

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BEDWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Stevenage

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117200

Headteacher: Mrs Judith Moore

Lead inspector: Jo Cheadle

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> January 2004

Inspection number: 255468

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	256
School address:	Bedwell Crescent Stevenage Hertfordshire
Postcode:	SG1 1 NJ
Telephone number:	01438 351 198
Fax number:	01438 722 740
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Tanis Kent
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The number of pupils on roll at Bedwell Primary has dropped over the past few years as a consequence of a falling birth rate in the local area. There are currently 256 boys and girls between the ages of 3 and 11, including 31 children who attend the nursery for morning sessions. The school is located on an estate of mixed, but largely council-owned properties. There is high unemployment in the local area. Most pupils at the school come from white British backgrounds, but there is a mix of pupils from other cultures. The next largest groups come from Bangladeshi and black Caribbean origins. There are also pupils from Pakistani, black African and mixed races. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than in other schools. Fifteen pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak English. At almost 50 percent, the school has a very high proportion of pupils who need support for a wide range of special needs, only two pupils have statements of support. While children's skills and knowledge vary when they start school in the nursery, generally, levels are well below the expected levels for their age and are particularly weak in language and communication.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23233	Jo Cheadle	Lead inspector	English, history, music, special educational needs, English as an additional language
9010	Gail Ellisdon	Lay inspector	
30244	Roger Tapley	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, design and technology, physical education
32617	Maggie Carney	Team inspector	Mathematics, art and design, religious education, areas of learning in the Foundation Stage

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Bedwell Primary is an effective, well run school that provides a very good quality of education for its pupils.** Very careful attention is paid to including all pupils and this ensures that they achieve well. The headteacher's very clear vision and her commitment to the pupils and their families is central to the school's success. The overall quality of teaching is good and the school is well supported by its governing body. As a result, good value is gained from the money the school spends.

The school's main strengths and areas for improvement are

- The headteacher leads the school very well and ensures that pupils are given every opportunity to succeed
- The school provides a very interesting and enjoyable range of learning opportunities that includes all pupils equally
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and their work, and behaviour is excellent
- Pupils are very well cared for and their individual needs and personal and social development are supported very effectively
- The provision for pupils with special educational need and those who speak English as an additional language is very good
- Senior managers and subject co-ordinators are improving in their roles, but are not as effective as they could be in some aspects
- In science, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should by the end of Year 6

### How the effectiveness of the school has changed since the last inspection

The school was last inspected in November 1998. Since this time the school has made **good** improvements to its work. Improvements have been made in the following aspects

- There is now a well equipped suite for work in information and communication technology, although not all aspects of control and modelling technology are fully covered yet
- The good quality of teaching has been maintained despite many staff changes
- The provision for design and technology is now satisfactory and pupils achieve the expected standards
- The governor's annual report to parents has improved and the governing body plays a more active role in planning the school's future
- There are now good procedures for evaluating the performance of all staff

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	E	E	D
mathematics	E	E	E*	D
science	E	E	E*	D

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Children begin in the nursery class with a range of skills and knowledge, but overall levels on entry are well below those expected for children of this age. Children's language and communication skills are particularly weak and this affects their achievements in all areas of learning. A very high proportion of the children joining the school need special support for a range of learning difficulties. In the nursery and reception classes, children play and work in a happy environment where their individual needs are quickly identified and supported and this helps them to achieve well. By the end of the reception class, however, children have not had enough time to catch up completely and most

children will not meet the early goals for their learning in language and communication, mathematical understanding, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In their personal and emotional development and physical development, the majority of children reach the expected levels by the end of the reception year. Overall, achievement throughout the Foundation Stage is good.

