

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **St Kenelm's Primary School**

Romsley, Halesowen

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116846

Headteacher: Mrs Hazel Gommersall

Lead inspector: Paul Edwards

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> February – 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2005

Inspection number: 272041

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: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 155

School address: Bromsgrove Road  
Romsley  
Halesowen  
West Midlands  
Postcode: B62 0LF

Telephone number: 01562 710214  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of Nicki MacKenzie  
governors:

Date of previous 24<sup>th</sup> May 1999  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Kenelm's is a voluntary controlled primary school situated in the village of Romsley near to Halesowen. There are 155 pupils - 81 boys and 74 girls - on roll, which is smaller than average. At the time of the previous inspection it was a first school; now that it is a primary school, numbers have risen significantly. The school has a Year 6 class for the first time this year. The building work required to accommodate additional classes has caused considerable disruption and new members of staff have been employed. The school is popular and a number of pupils live outside of the school's catchment area. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is above average. Almost all of the pupils are of white British heritage. The proportion of pupils that has been identified as having special educational needs is well below average. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Just under two per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below average. The school gained Investor in People status in 2003 and an Eco silver award in 2004.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21069	Paul Edwards	Lead inspector	Mathematics; science; information and communication technology; special educational needs.
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector	
23556	John Iles	Team inspector	English; art and design; design and technology; music; physical education
2766	Rashida Spencer	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage; history; geography; religious education; personal, social and health education and citizenship

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>10</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>30</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

St Kenelm's is a **very effective** school. There is a strong, caring ethos in which pupils behave very well and are encouraged to do their best. The staff are enthusiastic, very well led and managed by the headteacher and supported well by the governing body. Most pupils make very good progress throughout their time at the school because of the very good teaching. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- The pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics and science
- Teaching is very good overall
- Assessment procedures are very effective
- Relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are excellent
- The pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards work are excellent, and the provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good
- The school is very well led and managed
- The overuse of worksheets inhibits opportunities to practise writing skills and affects pupils' presentation of their work

The school has made good progress since the previous inspection. The very good standards in English, mathematics and science have been maintained in the infants and inspection evidence shows that high standards are being attained in the upper junior classes which have been created recently. Standards have been maintained in other subjects. There has been an improvement in the quality of information and communication technology (ICT) resources which has resulted in the pupils attaining better standards. There has been a continued development of assessment procedures, which are used effectively to monitor standards and the progress of individual pupils.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
Reading	A	A*	A	B
Writing	A	A	A	B
Mathematics	A	A	B	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.*

**Pupils' achievement is very good** overall. Pupils' achievement in reception and in both the infants and juniors is very good. Year 6 pupils attain standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are above the expected levels. Year 2 pupils attain above average standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT. Children enter the school with levels of attainment that are above average. They make very good progress in the reception class and most are likely to achieve above the nationally expected levels in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 continue to make very good progress and this is consolidated in Years 3 to 6. Throughout the school, work is very well matched to the pupils' ability, enabling them to achieve the standards of which they are capable. Pupils with

special educational needs make very good progress towards their individual targets because of the strong teaching and very good support provided by teaching assistants. **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good** and help to promote their excellent attitudes and behaviour. Attendance is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching is very good** overall. The children learn very well in the Foundation Stage because sessions are very well planned with high expectations of what the children can achieve. In both the infants and the juniors the teaching is very good and work is very well matched to the pupils' needs. An occasional overuse of worksheets inhibits the pupils' presentation of their work and reduces opportunities to develop writing skills further. The worksheets also lack challenge in subjects such as mathematics. The curriculum is good and enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The school provides good personal care and very good guidance and support for the pupils, which is underpinned by its caring, Christian ethos. Very good links with parents and the community make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good** overall. The headteacher works effectively with her deputy to provide very good leadership for the school. During the change from first to primary school status she has managed a high level of staff change very successfully, to develop a supportive and committed team. Subject co-ordinators, many of whom are new to their role, demonstrate a detailed knowledge of their subject and she leads them very effectively. Governance is good. Governors are fully involved in working with the headteacher and staff to determine the effectiveness of the school and to identify what needs to be done to improve. They fully meet their statutory requirements and make a good contribution to the life of the school.

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

The overwhelming majority of parents are very supportive of the school. They feel that the school provides their children with a good quality of education and that there is a good range of extra-curricular activities.

The pupils have very positive views of the school. Discussions with pupils indicate that they enjoy school and that they have to work hard. Most feel that the behaviour of other pupils is very good and that the teachers are approachable and helpful.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Reduce the use of mundane worksheets to improve the presentation of pupils work and to provide them with opportunities to practise writing skills in other subjects;
- Ensure that worksheets offer sufficient challenge, particularly in subjects such as mathematics.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

While moving to primary school status, the school had maintained its high academic standards. The evidence of the inspection confirms that the pupils' achievement is very good overall. Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by the end of Year 6.

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

- Children are provided with a very good start to their education in the Foundation Stage
- The very good provision in English, mathematics and science means that the pupils achieve very well in these key areas
- Standards in ICT have improved and pupils attain standards that are above average
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make very good progress overall

#### **Commentary**

1. When they first join Reception, children's ability covers a broad range but is above average overall. The very good teaching and the broad and balanced curriculum mean that the children make very good gains in their learning and are achieving very well. Most of the children are well on course to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of Reception in each of the areas of learning.
2. Due to the school recently changing from a first to a primary school, no National Curriculum tests have been undertaken at Year 6. However, inspection evidence shows that Year 6 pupils attain standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science and that they achieve very well. The teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and this results in the very good progress seen throughout the school. The school makes very effective use of additional staff to provide additional support and, while this is generally targeted at pupils with special educational needs, it does provide opportunities for staff to work with more able pupils. This ensures that all pupils are given work that challenges them and they attain the standards of which they are capable. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
3. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is very good. Frequently, standards in national tests are well above average and inspection evidence shows that standards are above average in all areas. Although the trend in the school's average National Curriculum points score for all core subjects has been below than that seen nationally at Key Stage 1, this is not a true reflection of progress overall. Last year's Year 2 pupils were atypical, with a slightly above average number of pupils with special educational needs and the high standards seen in previous years were not attained. However, pupils in Year 2 are achieving very well and are likely to attain the high standards seen in previous years.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
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reading	17.6 (18.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.3 (16.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.2 (18.2)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- Standards in ICT are above average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. The improvement since the time of the previous inspection has been maintained, partly because of the improved resources but also because of the increased confidence of teachers. The effective teaching of skills and the provision of opportunities for pupils to practise these skills to promote learning in other subjects ensure most pupils achieve well. In all other subjects, where it was possible to make a judgement, standards are above average.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates and make very good progress towards the steps noted on their very detailed individual education plans. This is because teachers ensure these pupils receive good additional help in lessons. Also, the school has very good procedures to identify any problems pupils are having with their learning and, as a result, any difficulties are quickly remedied. Teachers and support staff work very well together to ensure that the pupils know what they are expected to do and they fully involve them in the activities and in planning their individual education plans.

