

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WYVERN FIRST SCHOOL**

Wolverton, Buckinghamshire

LEA area: Milton Keynes

Unique reference number: 110257

Headteacher: Mr S Hopkinson

Lead inspector: Ms R Frith

Dates of inspection: 7 – 9 February 2005

Inspection number: 268321

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 8 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	319
School address:	Aylesbury Street Wolverton Milton Keynes Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	MK12 5HU
Telephone number:	01908 312275
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Isaac
Date of previous inspection:	21 June 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Wyvern First School is a larger than average size community school. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds but, overall, the socio-economic status of families is below average. An average percentage of pupils receive free school meals but as no hot meals are available at the school this is not a true reflection of the percentage that is entitled. The percentage of pupils currently claiming free school meals is higher than last year and will consequently place the school in a higher category when making comparisons with similar schools. When children join the school, they bring with them a wide range of experiences and abilities but, overall, their attainment is below average. It is well below average in speaking and listening and in personal social and emotional development. This is the third year when children have been admitted to reception full-time at the start of the academic year in which they are five. The percentage of pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs is below the national average, with nearly two-thirds being in the reception classes. Two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs because they need considerable help with their learning. Those receiving additional support, mainly have speech, communication, social, emotional, behavioural or moderate learning difficulties. Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds and nearly 28 per cent are identified as coming from homes where English is not the first language. Pupil mobility is high. The school is involved in initiatives such as Sure Start, The Children's Fund and Energy Cities: Energy Efficient Building. Due to reorganisation in the area, from September 2005 the school will become an infant school with children leaving at the end of Year 2.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2490	Ruth Frith	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Science Geography Religious education
9388	Anthony Mundy	Lay inspector	
26292	Helen Mundy	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Information and communication technology
23805	Margaret Lygoe	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Design and technology Music
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Wyvern is an effective school with many good features.** Staff are successful in creating a supportive environment where pupils enjoy learning. Teaching and learning are good, overall, and standards are rising. The day-to-day running of the school is good and pupils are well cared for. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision in the nursery is excellent and ensures that children settle quickly and enjoy learning.
- Standards in spelling, punctuation and handwriting are good because pupils are taught well.
- Recent initiatives have helped to improve standards in English but the success of this work is not yet reflected in reading standards, which remain below average.
- Overall, teaching and learning are good and well supported by the teaching assistants. This helps pupils to achieve well. The children's achievement in reception remains satisfactory as the rate of learning slows. This shows inconsistency between the nursery and reception.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and promotes good behaviour and good relationships.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and their learning are good.
- The identification and monitoring of provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory.
- Attendance is improving but remains below the national average.
- Good systems are in place to ensure that pupils are well cared for and that the school is a safe place in which to learn.
- Links with parents and other schools are good and links with the community are very good.
- Some aspects of leadership and management are good.

Since the last inspection the school has developed many aspects of its work well. The monitoring of pupils' progress and use of this data to plan appropriate work have developed and this has led to overall improvements in teaching and learning. Appropriate schemes of work now ensure that pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are developed in a systematic way. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved and resulted in some excellent nursery practice. However, there are some weaknesses in the progression between nursery and reception and these two areas are not yet working as a whole stage. Because of this, overall, improvement since the last inspection is only satisfactory.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

**Overall, pupils achieve well during their time in school and standards are rising.** In the nursery, children achieve very well but this is not consolidated in the reception year. A few children are likely to reach the standards expected for their age at the end of their reception year. Generally, in the rest of the school pupils achieve well and this is helping to raise standards. Those in the current Year 2 are working at below average levels in reading, above average levels in writing

and average levels in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education. Standards are at similar levels for those pupils in Year 3. Usually, pupils with special educational needs achieve well, as do those with English as an additional language.

**Provision to develop pupils' personal qualities is good' overall.** Pupils are encouraged to enjoy their learning but opportunities to extend pupils' spiritual and cultural development are missed. Pupils behave well, develop good attitudes, and good relationships with other children and adults. Pupils enjoy going to school but attendance remains below average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school and the quality of teaching are good, overall.** There are some inconsistencies between teaching in the nursery and the reception year which affects the rate of children's progress. Throughout the whole school, teachers have high expectations of pupils' personal and social education, which helps them settle well and become interested in their learning. Staff promote equality of opportunity well and are effective in supporting those pupils who have English as an additional language. Pupils' learning is also enhanced well, due to the effective support staff who, together with teachers, form a strong team. The teaching of writing is particularly good but insufficient time is allocated to reading. The good quality of teaching compensates for the weaknesses in identification and monitoring of pupils with special educational needs. Teaching for those pupils identified with special educational needs is generally good, enabling them to make good progress and to have full access to the curriculum.

Staff have developed good links with parents and other schools, and very good links with the community. The curriculum is generally satisfactory, with excellent provision in the nursery and good opportunities for enriching the pupils' learning experiences. Staff are effective in ensuring that pupils are all included, well cared for and feel supported. Pupils are listened to and their views valued.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school are good, overall.** The headteacher's unassuming and purposeful leadership style is effective in building a team of professionals with a clear sense of direction and good teaching skills. More time needs to be allocated to improve the leadership and management of special educational needs provision. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and how it should develop. They are fully committed to running a school where all pupils are included and helped to develop well, both academically and socially. The leadership and management of the nursery and reception year, although satisfactory, have not resulted in an overall Foundation Stage, as recommended in the national guidance. The school complies with all statutory requirements.

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

Parents are generally supportive of the school and the provision for their children. Nearly all believe that teaching is good, that pupils are expected to work hard and they make good progress. Some believe that the school does not sufficiently celebrate its successes and should have a higher profile. Most pupils feel that they can approach a member of staff if they have a problem, and teachers encourage them to work hard.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve standards in reading.
- Improve consistency and continuity of provision between the nursery and reception classes.
- Improve the identification and monitoring of pupils with special educational needs.
- Continue to raise attendance levels.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Overall, pupils achieve well and pupils in Year 2 are currently working at below average levels in reading, above average levels in writing and average levels in speaking, listening mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education.

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

- Children in the nursery achieve very well and children in reception achieve satisfactorily.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1, 2 and 3 because of the good teaching and their good attitude to learning.
- Standards in spelling, punctuation and handwriting are above average.
- Standards in reading are improving but remain below average.
- Pupils with correctly identified special educational needs usually achieve well.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language generally achieve well and reach standards in line with their levels of English acquisition.