Overall standards on entry to Year 1 are below the expected levels. Through Years 1 and 2 and 3 to 6, pupils continue to **achieve well** on their starting levels and standards meet expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 overall. The school works very effectively to ensure that all pupils are equally included in all work and uses very wise strategies to ensure that all pupils are effectively supported. This means that pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with learning and behavioural difficulties achieve as well as other pupils. Because the school pays **very good** attention to the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, their behaviour is **excellent** and they gain high levels of confidence and self-esteem that support their overall academic achievement.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a very good education for its pupils.**

**Teaching is good overall** and the clear focus on looking at how well different groups of children are doing is enabling teachers to plan effectively for learning, which means that children make good progress in lessons. The curriculum is very well planned and there is a very good range of extra activities that add interest and enjoyment to pupils' learning and keep them interested in their work. Pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are very well supported. Teaching assistants work effectively to support individuals and groups in lessons. Overall, the care of pupils and the support and guidance they are given is of a very high quality and very good attention is given to pupils' health and safety. The school has good links with parents and seeks ways to encourage more parents to be involved with the education of their children.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The school has maintained its strengths and improved on weaknesses because the overall quality of leadership and management is good.** The headteacher provides a very strong steer for the work of the school and her very clear vision for the future of the pupils is shared well with staff and parents. While there is currently no deputy head, the headteacher can rely on the commitment and good teamwork of all her staff to ensure that the school runs smoothly. Senior managers and subject co-ordinators recognise the contribution they must make to whole school developments and pupils' achievements. Some are new to their roles or have taken on greater whole school responsibility. All have good plans to improve the management of their work, which is currently satisfactory overall. Governors are knowledgeable, very supportive and play an increasingly useful role in planning the school's future. Their governance of the school is good. The school runs very efficiently on a day-to-day basis, supported by welcoming administrative staff who provide a friendly welcome and efficient service to staff.

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

The majority of parents are very happy with the opportunities provided for their children and are highly supportive of the school's work. Not many parents help out at school on a regular basis however, and the school would like to change this. Pupils love their school and are very proud of it. They are very fond of the headteacher, teachers and all staff who help them. Year 6 pupils in particular are very grateful to the school caretaker who supervises their lunchtime activities, gives high regard to their well-being and helps out with residential visits.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The school knows its strength and weakness well. In order to improve its work further the following aspects should be prioritised for action

- The work of senior managers and subject co-ordinators

- Achievement in science for some pupils by the end of Year 6

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

The vast majority of pupils **achieve well** to reach overall standards that are in line with expected levels at the end of Year 6. While the majority of pupils do well in English, they do not always reach the expected levels, because starting levels in this aspect of learning are very low. Many pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve as well as all others.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school supports pupils effectively so that they do as well as they can in national tests
- Standards in English are below expected levels at the end of Year 6
- Standards in art and music are above expected levels by the end of Year 6
- Pupils achieve very well during their time in the nurture group
- Pupils do not achieve as well in science in Years 3 to 6
- Long absences affect the achievements of some groups of pupils

#### Commentary

1. While test results were well below the national average in 2003, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected levels in Year 2 and Year 6 is gradually improving. Test scores are lower than the national average because a smaller proportion of pupils achieve better than the expected levels and a larger proportion of pupils achieve below the expected levels. However, for the vast majority of pupils, the school's tracking information clearly shows that based on individual starting levels, pupils achieve well. For the Year 6 group who took tests in 2003, the school has compiled extremely detailed evidence to show how each pupil was supported along the route towards taking tests. In some instances, pupils with learning difficulties achieved at the expected Level 4 having begun at well below the normal starting level. In other cases, the school quickly identified pupils' personal crisis points and provided suitable support to ensure that their targets were met. The school does not over emphasise the importance of national tests, but endeavours to help each pupil do as well as they can at this point in their education, so that they have the best possible start for the next stages of learning.

#### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003*

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.4 (13.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.8 (11.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.9 (13.8)	16.3 (16.3)

*There were 42 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 2003*

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.2 (24.9)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	21.8 (25.2)	27.0 (26.7)
science	23.6 (27.7)	28.8 (28.3)

*There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. The school is successful in identifying pupils' needs and effectively supports them so that they achieve well. The area of greatest need continues to be in the development of pupils' language and literacy skills. From the nursery class through to Year 6, spoken and written literacy skills are a

key focus for all learning. This ensures that pupils' achieve well on low starting levels. The current Year 2 pupils began with generally better levels than other year groups and the vast majority are now achieving nationally expected levels in English. However, standards in Year 6 are below the nationally expected levels overall. Despite this, pupils achieve well in the subject. Most importantly they are confident to talk about the difficulties they have, recognise where they must improve and the majority apply themselves enthusiastically when working towards set targets. This is because the school's programme for personal and social development places high priority on helping pupils to believe in themselves and facing challenge with determination. Pupils are confident, even when they find tasks difficult. They remain determined even when written work is a struggle. They support and help each other to reach the goals that are set for them. The end result is that pupils achieve expected levels in all subjects other than English and science by the end of Year 6 and achieve well overall.

3. In art and music standards are above expected levels. Pupils' learning in these areas adds greatly to their overall achievements both academically and in their personal and social development. Standards are better than expected because pupils' artistic and musical skills are promoted in equal balance to the development of their knowledge of artists and musicians and their works. Pupils develop a real sense of audience during their studies. They understand that pictures, paintings and sculptures are created in response to thoughts and feelings. Performance skills are very well taught in music and pupils' learn that singing is also an art form where feelings and ideas are conveyed through gestures and expression. Moreover, work in these subjects builds pupils' confidence levels. Pupils are proud of their achievements and recognise that a sound or image can be pleasing to one person and not to another.

4. The school has a good reputation for its work with pupils who need special support for a range of learning needs. When it is recognised that individual pupils need extra-special help to achieve well, they are taught in the school's nurture group for Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 pupils. These pupils are in no way excluded from the normal curriculum: the group provides them with the best opportunities to learn skills in a highly supportive environment. This helps them to be more fully included in every day learning with other pupils. Pupils in the group not only build on their basic literacy and numeracy skills, but also learn to organise themselves, work with other pupils, take turns and share and develop a whole host of learning strategies that support them in a whole-class situation. This very effective provision enables many pupils to achieve very well in a short space of time.

5. While the proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels in science tests is close to the national average, boys do not do as well as girls and standards overall are below expected levels in the current Year 6 classes. The school has already identified these issues. Unlike in English and mathematics, strategies to solve this problem have been slow in implementation and boys still struggle to explain their scientific thinking and organise their investigative work. They do not achieve as well as they should do by the end of Year 6. The school has identified that Bangladeshi pupils are also currently underachieving and has carefully investigated why this is the case. Tracking information clearly shows that pupils from this group who have attended school regularly achieve as well as others. Those who have been absent for extended periods do not do as well as they should.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes towards school are **very positive** and they behave **extremely well**. This is the result of the **very good** development of pupils' personal and social skills and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory** overall.

### Main strengths

- The school is successful in promoting pupils' very good attitudes, exemplary behaviour and very positive relationships
- Pupils achieve well in developing high levels of confidence and self-esteem, which prepares them well for the next stages of their education
- Pupils feel trusted to make choices, be responsible and to do things on their own
- Pupils' develop respectful attitudes and are very aware of how their actions affect others

### Commentary

6. Pupils and parents confirm that most pupils like coming to the school. The pupils' enthusiastic participation in extra-curricular activities is further evidence that they enjoy school. Most pupils take a very keen interest in classroom activities and want to succeed. They apply themselves well and sustain concentration. They enjoy participating, for example by answering questions, and take turns when doing so. They speak about their work and other aspects of the school in a sensible, polite and friendly way. These very good attitudes ensure that the vast majority of lessons are orderly and purposeful and this has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Despite the long absences of a few pupils, overall attendance is satisfactory and the majority of pupils arrive punctually.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.0	School data:	0.2
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.5

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

7. Consistent application of the school's very well considered behaviour-management procedures ensures that the pupils' behaviour is excellent overall and this contributes strongly to learning. It is very evident that pupils know what is expected of them and that teachers set and establish clear routines for their classrooms. Pupils respond to this approach confidently and helpfully. Staff understand the needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties very well, and so these pupils are provided with effective support that helps them to behave as well as other pupils. As a result, learning in lessons is very rarely disrupted. The school is very successful in promoting high standards of behaviour and only one fixed-period exclusion was necessary in the last school year.