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

Attitudes and behaviour are excellent overall. Personal development is very good due to the very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is good and punctuality very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils show great interest in school and work very hard
- Relationships are excellent and allow pupils to show great maturity and confidence
- High expectations of behaviour are reflected in very high standards
- Attendance is good because pupils like coming to school

### **Commentary**

- The pupils are highly committed to learning. Throughout the school pupils enjoy their lessons. They respond with great interest and enthusiasm to the lively and engaging teaching. The youngest pupils in the Reception class are highly motivated, listen well, participate actively and thoroughly enjoy their work. These most positive attitudes continue as pupils progress through the school. Pupils in Year 6 say how sad they are to leave the school because they enjoy it so much, but are equally very confident about their move to secondary school. They also enjoy and appreciate the extra-curricular activities provided. Standards in this aspect of the school have improved on those described the previous inspection.
- Pupils are very friendly and relationships are excellent. Pupils show natural confidence that is recognised and developed very well by the school. Pupils' understanding of becoming good citizens is encouraged very well, such as through the provision of an

effective School Council. Members' comments reflect the mature and responsible way they undertake this role. "We help make the school a better place." "We allocate jobs that will help improve things for everybody." "I like to help and try to sort out problems;" are typical of pupils' reasons for serving on the Council. The ECO committee of pupils demonstrates further their confidence, maturity and sense of responsibility. They have set up a range of environmentally caring initiatives such as pupil light monitors, recycling of paper and waste, and surveys on eating and drinking habits. Pupils' personal development is enhanced with a wide range of cultural and multi-cultural experiences and the provision of residential visits for pupils in Years 4 and 5.

8. All members of staff have very high expectations of behaviour to which the pupils respond superbly. They know right from wrong and what to do if squabbles or accidents happen. There is no evidence of any sexist or racist attitudes. A small number of parents show some concerns over bullying. There is no evidence to show that these concerns are justified. Minor disputes and name-calling do happen but the school deals with all them quickly and effectively in line with the behaviour policy. Records are thorough and up to date. Behaviour in lessons, around the school and at break times is excellent. The high standards of behaviour have resulted in no temporary or permanent exclusions since the previous inspection.
  
9. Overall attendance levels have been above or about the national average for the last four years. To date this year levels have improved further. There are very few unauthorised absences. The school has effective systems to monitor absences allowing them to identify and discourage potential absences such as when parents wanting to take children on holiday in term time. Punctuality is very good allowing lessons to start on time

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education. Teaching and learning are very good and the curriculum is good. There are good arrangements for securing the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils. Links with parents, the local community and other schools are very good.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good and there are good procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching in the Foundation Stage provides the children with a very good start to their education
- The pupils learn very well because teachers make lessons interesting and challenging
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported
- There is an overuse of worksheets

## Commentary

10. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently very good. The teacher has had significant experience of working with young children and this is evident in all aspects of the provision. Very effective teamwork, with high quality planning, ensures that all children are provided with work that not only matches their ability but also their level of maturity. Lessons move along at a brisk pace and pupils quickly develop confidence because of the teacher's ability to involve all pupils during question and answer sessions. There is a very good balance between teacher-directed and child-chosen activities and this helps considerably to develop the children's independence. Teaching assistants make a very significant contribution to the children's learning providing them with good support and intervening when appropriate.
11. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good because the school has maintained a high profile in these areas. The subjects are very well organised by the co-ordinators, who have identified areas for improvement and, with the support of the headteacher and local education authority advisory service, they keep a close check on the teaching and learning to monitor the developments. The work to improve the pupils' skills in practical mathematics has been promoted very well, ensuring the pupils make significant progress in this aspect. The teachers have a very good understanding of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and the work is presented in a very lively way that captures the pupils' attention from the start. The teachers have embraced new technology enthusiastically and the use of interactive whiteboards is helping to provide the pupils with exciting learning opportunities. There are good opportunities for them to discuss their work, at the beginning and end of lessons and as they work. Throughout the school the teachers are very good at using searching questioning to determine what the pupils know and can do and then using the pupils' responses to determine the next stage of learning. The work is very well planned to take account of the different levels of ability in each class. As a result, most pupils learn and achieve very well.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	12	11	2	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

12. Assessment procedures are very good; very detailed records of the assessment are kept and the information is used very effectively to plan the next stage of learning. The reception staff keep detailed records and there are regular meetings with parents to ensure they are kept informed and able to participate in their child's education. The assessments in the Foundation Stage are used very well to ensure a smooth transition to the National Curriculum. This is particularly evident with the gradual introduction of literacy and numeracy lessons for the younger children. The effective assessment of pupils' work continues into the infants and juniors and the use of the data has a good impact on the teachers' planning. The consistent use of the assessment information enables the teachers to match the work closely to the pupils' needs and results in very good progress being made by the pupils.
13. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good additional help in lessons from skilled and competent learning support assistants. When it is necessary for some individuals to receive more intensive help, they are withdrawn from class sensitively to work in a quieter environment.

This combination of approaches ensures they make at least good progress, and frequently progress is very good. Individual education plan targets are excellent; they are very clear and have explicit short term learning objectives. Teachers and learning support assistants use the individual education plans well to inform their planning and this ensures work is effectively matched to pupils' individual needs.

14. Occasionally, there is an overuse of mundane worksheets. These worksheets do nothing that the teachers cannot do better by other means. The overuse of these worksheets results in pupils' work not being presented as neatly and tidily as it could be and the quality of marking rarely identifies how the pupils might improve their work.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a good curriculum which meets the needs of all pupils. There are very good opportunities for pupils to enrich their experiences. Overall, the accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is very well planned
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- Activities to promote curriculum enrichment are good
- The new designated area for outdoor activities for reception children needs further modification

## **Commentary**

15. The curriculum throughout the school is planned well to meet statutory requirements and to meet the needs of all pupils. Given that the status of the school changed from a first school to a primary in September 2004, the school has made good progress in the relatively short time to secure a curriculum which has integrated the new requirements. The subject leaders have a very good capacity to enhance the curriculum areas further.
16. In the reception class the curriculum plan is very well organised and has a very firm structure. All areas of learning are clearly defined and the core skills in language, literacy and mathematics are linked very carefully to these. Provision for personal, social and emotional development is very good and has a positive impact on pupils' well being.
17. Policies and the schemes of work are satisfactorily developed for all subjects and cross-curricular themes, such as sex education and relationships, drugs and health education are clearly identified. The subject leaders have made significant efforts to align the existing schemes of work with national (QCA) guidelines; however, there are a few areas where further development is needed to complete a curriculum that encourages the progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding. History and geography are timetabled consecutively in half termly blocks leaving too long a gap between each set of lessons. The school is aware of the possibility of discontinuous learning in these subjects and has identified it as an area of priority for development in the improvement plan.
18. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are well embedded and are making a significant contribution to the high standards achieved. The cross-curricular links in other subjects are being defined but not fully embedded. The extensive use of printed

worksheets requiring only limited response, particularly in some subjects in Years 1 and 2, is restricting the opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their writing skills.

