

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NEW WHITTINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Chesterfield

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112668

Headteacher: Mr Roary Pownall

Lead inspector: Mr A J Dobell

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> March 2005

Inspection number: 272959

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	305
School address:	London St. New Whittington Chesterfield Derbyshire
Postcode:	S43 2 AQ
Telephone number:	(01246) 450 688
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss K Johnson
Date of previous inspection:	June 2000

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This large primary school draws its pupils mostly from the local area, but a small number attend the Hearing Impaired Unit which serves a much wider area of the local education authority. Overall, their socio-economic circumstances were average, as were their levels of understanding and learning skills when they entered the Nursery at the start of this school year. In most years, they are below average overall. Most pupils are of white ethnic origin. The school operates from two sites, each of which has a unit for pupils with hearing impairment. The sites are approximately half a mile apart; one is for the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, whilst the other houses Years 3 to 6. The school has 286 full-time pupils on roll and an additional 39 children attend the Nursery part time. There are 55 pupils in the Reception Year giving a full time equivalent of 75 children in the Foundation Stage.

An above average proportion of pupils (22 per cent) is on the school's register of special educational needs. Of these, 14 (4.6 per cent) have statements of special educational needs. This proportion, too, is above average. However, this group includes the ten pupils who attend the Hearing Impaired Unit. The nature of special educational needs includes moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and communication difficulties and hearing impairment. In the last few years, the school has gained a School Achievement Award and an Anti-Bullying Award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10373	Mr A J Dobell	Lead inspector	English Music
19374	Mrs W Sheehan	Lay inspector	
16761	Mr M Hemmings	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology (ICT)
28882	Mrs B Jones	Team inspector	Special educational needs The Hearing Impairment Unit
21910	Mr G Longton	Team inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics Geography History Religious education
15011	Mrs M Wallace	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Art and design Design and technology Physical education

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 5</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>6 - 9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>9 - 14</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 - 16</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>17 - 29</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>30</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school** giving very good value for money. Pupils are now achieving well in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology because they are being taught well, and their learning is managed very well. Very effective leadership and management by the headteacher mean that the school is positive and forward-looking.

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

- Good teaching, a substantial proportion of which is very good, is enabling pupils to achieve well.
- Very effective leadership and management have enabled the school to improve well since its previous inspection.
- The Hearing Impaired Unit is a strength of the school and there is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Very good teaching in the Foundation Stage gives children a good start to their education.
- Pupils do not use information and communication technology sufficiently to support their learning in other subjects.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are not developed systematically in other subjects.
- Very good systems for tracking pupils' progress and promoting their further progress have been developed in English and mathematics.
- Library provision is underdeveloped as a resource for learning, particularly with regard to the quantity and quality of fiction books.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning because they feel secure and valued in the school.
- The creative arts are not promoted well to support pupils' personal development.

The school has improved considerably since its previous inspection. Achievement is now good and there has been significant improvement in some areas, for example in teaching the skills of information and communication technology. The school has dealt well with the key issues from the previous inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E\* – in the bottom five per cent. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Achievement is now good.** Children enter the Nursery with levels of understanding and learning skills which cover a wide range but were average overall in 2004. They achieve very well in the Foundation Stage and are likely to exceed the standards expected nationally in the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development,

communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. They are likely to reach the expected levels in physical development and creative development. Achievement in English and mathematics is now much more secure because learning in these subjects is now managed very effectively. Standards in these subjects are now above average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. In other subjects, standards are average and pupils are achieving well. This represents a considerable improvement during this school year. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and those with hearing impairment achieve very well. **Pupils' personal qualities are good.** They mostly behave well in lessons, and play is boisterous but friendly. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and attendance is now above average. One pupil was excluded permanently during the last school year.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides an education of good quality. Teaching and learning are good** overall, with about 40 per cent of lessons being very good or excellent. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated. Teachers challenge pupils well at different stages of learning, so that almost all have good attitudes to learning. Assessment systems for managing learning are very good in English and mathematics.

The curriculum meets requirements and there are satisfactory opportunities for enrichment through activities outside lessons. Pupils are cared for well and relationships throughout the school are good overall. There are good links with parents, the community and other schools. The Hearing Impaired Unit is a strength of the school. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, but the split site creates difficulties in managing pupils' learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** This is a marked improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher, fully supported by all his colleagues, has a very clear vision for the school. Essentially, this is a commitment to excellence, with all pupils being happy and successful. The school is committed to equality of opportunity, and all pupils are valued for what they can offer. The headteacher's robust and purposeful leadership has created very effective teams throughout the school. Sensibly, he has devised a five-year plan for improvement so that the school can develop in a structured and manageable way. Now in its second year, the plan is already delivering marked improvements, and the school is now a vibrant and forward-looking community. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and potential for development, and ensure that it meets legal requirements. Governance is now good, which is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Finances are managed very well and the school practises the principles of best value very effectively.

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

Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school overall and much appreciate recent improvements. They would like to 'get rid of the split site'. A minority have concerns about bullying, but parents at the meeting and pupils in discussion agree that rare instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. Inspectors agree that this is so and support the parents' and pupils' positive views.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Create systematic opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects.
- Develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills systematically in other subjects.
- Develop the library as a resource for learning, particularly with regard to the quality and quantity of fiction books.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to have experiences in the creative arts to promote their personal development.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils achieve very well in the Foundation Stage and well in Years 1 to 6 regardless of level of attainment or special educational needs. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. Standards in information and communication technology meet expectations in Years 2 and 6.

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

- Pupils' good achievement is raising standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- Very good systems for monitoring pupils' achievement exist in English and mathematics and are being extended systematically to other subjects.
- Very good achievement in the Foundation Stage means that children are likely to reach, and sometimes exceed, the standards expected nationally by the end of the Reception Year.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and those in the Hearing Impaired Unit achieve very well.
- Information and communication technology is not used well to raise standards in other subjects and the skills of literacy and numeracy are not developed systematically in other subjects.
- Standards are rising because the school has introduced a long-term plan to overcome identified weaknesses.

### **Commentary**

1. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004, standards were average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. Teacher assessment judged standards in science to be average. Over the last five years, the trend of improvement in standards in the school up to the end of Year 2 has exceeded the national trend. Since pupils enter the school with levels of understanding and learning skills which are average in some years and below average in others, the pupils taking the national tests in 2004 achieved well in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.
2. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004, standards were well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Inspectors investigated the reasons for this in detail. It is clear that a backlog of underachievement in Years 3 and 4 for this year group adversely affected standards at the end of Year 6. Additionally, this year group did not have good attitudes to learning. Standards for this year group were lower than at the time of the previous inspection in English and broadly similar in mathematics and science. The trend of improvement over the past five years has been below the national trend. Over the last five years, boys have been more successful in the national tests at the end of Year 6 than girls.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.0 (17.8)	15.8 (15.7)