#### **Commentary**

1. On entry to school, children display a wide range of abilities and, overall, their attainment is below average. However, each year a few pupils join the school speaking little or no English or have special educational needs and this affects the overall standards on entry. Some pupils have well below average standards in speaking and listening, and in personal social and emotional development. Due to the very good quality of teaching and provision of an excellent curriculum, children in the nursery achieve very well. However, the children's learning slows in the reception year because the organisation and management of teaching and the curriculum do not take sufficient account of the children's needs, or the national guidance for the Foundation Stage. By the time they enter Year 1, some children are working at the levels expected nationally for pupils of that age in all areas of learning but many are not.
2. Attainment in the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 2 was below average in reading, average in writing and well below average in mathematics when compared with pupils in all schools and also when compared with pupils in similar schools. Care should be taken with the accuracy of the similar schools comparison as it is based on the percentage of pupils receiving free school meals and some pupils who are entitled do not claim them. This is partly because there are no hot school meals and also that the younger children like their packed lunches from home. These results show improved standards in reading when compared with the previous year and broadly similar standards in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments indicate that in science, pupils attained above average standards for the percentage attaining Level 2 (the level expected for their age) and below average standards for those gaining the higher Level 3. Over the last five years, the school's trend of improvement for all core subjects was above the national trend. Pupil mobility seems to be a key factor in pupils' progress and attainment because of the interruptions to pupils' learning and the additional time teachers have to spend settling new pupils into school.



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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.4 (13.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.7 (15.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.0 (15.3)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 63 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. The standards shown in the table above relate to the current Year 3 cohort who are continuing to achieve well and are building on these standards. During the inspection, they were seen to be working at average levels for their age in speaking, listening, writing, mathematics and science with higher than average standards in spelling, punctuation and handwriting. Overall, standards in English are at the expected level. They were also working at average levels in ICT and religious education. Pupils in the current Year 2 are generally working at levels expected for their age in these subjects but have strengths in some aspects of writing and weaknesses in reading.
4. No significant difference was noted in the achievement between boys and girls during the inspection, although in the current Year 2 there is an imbalance of boys to girls. This may affect the overall standards in this year's national tests results. For example, over the last three years, girls did better than boys in reading and writing and boys did better than girls in mathematics in the tests. The targets set for this cohort are very challenging.
5. More capable pupils are generally appropriately challenged and the school has made recent improvements in its provision for those pupils who are gifted and talented. Currently, their needs are met satisfactorily through the setting of appropriate work in lessons and extra challenge provided through additional activities. Those pupils with correctly identified special educational needs achieve well, overall, and make good progress towards the targets set.
6. From the information provided by the school and through observation and discussion with pupils, no significant under-achievement of pupils from specific minority ethnic groups is identified. Most pupils have access to an appropriate curriculum that meets their needs and helps them to achieve well. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are usually well supported so that they achieve in line with their peers and their level of English acquisition. In one instance, insufficient support was given to ensure adequate progress for a pupil with very little spoken English. This was quickly remedied after discussion with the teacher. Although it seems from analyses of data that pupils with English as an additional language are not attaining as highly as some of their peers, this is sometimes because insufficient time has passed for them to attain similar levels of English to others in the class before taking the tests. Over time, those pupils with English as an additional language in the current Year 3, who have had all their education in school, seem to have achieved well in reading and writing.

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

Good attitudes and behaviour contribute greatly to pupils' achievements. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is satisfactory, overall. Attendance was unsatisfactory in the school year 2003/04.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are eager to take part in lessons and other activities.
- Pupils conform to high expectations of behavior and courtesy.

- The promotion of spiritual development is weak.
- Attendance is below the national average for similar schools and has deteriorated since the previous inspection.

### Commentary

7. All pupils enjoy school, and participate enthusiastically in academic and informal activities. Their good attitudes and behaviour contribute significantly to the quality of learning in all classes. Children settle quickly in the nursery, and make excellent progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They are fully prepared for the subsequent transfer to the reception classes. In all year groups, pupils listen carefully to their teachers' explanations and instructions. They usually answer questions politely, but some teachers are inconsistent in accepting shouted answers in disregard of their own rules of behaviour.
8. Pupils emulate the courtesy and thoughtfulness of the adults they meet in school each day. Consequently, pupils' behaviour is usually good in classrooms, and very good in the open areas of the school. Behaviour was exemplary in the practical session of a Year 2 science lesson, when adults supervised experiments using heat sources, and pupils followed the class teacher's meticulous health and safety instructions. Staff successfully support pupils who have behavioural difficulties. Pupils usually respond well because they are treated calmly and consistently during lessons. Relationships are good, and pupils have no concerns about bullying or intimidation. No pupil has been excluded in recent years.
9. Pupils accept a variety of responsibilities in their classrooms. In Year 3 they participate in the school council, and maturely answer the office telephone at lunch-times. The school council has discussed a variety of topics related to lunch-time procedures, and the establishment of a wildlife area and an adventure playground. Pupils sing enthusiastically in the school choir, and participate in, or support, local events including a Shrove Tuesday pancake race and singing Christmas carols in the town square.
10. All pupils have good understanding of the concept of right and wrong. They are encouraged to empathise with the feelings of others, and generally to do what is right rather than what is expedient. They follow school rules, and are polite, friendly and respectful to visitors, and to their peers and teachers. Although pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, they derive little benefit from school assemblies. Assemblies seen during the inspection complied with legal requirements but were brief, almost perfunctory, and were deficient in spirituality. Pupils' behaviour was sometimes restless because they were not engaged by teachers' presentations of important themes. All year groups enjoy a good variety of visits to local places of interest, including a toy museum, a zoo and a stately home. European pupils have satisfactory understanding of western culture but limited understanding of eastern cultures. Pupils from Asian ethnic minorities respond to western influences, while sustaining their cultural identities. Although the school does not fully exploit the cultural diversity of its pupils and their families, the nursery successfully encourages multicultural contacts. During the inspection, a nursery child's Chinese parents and grandparents proudly led a celebration of the year of the rooster. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has not improved since the previous inspection.

### Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data	6.6
National data	5.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

11. Attendance was significantly below the national average for primary schools in the academic year 2003/04, but improved in the autumn term of 2004. A small number of families do not fulfil the legal requirement of ensuring their children's regular attendance, and some families take extended holidays in term-time. The school's procedures for ensuring regular and prompt attendance are satisfactory, but no formal procedure is established for challenging families who fail to provide a reason for continuing absence. Morning registration periods are brief and efficient, and lessons begin promptly.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good, overall, and pupils experience a satisfactory curriculum and good levels of care and support. Links with parents, other schools and colleges are good and links with the community are very good.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good, overall, and assessment is satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection.
- Teaching and learning in the nursery are very good, overall, and occasionally excellent.
- Teaching and learning in reception are satisfactory, overall, and sometimes good.
- The teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar is good.
- Teachers and support staff work well in year group teams. Teaching assistants support the pupils well and help them to make good progress.
- Teaching for pupils identified with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is usually good.
- Assessment in the nursery is very good.
- Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and pupils respond well. This helps to create a good ethos for learning.