19. Throughout the school, the curriculum is very well planned to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are of a very high quality; they are reviewed and amended regularly and the staff make good reference to meeting specific targets in their planning. The teachers and support staff work well together to ensure learning opportunities are consistently challenging and stimulating. Very good account is taken of advice from other professionals when considering how best to address the needs of individual pupils.
20. A good range of visits, visitors and additional experiences outside classes enrich learning, for example in sports, music, dance, drama and art. Many field trips and residential trips are also arranged, providing a good extension to the curriculum. Two projects are specific highlights of the school. The Eco school project is managed by Year 5 and 6 pupils. An Eco committee, which includes staff and governors and is chaired by pupils, organises audits and surveys and identifies issues that have an adverse impact on the local environment, such as litter. Good evidence about the positive results of its activities is collected, collated and shared. This project promotes and nurtures good citizenship skills. 'Forest School' is another major project which is managed by the reception teacher. This is focused on making good use of the immediate woodland area. Personal, social and health education is very well promoted through these and other activities in the school. Parents are very aware of issues relating to health and the harmful effects of drugs etc. The ethos of the school encourages pupils to take responsibility and allows them to make decisions; consequently, pupils are well involved, interested and excited about their education. Links with neighbouring schools further enhance the curriculum.

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

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is satisfactory; pastoral care is good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on the monitoring of pupils' achievement is very good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is very good. Standards are similar to those described in the previous inspection report.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The induction arrangements are very good
- Support and advice available for pupils is very good
- Pupils' views are seen as very important
- Care is good but some health and safety issues remain outstanding

### **Commentary**

21. Very good induction arrangements ensure the pupils quickly settle into the Reception class. Parents and children welcome the warm, friendly and informative approach that quickly establishes relationships which continue throughout the school.
22. Personal and academic development is supported very well as pupils move through the school. Pupils who move to the school from other schools say they are made welcome and quickly settle and are included into school life. This has been particularly successful as the school moved to full primary status. Pupils who have moved from a number of first schools have quickly integrated into the school with no detrimental impact on their progress. All members of staff know the pupils and their backgrounds very well, allowing them to give them good support and guidance. Academic support and advice for pupils from the Reception class is good due to

good assessment procedures. All pupils, especially those with special educational needs, are supported very well to take a full part in the life of the school.

23. Pupils feel that members of staff value their views and this gives them confidence to discuss issues and raise questions. They are consulted with very well; for instance through the school council or through surveys. For example the latest survey this term indicated pupils' very positive views on teaching, relationships and behaviour.
24. The good care and concern for pupils' needs is appreciated by both the pupils and their parents. The thorough approach to child protection procedures, good evaluation of health and safety risks, fire precaution arrangements, good first aid procedures, including a very good new medical room, and supervision of pupils at break and lunchtimes enables pupils to feel secure and work and play in confidence. Although the school has identified potential safety risks a number have not been dealt with, for example, the height of the stair rail, gaps in the rail of the decking area used by the reception pupils, and the width of the hall in physical education lessons. The school is very clean, tidy and secure. Pupils are confident they have a supportive adult to speak to if they have worries or concerns. They feel they are listened to and action is taken if they have concerns.

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

The school has a very good partnership with parents that has a very positive impact on pupils' achievements. Links with the local community and local schools are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parental support is very good
- Very good information is provided to parents
- Liaison arrangements with local schools are very good
- The local area is used well to support learning

### **Commentary**

25. Parents are very supportive of the school and provide very good encouragement to their children in their learning. Parents ensure pupils attend on time and wanting to enjoy learning. They support homework, especially reading, very well. The HSA (Home School Association) provides outstanding support both in fundraising and social/ educational events. Events for parents and pupils such as the popular French and Indian evenings provide social and cultural experiences for all. Parents provide good help with visits, in the library and in lessons such as art and design.
26. This support is encouraged and built on well by the school. Newsletters are informative and helpful especially in relation to areas of work to be covered for each class. Annual reports give very good information on progress and achievements and targets show parents areas where they may provide further support for their children's learning. The school is open to parents; teachers are available at the end of the day and issues are dealt with promptly and to good levels of satisfaction from the great majority of parents.
27. The partnership with the local schools, especially the local pyramid, benefits pupils particularly in relation to sport and the Arts, for example with the Pyramid arts Festival. There is very good support as pupils move to secondary school. The pyramid has been very supportive in ensuring that the change to primary school status has had little impact on pupils' achievement. A wide

range of visits to the local high school for example in relation to ICT and art are used very effectively. Very good links with the local playgroup help pupils settle very quickly into school life in the reception class.

28. The school makes very good use of the local community to support learning. Pupils in Reception love “Wellie Wednesday” when they work and play in the school’s woodland each week. Work done includes making a log circle, twig numbers, and sketching a favourite tree. The local community see the school as an important part of the area. The quality of the partnerships and links is similar to that described in the previous inspection report.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are very good and governance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a very clear understanding of the school’s strengths and areas for improvement
- The governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively and actively support school improvement
- Subject leadership is good; staff understand their roles and responsibilities and are eager to move the school forward
- The provision for special educational needs is very well managed
- Arrangements for induction, staff recruitment and the professional development of staff are very good
- Financial monitoring procedures and day-to-day routines are well managed
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is very good

### **Commentary**

29. Significant changes in the status of the school have led to a period of change in staffing and leadership. In addition, a substantial re-building programme has been well managed but led to disruption in the use of accommodation. Health and safety management has been very effective. Change has been managed well and the very good induction of new staff has enabled the vision of the school to be communicated effectively throughout the community. There is a shared commitment to raising higher the achievement for all groups of pupils. The headteacher has provided good pastoral leadership and the school has a caring ethos. The very good leadership of the Foundation Stage is based on high expectations and a well-embedded understanding of the needs of young learners. As a result, the youngest children become highly motivated and make very good progress.
30. The staff have embraced change with enthusiasm and are a competent, hard working team. Co-ordinators have not yet had sufficient time to develop their new roles fully but judgements about quality are accurate. Action plans indicate clearly the next steps to be taken and the capacity for further improvement is very good. All staff receive the training they need to fulfil their roles and performance management procedures are very good. Local partnerships through the pyramid of schools are very effective. For example, staff are leading the celebration of creativity and work alongside colleagues in other schools to improve and enrich the curriculum and enhance learning through the arts. Very good liaison with the secondary schools secures strong curriculum links and ensures transition is smooth.