writing	16.2 (16.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.3 (17.2)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.1 (26.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.6 (26.4)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.7 (29.5)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- Pupils are now achieving well in Years 1 to 6 because the quality of teaching is good overall, with a significant proportion of very good teaching and some excellent lessons. Over the last 12 months, the school, sensibly, has concentrated its strategies for raising standards on the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology. As a result, standards in English, mathematics and science are now above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. This is a marked improvement in Year 6 on standards in 2004. Standards in information and communication technology meet expectations in Years 2 and 6. In other subjects of the curriculum, standards are at the expected level in geography, history and religious education in Years 2 and 6. In music, standards are above expected levels in Year 2 and at the expected level in Year 6. This is a marked improvement since the previous inspection. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in art and design, design and technology, and physical education.
- The school has introduced very good systems for monitoring pupils' progress and promoting their further progress. At this stage, these systems are applied in detail in English and mathematics, and will be fully embedded in science by the end of this school year. Plans are in place to extend them progressively to other subjects in future years. These systems mean that there is a much more secure understanding of pupils' standards throughout the school and learning is managed much more effectively in the light of this knowledge. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Much more effective management of learning is resulting in more consistent standards across the school.
- Children achieve very well in the Foundation Stage because the quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. All adults in the Nursery and Reception classes have a very secure understanding of how young children learn. Their personal and academic progress is managed very effectively. As a result, children are likely to achieve at least the standards expected nationally in the areas of learning designed for this age group by the end of the Reception Year in physical development and creative development. These standards are likely to be exceeded in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are well prepared to begin their work on the National Curriculum in Year 1.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they receive effective support. Whilst their standards are below those expected overall, there are examples of these pupils reaching average standards in some areas of learning. The tracking of

their progress shows instances of substantial improvement, and there are examples of pupils being taken off the special educational needs register because they are now working at average levels. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils in the Hearing Impaired Unit achieve very well in relation to their previous levels of understanding. Very good, and some excellent, teaching means that some pupils are reaching average levels in literacy and numeracy. They frequently reach the same levels as their classmates in physical and creative subjects. They achieve very well in relation to their personal targets.

7. Pupils now reach expected standards in information and communication technology in Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 now use the computer suite each week and develop skills in the subject effectively. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have the opportunity to use the computer suite because it is in the 'junior building' and this restricts their achievement in the subject. Throughout the school, pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise the skills that they have learned in information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects. There are a small number of interactive whiteboards in classrooms, which are generally used well, but too few pupils have opportunities to benefit from them. There are good examples of the skills of literacy and numeracy being developed in other subjects, but these are not planned systematically, and some opportunities are missed. The school recognises that these are areas for development.
8. Standards are rising because the school has analysed areas of weakness and introduced long-term plans to overcome them. After fewer than two years of the five-year plan, these strategies are beginning to take effect.

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

Attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils' personal development is good, resulting in a friendly ethos for learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance and punctuality are improving well and are good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good overall and the school creates an effective environment for learning.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good, helping them to develop appropriate personal and social skills.
- A lack of concentration on the creative arts adversely affects pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- Attendance has improved significantly during this school year.

### **Commentary**

9. Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are good overall. They usually settle quickly in class and are keen to learn. They support each other well in paired and group work. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, pupils shared their ideas, delegated tasks effectively and respected the opinions of others. In some classes, pupils find concentrating for prolonged periods difficult and become restless. However, their behaviour is usually managed well so that it does not adversely affect the learning of others. In some classes, attitudes to learning are very good. For example, in Year 6, attitudes to learning and behaviour are exemplary. Pupils who have special educational needs are given good support so that they feel confident and

have good attitudes in lessons. Pupils from the Hearing Impaired Unit are very well integrated into classes, benefit from very good relationships, and so have very good attitudes to learning. Pupils' behaviour is good throughout the school day, and playtimes are friendly and lively social occasions. Most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that behaviour was good. No bullying was observed during the inspection and, in discussion, pupils felt that staff dealt with any instances quickly and sensitively. The school has introduced active measures to safeguard against bullying, including a confidential 'bullybox', and has received a Derbyshire Anti-Bullying Award in recognition of its work in this area. There was one permanent exclusion during the last year.

10. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from the Hearing Impaired Unit, have a secure understanding of the difference between right and wrong and a clear appreciation of the possible impact that their behaviour might have on others. School and class rules are clear and applied consistently across the school. Social skills are developed effectively so that relationships between the different age groups and all adults are generally good. However, at times, the behaviour of some pupils strains these relationships.
11. Pupils' spiritual development is supported satisfactorily through assemblies and opportunities taken in lessons to raise their self-esteem and self-awareness. For example, in a Year 1 history lesson where pupils participated in a Victorian tea party, they were totally fascinated by the experience and compared this intuitively with their own lives. Pupils have a secure appreciation of their own and other cultural traditions. However, the lack of opportunities for them to be involved in a wide range of creative arts activities adversely affects the development of their spiritual and cultural awareness.
12. The school's attendance levels in the past have been below the average for primary schools. However, the attendance rate in the autumn term of this school year (over 95 per cent) shows considerable improvement. This is due to more rigorous procedures being in place to follow up any unexplained absences. The school recognises that it now needs to introduce a system of contacting parents on the first day of absence to ensure that pupils' whereabouts are known at all times. Most pupils arrive on time, resulting in a smooth start to the day.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.9	School data	0.8
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

13. Good behaviour and attitudes to learning have been maintained since the school was inspected previously. This has had a positive effect on pupils' standards and progress. Pupils feel secure and valued in the school and, as a result, achieve well.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides an education of good quality. Pupils achieve well because they feel secure and valued and are well taught. The curriculum and opportunities for enrichment are satisfactory. Pupils are well cared for and very good systems are in place to assess their progress in English and mathematics. There are good links with parents, the community and other schools. The quality of provision for pupils in the Hearing Impaired Unit is very good.

## Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good, and systems for assessing pupils' progress are very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning has improved well since the school's previous inspection.
- Very good systems for tracking pupils' progress have been developed in English and mathematics.
- Teaching and learning in the Hearing Impaired Unit are strengths of the school.
- Very good teaching enables children in the Foundation Stage to achieve well from the time they join the school.
- Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs effectively so that they achieve well.
- The split site creates difficulties in the management of learning.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 59 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4 (7%)	20 (34%)	26 (44%)	9 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. The quality of teaching and learning has improved well since the previous inspection. It is now good overall, whereas it was then only satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved throughout the school. As a result, the quality of learning is good overall, and pupils achieve well.
15. Teaching and learning have improved because they are now purposefully managed. The comprehensive systems for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress are a key element in this effective management. At this stage of their development, these systems are most effective in English and mathematics, but plans are in place to apply them systematically to other subjects. Expectations have been clarified for the standards expected for pupils at the end of each year, and they are given individual targets to enable them to reach these standards. Progress is then assessed four times during the school year so that pupils can be helped to achieve their targets. Tracking grids have been fully introduced in English and mathematics so that this process can be managed efficiently. Grids have also been developed in science and will be fully operational by the end of this school year. This process is managed very effectively by the assessment co-ordinator using information and communication technology. It is providing a wide range of information and, for example, enabling the school to create target groups for extra support in writing and numeracy. This very effective management of learning has considerably improved achievement and is making it more consistent across the school.
16. Teaching and learning in the Hearing Impaired Unit are strengths of the school. Specialist teaching and support involve constant use of signing both within the Unit and when pupils join mainstream classes, and enable them to play a full part in learning. Class teachers co-operate fully in enabling these pupils to gain maximum

benefit from learning opportunities. They make very good progress and achieve very well, not least because the teaching within the unit is very good. The use of gesture, facial expression, signing and clear language enable pupils to reach a secure level of understanding. All adults in the units on each site work very effectively as members of well-integrated teams so that pupils receive very effective support. Because of this, they develop very well in both academic and personal terms.