### Commentary

12. Pupils generally make good progress throughout their time in school and achieve well. This is because of the good overall quality of teaching and the pupils' good attitudes to learning. The chart below gives an outline of the quality of lessons seen during the inspection. The unsatisfactory lesson in reception was related to the organisation and planning of activities that did not build sufficiently on previous learning. The excellent teaching was seen in the nursery, where sessions are planned very well to meet the children's needs and ensure that they develop good learning skills and progress very well. There is inconsistency between the organisation, management and planning of sessions in the nursery and reception. Staff should now focus on ensuring at least good quality teaching, overall, in the reception year so that the rate of children's learning does not slow after leaving the nursery.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	5 (10%)	29 (60%)	12 (25%)	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.*

13. Teachers are developing their practices in the light of national expectations and this is helping to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning. They work well in year group teams, sharing their expertise and experience. This supports newly qualified teachers well, and staff who have been in the school for some time also benefit from those who have taught

elsewhere and bring new ideas with them. Staff are aware of the changes due in September, which may affect their own professional development and have been kept informed during this unsettling time.

14. Staff have welcomed new initiatives, such as those developed to help pupils make connections between a letter, or letters, and the sound they make. Although insufficient time has elapsed for this to have made a significant difference to the pupils' reading, early indications are that it is bringing about improvements in learning. Some aspects of the pupils' writing have developed well over time because of the systematic way they are taught spelling, punctuation and grammar. Similarly, although the nursery has had a good reputation for several years, developments in provision and practice have helped to ensure that the children's learning is very good and they achieve very well. A particular strength is the way pupils are assessed and their progress monitored so that appropriate work can be set that matches their capability. Improved resources for ICT have also helped staff to develop their teaching and pupils' standards remain average, although national expectations of what pupils should be able to do have risen since the last inspection.
15. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and this has a significant influence on how staff manage successfully the pupils in their care. Pupils becoming more confident in their abilities, and what they might do to improve, because staff are encouraging and supportive. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond well to these as they know what they should do.
16. Teaching for those pupils identified with special educational needs (SEN) is generally good, enabling them to make good progress and to have full access to the curriculum. The teachers usually ensure that work is suitably varied for all those who need additional help and the support given by teaching assistants is good. Some, but not all, of those who need regular support are formally identified as having special educational needs. Identification of SEN is not monitored adequately nor is the review of pupils' progress against their specific targets. There are pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 who have significant difficulties in learning, whose needs have not been formally identified. The school has improved its work with higher-attaining pupils and those that are gifted and talented. Teachers are aware of differences that may occur in the responses and learning of girls and boys so try to use a range of methods to ensure that all are included and interested.
17. The school has recognised the need to improve teaching in response to the increasing number of pupils with English as an additional language who now attend the school. Staff are in the process of participating in a series of professional development sessions, which are helping them to identify these pupils' specific needs and to offer appropriate support. In the vast majority of cases, the support given is good. Teaching assistants, including those who are bilingual, are particularly effective in ensuring that pupils understand unfamiliar vocabulary and respond actively in lessons. Whilst most pupils at the early stages of learning English are encouraged well and develop their confidence to speak in English, a few opportunities are missed to fully involve non-English speakers. Parents are more anxious about the support given to these pupils if there is no-one in the school who speaks that particular home language. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and people of different faiths and backgrounds are usually well supported, so that they are included in all class activities and progress at a similar rate to their peers, in line with their abilities. Staff are sensitive to the needs of such pupils and value the diversity within the school. This was seen in a Year 1 religious education lesson when pupils were listened to carefully as they spoke about their own experiences and their family beliefs.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school provides good opportunities for the enrichment of the curriculum. The accommodation and the quality and range of learning resources to support the curriculum are satisfactory, overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' preparation for the next stage of their education is good.
- The curriculum in the nursery is excellent and satisfactory in the reception year.
- The school's participation in the arts is good.
- The expertise of support staff is well utilised.
- The school has made good use of curriculum developments to raise standards in English.

### **Commentary**

18. Links with the local middle school are good, with visits from its staff as well as pupils from Wyvern visiting the middle school for a variety of activities. These include ICT, physical education activities as well as going to see drama productions. These activities have taken place earlier than normal because of the reorganisation of the school this year. Parents have appreciated the close links between the two schools.
19. There is a good range of activities that enrich the curriculum, including visits and visitors and through pupils taking part in local activities. The school is involved in the annual Wolverton pancake race and Maypole dancing and the development of a new orchard near to the school. As part of their studies, the children visit local museums, the allotments and local places of worship. A Greek workshop visits the school and this supports their history curriculum. Other activities include the annual Wolverton Music Festival and a children's author visit during Book Week. The school is currently working towards the silver award of being a healthy school.
20. All staff in the nursery have excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and of the importance of high quality, structured play. This is used well to provide a range of learning experiences of the highest quality. However, this is not developed into the reception year, where the curriculum is more suited to older children or those of higher capability. Individual needs are not always clearly identified, so the curriculum provided does not always develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in a systematic way.
21. The support staff have clear roles and responsibilities and are deployed effectively. Their work enhances the overall teaching and helps to improve pupils' learning. They work well alongside the teachers, encouraging pupils and ensuring that the support they give to pupils with special needs, the gifted and talented, and those who have English as a second language is appropriate. However, provision for those pupils identified with SEN is only satisfactory, overall, due to problems with identification and monitoring. Individual education plans are clearly written, targets are measurable, and these are reviewed regularly. Support for pupils with Statements of SEN is satisfactory. Work is varied to ensure that all pupils are included in the full curriculum. Staff are careful to distinguish between SEN and the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language.
22. The school has introduced new strategies for helping pupils learn; for example, 'Sounds Write', which is used with small groups of pupils, who due to this programme achieve well with spelling and phonics work because of the very positive impact of this initiative.
23. The accommodation is more than adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. As the school moves from being a First school to being an Infant school this will lead to spare capacity and management is already involved in considering its appropriate use. The curtain partitions between some of the classrooms have reduced the disrupting noise from other classes.

## Care, guidance and support

The school provides good care and academic guidance for all pupils. Pupils, particularly those in Year 3, have good opportunities to express their views and to influence school life. In each of these aspects, standards have been maintained or improved since the previous inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are secure in the complex school building and large grounds.
- Staff have good knowledge of pupils' academic and social achievements.