31. The school's provision for those pupils with special educational needs is very competently organised by the deputy headteacher, with the close co-operation of a teaching assistant who has an in-depth knowledge of these pupils. Between them, they provide very good support and advice for colleagues, maintain the pupils' records to a high standard and ensure that the school makes very good provision for meeting the needs of the pupils identified with special educational needs and those who need extra help.
32. The governors demonstrate a high level of commitment and they make a considerable contribution to the school's development. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well and provide the headteacher and staff with good encouragement and support. It has a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses, based on the effective systems they have adopted to gain first hand knowledge of the school's work. A number of governors visit classrooms regularly and visits are often organised to focus on specific subjects. The governors and staff make very good use of test and other performance data to support the process of self-review, a prime example being the very successful work done to raise the attainment of boys. The governors are particularly effective at supporting the planning and spending of the school's budget through prudent financial management. Spending is closely linked to the priorities of the school improvement plan and governors ensure that the school achieves the best possible value in its purchases. The governors have been very involved with negotiations with the local education authority over the past 12 months in its attempts to improve the quality of buildings to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers. Although it has not achieved all it wants, much has been done and further work is planned. Expenditure is monitored very carefully and day-to-day financial administration is very good. The school has accrued a large underspend but this is earmarked to supplement further enhancements to the building.
33. Plans take account fully of national and local initiatives and staff and governors are well informed. Data is analysed thoroughly. There is a good understanding of standards and the reasons for differences in test results between cohorts. The next steps, already identified, are to raise the very good achievements of pupils even higher. Evidence of very good teaching shows the capacity to achieve this goal. Parents value the good communication they enjoy with staff. The school welcomes the views of the community and is eager to develop provision to meet local needs. The school provides very good value for money.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	411,746
Total expenditure	303,290
Expenditure per pupil	2,570

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	35,990
Balance carried forward to the next	71,365

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

**AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**



34. Children join the reception class at the beginning of the academic year of their fifth birthday. The five younger summer born children attend part-time during the autumn term. Nearly all the children who have attended the nursery, which is on the school site, transfer to the school. The remaining few have either attended the local playgroup or the village nursery. There is very good liaison between all the contributory organisations and the school. Very detailed records are passed so that the receiving reception teacher has useful information at the beginning of the reception children's schooling. Further baseline assessments are carried out during the first six weeks. The attainment on entry is above average.
35. The overall provision is very good and children's achievement is well above average. Because the quality of teaching is consistently very good, all children will achieve the early learning goals and most will exceed them in all areas of learning. Nearly half the children are working towards the National Curriculum Level 1 work in communication, language and literacy. The reception teacher, well supported by her teaching assistant, provides very good leadership and management. The management and organisation, and the quality of the curriculum planning, are very good. This is based on a very thorough understanding of how children learn and what activities and experiences they need to realise their full potential. She expertly selects aspects of the curriculum from a range of national and local schemes of work and blends them to meet the specific educational requirements of the children in the reception class. The activities are exceptionally well structured, providing a good balance between teacher-directed and independent activities. While these provide a very secure structure for the children, additional, regular 'free' activities, such as painting, would further enhance this well-thought out curriculum provision.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is consistently very good and children's achievement is well above average
- Children are happy, confident and exceptionally well behaved
- Liaison with pre-school provision is very good

### **Commentary**

36. Children enjoy coming to the school; they are eager, enthusiastic and highly motivated learners. They settle well because of the very good relationships between parents and staff and the very good liaison between the nursery and other providers and the school. Most enter the reception class with the full range of skills in personal and social development. Daily routines, rules and expectations are quickly established. The teacher and the adult helper have high expectations of good manners and behaviour because children have well-developed social skills. Consequently, they settle down very quickly. They take turns, share their resources, work in pairs and groups with a level of maturity higher than that normally expected for children of this age. They choose their own activities and those directed by adults. They relate to adults confidently because they know they are valued. There is constant praise and encouragement; they are sensitive to other children's feelings. Children's personal, social and emotional

development is very effectively promoted and most children will exceed the early learning goals.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is very good and, thus, children achieve very well
- Speaking, listening and writing are developed expertly
- A wide range of imaginative activities is provided to stimulate learning

### **Commentary**

37. Very good planning, organisation and management ensure that the range of activities planned matches children's learning needs. Each week activities are linked to a theme; for example, during the inspection week the theme was 'birthdays'. A display of birthday cards, with a wide range of resources, was available in the writing centre for children to make their own cards and to write their own message. Writing skills are systematically developed. They make very good progress. Higher attaining pupils who entered the school in September were tracing letters, copying letters and independently writing four-word sentences with capital letters by the end of November. Their letters had clearly defined shape, showing increasing pencil control. These children make very rapid progress and are likely to achieve National Curriculum Level 1 work by the end of the year. Based on very good planning, the teacher ensured that there were many opportunities for children to talk to each other. Her own questioning required children to explain their ideas and give reasons for their responses in order to develop their oral skills. The children's own desire to learn meant that they listened attentively. Through the phonic sessions they quickly learn the initial sounds and were able to demonstrate their understanding when asked to find alternative words with the same sounds for the title of a book. Children have a wide vocabulary for their age and soon came up with a range of alternative words, such as 'Pass the Net Natalie', 'Pass the Snail Sam' and 'Pass the Log Luca'. This was a fun activity and their enjoyment at being challenged was very evident. Good reading habits are promoted effectively. Books are handled carefully and children know that they can get information from the words and pictures. The more able children use their phonic knowledge when they read unfamiliar words, or when writing, and need to decide how to spell. The majority of children are likely to exceed the early learning goals, and about half will be working well within the National Curriculum level when they join Year 1.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Basic number skills are consistently reinforced
- Teaching and learning are very good
- A wide variety of practical activities is provided

## Commentary

38. Elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are implemented in the reception classes and children respond well to the mental and oral part of the lesson. At the beginning of each session there is a lively rapport between the teacher and the children. The children see this activity as fun and participate actively. They use number facts confidently and the class teacher has high expectations and challenges the more able by asking them to add three numbers mentally. She is very alert and ensures that those who need a less challenging activity are also included. She praises all efforts effusively and prompts in each child a sense of achievement. Children are encouraged to choose activities, and opportunities are carefully created to prompt their independence in the selection of cards and the number of companions who should join each activity. More emphasis on some areas, such as weight, measure, shape and space would further enhance their learning. Teaching emphasises number vocabulary well and provides good opportunities during daily routines for counting and checking. Children are keen to use numbers. They count, recognise and order numbers to a high level of competence and understanding. On a visit to the 'café' in the role-play area it was quickly established that the most expensive item on the menu was costed at 13p, and that 7p for a drink was more than 3p for an orange! Children know how to find 'two more' and 'two less' and accurately work out simple problems accurately. Vocabulary is well developed and children are expected to use new words in context. Overall, children make very good progress and most are likely to exceed the early learning goals.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good use is made of local resources and the woodland area
- Teaching and learning are very good
- Children have a good background of general knowledge
- A wide range of activities is offered to explore and investigate