17. Very good teaching in the Foundation Stage enables children to achieve well from the time that they enter the Nursery. Teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants take every opportunity to give children a wide range of learning activities so that they develop confidence and good personal and social skills. They make good progress because learning activities interest them and they are fully engaged in the different areas of learning provided for them. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection.
18. There is good provision for the learning of pupils with special educational needs because individual education plans are used well across the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The progress of these pupils is tracked carefully, and this information is then used well to guide the next stages of their learning. Work of a suitable level is provided in class so that pupils with special educational needs can build on their current levels of understanding. Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs well, although there is occasionally scope for more interaction with pupils during the introductions to lessons. There are effective systems to support pupils who speak English as an additional language, who achieve well.
19. The split-site accommodation creates problems for the management of learning. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have no access to the school's computer suite and main library which are located in the junior building. As a result, their computer skills and their ability to use libraries do not develop as quickly as their knowledge, skills and understanding in other subjects.
20. The quality of teaching and learning is now good overall, and very good or excellent in about four lessons out of ten. This means that the school is in a good position to raise standards and improve the quality of the education it provides.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced with a sound range of enrichment opportunities, including extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. The match of teachers and teaching assistants to the needs of the curriculum is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- There is insufficient use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects, and a lack of planned opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is good.
- The split site has an adverse effect on some aspects of management.

## Commentary

21. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. In the Nursery and Reception classes, there is strong emphasis on giving children practical activities which are stimulating and often linked to their own experiences. As a result, learning is fun and children make good progress and achieve well. Since the appointment of the current headteacher, there have been considerable improvements in curricular planning for pupils in Years 1 to 6, who now achieve well in English, mathematics and science. The school accepts that it needs to refine planning further to ensure that all pupils in the mixed-age classes are as effectively challenged as those in the single-age classes. There is a lack of systematic planning to enable pupils to practise and refine their literacy and numeracy skills systematically in other subjects. There are good opportunities for pupils to be involved in structured practical investigations in science, which are leading to improving standards.
22. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to all aspects of the curriculum and receive specialised support to address identified weaknesses in literacy and numeracy. Those with significant behavioural problems are supported with 'positive play' activities which involve multi-sensory stimuli. The school reports that this is achieving good results, although no activities were observed during the inspection. The school has good links with external agencies so that pupils needing specialist support, for example with speech therapy, are helped to achieve well. This is effective curricular support. Pupils from the Hearing Impaired Unit have full access to all aspects of the curriculum. The social aspects of integration are given a high priority, and there are good examples of 'reverse integration' where mainstream pupils go and work in the Units for particular purposes. Many teachers, in addition to all staff in the Units, have learned to sign, and this helps pupils with hearing impairment to feel valued, and so enhances their curricular provision. They are all fully accepted by everyone in the school.
23. The provision for information and communication technology has been greatly improved since the previous inspection by the creation of a computer suite in the junior building. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 are timetabled to use this on a weekly basis and are now making good progress and achieving well in this subject. However, when they are back in the classroom, they have insufficient opportunities to practise these skills or use them to support their learning in other subjects. Because of the split site, pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have access to the suite. The limited number of computers in their classrooms makes it difficult to provide them with whole-class teaching of information and communication technology. The school is actively pursuing ways of improving provision; however, at this stage, information and communication technology does not make an effective contribution to learning across the curriculum.
24. Over the last two years, the school's priority to improve standards in English and mathematics has proved successful. However, it has also meant that some other subjects, such as art and design and design and technology, have not had a high profile. Pupils are also able to participate in a range of educational visits, including a residential experience, and extra-curricular activities. These provide valuable learning experiences.
25. Provision for pupils' personal development is good, within a curriculum that is fully inclusive. All pupils are suitably prepared for the next stages of their education. The match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum means that all pupils' needs are met well.
26. Accommodation is satisfactory, although some of the classrooms are rather small, which leads to cramped conditions, particularly for older pupils. The school is situated on two sites, about half a mile apart, and this causes some management problems as subject leaders based on one site are unable to monitor teaching and learning easily on the other site or to provide support for colleagues on a daily basis. Both school sites have many steps, making parts of the building inaccessible for people who have difficulties with physical mobility. The infant school hall is a distance from the main building and considerable time is lost when young children travel between the two. The school has no grassed play areas, and all-weather

play areas are too small for a school of this size. Resources are generally satisfactory. The library is well stocked, but too many of the fiction books are dated and in a poor condition, which adversely affects pupils' willingness to borrow books. The Reception classes share the outdoor play resources with the Nursery, and the Nursery resources are not sufficiently challenging for children in the Reception Year to develop their physical skills fully.

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

Procedures to ensure that pupils work in a safe environment are good. Good levels of support and guidance help them to develop into confident young people. The school involves all pupils well by seeking and acting on their views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's procedures for health, safety and child protection are good and ensure that pupils work in a safe and secure environment.
- Pupils from the Hearing Impaired Unit receive very good care, and pupils with special educational needs are cared for well.
- Good procedures for induction help pupils to settle well into the school.
- Pupils' academic development is monitored carefully to set targets for further improvement.
- Pupils' views and opinions are listened to sensitively.

### **Commentary**

27. The school ensures that regular health and safety checks are carried out. Thorough procedures, including risk assessments, are firmly in place to promote a safe learning environment. The caretaker and his team ensure that pupils enjoy a clean, safe and secure learning environment on a daily basis. Through the programme of personal, health and social education, there are good opportunities to ensure that pupils learn how to keep safe and healthy. Concerns raised at the time of the previous inspection have been fully addressed. Child protection procedures are well established, and the school is diligent in monitoring the welfare of its pupils. The welfare of 'looked after' children is very carefully monitored.
28. Pupils from the Hearing Impaired Unit receive very good care. Continuing liaison between the Unit and class teachers ensures that any difficulties are identified quickly and can be addressed. Strong links with experts such as speech and language specialists and audiologists ensure that care is of high quality. All rooms in the school are fitted with a 'sound field system' to enable pupils with hearing impairment to hear at the same level as others in the room. Outside agencies give good support to pupils with other special educational needs. Difficulties are identified early and the supportive nature of the school enhances the learning and care of these pupils. Intervention techniques are in place to respond to both academic and behavioural difficulties, so that pupils with special educational needs receive good levels of care and support.
29. Good induction procedures enable children to enjoy a smooth transition into the Nursery. These help children to make very good progress in their learning from the time that they start school. The induction arrangements for pupils moving from the infant to the junior site are satisfactory and the school recognises the need to support this transition further.