#### Commentary

24. Pupils receive a warm welcome when starting in the nursery, and when transferring to the reception classes. They are secure on a large site, where the implementation of good policies for health and safety, child protection and behaviour management sustains high standards of welfare. During the inspection, some minor health and safety issues identified by the inspection team were immediately addressed. At lunch-times, experienced midday assistants closely monitor pupils' activities and sometimes join in their games. The headteacher is responsible for child protection. He receives regular training, and conscientiously ensures that all adults in the school are alert to possible issues. Pupils in Year 3 visit a local *safety centre*, to learn something of the hazards of railways, reservoirs, strangers and illegal drugs. The school has adequate procedures for verifying that current and prospective staff are not prohibited from working with children.
25. Teachers' and other adults' good informal knowledge of pupils' personal and academic development is supplemented by brief details recorded on simple, clear pro-formas. All pupils are involved in the life of the school. In Years 1 and 2 their views are canvassed at circle time, when pupils sit in a circle putting forward their views and commenting on issues raised by themselves or the teacher. In Year 3, two pupils in each class are elected to the school council and take their roles seriously as they speak on behalf of their peers. Every day, teachers and midday assistants award stickers for good work, effort or helpfulness. At a weekly *good work* assembly, two pupils from each class are nominated by their teachers for special recognition. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, and all adults are always immediately supportive of pupils seeking help or reassurance. Pupils are learning the skills of self-assessment. During the inspection, in a good music lesson in Year 3, pupils assessed the quality of their own work before evaluating one another's.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's good relationships with parents and other schools, and very good relationships with the community, contribute significantly to pupils' achievements. Standards in each of these aspects have been maintained or improved since the previous inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils benefit from a variety of links with other schools, and some exceptional links with the community.

#### Commentary

26. Most parents are very supportive of the school, and some volunteer as regular classroom helpers. In 2004, when a specialist agency canvassed parents' views on a wide range of school topics, their opinions were generally very favourable. A friends' association [FOW] organises popular social and fund-raising events, and contributes to the school's budget each year. Recent activities have provided cash for computers, and for numerous small items in classrooms. Currently, FOW is accumulating funds for an adventure playground. FOW has a

very good relationship with the governing body, and some families are active on both committees. Many parents, although not formally active in the FOW, support the school well by attendance at events.

27. The quality of information provided for parents is good. They receive a wide range of written and verbal guidance about the school's routines and expectations when their children enter the reception classes, or join other year groups. They have good access to class teachers, and can rely on a sympathetic response at any time if difficulties arise. The school's *Learning at Home* booklets provide an excellent introduction to learning for parents and children. Newsletters for all parents are regular, brief and informative. The school prospectus and the most recent governors' annual report to parents include much useful advice for parents, additional to the information legally required. However, the prospectus does not refer to the Foundation Stage as a distinct phase in education, with a curriculum based upon the Early Learning Goals.
28. Teachers' annual written reports to parents are satisfactory, showing in some detail the work covered by pupils, but rarely offering specific points for improvement. Two consultation evenings each year are very well attended, and many parents see the school in action during an annual open morning. An informal crèche or child-minding service is often provided for parents attending after-school meetings.
29. The school is effective in consulting parents when their children are identified as having special educational needs. Parents are regularly invited to meet teachers to review their children's progress and are involved in preparing new individual education plans. Pupils identified with special educational needs are given good support when they transfer to middle school because information about their needs is shared so that provision is consistent, and they get to know their teachers.
30. Links with local schools are good. Some gifted and talented pupils enjoy specialist activities elsewhere, and staff and the headteacher from a middle school occasionally visit to meet pupils or to lead assemblies. Wyvern provides good support for trainee medical nurses, nursery nurses and secondary school students on work experience programmes.
31. Very good links with the community contribute significantly to pupils' learning. The school hosts regular events for a number of community groups, including a conservation society, and provides a multilingual interpreter for a weekly mother and toddler group. A family learning scheme is very popular with parents and their children, and the current course was oversubscribed. A *community mobiliser*, sponsored by the government's Children's Fund, is a frequent and welcome visitor. He leads a wide range of family activities. The school has some multicultural contacts, but ethnic minority links and international links are not as good as they might be. Staff have identified this as an area for development.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership, management and governance of the school are good, overall. The leadership of the headteacher is good and the leadership of senior staff is satisfactory. The school is well managed and governors fulfil their duties well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The understated but effective leadership style of the headteacher is helping to create a team of hardworking professionals.
- Governors support the school well.
- The year team structure supports the management of the school well.
- Whilst teaching for pupils with SENs is generally good, leadership and management of SEN are unsatisfactory.

- Currently, leadership and management of the nursery and reception year are not resulting in a united Foundation Stage.
- Good approaches to financial management are helping the school to achieve its educational priorities.

### **Commentary**

32. The headteacher is providing effective leadership during this time of change and is ensuring that he is up to date with any new developments from the local education authority. This means that staff are also kept informed and able to discuss their personal futures in the light of reorganisation. A key feature in the headteacher's leadership is his ability to create an atmosphere where staff feel able to suggest developments and feel confident to develop their expertise. Staff feel supported and able to follow up their ideas in order to improve practice. They are supported by a good professional development programme and performance management that links the school's needs and individual needs. In Years 1, 2 and 3, the organisation through year group teams is an effective way of managing teaching, learning and the curriculum and helps to ensure continuity and progression in learning.
33. Overall, leadership by senior managers is satisfactory. The deputy headteacher does not receive the amount of non-contact time usually seen for someone with her responsibilities. She is a class teacher and SEN co-ordinator and has many additional responsibilities, with little time allocated to special needs. As a result, she is unable to gain an adequate overview of provision, nor to monitor the progress of individuals and to take the lead in identification of SEN and assessment of pupils' needs. Also, there is insufficient liaison between the nursery and reception and a lack of monitoring to ensure consistency of practice. The good quality of leadership and management of other curriculum areas, such as English and religious education, ensures high profile subjects and improvement.
34. There is much support and experience within the governing body and this is utilised well. Governors are committed and have good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This enables them to participate well in discussions and to contribute fully to any developments. For example, their work on the survey of parental views has helped them to gain good insight and to suggest future actions. In this way, governors are able to influence the work of the school. Governors are well trained and keep up to date with current changes in education policy and new initiatives. Currently, much of their time is being spent on preparing for the reorganisation of the school. They are well prepared for any issues that might arise from this and the decisions that might have to be made.
35. The school has good approaches to financial management. The school has a higher than usual surplus, but this has been set aside to make further improvements to the school (the outdoor provision for reception children), purchase more resources, pay for the recently completed work to the exterior of the school, including the railings, and to support the current level of staffing during the forthcoming reorganisation. Governors are clear about the need to ensure that finance is allocated to the children for whom it has been allocated, but they also are aware of the need to ensure that larger expenses have to be planned for. The fact that the school is a listed building means that to meet set requirements, the work is frequently more expensive than at first expected. Once the recent works have been paid for, the surplus will be more in line with current expectations. Finances are managed efficiently and effectively, with best value principles satisfactorily applied when considering financial expenditure. Financial resources, including specific grants and additional funding, are used well. Overall, the school provides good value for money because standards are rising and pupils achieve well, and the ethos for learning, the quality of provision and teaching, are all good.



## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	850,830
Total expenditure	865,040
Expenditure per pupil	2,747

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	126,992
Balance carried forward to the next	112,782

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

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

Provision is excellent in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes.