## Commentary

39. Children have a broad general knowledge. They talk confidently about where they like to go on holiday, where they live and when it is their birthday. The current theme on birthdays helps them to understand and arrange in a sequence photographs of growth from babyhood to adult. There is great emphasis on gaining first-hand experiences. As part of the wider study of 'forest schools', the local woodland is visited every Wednesday regardless of the weather. The visit is based on a theme and books, such as the 'Teddy Bears Picnic'. Learning objectives and activities are defined clearly. The reception teacher is resourceful and is prepared to modify the learning objectives if the weather conditions change. So, during the inspection week when there was heavy snowfall, activities were planned to give the children plenty of opportunities to design and build a snow home for the teddy. Children absolutely love Wednesday's activities; they explore and investigate, learn to use natural materials, for example making numbers using twigs, make models, build and learn to make observational drawings and record their findings in different ways, including using ICT. This activity gives a very effective start in learning about and respecting the natural environment. Most children are likely to exceed the early learning goals.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is very good and children achieve very well
- Children develop and extend their physical skills very well
- The new outdoor area cannot be used effectively until the weaknesses in design are corrected

### **Commentary**

40. Children enter school with physical development above expected levels. The teacher has a very clear understanding of the needs of the children. Children know the routine well and as soon as they entered the hall the children found a space automatically and joined in the warm-up exercise quickly and sensibly. Because their behaviour and concentration are very good throughout the lesson, they made very good progress as the teacher swiftly developed their skills. They changed direction and shape swiftly and imaginatively with the awareness of others. The teacher was very alert and quickened the pace, demanding more challenging activities. She regularly posed, praised and encouraged those who made big improvements as well as those who excelled. She provides a very good role model by participating fully and dressing appropriately.
41. In the classroom the children show their manipulative skills are well developed. They use small equipment, such as scissors and brushes, confidently and securely. There is a good range of equipment but the use of large equipment, such as wheeled toys, is restricted because the design of the raised outdoor space has many health and safety hazards and cannot be used safely. The school is aware of this and there are plans to rectify it

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children achieve well because of the good teaching
- Planning is good; it provides the children with a good range of materials and tools
- Opportunities to paint and choose materials to make things are limited

### **Commentary**

42. Children are provided with good opportunities to develop their observational skills through first-hand experiences in the forest. They make good progress in these skills through what they see, hear, smell, touch and taste. These activities are worthwhile and planned and supervised carefully. Through good teaching, children learn how to use and control the materials well and this helps them to gain an awareness of shape, pattern and colour, as demonstrated in the design and technology aspect of the lesson on making a 'birthday cake for Lola'. These activities in design and making are linked to the National Curriculum level requirements. However, by structuring the curriculum so

early to National Curriculum level requirements, some important elements of valuing individual work, which prompts imagination and creativity through activities, like opportunities to paint every day, are not well developed. Overall, because children are so well motivated and keen to learn whatever they are doing, their absolute enjoyment is evident. Their language is well developed and they make good progress.

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

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

#### **ENGLISH**

The provision for English is **very good**.

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

- Pupils achieve very well in speaking, listening, reading and writing
- High quality work is maintained as pupils enter the junior stage of learning
- Teaching is very good across age groups, with excellent examples in Year 6
- The links between literacy and other subjects are excellent

#### **Commentary**

43. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build well upon the very good start they make in the Foundation Stage. High quality teaching takes account of prior learning and supports transition and the development of pupils' communication, language and literacy skills. By the end of Year 2 standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing are well above average. Compared to the average attainment on entry to the school, all groups of pupils achieve well.
44. The 2004 national tests showed standards in Year 2 were above average and pupils made steady progress compared with their prior attainment. The dip in 2004 was due to a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs and, in a small cohort, this made a significant difference to overall test results. There are no previous national test results for older pupils because the school recently changed its status from first to primary. The school has responded well to the change in status and provides a very good quality curriculum for older pupils. Pupils in Year 6 achieve high standards because of the very good and excellent teaching they receive. Very good links are being established to link literacy across the curriculum with pupils applying their skills and knowledge independently to support the development of reading and writing through meaningful contexts.
45. Time is built into lessons for pupils to learn through speaking and listening. For example, in a very good design and technology lesson pupils discussed ways of overcoming problems when designing and making models of fairground roundabouts. Pupils use a broad range of instructional vocabulary to explore ways of problem solving. They listen carefully to the contributions of others and the learning is of very good quality. Staff provide very good role models for pupils. They introduce subject specific language in context and expect pupils to use new vocabulary in their own speech and writing. Plenary sessions are used well to assess pupils' language. They are given time to share their work with their friends and to listen to well constructed arguments to

support further improvements. Pupils give and receive criticism constructively and this supports very good quality learning. Pupils understand there are different ways of speaking to achieve a range of effects and this is reflected well in their writing.

46. A feature of the very good teaching is the challenge that is planned for different groups of pupils. The use of interactive white boards promotes very good pace in lessons and this ensures pupils are engaged and highly motivated. Teachers are skilled in developing pupils' thinking and reasoning through well-focused questions. Pupils use their knowledge of grammar to respond and this ensures accuracy. The quality of assessment is good. Teachers mark work with pupils and encourage and guide them to be critical and seek ways to improve their work. Through precise questioning pupils are helped to recognise what they need to do to achieve better results.
47. Pupils enjoy reading. Attractive book displays enhance every classroom. In discussion pupils identify preferences of authors and give reasons for their choices. Pupils give reasons why certain characters are more attractive than others and how they contribute to the excitement within stories. They illustrate their opinions by quoting favourite aspects of text. Books are preferred to films because pupils complain that filmmakers exclude important parts of a book. The breadth and range of reading materials and experiences ensures pupils have access to a broad choice of fiction and non-fiction. Very good emphasis is placed on the teaching of reading. All pupils have very good knowledge of phonics that they apply well to unknown words. Library skills are very good and support research well. Pupils eagerly access information from reference books and use the Internet to extend their learning. Reading diaries are used very effectively and are monitored by teaching staff and shared with parents. All pupils read regularly to adults on a one-to-one basis and families support this practice.
48. There are very good examples of a creative writing based upon pupils' own experiences. For example, when pupils argue the case for and against homework. During this work pupils modelled sentences and trialled vocabulary to assess the effectiveness of text. These considerations promoted rigorous discussion to negotiate persuasive language. The teacher managed these sessions very sensitively, providing sufficient intervention to sustain fresh and lively debate. The quality of learning is very high when teachers and pupils have high expectations. There are good examples of carefully structured extended stories. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are accurate. However, in some classes there is an over reliance on worksheets to teach aspects of grammar and punctuation. This decreases as pupils proceed through the school and teachers use pupils' writing to teach aspects of formal language. The presentation of work is good and writing is neat, joined and legible reflecting pupils' care and pride in their work.
49. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. Their needs are clearly set out in precise individual education plans. Teaching assistants quietly encourage pupils and this develops self-esteem. Pupils' progress is monitored and parents work very closely with the school.
50. The subject leader provides good leadership. Test results are analysed and pupils' and teachers' work is monitored. The co-ordinator has identified that there is scope to develop further consistency in the opportunities for writing between classes and to reduce the use of worksheets.