30. The school's very good assessment procedures are beginning to be used well to guide pupils in their learning. However, this use of data to guide individual pupils' learning is still at an early stage. The school has started well with the introduction of 'target marker cards' for pupils' writing. Pupils say that these have been very useful and have helped them to know instantly what they need to do to get to the next National Curriculum level. The use of these markers in other subjects is still being developed. Day-to-day marking is generally good. Pupils' personal development is mostly monitored informally by staff who know them well. Initiatives, including the 'Positive Play' scheme to mentor pupils with low self-esteem provide good support for the school's efforts to promote pupils' personal development.
31. Pupils' views are listened to carefully, for example through the school council which has been involved effectively in discussions to improve the school environment. School council members from the junior classes are particularly proud of their new 'quiet garden' which has been developed to include their ideas. They are now embarking on the development of a small play garden and are organising fundraising events to support their vision. The school has also carried out its own questionnaire to seek the views of all pupils as part of its school improvement programme. It recognises the need to ensure that the views of younger pupils are taken into account.
32. The school's provision for pupils' care, guidance and support has improved well since its previous inspection, and is having a positive effect on achievement. Pupils have good attitudes to learning overall because they feel secure and valued in the school.

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

The school's partnership with parents is good, as are links with other schools and the community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents' views of the school are extremely favourable and they have a high level of involvement.
- Links with the local community and secondary schools are good.
- Parents are well informed about school activities and their children's progress.
- There are good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs and those with hearing impairment.

### **Commentary**

33. The meeting held before the inspection and the pre-inspection questionnaires show that parents are pleased with most aspects of the school, but some were concerned about bullying. However, the school has good procedures in place to ensure that any bullying is sensitively dealt with, and pupils say that they feel safe from any persistent bullying. The school, through questionnaires and informal daily contact with parents, promotes a friendly two-way communication process. The 'Friends of the School Association' actively supports the school's work by raising funds to buy extra learning resources.
34. The school has developed good links with the community. For example, good links exist with the local church and those with various retail outlets support learning well. Through the yearly 'Citizenship Promotion Week', different members of the local community are invited into school to work with pupils. For example, people from local environmental groups supported the school's 'Environment Week' and this helped to raise pupils' awareness of their local area.
35. Good links exist with the main secondary school to which pupils transfer, and various school

cluster meetings promote the sharing of ideas and good practice between schools. Local schools are working closely together to bid for extra funds to support learning. Links also exist with another Hearing Impaired Unit to share ideas. These links have a positive effect on attainment.

36. The school provides parents with information of high quality overall, although information about the curriculum is not yet sufficiently detailed to help parents to support their children's learning. The school has already identified this as an area for improvement. Pupils' annual reports fully meet requirements and include appropriately detailed information about progress and targets for improvement. There are regular opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress, and the overwhelming majority attend consultation meetings. The school has organised information evenings in literacy and numeracy, with a mixed response. However, this good-quality regular information ensures that parents are fully involved in the school and in their children's learning.
37. The Hearing Impaired Unit maintains close links with parents through the home-school information book, regular meetings, and reviews. Parents are fully involved and fully supportive of the Unit's work on behalf of their children. Pupils from the Unit are always fully involved in any community activities organised by the school. There is also effective contact with parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are regularly invited to meetings and annual reviews and are given every opportunity to support their children's learning. Most parents support learning at home well. There is good contact with the secondary school to support the transfer of these pupils.
38. Links with parents have improved well since the school was inspected previously, particularly in terms of written communication. Parents are a significant element in supporting children's learning, and the school sees a close partnership with parents as a priority.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher is providing very effective leadership and is given very good support by his deputy and other colleagues. Governance is good and the school is in a process of planned systematic development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has planned the school's development very effectively, with the improvement of standards as a key priority.
- Other key staff are very effective.
- Teaching and learning are managed very well, although the split-site arrangement causes difficulties.
- Strategic planning is very effective.
- Governors have a good appreciation of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Finances are managed very well and the principles of best value are applied very effectively.

### **Commentary**

39. The headteacher took up his appointment in January 2003. Having evaluated the school's potential for development, he created a five-year development plan, rooted in a determination to raise standards. The school is in the second year of this plan and impressive progress has been made. Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are rising, the quality of teaching and learning has improved, and pupils are now achieving well. The school is purposeful

and forward-looking and parents appreciate recent marked improvements. The headteacher has created effective teams throughout the school and there is a clear unity of purpose among all adults in the school. The headteacher is providing very good leadership.

40. He is given very effective support by his senior colleagues and all adults in the school. His deputy is based in the 'infant building' and leads that very effectively so that pupils achieve well. The Hearing Impaired Unit is led and managed very well and is a strength of the school. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages the provision for these pupils efficiently so that they achieve well. The Foundation Stage is led and managed very well by the deputy headteacher, and children achieve very well in the Nursery and Reception classes. All adults in the school support the headteacher's drive for improvement and are keen to contribute. For example, the subject leader for information and communication technology has played a leading role in developing the school's recently introduced assessment systems. Furthermore, two teaching assistants provide targeted support for pupils who find it difficult to achieve well in English and mathematics. The many teaching assistants who support pupils with special educational needs or those who have hearing impairment contribute effectively to their progress.
41. Teaching and learning are now managed very well. All subject leaders have a strategic role to promote achievement and monitor teaching and learning in their subjects. They write an annual report for consideration by the governing body, which is thus kept well informed about teaching and learning and how staff plan to raise standards. The work of subject leaders ensures that the school has a strong commitment to inclusion and equality. However, the split-site arrangement has an adverse effect on subject leaders' effectiveness.
42. Strategic planning in the school is now very effective. Its aims are reflected in a five-year plan which is carefully designed to enable the school to improve, whilst not overloading staff. The headteacher and his senior colleagues have succeeded in creating very good teams of staff who are working together with an impressive unity of purpose. Because of this, development is systematic and structured, and the school is improving rapidly. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
43. The work of the governing body has improved markedly since the previous inspection, when it was felt that it had too little input into the strategic development of the school. Governors now have a range of individual responsibilities which ensure that they are well informed about the school's strengths and potential for development. They are concerned that the school still operates on a split site and are keen to resolve this situation as soon as possible. This is an effective governing body, which ensures that the school meets its legal responsibilities.
44. Governors play an appropriate role in managing the school's finances. Budget allocations reflect the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. Finances are managed very well on a daily basis. The school's accounts were last audited in June 2004. The report was supportive of the school's procedures, and its minor recommendations have all been implemented. In the financial year 2003-2004, the school eliminated a deficit from the previous year, and was able to carry forward a slightly above average sum into 2004-2005. This has been used effectively to improve staffing levels. It is also improving achievement, and is a very effective application of the principles of best value.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	891,587
Total expenditure	791,062
Expenditure per pupil	2,313

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-45,244
Balance carried forward to the next year	55,281

45. Given pupils' good achievement, their good personal development, good teaching and learning, very good leadership and management and below average costs per pupil, the school is giving very good value for money. The headteacher is providing purposeful and vigorous leadership and is receiving very good support from his deputy, the assistant headteachers, and all adults in the school. The school has good potential to improve further.