8. Parents say the strong moral code and the policy of fairness and equality promoted by the school are real strengths. Inspectors agree with this positive view. Pupils learn about right and wrong and other moral concepts through discussions about issues such as the recycling of waste and care of the environment. This effectively reinforces messages about moral values that are powerfully promoted in assemblies and which contribute to the pupils' thoughts and feelings about the world and their part in it. Pupils know the rules by which their classrooms will operate, including issues of personal morality and responsibility. That pupils understand the difference between right and wrong is apparent in the way they take care of school equipment, and the great concern they expressed about some graffiti left by intruders.

9. Pupils respond very positively to the trust placed in them to act responsibly. They happily volunteer for monitoring and messenger duties and perform them conscientiously. Older pupils willingly take on greater responsibilities, which contributes to their development as appropriately mature and confident young people. Year 6 pupils demonstrate how trust worthy and sensible they

are during lunch times when they are allowed to stay indoors to play snooker, computer games and enjoy other activities. They rise to the trust placed in them, behave extremely well and thoroughly enjoy themselves. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the school council because they see the results of their decisions in improvements. They clearly appreciate the chance to have some autonomy and to show initiative. Class representatives undertake their role seriously and sensibly, enabling all pupils to gain an understanding of democracy.

10. Relationships amongst the pupils are very good because they learn about the importance of friendship and the feelings and needs of others. They willingly help new arrivals settle in to school, and look after others who may be hurt in the playground. In lessons, pupils collaborate well in groups. When given the opportunity to form groups for themselves, the result is frequently of mixed sex, ethnicity and ability. Both parents and pupils feel that bullying or other forms of harassment are rare. They are confident that any reported incidents are taken seriously and are followed up speedily and thoroughly. No incidents were witnessed during the inspection and systems for monitoring this type of anti-social behaviour are good.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **very good** quality of education, where good teaching, high levels of care, support and guidance for pupils, very interesting and relevant learning opportunities and good links with parents all make essential contributions to pupils' good achievements.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is **good** and pupils learn well in the majority of lessons. Teachers make good use of detailed assessment to ensure that lessons are relevant to pupils' needs.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are very skilled at explaining and demonstrating clearly, so that pupils understand what is expected of them and are able to start their work confidently
- Teachers' good subject knowledge, effective teaching methods and the use of specialist skills encourage good learning
- Teachers know pupils' needs very well and this information is used to plan effectively for new learning
- The development of pupils' personal and social skills is incorporated in all learning and this is fundamental to their good achievements
- Teaching assistants provide very effective support for pupils' learning
- The pace in some lessons is a little slow and this affects pupils' ability to concentrate

### Commentary

11. Teachers plan lessons carefully and the purpose of learning is very clear. Learning intentions are effectively shared and reinforced with pupils. Because teachers introduce lessons skilfully, using a balance of speaking and demonstration, pupils take on new concepts quickly and learning starts immediately. In the majority of lessons, teachers speak clearly, for a suitable length of time and in a style that is appropriate to the pupils. They make good use of resources to explain and exemplify and pupils are kept interested. The result is that most pupils know what they are meant to do, feel confident to work independently and show their good grasp of new learning in applying it to the task set.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	9 (19%)	20(43)%	18(38%)	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.*

12. Throughout the school, teachers have a good understanding of the curriculum. Professional-development opportunities are readily available to ensure that subject knowledge is up-to date. Because teachers know subject content well, lessons are consistently informative and interesting and the right sort of resources are used to help pupils learn well. Teachers are confident and enthusiastic in their delivery and this makes learning good fun for the pupils. Specialist teachers are used very effectively in a variety of subjects. During the inspection, pupils learned very well in music and physical education lessons because the teachers were masters of their subjects and expectations were very high.