## **Language and literacy across curriculum**

51. There are very good examples of pupils' writing across the curriculum. In history, pupils write very good accounts of life aboard ships in Tudor times. Writing is characterised by the sensitive choice of vocabulary that helps to create a sense of atmosphere. In design and technology pupils describe their designs, and evaluate their success, giving reasons why they would make changes if repeating their projects. They understand the importance of labelling diagrams and note taking when engaged in research work. Speaking and listening skills are promoted well through all subjects. Teachers provide good role models and encourage the use of a broad range of descriptive vocabulary.

## **FRENCH**

52. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are provided with tuition in French on a regular basis although there was insufficient opportunity to observe sufficient lessons to make an overall judgement on the quality of provision. However, from the brief observations made and an analysis of the pupils' books, it appears that the subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' overall development. The school pays for a native French speaker to teach on a regular basis and the pupils respond very positively to learning an additional language. Pupils demonstrate significant confidence when speaking and have a wide vocabulary for pupils of their age. They work hard at the subject and do their best to pronounce words accurately. While their written work is not to the same level as their spoken work, it is still of a good standard.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve very well in all aspects of mathematics
- The teachers expect the pupils to do well and they provide interesting and challenging lessons resulting in high standards
- Assessment procedures are very good and used effectively
- Teachers occasionally use worksheets which lack challenge

### **Commentary**

53. The school's provision for mathematics is a strength and standards are well above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Results of the Year 2 national tests in 2004 were above average but this year group were atypical and the analysis of work in all year groups show that standards are well above average overall. This is the first year the school has had pupils in Year 6 and therefore no National Curriculum tests have yet been undertaken. However, inspection evidence shows that by the end of the year, most pupils will attain standards that are well above average. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are getting better and the pupils are achieving very well because of continued improvements to the teaching and organisation of mathematics. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in Year 2 is rising and evidence shows that the teachers are challenging the pupils in Year 6 well.

54. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. The teachers have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and there is a consistent approach from class to

class. The pupils' attention is captured by very effective, introductory activities. A good variety of strategies for these activities, for example the use of number fans, help to maintain the pupils' interest and helps to improve the pupils' mental skills. Rapid questioning keeps the pupils alert and ensures that they are all involved. A range of strategies is used to ensure the brisk pace is maintained. 'Brain gym' activities – where the pupils carry out brief physical movements – have been introduced effectively in some classes and are used well to refocus the pupils' attention. Throughout the school, the pupils become increasingly confident and competent in mental calculation and they use these skills well to benefit other work. The recent acquisition of interactive whiteboards for most classes has provided the teachers with a new dimension to their teaching and they have fully embraced the opportunity to enliven their teaching and make learning more exciting for the pupils.

55. Lessons are well planned. The planning takes very good account of the pupils' different needs and the teaching assistants are used well to provide effective support, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. As a result, pupils of all abilities achieve very well. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils' capabilities and how they should behave. More able pupils are provided with harder work that challenges and stimulates them. Those with special education needs make very good progress towards their particular targets. The pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics and respond exceptionally well in lessons. They settle very quickly to tasks, persevere when challenged and are keen to complete tasks. The lack of a consistent approach to the setting out of work gives the impression of untidiness. This is occasionally compounded by the overuse of worksheets, which do not help the pupils to present their work neatly, and which lack challenge.
56. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and, although she has only been in post a short time, has a very good grasp of the subject and of areas for improvement. A close check is kept on the teaching and learning. Very good procedures are used to assess and track the pupils' progress. The teachers have very good questioning skills, which they use to assess the pupils' understanding, and they provide many opportunities for the pupils to explain the strategies they use. As a result, the teachers are able to keep an eye on the progress of individual pupils. Although work is marked regularly and systematically, few teachers take the opportunity to indicate to the pupils how they might improve their work. The information collected by teachers enables them to track the pupils' progress as they move through the school. The co-ordinator ensures that this information, together with the analysis of test results, is very well used to identify strengths and areas for development.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

57. Mathematics is well used across the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 and very well used in Years 3 to 6. Scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 showed that pupils collected data and represented their results as block graphs and their conclusions were realistic. In Years 3 to 6 pupils display accuracy in their work, as when measuring in science and design and technology, and display their work graphically, often using their good ICT skills.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**



- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6
- The teachers make lessons interesting, providing a good range of practical activities for the pupils
- The pupils have excellent attitudes towards learning, enabling them to learn well

## **Commentary**

58. The evidence from the lessons observed, from discussions with the pupils and a scrutiny of their previous work indicates that the pupils achieve well and standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. This reflects the teachers' assessment of the pupils in Year 2 in 2003, when all of the pupils achieved the expected Level 2 and an above average proportion achieved Level 3. Although this is the first time the school has had pupils in Year 6, evidence from the optional National Curriculum tests and other testing undertaken by the school, show that by the end of the year, almost all pupils attain the average Level 4 and the proportion attaining the higher Level 5 is above average. Inspection evidence confirms the school's assessments.
59. The quality of teaching is never less than good and is very good overall. The teachers have very good subject knowledge, which has been gained through systematic staff development activities and through the identification of areas of relative weakness when test papers have been analysed, and through the monitoring of the pupils' work and the quality of teaching. A particular strength of the teaching is the way in which the teachers identify the needs of the various groups of pupils and plan work so that it matches the needs of all. This ensures that all pupils achieve very well and attain the standards of which they are capable. The teachers question the pupils very well, providing them with good opportunities to explain their answers and to identify what they understand. The teachers move the lessons along at a brisk pace and the pupils enjoy lessons. Across the school, there is a good emphasis on practical activities and the pupils make good progress in their understanding of how an investigation should be organised.
60. The teachers have rapidly seen how they can make lessons more interesting through the use of recently installed interactive whiteboards. For example, in a Year 4/5 lesson on solids, liquids and gases, the pupils were captivated as they observed how different sponges looked when seen through a microscope connected up to the whiteboard. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the use of such equipment and know how to 'capture' the pictures taken for further reference.
61. Previous work shows that the pupils have access to a broad and interesting curriculum. Throughout the school, pupils clearly enjoy science and particularly enjoy the practical aspects of lessons. These very positive attitudes have a beneficial impact on their learning and achievement. The work is sometimes linked to other subjects. For example, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 designed meals including their favourite foods, based on what they had learned about healthy diets. The pupils make good use of their research and computer skills to extend their knowledge and understanding of science. Although the standard of science work attained by the pupils is always good, pupils do not always take care with the presentation of their work. Occasionally, there is an overuse of worksheets, particularly in the infants, and these do not help the pupils to present their work neatly. They also limit the opportunity for the pupils to determine for themselves how they should set out their work, particularly when writing the results of investigations.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are good by the end of Years 2 and 6
- ICT provides effective support for other subjects
- The pupils have excellent attitudes towards learning, enabling them to learn well