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

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

46. There has been considerable improvement in the quality of provision since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching has improved from good to very good overall and there has been a significant improvement in the accommodation, resources and outdoor play provision for Nursery children. Music activities are now taught regularly and all children now have access to musical instruments.
47. There is currently one class containing 35 children who attend part time in the Nursery and two Reception classes with 55 children in total who attend full time. Children with special educational needs are making very good progress because their individual education plans identify their needs clearly, and they receive very good support. One child attends the Hearing Impaired Unit. She is very well integrated into the Reception class and works very well alongside other children. Attainment on entry is just average in the current year but is normally below average. Children achieve very well in both the Nursery and Reception classes, and the majority should achieve the expected goals in all areas of learning at least by the end of the Reception Year.
48. The Foundation Stage's resources and accommodation are satisfactory. The school has worked hard to improve the outdoor play area for Nursery children. Reception children have access to the Nursery outdoor play area, but the bikes and climbing equipment are too small for them, and this inhibits their physical development.
49. Procedures to check on children's progress are very good and the use of assessment to challenge and extend their learning is very well developed. Children's progress is now tracked systematically and carefully monitored from the time that they enter the school. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good and securely based on the principles of effective early years practice.

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

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

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

- Children form very good relationships with adults so that they feel secure and enjoy coming to school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good, so that children make very good progress.

#### **Commentary**

50. Children settle into the routines of the Nursery and Reception classes well because they establish very good relationships with all adults. They feel secure and develop good levels of concentration because adults plan interesting and enjoyable activities. Expectations for behaviour are very clear throughout the Nursery and Reception classes and children respond to this firm guidance by developing very good attitudes and behaviour. Children learn very effectively because teachers plan work which extends their knowledge systematically. Adults acknowledge and celebrate good

achievement so that children develop confidence and a positive attitude to school. There are very good opportunities for them to take responsibility. For example, in the Reception classes, children take turns in leading and questioning the class about the days of the week and the weather. They are challenged to suggest ways in which they can be kind to each other. By the end of the Reception Year, all children should exceed the early learning goals designed for this age group.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make very good gains in their learning because teaching is very good.
- Adults provide very good opportunities for speaking and listening, and, as a result, children gain confidence in communicating with others.
- Children make very good progress in reading and writing because activities and skills are taught so well.

### **Commentary**

51. Teaching and learning are consistently very good in this area of learning and enable children to make very good progress. The large number of adult helpers also contribute to this very good progress. A significant number of higher-attaining and average children in the Reception classes are already exceeding the expected goals. The majority of children are on course to achieve the expected goals by the end of the year. There are very good opportunities for them to develop speaking and communication skills. Adults seize every opportunity to encourage them to respond to questions and to describe characters and events. All children enjoy the role-play areas such as the 'garden centre' in the Reception classes and the 'shoe shop' in the Nursery, and this is helping them to develop social language.
52. Higher-attaining and average children in the Reception classes have made a good start in reading and they all have a positive attitude to books and stories. There are very good opportunities for children to take books home, and teachers plan a range of reading activities which children enjoy. Teachers reinforce learning well; for example, in the Nursery, children used puppets to act out scenes from their 'big book' and, in the Reception classes, children enjoyed acting out the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. They make very good progress in learning to write and make marks on paper in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Higher-attaining and average children in the Reception classes write simple sentences with appropriate capital letters, full stops, and description in their writing.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are consistently very good in the Nursery and both Reception classes so that all children achieve very well.

### **Commentary**

53. Higher-attaining and average children in the Reception classes are already exceeding the expected goals in the recognition and use of numbers. By the end of this school year, the majority of children should achieve the expectations for this age group. The quality of teaching is very good in both the Nursery and Reception classes and this is helping children to make very good progress. In the Nursery, children are challenged to count and recognise numbers in simple games and activities. They consider how many pints of milk they will need in the playhouse, for example, and enjoy counting out the milk bottles from the crate or counting the number of skittles that they knock down. All adults intervene very well to challenge children to extend their number skills and this rigorous challenge continues into the Reception classes, where activities are very well planned to match children's needs.
54. They enjoy identifying symmetrical objects and placing animals in a symmetrical pattern. Higher-attaining children add numbers up to 20. All children are encouraged to enter data into the computer to produce a class graph and the majority can explain and identify the largest and smallest numbers on the graph. Very good teaching of computer skills results in very good achievement.

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

Provision in knowledge and understanding is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well in this area of learning.
- Teaching and learning are very good in both the Nursery and Reception classes.

### **Commentary**

55. Children make very good progress in learning about their world because teaching and learning are very good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. They all develop a very good understanding for their age of what plants need in order to grow. Adults guide children's observations of shoots growing and children predict what might happen. The majority know that plants need water and light to grow. All have good knowledge of the weather and days of the week because teachers discuss these daily. Children make good progress in learning to use computers for writing and drawing activities. Older, higher-attaining and average children use the mouse well and draw simple recognisable pictures of objects such as vehicles and flowers. There is no printer in the Reception classes which is a disadvantage, as pupils cannot see their work instantly being printed and have to walk to the Hearing Impaired Unit to collect their printed drawings. This adversely affects learning. Construction kits are easily accessible and children are encouraged to make models in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Reception children are challenged to design and make their own sandwich. They make very good progress in learning about Bible stories. Very good teaching in the Reception classes ensures that children know and can talk about the story of the Good Samaritan, for example.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for physical development is not as strong as in other areas of learning.
- The school has made good progress in developing the outdoor area for the Nursery.
- Reception children do not experience progression in using resources for outdoor play.
- The lack of easy access to the hall for physical education is a barrier to learning.

### **Commentary**

56. Achievement is satisfactory in this area of learning and, by the end of the Reception Year, the majority of children are likely to achieve the expected goals. The school has worked hard to provide an outside area for Nursery children, and Reception children are timetabled to visit this area as well as the hall for physical activities during the course of the week. Teaching is good in both years. Nursery children develop climbing, balancing, kicking and aiming skills. However, because there are not enough suitable resources, Reception children do not benefit from more demanding outdoor physical challenges. Because of this, their progress is not as good in physical development as in other areas of learning. Furthermore, because the hall is situated in another building, lack of easy access to suitable accommodation for physical education is a barrier to children's physical development. Other equipment stored in the hall limits the available space further. Children make sound progress in developing the skills needed to manipulate small apparatus and to use a range of tools and materials in both the Nursery and Reception classes.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children enjoy the planned activities in both the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The provision for music has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- Achievement is good and reflects good and sometimes very good teaching.

### **Commentary**

57. Achievement is good and the majority of children are likely to attain the expected goals by the end of the Reception Year. Children make consistent progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes because there are appropriate opportunities to develop their creative skills through role-play, art and music. The provision for music has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Musical instruments are easily available for all children to use and there are regular singing sessions. Very good teaching in the Nursery ensures that children know the names of instruments and are learning how to hold and play them correctly. The majority have learned to stop and start playing on command. Nursery children sing, play and march to 'The Grand Old Duke of York', for example. Singing skills are well developed and all children show joy and enthusiasm as they sing a wide range of songs from memory such as 'All Kinds of Weather' and 'Beep, Baby Beep.' Children in both the Nursery and Reception classes learn to mix paints and to practise, for example, observational paintings of daffodils. Artists such as Van Gogh are used as a stimulus and compared with artists from Australia. There are good opportunities in both the Nursery and Reception classes to use imagination in the attractive role-play areas.

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



## ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are now above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6 because pupils are taught well.
- Very good leadership and management are raising standards effectively.
- Spelling is insecure and this is adversely affecting standards.
- The library does not encourage wide reading among pupils.
- Pupils with particular needs are well supported and so achieve well.
- Other subjects are not used systematically to develop literacy skills.