13. Consistently good use is made of assessment information. This ensures that pupils begin new learning at a suitable level and progressively build their knowledge and skills. Effective use of tracking information also directs the teaching methods used in the school. In Years 3 to 6, English and mathematics are taught in attainment sets, so that the wide spread of learning needs in each year is catered for more efficiently and all pupils are able to do their best. The co-ordinator for special educational needs and the co-ordinator for English as an additional language make a very valuable contribution to these groups and pupils are given particularly useful support that helps them to achieve as well as others. The setting arrangements are having a positive effect on standards. Teachers assess pupils' achievements and reorganise groups to ensure that pupils at the borderline of each level of achievement are given the necessary support and challenge to move to the next level. In Years 1 and 2, assessment information is used well to group pupils within lessons and work is very well planned to match the needs of all groups. Teacher assistants are effectively deployed to support targeted groups and have a very positive effect on pupils' learning. In some lessons in the reception class, where there is a great range in children's skills and knowledge, the teaching assistant is sometimes not used well enough to support lower attaining pupils who have difficulty concentrating.

14. Without exception, teachers have very good relationships with their classes. The mutual respect between all adults and pupils is very evident. Teachers know their pupils very well and understand that the best learning takes place when pupils feel confident and not frightened to make mistakes. For this reason, the development of personal and social skills is a fundamental aspect of the majority of lessons in all subjects. Therefore, as pupils gain knowledge of facts and acquire new skills, they also learn how to work together, support each other, persevere when the going gets tough and behave in a way that helps them and everyone else to learn well. Lesson planning highlights this learning and it is key to the school's vision for pupils' achievements. With such a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, a variety of home languages spoken and many other issues that might affect learning, it is especially valuable that teachers encourage pupils' personal determination, motivation and feelings of self-worth.

15. A relative weakness in the teaching observed was the slow pace of some lessons, which were nevertheless satisfactory overall. In a few instances, teachers talked for too long to the whole class rather than repeating information for a few. On other occasions, demonstrations were less practical and the point of learning was not made quickly enough. In these lessons, groups of pupils, most often lower attaining pupils, began to lose concentration and their learning was affected.

## The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is **very good**. It is enriched by very good extra activities, good resources and well maintained and pleasant accommodation.

### Main strengths

- The curriculum is highly relevant to pupils' needs and provides very interesting and enjoyable opportunities for them
- A very good range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum
- The provision for special education needs and support for pupils who speak English as an additional language are very good
- The programme for pupils' personal and social development prepares them very well for further stages of education
- The school's accommodation and resources support learning well

### Commentary

16. Creating an interesting curriculum is of high priority to the school. Statutory aspects of the curriculum are covered in full and very well enriched by numerous visits and visitors, carefully chosen to add excitement and to motivate pupils in their work. Additional teachers are well used to add the extra dimension of specific specialisms to subjects such as music and physical education. The curriculum focuses very well on the development of pupils' social, personal and health development alongside academic aspects of learning and this encourages pupils' good overall achievements. Relevant and interesting work in science, physical education and personal social and health education programmes are used well used to promote healthy life styles.

17. The overall provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is very good. For both of these groups of pupils, the co-ordinators and teachers work very effectively together to ensure that the curriculum caters for specific needs and includes them in all that the school offers. A thoughtful combination of support in lessons, specific programmes for small groups of pupils and effectively- planned setting arrangements are used to ensure that the curriculum for these pupils is successfully implemented.