### **Commentary**

62. Though few observations were made of direct teaching of ICT, computers were seen in regular and productive use in all classes. From these observations, from a scrutiny of pupils' work and from discussions with both teachers and pupils, the main strengths of the subject are the good levels of skill attained by pupils, the effective support that ICT provides in other subjects and the good resources.
63. The pupils have very good word processing skills and they improve well as the pupils move through the school. Pupils' attainment in this aspect of the subject is above average, as is their ability to use painting and drawing programs. In Years 3 to 6 the pupils' skills in using computers for multi-media presentations are better than might be expected for pupils of their age. The pupils have already had some good opportunities to use computers to learn about spreadsheets, sensors and data-handling and demonstrate an above average understanding of these aspects of the subject.
64. During the inspection, all staff demonstrated considerable confidence in using computers and interactive whiteboards to introduce their lessons and to develop particular themes. Computers were in regular and effective use in all classes. This improved confidence amongst staff is a direct result of the systematic staff training and the good guidance and support provided by the subject co-ordinator. Her skills, and those of the staff, are ensuring that standards continue to improve and that computers are becoming an integral part of the curriculum.
65. Although the school has increased the number of computers, there is no space for a computer suite and consequently the teaching of skills is undertaken to small groups of pupils or occurs incidentally when activities are developed. Pupils are very sensible when using computers, share the equipment without fuss and are keen to help those class-mates who are having difficulties. Discussions with pupils show that they are highly motivated when they have the opportunity to use the computers.

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

66. Part of the school's recent focus has been to improve the use of ICT across the curriculum and the teachers are planning to do this more in subjects such as English, mathematics and science. Good use is being made of the Internet to carry out research, for example, in history and religious education. However, the school has recognised the need to identify opportunities for using computers at an early stage to ensure the most effective use is made of ICT in all areas of the curriculum.

## **HUMANITIES**

67. History and geography are taught alternatively in blocks for half a term at a time. Only one history and one geography lesson were observed, so no evaluation can be made of the quality of the provision. Pupils' work was analysed and discussions with pupils and teachers were held.
68. In **history**, pupils in Year 6 talk confidently about the Aztecs and Tudors, discussing the range of resources they used to do their research on the Aztecs. Their research included useful notes on Aztec gods, their calendar, temples and priests. Pupils' skills in organisation and communication are well developed and build on prior learning. The development of these skills was well illustrated in a Year 3/ 4 lesson where pupils were researching different aspects of Ancient Egypt. Pupils could access information from a wide range of materials and books provided by the teacher. The pupils' interest and excitement were evident. They could not wait to communicate to the visitor all the interesting facts they had found. Analysis of Year 2 work showed good coverage of the National Curriculum Programme of Study. Pupils had produced small booklets entitled 'My Eyewitness Account of the Great Fire of London'. The subject is taught imaginatively and teachers plan and prepare well. Pupils are provided with a wide range of resources and are successfully taught how to use them. The teachers' own enthusiasm is communicated effectively to pupils across the school. They enjoy learning and are making good progress.
69. Very limited work was available in **geography** as the subject was scheduled for the next half term. The main focus has been on environmental study. Pupils have studied the island of Mozambique, particularly focusing on the impact of landmines on the land. They show a growing appreciation of how certain events can have an impact on the economy of the country. The range of work was limited in scope, and some other aspects of their geographical skills do not appear to be well developed. For example, there was only limited evidence of the analysis of the data gathered from a survey carried out on holiday locations. The use of worksheets further limits pupils' scope for setting out their own work independently or developing and extending their writing skills. Similarly, the survey of Year 2 work indicated that some areas of the National Curriculum Programme of Study requirements are not well covered.
70. The subject leaders have not had opportunities to monitor teaching directly. They do see samples of teachers' planning and are aware of a need to review the geography and history curriculum areas. Both these subjects are identified as priority areas for review and development in the school improvement plan.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is consistently good and, thus, children achieve well
- The links with personal, social and emotional development are well embedded
- Pupils show a deep interest in other faiths

### **Commentary**

71. Standards attained in Year 2 and Year 6 are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils achieve a secure understanding of Christianity as well as a

broad range of other sets of beliefs and values. Pupils in Year 2 show a good level of understanding of Jewish religious beliefs and rituals. Their written work shows that they make good connections between stories they hear from the Bible and their everyday life. Based on good teaching, pupils in Year 3/4 were sensitively led to understand the differences between miracles, magic and tricks. They learnt to distinguish between miracles, which were related to healing, nature or unusual phenomena. Open-ended questioning and encouragement to explore differences led to lively discussions on whether a 'rabbit pulled out of a hat' was trick, magic or miracle. Older pupils in Year 6 were deeply engrossed in learning about Sikhism. They recall accurately what they have learnt and use appropriate vocabulary for prayers and other ceremonies. Their study showed detailed work, such as translating quotations from the Sri Guru Granth Sabah into their own words.

72. The quality of teaching is good with some very good features. The most important aspect, which is developed very well, is giving pupils time to reflect and discuss. Most teachers have a very secure knowledge and understanding of Christianity and they are skilfully able to show similarities and differences between Christianity and other beliefs. Most teachers make very effective use of interactive whiteboards so, for instance, pupils can travel with the teacher into a synagogue. This offers visual experiences, which provide a more real experience than just reading from a text.
73. Aspects of personal and social education are well embedded in teaching, so older pupils explored what was meant by the Sikh concept of 'all people being equal' in the eyes of god and the modern concept of 'equal opportunities'. These debates show a mature understanding of complex concepts. Pupils' behaviour during these sessions was excellent. They showed a lively curiosity and interest and asked intelligent questions. Their questions, and their general behaviour, indicate the respect they accord to this subject. In addition, visits to places of worship are an integral part of the religious education curriculum. These visits have a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Presentation of work in Year 6 is of a high standard. Younger pupils use too many worksheets, which are often not dated, making it difficult to track their progress.
74. Assessment is now an integral part of the planning, and this is an improvement from the previous inspection. Assessment focuses on learning skills rather than just factual knowledge. The headteacher, who is the subject leader, provides very good leadership. Her own analysis of the strengths and weaknesses are very thorough and accurate. Her monitoring records show accurately which aspects of teaching need further development and improvement. She has a very clear vision of how this subject can be developed and enhanced further.