### Commentary

58. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004, standards were average in reading and well above average in writing. This was a considerable improvement since the school's previous inspection. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004, standards were well below average in English and had worsened since the previous inspection. This reflected a backlog of underachievement in Years 3 and 4 in previous years. The school has taken steps to correct this. Evidence from the school's tracking of pupils' progress is that standards are now above average in reading and writing in Year 2, and average in English in Year 6. Evidence from the inspection confirms this.
59. Achievement is now good throughout the school because pupils are well taught. During the inspection, the quality of teaching in English was good overall, with examples of very good and excellent teaching. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, for example, highly imaginative and enthusiastic teaching meant that pupils responded with impressive levels of sustained interest and concentration. Separate work was planned to enable pupils at different stages of learning to build on their existing levels of understanding. As a result, achievement was very high. Higher-attaining pupils planned their own performance of the poem 'Jabberwocky' independently, and performed it imaginatively for the rest of the class. This was work of impressive maturity. Whilst behaviour and attitudes to learning in Year 6 are exemplary, a number of other classes contain a few pupils with short concentration spans. Their behaviour is generally managed well but this inevitably slows the pace of the lesson. However, other pupils generally achieve well. For example, in a good Year 3 lesson, they produced some good writing, although the pace of the lesson had been slowed by the poor concentration of a few. Pupils in Year 2 generally have a good command of basic grammar, and handwriting is legible and has clearly improved over the year.
60. Standards have improved well in Years 3 to 6 and become more consistent in Years 1 and 2 because learning in English is now very well managed. Teachers and pupils now have a clear understanding of what is needed to achieve different levels in the National Curriculum, and pupils' progress is now very effectively planned. New tracking systems are in place and pupils' progress is assessed four times per year. All pupils have target cards so that they and their parents understand what they need to do to raise their standards. The school, with justification, expects standards to improve markedly in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2005, not least because of the introduction of these systems. Other measures have also been introduced. 'Big Writing Days' have been introduced to give pupils opportunities to write at length for a

specific purpose. Support is being provided for pupils in Year 6 who are on the borderline between average and below average, and separate support is given to pupils who have the potential to be above average in the national tests. These shrewdly-planned measures are raising standards significantly.

61. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' writing contains too many spelling errors and this is depressing standards. Other aspects of writing, such as sentence structure, are generally accurate and there are good examples of imaginative and creative writing and of the use of challenging vocabulary. However, even higher-attaining pupils routinely spell words incorrectly which they use regularly, and the school accepts that this is an area for improvement.
62. Throughout the school, pupils' reading is average and higher-attaining pupils read with good levels of expression and understanding. However, a number do not belong to a public library and their understanding of how to find information in a library is insecure. The school has put resources into non-fiction books to improve the library as a resource for reference and this has been useful. However, the quality and quantity of fiction books in the library are unsatisfactory for a school of this size and will not encourage pupils to read widely. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have no access to the school's main library and so do not benefit from its provision. There are examples of the library being used as a resource for information, but these are not consistent.
63. Pupils with particular needs are supported well overall and so achieve well. Pupils from the Hearing Impaired Unit are supported very well when they join other classes for English, and so achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs are given learning activities which are carefully planned to enable them to build on their current levels of understanding and are linked to their individual education plans. As a result, they achieve well.
64. The school has recognised that there are issues to address in the teaching and learning of English and has put a number of strategies in place. These are beginning to have a positive effect on standards, which are becoming more consistent across the school. Very effective leadership and management of the subject mean that the school is in a good position to raise standards further.

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

65. To an extent, literacy skills are developed well in other subjects. For example, in a very good music lesson in Year 2, pupils listened very carefully to music to explore the feelings it evoked. This produced some carefully expressed responses, for example, 'a squirrel scurrying and scuttling, and rustling in the trees', and 'a butterfly dancing in the sunlight'. This is very good development of vocabulary. However, the school recognises that other subjects are not used systematically to develop literacy skills and that some opportunities are missed. The subject leaders agree that this is an area for development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good subject leadership is clearly focused on improving attainment.

- The majority of pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Very good assessment data is now used effectively to provide pupils with challenging targets aimed at reaching higher levels of attainment.
- There is scope for information and communication technology to be used more consistently throughout the school to support learning and to be planned into mathematics lessons.

## Commentary

66. In the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 2, pupils reached average standards, but at the end of Year 6, pupils were well below the expected standard. The school's predictions and evidence seen during the inspection indicate that standards in these tests in 2005 will be above average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. This is very good improvement during this school year.
67. Mathematics has already been a key priority in the school's five-year improvement plan. The subject is now very well led and managed by the subject leader, who has been supported effectively by the headteacher and by the local education authority adviser. Together they have brought about impressive improvements. For example;
  - By Year 6, pupils are beginning to reach much higher standards than previously.
  - Pupils now achieve well, particularly in the skills that they develop when using and applying mathematical knowledge to solve 'real life' problems.
  - The quality of teaching is now much improved.
  - The procedures used to check pupils' progress are now highly effective and are used rigorously to ensure that all pupils know their own targets to help them to reach their full potential.
  - The subject leader is very aware of the need to improve the use of information and communication technology in mathematics lessons.
68. Teachers work hard to ensure that all pupils benefit from what the school has to offer. This is done particularly well in mathematics and is brought about by very good assessment methods. For example, each pupil's progress is checked four times a year and new targets are set for them. Their work is marked carefully and this enables teachers to see which pupils have grasped a new concept or skill and which have not. In the Year 6 lesson, for example, reinforcement activities were organised so that pupils could have additional opportunities to understand the previous day's work. Assessment of this learning was being used very effectively to plan the next stages of learning.
69. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 enjoy their mathematics, especially their mental activities at the start of the lesson. For example, pupils in Year 2 enjoyed using model digital and analogue clocks to learn about time and tried to beat each other as they set the correct times on their models. In a mathematics lesson in the computer suite, pupils in the Year 3/4 class achieved well as they enjoyed trying to keep up with the questions set on the interactive whiteboard, based on their growing knowledge of tables. Pupils in Year 6 used individual small whiteboards to show quick answers to problems based on money, which helped them to understand decimals. Pupils' work in their books shows that they are making good progress and covering a wide range of work during the year. The majority take a pride in their work and it is neatly presented.
70. Pupils who have special educational needs are given good support and guidance by teachers and so achieve well. Due to budget constraints, there is a shortage of additional help in many classes. For example, in the large mixed-age class of Year 5/6

pupils, there are a number who find the work difficult and whose concentration spans are short, and they would benefit from extra support during their lessons. The school has established extra provision in the form of 'Springboard' booster groups to help pupils who need greater support. Pupils from the Hearing Impaired Unit are very well supported when they join classes throughout the school. Because of this, they make very good progress and achieve very well.

71. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good, with some very good teaching being observed during the inspection. Teachers are enthusiastic and introduce lessons with quick-fire mental exercises. They use praise and encouragement well to boost pupils' self-esteem. Teachers now plan well, using the National Numeracy Strategy. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Work is planned to match the needs of all pupils and appropriate challenges are provided for those at different stages of learning. At present, the use of computers to support learning in mathematics is unsystematic in several classes. The computer suite is located in the 'junior building', which means that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have no access to it. During the inspection, computers in classrooms were generally underused in mathematics lessons.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

72. Pupils are taught from the time they start school that mathematics is an everyday part of life. For example, they are given responsibility for calculating the number of children present or absent. They follow timelines in history, which enables them to develop a good understanding of chronology. In geography, they use co-ordinates as they refine their mapping skills, and in science they measure accurately using a range of instruments. However, the development of numeracy skills in other subjects is not planned systematically and information and communication technology is not used well to support learning in mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good and so pupils achieve well.
- Leadership and management are good.
- There is insufficient use of information and communication technology to support learning, and a lack of planning to develop literacy and numeracy skills in the subject.
- Pupils' attitudes are positive.

### **Commentary**

73. Over the last few years, the results of the national tests at the end of Year 6 have been mainly well below the national average. Teacher assessments for pupils in Year 2 have been mostly average. Pupils currently in Year 6 are working at average standards, while those in Year 2 are above average. This reflects the improvements made in the last two years.
74. Teachers plan their lessons thoughtfully so that pupils are able to use their existing scientific knowledge and understanding to support their learning. This was evident, for example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 6 on investigating the factors affecting how

materials dissolve. The teacher skilfully used pupils' previous experience of devising 'fair tests' to let them work collaboratively in groups to explore how jelly dissolves in different conditions. Teachers also have secure subject knowledge and understanding and so are able to demonstrate and to explain new scientific ideas accurately to pupils. As a result, pupils are clear about what they are to learn and what is expected of them. The management of pupils' behaviour is good, so that they have a good work rate and are productive. There is good use of praise to develop pupils' self-confidence when carrying out investigations. Teachers also encourage them to use accurate scientific terminology when answering questions and communicating their ideas. This extends their personal, as well as their scientific, vocabulary well. There is not enough emphasis on pupils considering the findings of their investigations. Because of this, their conclusions tend to be descriptive, rather than an evaluation of what they have found out. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teaching assistants so that they are fully involved in all scientific activities. This is particularly the case for those with hearing impairment.

75. The subject leader provides good leadership and management which are having a positive effect on pupils' progress and achievement. Her close monitoring of the subject has developed a clear view of how it can be improved further. Curriculum planning has been improved since the previous inspection so that there is now a strong emphasis on pupils learning through structured practical investigations. Because of this, most pupils in Year 6 are confident in planning a test, making sure it is fair, and then carrying it out well, independently of the teacher. The curriculum also makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development. This is evident in the many opportunities that pupils are given to show initiative and take some responsibility for their own learning when working collaboratively during investigations. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning in the subject. Similarly, there is a lack of planning to enable them to develop literacy and numeracy skills in the subject. In all lessons, pupils were very well behaved and had good attitudes to learning. This has a favourable affect on the quality of their work and the standards they achieve.
76. There has been considerable improvement since the previous inspection. In particular, pupils now have more opportunities to develop investigative skills and to work independently.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The ICT suite is used well to develop pupils' basic skills in the subject.
- There is good leadership and management.
- There are not enough opportunities to use ICT to support learning in other subjects.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work, and this has a positive effect on the progress that they make.
- The split-site accommodation adversely affects progress for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and children in the Foundation Stage.

### **Commentary**

77. MOST PUPILS IN YEARS 2 AND 6 REACH THE EXPECTED STANDARDS. THIS MEANS THAT THEY MAKE GOOD PROGRESS AND ACHIEVE WELL.
78. There have been considerable improvements in the provision for ICT since the previous inspection, particularly in the creation of a computer suite in the junior building. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 are timetabled to use this on a weekly basis to develop their basic ICT skills. As a result, they are now making good progress and achieving well in this subject. However, back in the classroom, there are insufficient opportunities to practise these skills and to use them to support their learning in other subjects. Because of the split site, pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have access to the computer suite. The limited number of computers in their classrooms makes it difficult to provide whole-class teaching of ICT skills for these pupils. The school is pursuing ways of improving provision, and plans to provide a bank of laptops for them to use.
79. Teachers make good use of the computer suite for whole-class teaching of basic skills for pupils in Years 3 to 6. They have secure subject knowledge and so are able to explain and demonstrate new ideas and techniques accurately. As a result, pupils are clear about what they are to learn and what is expected of them. Teachers encourage pupils to work collaboratively in pairs on the computers and this makes a good contribution to their personal and social development.
80. The subject is led and managed well. The subject leader has a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses and has created a focused action plan for taking the subject forward. The quality of his teaching sets a good example for his colleagues. The curriculum is planned well so that all aspects of the subject are covered. Pupils enjoy their ICT activities. They have a positive attitude to their learning which has a beneficial effect on the progress they make.

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

81. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their ICT skills by using them to support and enhance their learning in other subjects. However, there are some good examples of pupils using the Internet as a means of researching information in science, history and geography. They are also able to use their word-processing skills to add interest to their writing in English, for example, by changing font style, size and colour.

### **HUMANITIES**

History and religious education were inspected in full and geography was sampled.

#### **HISTORY**

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils enjoy studying the past and achieve well.
- Pupils have a good attitude to learning in history.
- Teachers try hard to make lessons exciting.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to practise their literacy skills and to use information and communication technology.

#### **Commentary**

82. Pupils achieve well throughout the school and reach the expected standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a secure early understanding of how people's lives change as time passes. For example, in an excellent lesson in Year 1, pupils took part in a themed Victorian Day. The teacher had planned the lesson very well to include role-play in which pupils dressed in Victorian costumes, made bread, and wrote on slates. They enjoyed a typical Victorian tea party when the adults acted as waitresses, which helped pupils to develop their social skills. Pupils in Year 2 make a comparison of old and new toys, being particularly thrilled with a 30-year-old doll brought in by their teacher. As part of their study of the Second World War, pupils in the Year 3/4 class were amazed as their teacher demonstrated exactly how much food was provided for each person per week as a ration during that time. They realised why it was necessary to ration food, and set to work with enthusiasm to research material for a poster to urge people to grow their own food.
83. Teaching is good overall. Teachers have a good rapport with their pupils and create a good ethos for learning. Pupils work hard, enjoy their lessons and so achieve well.
84. The subject leader is very experienced and is sharing her expertise and experience effectively with colleagues. During the past year, she has been given the opportunity to monitor teaching in history and to analyse planning. Resources have recently been improved and history is due to be a focus for development in the coming year as part of the school's five-year plan. There is no common system of assessment in place yet. Plans are in place to improve resources and to provide more books for the library to help pupils to develop their research skills.
85. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in history. Regular speaking and listening activities develop their oral competence well and writing for different purposes is beginning to be used more. However, information and communication technology is not used effectively to support learning in history

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good attention is paid in lessons to supporting pupils' personal development.
- Pupils have only a limited range of opportunities to visit places of worship other than those from the Christian tradition.
- The assessment of pupils' progress is unsatisfactory and information and communication technology is not used well to support learning.