All nursery children attend part-time each day, either morning or afternoon. Of 69 on roll, 20 speak English as an additional language. Children with special educational needs are very quickly identified, and many are referred to external agencies. The nursery is staffed by a teacher [the Foundation Stage co-ordinator], two nursery assistants and a bilingual teaching assistant. Seventy children are in three reception classes, each with a teacher and a teaching assistant. Twenty-three children in the reception classes speak English as an additional language, and thirty children in the reception classes are identified as having special educational needs. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is below national expectation, and well below expectation in speaking and listening, and in personal social and emotional development. Many children with English as an additional language have little competence in their home languages when they enter the nursery. Although all children make good progress, and many make very good progress, their attainment on entry to the reception classes is below the national expectation. A few children are likely to achieve all the Early Learning Goals at the end of their reception year.

Teaching is consistently very good in the nursery, and often excellent. All staff have excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and of the importance of high quality, structured play. They use a wide variety of assessment methods to plan the next steps in children's learning. They have very high expectations of work and behaviour.

Teaching in the reception classes is satisfactory, overall, and is sometimes good. Teachers do not fully implement the Foundation Stage curriculum, and frequently use teaching methods more suited to pupils in Year 1. For example, children are often seated on the floor for extended periods of formal teaching. Time is not always used productively. Daily snack sessions rarely include the timetabled *circle time*, and staff often watch passively for periods of 15 minutes. Although Foundation Stage profiles are completed, children's work is not closely monitored and individual needs are not included in teachers' planning.

Leadership and management are satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. The co-ordinator is the nursery teacher. She is an excellent teacher, with very good management skills, but has limited influence on the reception classes. The nursery building is at some distance from the main school building, limiting daily contact with reception. This separation between nursery and reception affects continuity in the Foundation Stage. Additionally, the school's senior management team does not promote a separate identity for the Foundation Stage: much reception practice is based upon the Year 1 curriculum and is unsuited to the needs of reception children. Consequently, the fine achievements of the nursery are not carried forward in the reception classes.

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

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good** in the nursery and **satisfactory** in the reception classes.

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

- All social relationships in the Foundation Stage are excellent.
- Reception activities are often purposeless.

## Commentary

36. Standards and achievement are satisfactory in this area of learning. Teaching is very good in the nursery, and is satisfactory in reception. Very good assessment procedures on entry to the nursery, and very good induction programmes for nursery and reception, settle children quickly into established routines. Children are very happy, polite, and friendly. All adults in the nursery and reception classes establish and maintain relationships successfully with children and their families. Interesting activities stimulate nursery children, and engage their interest for extended periods. In the reception classes, where many afternoon activities are purposeless, children frequently change activities, and rarely complete any task. Teachers do not monitor children's choice of activities, or the time spent on self-selected activities. All Foundation Stage children learn about Christianity, and learn something of other faiths and cultures as required by the locally agreed syllabus. During the inspection, to celebrate Chinese New Year, a Chinese family entertained nursery children with traditional music and food. The children responded with a meticulously rehearsed song in English and Chinese. They learned that celebrations are common to all cultures, and may be marked by special clothes and music. This happy event contributed significantly to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good** in the nursery and **satisfactory** in the reception classes.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Nursery children develop excellent early reading skills.
- Phonics teaching is good in the reception classes.
- The teaching of writing is underdeveloped in the reception classes.

## Commentary

37. Standards and achievement are satisfactory in this area of learning. Teaching is excellent in the nursery, and satisfactory in the reception classes. All staff in the Foundation Stage speak very clearly to encourage the development of children's speaking and listening skills. In the nursery, the skills of a bilingual teaching assistant enable all children with English as an additional language to participate fully in all activities. All nursery children speak confidently to their peers and to adults. Staff regularly invite them individually to speak to the whole class, explaining their work or describing day-to-day events. Nursery children frequently choose to sit quietly, turning the pages of familiar books, absorbed in the illustrations. Many nursery activities, including lotto, develop the children's pre-reading skills. When reading to the children, staff consistently indicate words as they say them. During the inspection, many parents were seen to help their children select books to take home.
38. Phonics teaching in the reception classes is consistently good. Children of high attainment and average attainment use their knowledge of phonics to write simple words correctly on their whiteboards. Although children with special educational needs receive good support from teaching assistants, progress is sometimes limited because teachers do not plan the use of some basic resources. Additionally, afternoon sessions for children with special educational needs often replicate tasks completed in the morning. Children recognise their names, and some simple words. Excellent reading habits established in the nursery are not developed in the reception classes.
39. The teaching of writing is unsatisfactory in all reception classes. Analysis shows little completed work in children's books during the first term-and-a-half of their reception year. Inadequate planning and inadequate challenges limit their progress.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good** in the nursery and **satisfactory** in the reception classes.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the nursery, mathematics activities are fully integrated into all areas of learning.
- In the reception classes, the planning of mathematics is not linked closely with the Early Learning Goals.

### Commentary

40. Standards and achievement are satisfactory in this area of learning. Teaching is excellent in the nursery and is satisfactory, overall, in the reception classes. Children of average attainment in the nursery count objects accurately to seven. Children in the reception classes count accurately to fifteen. In an excellent lesson seen in the nursery, children explained the properties of a triangle and a rectangle accurately, and observed that the classroom door was a rectangle. In a good lesson seen in a reception class, children accurately recited numbers from nought to 20 in twos, and from nought to 100 in tens. A child with English as an additional language responded positively to individual attention from a teaching assistant, and participated fully. Children made good progress in this fast-paced lesson, and achieved the learning objective. However, in a brief session of a satisfactory lesson seen, children of average attainment were set work unsuited to their level of understanding. They were unable to total two groups of objects and did not understand the mathematical symbols for plus, minus and equals. In the nursery, the teaching and learning of mathematics is included in a wide variety of activities. For example, children counted and measured the ingredients for their Shrove Tuesday pancakes.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good** in the nursery, and **satisfactory** in the reception classes.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent questioning by nursery staff stimulates children's learning.
- Information and communications technology resources do not include programmable toys.

### Commentary

41. Standards and achievement are satisfactory in this area of learning. Teaching is excellent in the nursery, and satisfactory in the reception classes. Nursery children have a very good understanding of time. High-attaining children know the days of the week, and most children know the seasons of the year. To consolidate previous learning, and make links with current learning, staff constantly question children about past events in school life. Nursery children can identify a number of bird species, including robins, crows and blackbirds. During the inspection, they successfully adapted yogurt pots to serve as bird feeders, and filled the pots with their own blended paste of foods suitable for wild birds. A few children in one reception class identified the components of a torch. They knew the difference between electricity from the mains supply, and electricity from a battery. When using a computer, children in the nursery have satisfactory mouse control. During the inspection, a high-attaining child explained clearly how to print work displayed on a computer monitor. Reception children have good mouse control, and understand some simple computer programs. However, they are not supervised closely enough when working at the computers, and often do not complete program objectives. Resources in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, overall, in this area

of learning. Resources are unsatisfactory in information and communications technology because programmable toys are not available to children. Planning in the three reception classes is unsatisfactory: inadequate curriculum time is allocated to this area of learning.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good** in the nursery and **satisfactory** in the reception classes.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A very good variety of stimulating activities is provided for nursery children.
- Many activities in the reception classes are purposeless.