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

75. Insufficient lessons were seen in music and art and design and it is not possible to make a secure judgment about the quality of provision in these subjects. Inspectors spoke with pupils and discussed opportunities the school provides with the subject co-ordinator.
76. The school has chosen to use a commercial teaching scheme that supports the requirements of **music** in the National Curriculum. Pupils learn songs from around the world and about music from different periods and genres. Lessons are designed to deliver a balance of listening, composing, performing and appraising. The subject leader is seeking ways of introducing improved strategies of monitoring and assessment to track pupils' progress. Opportunities to learn to play musical instruments have been

improved. For example, all pupils in Year 3 receive a year's recorder tuition. There are plans to extend the choice of instruments that pupils can learn to play. The school values highly the advantages of extending links with the high school and other primaries. The school has achieved its goal to gain membership of the recently formed pyramid orchestra. This enables the school's older musicians to share making music with players from nearby schools in other settings. Invitations to musicians to contribute to the range of experiences provided in music, both local and from further afield, are also broadening pupils' awareness of the range of music that contributes to enriching leisure. Music forms an important part of the school's bid to achieve Artsmark status. The subject leader is an enthusiastic teacher who has a wealth of ideas to make a significant improvement to musical provision in the school. The school offers great potential for exciting music making.

77. **Art and design** has a high priority in the school. All teachers are enthusiastic to develop their skills further and have attended local courses. A feature of the school is good quality display with shape and form colourfully displayed. All pupils know their best work is celebrated through displays. This approach helps pupils to develop and improve their self-esteem and is effective. Pupils are proud to talk about their pictures and this supports links with speaking and listening as pupils describe their strengths and the aspects of their work they would like to improve.
78. Teachers encourage pupils to be creative and encourage them to experiment as an essential part of their development. This is very clearly evident in the work of children in the reception and Year 1 classes. A weekly visit to nearby woodland leads to very good quality environmental art based on first hand experience. Pupils paint with mud and charcoal, adding natural textures, cardboard, chicken wire and natural resources to make three-dimensional figures. Pupils' work has been exhibited in Worcester Cathedral and at County Hall. The school benefits from the services of an artist in residence. There is a school art club that is well attended. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Art is promoted well as an important learning medium to communicate personal ideas and feelings. She attends courses and cascades ideas to staff. Art is an exciting, well-established area of the curriculum.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve well
- The curriculum is of good quality
- Subject leadership is good

### **Commentary**

79. Displays of good quality work are prominent around the school. There is a broad range of work, ranging from paper sculptures and puppets in Year 2 to designs for slippers and modeling fairground rides in Year 6. Pupils are eager to describe the process they have taken to make their models and are able to suggest ways in which their work could be improved.

80. Design and technology is included in the school improvement plan and the action taken is enabling standards to improve further. The policy is currently under revision to provide improved guidance for staff. The subject leader has good knowledge and attends courses to improve her expertise. She recognizes the importance of challenging pupils to develop their skills and problem solving strategies
81. The quality of teaching is very good. In a Year 6 lesson pupils made a model of a fairground roundabout. The model was powered by an electric motor. Pupils decided the position of the motor, the thickness of the drive belt and the size of the pulley. All of these factors were potential problems. The teacher encouraged pupils to work in a systematic way to overcome difficulties. They worked very well together, hypothesizing, suggesting solutions and reviewing means of fixing components. Very good learning took place, reinforcing a systematic approach to problem solving and enriching pupils' language development. They listened to each other, respected other people's judgments and tested suggestions before drawing conclusions. When some pupils were unable to solve individual problems, other pupils offered support and encouragement. Design and technology has very good links to pupils' personal, spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Strong emphasis is placed on preparation for this work. Some classes choose to plan and design their work in workbooks and in this way they build up a portfolio of their work.
82. The school has made very good links with the local secondary school. Secondary school staff work with pupils from the junior school to develop ideas about a range of exciting work.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6
- The curriculum is of good quality with a good range of sporting activities
- Subject leadership is very good
- There is a good range of after school clubs that are well attended
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory

### **Commentary**

83. Despite a hall that is too small and a playing field that has inadequate drainage, pupils achieve well in all aspects of physical education. The teaching of dance is a strength. All teachers completed the 'Top Dance' programme to build up their expertise and this has had a very positive impact on the quality of learning and teaching. Additionally, the school has implemented well local education authority guidance to supplement the National Curriculum. These initiatives have enabled provision to develop rapidly. Barriers to achievement have been overcome due to the improved quality of teaching. Staff and pupils have very positive attitudes about physical education and the plans to celebrate their achievements are justified. Boys and girls are equally enthusiastic. There is a commitment to widen experiences by inviting other cultural groups to share their dances with the school.

84. Pupils achieve well in swimming. They attend the local leisure center for instruction. Staff share the teaching with the centre's instructors and this enables them to develop their expertise further. Small swimming groups enable good quality learning and all pupils achieve the required standard by Year 6.
85. Games are a highly popular activity. Unfortunately, recent building works have restricted the use of the school field for competitive matches against other small schools but there are plans to revive these opportunities. Additionally, poor drainage of the field limits its use when the weather is poor.
86. After school clubs are well attended. Older boys and girls attend a football training session each week and there are additional multi games activities for older and younger pupils. These activities are led by instructors from a local sports development group. Pupils look forward to working together to broaden their skills and knowledge of games other than netball and football. These instructors also support games teaching during lessons and provide challenging activities with Year 6 pupils in the hall.
87. Gymnastics is taught well despite restricted space and limited storage. There is a determination on the part of the staff to provide pupils with the whole physical education package and they adapt activities in the light of available space. Very good attention is given to health and safety. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and delivered in a lively way. There is a strong element of challenge that results in a very good response from pupils. Good use is made of informal self-assessment strategies as a means of evaluating performance and identifying areas that can be improved. Pupils self esteem is enhanced when they are asked to demonstrate their skills to the rest of the class. Success is celebrated and pupils share the pleasure of success with class members. Physical education makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It also makes a very good contribution to health education. Leadership of the subject is very good. She provides a very good role model for staff and pupils.

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

88. The provision for pupils' **personal, social and health education** enhances the curriculum. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to express their views and opinions. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 carry out a range of jobs and are involved in running the school council and in developing the pupils' awareness of the environment through its involvement in the ECO project. They are made aware of various aspects of citizenship, relationships and their responsibilities. The school places great emphasis on involving the local community and being part of the community. This interaction with other members of society helps pupils to become responsible members of the community. Health education underpins much of the work. Overall, personal, social and health education has a very positive effect on most aspects of school life and successfully develops pupils' self-confidence and esteem and promotes their well-being and happiness.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>1</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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