### **Commentary**

86. The curriculum meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils' attainment is at the expected level and the subject supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
87. Across the age groups, pupils have a sound understanding of Bible stories, and older pupils understand that religious belief influences people's way of life. Pupils in Year 6 have carried out an in-depth study of Christianity and Islam, looking at the similarities and differences between these two world religions. Pupils were keen to explain what they had learned on their visit to the local Christian church, where they had looked at

various vestments used at different times of the Christian year. During the inspection, pupils in Years 4 and 5 discussed what makes a good friend, after watching a video of The Easter Story, where a friend betrays Jesus. The video helped them to clarify their ideas, promoting their spiritual, social and moral development well.

88. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In a Year 6 lesson, teaching was very good and helped pupils to gain a deeper understanding of The Easter Story as they prepared for Palm Sunday by studying the life of Jesus and preparing questions that they would have liked to ask him themselves. Their work showed that they had a good basic knowledge of both Christianity and Judaism and could identify how events then have significance for us today.
89. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The recently-appointed subject leader has already made some improvements to the teaching of religious education. A new whole-school scheme of work is in the process of development. The assessment of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding is in the early stages of development and does not yet provide a clear picture of pupils' progress and achievement. Information and communication technology is not used systematically and consistently across the school to support teaching and learning. Religious education is soon to become a priority in the school's five-year improvement plan and the subject leader has plans to take that opportunity to improve teaching and learning in the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

90. Evidence gained through one lesson observation, discussions with pupils and teachers and an analysis of pupils' work in books and displays indicates that they are achieving the standards expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. Planning shows that they are following a suitable curriculum.
91. Pupils in Year 2 are able to compare and contrast living in Chesterfield with living at the seaside. They have analysed deliveries made to the school, which has helped them to realise how dependent they are on other people in different parts of the world. During the inspection, the mixed Year 5/6 class watched a video of how people make use of water from the River Severn, and how it is recycled. The lesson was taught well by the class teacher, who very sensibly stopped the video frequently to allow pupils time to make notes in their jotters to help them prepare to write a report on their return to the classroom. The class had visited Carsington Water to experience at first hand how we store and use water. Teachers often combine geography with history topics. For example, pupils in Year 6 have studied maps of the world as part of their study of the Ancient Greeks and the Indus Civilisation.
92. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Geography has not yet been included for focused development in the school's five-year plan for improvement, but resources have been improved and there are already developing links with other areas of the curriculum, particularly with the teaching and practice of writing skills. However, information and communication technology is not used extensively to support learning in geography.

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

Music was inspected fully, and art and design, design and technology, and physical education were sampled.



## MUSIC

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved markedly since the school's previous inspection.
- Teaching and learning are good overall, resulting in good achievement.
- Music does not have a high profile in the school.

### Commentary

93. Standards are above those expected in Year 2 and at the level expected in Year 6. This is a marked improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were below those expected, and teaching in Years 3 to 6 was unsatisfactory. The school has met the requirement from that inspection to improve the teaching of music.
94. The quality of teaching in music is now good and there are instances of very good teaching. For example, a very effective lesson in Years 1 and 2 enabled pupils to make very good progress in their singing. In a very good lesson in Year 6, very effective teaching enabled pupils to 'compose' a cyclic pattern and to perform it competently and confidently on the range of instruments available. Pupils' use of specialist musical vocabulary was largely accurate. Whole-school singing in assemblies is satisfactory overall and there are examples of enthusiastic singing, for example, in the refrain to 'Colours of the Day'!
95. The subject leader has had the responsibility for six months and subject leadership is satisfactory. She is undertaking a small amount of specialist teaching throughout the school which is helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning. She ensures that the National Curriculum is covered throughout the school. However, she acknowledges that music does not have a high profile in the school. For example, only one pupil is taking advantage of the opportunity to learn an instrument. Pupils have occasional opportunities to perform in assemblies and in Christmas or end-of-year productions, but the performance of music for audiences in and out of school is not a regular part of their learning. Similarly, they do not have opportunities to visit performances of music or to hear musicians performing in school. Music is not used with, for example, dance or drama to give pupils an appreciation of the creative arts. Music makes little contribution to pupils' personal development or to their spiritual and cultural awareness.

## ART AND DESIGN

96. No lessons were seen in art and design and there is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of provision and standards. Work sampled shows a lack of effective progression in basic skills, knowledge and understanding, especially in Years 3 to 6, and insufficient use of professional artists to enrich learning about different artistic styles. Pupils have their own sketchbooks, but there is no obvious progression evident in drawing skills, painting, textiles, and three-dimensional work. A visiting artist has worked with pupils to produce an attractive red dragon for the junior playground and a Chinese paper dragon for the infant school. The school is aware of the need to

develop art and design and it has been identified as an area for development in the school improvement plan.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

97. No lessons were seen in design and technology and there is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of provision and standards. Work was sampled and shows a lack of effective progression in basic skills, knowledge and understanding in Years 3 to 6. Appropriate planning and design were evident in Year 2. Pupils used their design ideas to make paper houses and developed the skills of cutting, sticking, folding and measuring. In one Year 5 class, pupils had designed and made slippers and musical instruments, but making skills and the quality of the finished article did not show a clear progression from the infant classes. The school is aware of the need to improve design and technology, and it is scheduled as an area for development on the school improvement plan.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

98. No lessons were seen in physical education and there is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of provision and standards. The school enters local competitions in skipping, cricket and football, and pupils achieve well against other schools. Accommodation for physical education is satisfactory. There is a large hall for older pupils and a second hall on the infant site. The infant hall does not provide any opportunities for climbing and swinging. The playgrounds are well marked out, but the junior playground has a significant slope and there are no grassed areas. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to take part in after-school activities such as water polo, table tennis, skipping and cricket. All pupils experience two terms of swimming at the local pool, but the school does not keep any records of achievement in swimming, and acknowledges that this is an area for development.

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

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship is **good**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- The timetabled programme makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The subject leader has a clear overview of the development of this subject.
- Citizenship weeks promote pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively.

### **COMMENTARY**

99. Personal, social and health education and citizenship are seen as an integral part of the curriculum and are given a high priority. The subject is led and managed well and the subject leader is developing an overview of the school's work in this area. She has been proactive in selecting and developing the scheme of work for the school. Overall, good teaching in lessons supports the school's emphasis on developing pupils' personal and social skills. As a result, their personal development is good and they achieve well. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils were effectively developing skills of enquiry and communication through discussing the implications of media advertising on young children. Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced regular timetabled lessons which are well structured through a carefully

planned scheme of work. This is still at an early stage of development and has still to be fully evaluated.

100. The school is proud of the 'Citizenship Weeks' that occur on an annual basis, and uses them to explore and broaden pupils' thinking about the world. Last year's theme was connected to 'Environmental Issues,' and the planning for this year is on 'Working Together'. In PSHE lessons, citizenship issues are explored well. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils made good progress in discussing the concept of money and decision-making. The programme includes sex education for older pupils in which they learn about body changes in puberty and the importance of relationships. Pupils are taught about the dangers of drugs and other substances, and visits from and to the emergency services emphasise fire and road safety. Through participation in the school council and positions of responsibility, pupils are given an opportunity to care for and be part of their local school community.
101. Personal, health and social education and citizenship have improved considerably since the school's previous inspection. They play a significant part in developing pupils' confidence and positive self-image, and so contribute effectively to their good progress and achievement.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<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	3
Value for money provided by the school	2

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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