### **Commentary**

42. Standards and achievement are satisfactory in this area of learning. Teaching is excellent in the nursery, and satisfactory in the reception classes. Nursery staff have very high expectations of children's work, and plan ambitious art projects in collage, paint and other media. The nursery is decorated with very attractive displays of children's original artwork. For example, children have completed beautiful observational drawings of spring flowers. Photographs show that reception children designed and laid out complex patterns of coloured stones representing hearts, flowers and similar symbols. Imaginative play in the reception classes has improved since the previous inspection, stimulated by some good resources and imaginative guidance from adults. For example, in this inspection, children were seen to re-enact scenes from a familiar story. Although children in the reception classes have constant access to a variety of art materials, teachers rarely establish clear objectives for their work and have low expectations of outcomes.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **very good** in the nursery and **satisfactory** in the reception classes.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- No significant strengths are identified in this area of learning.
- The reception outdoor play area is underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

43. Standards and achievement are satisfactory in this area of learning. Teaching is very good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. In a very good dance lesson seen in the nursery, children interpreted a popular story imaginatively. When questioned the next day, they clearly recalled the sequence and detail of the story. On Shrove Tuesday, nursery children were seen to cook, and sometimes to catch, their tossed pancakes! Reception children have good gross motor skills. They cycle confidently in the outdoor area, but, as the playground surface is not marked with a roadway or with traffic signs, their play is often purposeless. Children in the nursery have good fine motor skills. They use pencils, glue spreaders and scissors confidently. Children in the reception classes are rarely encouraged to develop their similarly good skills. Nursery and reception children have some understanding of the elements of a healthy life style. They know the benefits of eating fruit and vegetables each day.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, overall, and pupils achieve well.
- Subject leadership is good and recent initiatives are raising standards.
- Basic skills in writing are taught well and standards in spelling, punctuation and handwriting are good.
- Standards in reading are below average and pupils have only one focused reading session each week.
- Teachers encourage pupils to practise their speaking skills in all subjects.

#### Commentary

44. Standards have risen since the last inspection. In the 2004 national tests, at the end of Year 2, results in writing were similar to those attained nationally and in similar schools. Reading results were below both the national average and those achieved in similar schools. Current standards in reading and writing in Years 2 and 3 are broadly similar to those attained in the 2004 tests. Standards in speaking and listening are average in both year groups. Overall, English standards in Year 3 are average. At the end of the reception stage standards are below average and pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 3. This is because the teaching is good and pupils have good attitudes to learning. Many pupils join the school later than the usual entry dates. School data clearly shows that those pupils who start in the school before Year 1 attain better than those who join later. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well, but their test results fall below the school average. Many of these pupils start school with limited English.
45. The quality of teaching is good and enables all pupils to make progress. Teachers are particularly effective in involving pupils in thinking about their learning. Learning objectives are shared with pupils at the start of each lesson so that the purpose of the session is clear. At the end of the lesson teachers refer again to the objectives to assess progress. Individual target-setting is a very good feature, particularly during Year 1 writing activities. Pupils are motivated and work with their target cards in front of them. They know that when they have achieved five "ticks" against one target they are set another. Lessons are usually planned carefully to interest and motivate pupils. In a very good lesson in Year 3, pupils were keen to edit their writing because there was a clear purpose. The teaching assistant was to see whether or not she could assemble a picture frame by following pupils' instructions. Support staff are well deployed. They give effective help to pupils identified with special educational needs and to others who need support in learning. Most teachers ensure that activities are suitably varied for those at the earlier stages of learning English as an additional language. Occasionally, this is not the case and teachers miss the opportunity to use concrete examples to help pupils understand vocabulary.
46. Spelling, handwriting and punctuation are taught well, and standards in these aspects of writing are good. Teaching is systematic and thorough, and staff share good expectations of what pupils can achieve. Standards in reading have improved but remain below average. Pupils respond well during the single weekly focused reading session. These lessons are well organised with a good range of supporting activities. The school works hard to encourage parents to read with their children at home but is aware that not all parents do so. Pupils read during the brief morning registration period, but focused time spent on daily reading is less than that seen in many schools.

47. Teachers focus well on developing speaking and listening skills. Pupils have good opportunities to take part in brief discussions during most lessons, and they gain confidence in expressing their views. Year 2 pupils participate in a specific programme, which the school helped to develop. Some pupils in the current Year 2 find this quite demanding as they find it difficult to take turns in activities. In general, however, standards are broadly average in both Years 2 and 3.
48. Leadership and management of the subject are good and there is a clear focus on raising standards. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and learning and identifies areas, such as ICT, for development. Improvement since the last inspection is good, and resources are now in good condition. Recent initiatives include a focus on developing speaking skills and a new phonic programme. The latter is having a clear impact on developing pupils' skills in spelling. It is too early to assess any impact on reading standards. Average- and higher-attainers in Year 2 use phonic skills to work out unfamiliar words, but lower-attaining pupils do not.

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

49. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use their skills in relevant subjects. They are familiar with reference books, and by Year 2 most pupils are competent in using the contents and index pages. Pupils write captions and label drawings when they illustrate their work. Writing skills are used well in design and technology, particularly in Year 3, for planning and evaluating work. There is little evidence, however, of extended writing in history or geography.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards, although low in the last national test, are improving and pupils are now achieving well.
- Teaching and learning are good, overall.
- The learning support assistants provide good support for pupils with SEN and English as a second language.
- The subject leader provides satisfactory, but rapidly improving leadership.

### **Commentary**

50. Standards achieved in the national tests in 2004 were very low for Year 2 and very low in comparison with similar schools. However, approximately only two-thirds of pupils had received all of their education at the school and many of the new comers had English as an additional language. The attainment seen during the inspection in Years 2 and 3 was broadly similar to that seen nationally for pupils of this age. The recent improvements in identifying and challenging the more able pupils and the additional support being given to the pupils with English as an additional language are beginning to bring about improvements, but they had not had time to have an impact on standards in the 2004 national tests. There was less recorded work seen in pupils' books than would be normally be expected at this time in the school year, and during the inspection no practical mathematics was seen. Mathematics' displays did not have a high profile and not all involved pupils' work. Therefore, they did not have an impact on pupils' learning.
51. The quality of teaching and learning was mostly good, with well-paced lessons and differentiated activities that gave challenge to the more able pupils. There were opportunities for pupils to reflect upon and to discuss their work with partners and the teacher. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are fully involved in the majority of them. This helps them to achieve well. The planning is based on the National Numeracy Strategy but in only one lesson was ICT included, though ICT did take place in the majority of the lessons seen. To this extent,

practice was better than the planning indicated. Information and communication technology is used in the teaching of numeracy but is not incorporated into planning in a regular way.

