to generate and develop their own ideas. Appropriate

technical vocabulary is used and explained well. Teaching assistants work closely with pupils who have special educational needs to enable them to be fully included and there is good quality support available for pupils with EAL to ensure they understand the technical terms.

82. Management and leadership of the subject are very good. The curriculum co-ordinator has been instrumental in broadening the curriculum and setting high expectations. Monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observations and team teaching, contribute well to raising teacher confidence. Direct teaching of specific skills is very good. The plan for future development is sharply focused on raising standards and is based on a thorough review of the subject.

### **Music**

83. In music, it was not possible to form an overall judgement about provision, standards of work, achievement or teaching because only two lessons in music were observed during the inspection. An appropriate music curriculum is in place. It is enhanced well through a range of extra-curricular opportunities for musical development. Peripatetic music tuition in brass, strings, woodwind and keyboard is taken up by more than 20 per cent of the pupils. There is a flourishing school choir and orchestra, who perform at local concerts, church and music festivals. Such experiences are instrumental in raising pupils' confidence and self-esteem and increasing their enjoyment of music. A number of pupils have also had the opportunity to take part in countywide musical events. A good range of resources effectively promotes pupils' learning. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has monitored the teaching in all year groups and given ideas to the teachers about how they might improve their teaching. She has also put in place procedures to enable teachers to quickly assess pupils' learning, ensuring that teachers match the needs of the individual pupils to the curriculum.

### **Physical education**

84. In physical education, Year 3 pupils were well motivated to learn the African tradition in dance and were inspired to work hard with enjoyment and perform different actions to the music with good control and good awareness of the rhythm and beat. As a result, pupils achieved well. Most pupils now access an increased range of physical activities and engage in all aspects of the subject including gymnastics, athletics and many different sports. Swimming is an important feature of the curriculum. Almost all of the pupils can swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school at the age of 11.
85. A strength is the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils. They play competitive games against pupils from the local cluster group schools. The enthusiasm of the subject leader is infectious and pupils are anxious to take part and subscribe to the very good range of after-school sporting and physical activities. These include activities such as soccer, basketball, netball, cross-country and athletics. Pupils enjoy sport and are very enthusiastic in celebrating their achievements. Girls are active participants in football and tag rugby teams and equally share in a range of sporting achievements.
86. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator provides very good support to staff, which extends their ideas and enhances the quality of teaching. Opportunities for sharing good practice are managed well. There is a very good action plan to raise the profile of the subject. The school is taking effective action to reach the Active Sportsmark Award. This involves working in partnership with a number of schools to develop sporting achievements. The school uses the neighbouring high school's facilities to enhance the athletics curriculum and improve the training resources for its pupils. All pupils benefit from this initiative, especially those with special educational needs who achieve a high success rate in a wide variety of sporting achievements.

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

87. There was not enough evidence to make judgements about the quality of provision. Discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils were held and one lesson was seen. The school sees pupils' personal development as a very important part of its work. It is very committed to developing pupils' understanding and awareness of issues surrounding a healthy lifestyle. Participation in the national scheme to provide fruit on a daily basis for pupils is raising pupils' awareness of the need for healthy eating and lifestyle. Personal, social and health education is provided through discrete lessons as well as through subjects of the curriculum.
88. Role-play is effectively used to help pupils consider how they would respond to a range of situations such as bullying. Disability awareness has been a focus in Year 5 in which a local group of wheelchair users were involved. Issues relating to the misuse of drugs and understanding of physical and emotional changes are taught sensitively, and at the pupils' level of maturity. The school council ensures that pupils are involved in decision-making. They have made some good contributions to discussions on environmental issues and are responsible for the litter-picking scheme. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to ask questions and to express their opinions, particularly in 'circle time' where pupils are encouraged to discuss social issues and matters of importance to them. Awareness of citizenship is promoted well. For example, older pupils keep abreast of current affairs and during the general election campaign they talked with the local MP about his work. As a result of all these activities pupils grow in maturity, are confident and eager to talk about their experiences in school, and are well prepared for their next stage of education.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	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	2
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

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

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