52. The expertise of teaching assistants was used well in all lessons seen, although not always supporting the less able and those with English as a second language. Those with SENs made good progress in the lessons due to effective support and were well motivated.
53. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory. The leadership and management of this subject are satisfactory, overall, as the co-ordinator is enthusiastic, has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to develop the subject and also has a firm grasp of the strategies required to raise standards. She has been involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and has modelled lessons. There is, at present, no subject development plan, although the co-ordinator is aware that one would benefit this subject area. Mathematics is not a priority in this year's school development plan. Resources are generally satisfactory for teaching this subject.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

54. There are insufficient planned opportunities for the development of mathematics across the curriculum; the lack of a whole-school overview results in individual staff having to make the mathematical links. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson, data-handling skills were used to record the colour of pupils' eyes.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good and help pupils to achieve well.
- There is a greater focus on the investigative nature of science and this is helping to maintain pupils' interests and to develop their good attitudes to learning.
- Coverage of the science curriculum is satisfactory, overall, although pupils do not systematically use information and communication technology in science.
- There was a limited amount of pupils' written work, so it was difficult to understand how they consolidate their learning.

### **Commentary**

55. In the 2004 national tests, teachers' assessments indicate that the percentage of pupils reaching the level appropriate for their age was above average but the percentage reaching a higher level was well below average. This is generally reflected in the current Year 2 where most pupils were working to at least Level 2. However, higher-attainers are now being challenged more, owing to the greater emphasis placed on investigative science. This develops the scientific thinking of all pupils but particularly the more capable. In Year 3, most pupils are working at the level expected for their age. Throughout the school, most pupils achieve well because they are interested in the practical nature of the tasks and like 'doing science'. Pupils with special educational needs generally achieve well, particularly when additional support is provided. Those pupils learning English as an additional language also achieve well due to the effective support provided; for example, in Year 2, where pupils were encouraged to understand how materials changed when heated. Here, new vocabulary was introduced and its use by pupils encouraged. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.



56. In good lessons, like those observed in Years 1, 2 and 3, teachers encouraged pupils to think scientifically and to predict, in Year 1, for example, what might be the best paper in which to wrap a present and, in Year 3 the effect of stretching an elastic band to move a car when studying forces. The pupils responded well and, because they were interested in what they were doing they behaved well. Relationships were good and this helped pupils to work well together and share their ideas. All these features ensured that the pace of learning was good and that pupils achieved well.
57. Links with literacy are not developed well, as pupils are not encouraged to write at length about their observations and investigations. Opportunities are also lost to consolidate pupils' learning by recording, and to prepare for future work when pupils will develop their own ideas for investigations and recording their observations. Although all areas of the curriculum were covered, pupils' ICT skills were not highlighted for development in the planning.
58. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Strengths include the better coverage of the full science curriculum and the renewed focus on investigative science. However, the co-ordinator has insufficient time to fulfil her monitoring role in any great depth and, consequently, is unable to help teachers identify areas that would drive standards higher. Consequently, leadership and management remain satisfactory.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Facilities and resources have improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- Teachers rarely plan for the use of information and communication technology in curriculum subjects.

### Commentary

59. Overall, good improvements have been made since the last inspection. Standards are now satisfactory in all year groups, and meet national expectations in Year 2. Pupils achieve well and they made good progress in each of the lessons seen. Pupils learn quickly because experienced teaching assistants contribute significantly to lessons, and some teachers organise peer support for pupils who do not have access to a home computer. During the inspection, an attractive display by pupils in Year 2 showed imaginative designs for houses, created with a paint program, and embellished with clipart people, trees and birds. In word processing, pupils respond to spelling and grammatical errors identified by program underlines. They have designed and printed many labels for their classroom. In a lesson seen in Year 2, pupils employed good keyboard knowledge to create single sentence descriptions of scenes in Goldilocks. High-attaining pupils were asked to create more than one sentence, but were not challenged to make changes to the font size or colour to extend their ICT skills.
60. A computer suite now provides satisfactory accommodation for all year groups, although some workstations are affected by bright sunlight. Teachers' expertise has improved, overall, and the quality of teaching and learning is now good.
61. Some pupils in Year 3 use *drag and drop* for moving blocks of text, and they locate, copy and paste relevant pictures into their work. In a good ICT/music lesson seen, pupils composed short pieces of music, using icons representing musical phrases. Most achieved good results, played back their compositions, and evaluated one another's work in a good session of speaking and listening. A group of Year 3 pupils used a digital camera to record a whole-class sandwich-making session. The teacher demonstrated how to download and print pictures, and pupils were delighted with the results.

62. Subject leadership is good, and management satisfactory. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and very enthusiastic. She continually helps staff to improve their skills, but does not always exploit the potential of available resources. She has satisfactory knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in all classes and is beginning to develop simple assessment procedures for year groups.

### **ICT across the curriculum**

63. Analysis of pupils' work, including displays in classrooms, indicates that some ICT is included in subjects. However, teachers do not plan systematically for the use of ICT. Many opportunities are missed in the computer suite, where teachers could bring subject material to the computers, and in classrooms, where they could bring ICT resources to the subject. For example, some high quality digital photographs of a physical education lesson are attractively displayed but have not been used to demonstrate to pupils how their performances might be improved.

### **HUMANITIES**

64. Inspectors observed one geography lesson and two religious education lessons. No history lessons were seen. Inspectors also looked at a limited sample of pupils' work and teachers' planning and spoke with staff and pupils. It was not possible to make overall judgements on provision in geography and history.
65. Overall, coverage of the **geography** curriculum is satisfactory according to teachers' plans and discussion with pupils. In Year 1, pupils develop an understanding of their own environment and types of housing. This is extended in Year 2 as they develop knowledge about India and make comparisons between their own lives and those of others in different places. They develop an understanding of differences between towns and, for example, the seaside and identify features of these areas. Pupils' geographical skills are developed through the use of maps and, for example, the use of atlases, as seen in a good Year 3 lesson. Here, pupils used information based on a homework activity to identify places in the world with which they had a connection. This developed their skills and also their cultural awareness of others in the class. The display *Passport to the World*, which indicated their holiday destinations and countries of birth, supported their learning and celebrated their cultural diversity. Comments about the recent Tsunami were handled sensitively and appropriately by the teacher.
66. In **history**, there was only one piece of work in the books. Year 2's piece of work concerned 'Wolverton in the past' and in Year 3, 'Transport in 1900'. Displays were only to be found in Year 1, which were a good mixture of children's writing, photographs and pictures concerning their visit to the museum with a focus on toys.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good and help pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils are interested in the subject and have good attitudes to learning.
- Resources are used well to support pupils' learning and engage their attention.
- Although teachers are aware of what pupils know and can do, there is no whole-school assessment procedure for assessing pupils in religious education.
- There is no planned use of ICT identified.

## Commentary

67. Standards of attainment for pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 3 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Since the last inspection there have been good improvements in the programme of work pupils cover, teaching and learning. These changes have ensured that pupils now make good progress and achieve well.
68. Teaching and learning are good for a variety of reasons. Discussions with pupils show that they are given a good understanding of the nature of religious belief. Visits to a local church and assemblies support pupils' learning in this respect. Pupils also show interest in the range of beliefs and are aware of similarities. For example, they identify that all have places of worship and pray, and are aware of special things and processes. One Year 1 pupil was very keen to explain that the inspector should not touch 'the special book unless she had washed her hands', whilst another spoke about how members of his family prayed.
69. The Year 1 lesson observed was good because it quickly captured the interest of the pupils and maintained their learning. The teacher and a pupil had brought into the class various items of traditional dress and the pupils learnt the names of each. This activity reflected the good links between home and school and highlighted the respect given to a range of beliefs. Another strength of this lesson was the good support provided by the bilingual teaching assistant who encouraged pupils to respond to the teaching either by speaking in English or their home language. This lesson also contributed well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
70. In another good lesson, Year 2 pupils were fully involved in the life of Moses through listening well to the teacher because she held their attention. Pupils had good subject knowledge and responded well to her questions, indicating good previous learning. Their knowledge and understanding was consolidated well as they acted out part of the story of Moses and joined in fully in a sensible and sensitive way. The teachers' very good behaviour management skills ensured that this class, including several pupils with challenging behaviour, enjoyed the lesson and achieved well.
71. Leadership and management of the subject are good, mainly due to the good improvement made since the last inspection. The co-ordinator uses her own very good subject knowledge to support staff and to ensure that they are confident when teaching. This helps to raise the overall standard of teaching. Assemblies contribute to religious education well when taken by the co-ordinator. She is in the process of developing new assessment procedures that are more manageable and ensure that skills and knowledge are developed at levels appropriate to pupils' abilities and their progress monitored. She is also aware of the need to develop the use of ICT across all age groups now that that resources have improved.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. One lesson was observed in each of art and design, design and technology and music and four in physical education. Inspectors also spoke to staff, analysed the school's curriculum provision and evaluated pupils' work and displays around the school. Pupils were heard during singing practices, choir and recorder clubs. It was only possible to make an overall judgement on physical education.
73. There have been some improvements in **art and design** since the last inspection. The school now follows national guidance, which ensures that pupils experience a range of activities. Resources are satisfactory in terms of range, and often of good quality. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to work with fabrics and clay as well as with paint. Finished batik designs in Year 3 classes indicate that standards are broadly in line with those expected. Year 1 pupils worked with a high level of concentration in a good lesson on

weaving. They chose colours and materials carefully and worked well independently and in

adult-led groups. The teacher valued pupils' ideas as they chose materials to decorate their work, and extended their understanding through sensitive comments.

74. Evidence from pupils' **design and technology** work and teachers' planning indicates that all aspects of the subject are covered thoroughly. Standards in the Year 3 lesson were above average. Pupils had explored structures and were aware of terms such as *stability*. Their picture frames were carefully constructed, and highly individual. During a very good lesson, pupils evaluated their work, making constructive comments about how the frames could be improved. Skilful questioning by the class teacher ensured that pupils focused on "function" as well as appearance. Pupils tested to see whether frames were stable, and found out whether it was easy to insert photographs. The final product was compared with the original design, and pupils recognised that some changes had to be made during construction. Strong links with literacy lessons involved pupils in writing instructions for making frames, thereby reinforcing their understanding of the process. Samples of glove puppets made by Year 2 pupils were also made well and indicate that pupils had good opportunities to make individual choices when they decorated the finished product. Pupils have some opportunities to use drawing programs when using the computers.
75. Standards of **music** performance in the Years 2 and 3 singing practice were similar to those expected at this age. Pupils responded well to praise and were helped in this session by the presence of all the class teachers. In the singing practice for reception and Year 1 classes, several pupils talked throughout without being checked. Little was done to improve the quality of singing. By contrast, in a good Year 2 music lesson pupils responded enthusiastically and participated well. They enjoyed singing and maintained the beat as they clapped. The teacher's lively presentation moved the lesson forward at a brisk pace and some potentially silly behaviour was skilfully managed. In a well-taught lunch-time recorder group, Year 3 pupils played well and showed an emerging understanding of formal notation. The Year 3 choir was motivated by the prospect of taking part in a music festival and sang tunefully as they prepared a variety of lively songs. Some good links are established with ICT when pupils use a program to compose music.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Displays concerning aspects of physical education are good.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and participate fully.
- There is limited opportunity for enrichment by extra-curricular opportunities.

### Commentary

76. During the inspection, lessons in dance and gymnastics were seen taught across Years 1, 2 and 3. Here, the teaching and learning were good. Teachers demonstrated activities well and ensured that pupils were aware of health and safety issues. There were no significant differences in achievement between boys and girls. Standards were in line with national expectations and pupils achieved well. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, made good progress, Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieved similarly to their classmates.
77. There are high profile displays around the upper hall, which show good examples of performance that is planned to be used for assessment purposes. These displays give physical education a high status within the school. Pupils enjoy their lessons and, therefore, participate fully. They are good at watching one another perform and discuss their performance and the performance of others without being critical, making constructive

suggestions as to how performances could be improved. Pupils string a series of controlled movements together successfully into a sequence.

78. There are few extra-curricular activities for the enrichment of the curriculum, but those offered include line dancing at lunch-time and Kwick cricket in the summer term. There is recognition within the school for pupils who take part in sporting activities in the community.
79. Leadership and management of this subject are good. This aspect shows good improvement since the last inspection, and overall improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about her role. She has a clear view of her subject area and has appropriate plans for further development. She is involved in monitoring the quality of lessons and has been used to model lessons. Resources have recently been increased and are now adequate for the teaching of this subject. There are links with Milton Keynes Dons, which benefits the pupils in Year 3. There are also good sporting links with the neighbouring middle school.

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

80. This area of the school's work was sampled in a single *circle time* seen in Year 3. Pupils discussed aspects of positive behaviour in society. They understood that actions have consequences, and that peer pressure can be difficult to resist. The school's policy has recently been rewritten, but the co-ordinator has not yet developed a scheme of work. She has insufficient time to evaluate teaching and learning.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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