18. A significant strength of the school's curriculum is the attention that is given to preparing pupils for the next stages in their education. Teachers clearly understand the skills and knowledge with which pupils begin. The school devises the necessary strategies and experiences to give pupils the best possible chances for life beyond Year 6 at Bedwell Primary. The curriculum sets a wide range of challenges that encourage pupils to do well, but at the same time maintains their interest and enjoyment of learning. Pupils are inspired to believe that they can do well and recognise that they have every chance in secondary school to build on their successes. Many of the pupils talk about their aspirations for the future and have a realistic understanding of the efforts they must make to achieve their dreams.

19. The school accommodation is well maintained, very clean and attractively presented for pupils' benefit. In all areas of the school there are interesting paintings, sculptures, collections of artefacts, photographs and displays that create a stimulating environment for staff and pupils. Pupils are very proud of the quality of this environment and show great respect for the school building and resources. The Foundation Stage internal accommodation is of a very good quality and there is lots of space. However, the only outdoor accommodation, which is situated adjacent to the nursery, has no climbing equipment, which is a weakness.

## Care, guidance and support

The care guidance and support for pupils is **very good** and a significant strength of the school, enabling pupils to take full advantage of the wide range of educational opportunities provided. Parents are happy that their children are well care for and supported by the school.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children feel safe in school and are very well looked after
- High levels of care and concern are shown to all groups of pupils, so that the school is highly inclusive in its practice and procedures
- There are good assessment procedures that enable suitable academic and personal targets to be set
- First aid provision within the school is under review and a programme of training for staff is currently being updated

### Commentary

20. The school looks after its pupils very well. Procedures for monitoring individual progress are effective. Teachers understand the needs of the pupils very well and this underpins the nature of the high level of care that the school provides. There is good informal monitoring of the pupils' well being. Any problems are quickly noted and support is given promptly. The school takes care to ensure that health and safety procedures are in order and the headteacher and caretaker make regular checks of the site. Child protection procedures are effective and all staff are clear about what to do if they have concerns. First aid training for staff is being updated and staff are registered to attend courses. Pupils who feel unwell and those with playground bumps and grazes are dealt with suitably and sensitively.

21. The support and guidance available to pupils with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language is very good. Good assessment procedures provide useful information that guides the school in setting realistic, yet suitably challenging targets. The good monitoring and tracking procedures for pupils with English as an additional language and the effective deployment of staff to meet the needs of groups who need most support is an example of the school's very inclusive practices. The Breakfast Club has proved very successful. The school has encouraged pupils who need support for their emotional and behavioural difficulties to attend each morning and this strategy ensures they make a calm start to the day. The school is fortunate in being part of a joint education and social services project, facilitating the support of a Children's Schools Family Worker. Very successful support is given to pupils with emotional, behavioural and attendance problems through small group work and individual support. The school's nurture group very effectively supports pupils across a range of needs, including social, emotional and communication difficulties.

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

The school has established **good** links with many parents and works hard to establish productive links with all parents. Links with other schools are **satisfactory**. Pupils benefit from effective use of the wider community.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of parents have positive views about the school
- The school works hard to communicate effectively with parents and liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs is particularly good
- Good links with the wider community have a beneficial impact on the pupils' attainment
- While there are regular communications with parents, some are not presented in the most suitable way
- Only a small number of parents regularly help in classrooms, although many parents do join in with whole school activities and events

## Commentary

22. Nearly all parents whose views were obtained during the inspection expressed high levels of satisfaction with the school. They feel that the arrangements for helping children to settle at school are good. They think their children are happy at the school and that they enjoy a wide range of activities that contribute well to their personal development. Parents also like the way that staff expect their children to do their best and to work hard. They are satisfied about the way they are kept informed of their children's progress and feel very able to approach staff at any time to share concerns about their children's education. Inspection findings support these positive views.

23. The very good liaison with parents of children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is a strength of the school and has a very positive impact on pupils' achievements. Parents are involved as soon as there is any concern about their children's progress or behaviour and are involved in the preparation and review of individual education plans. There are regular informal meetings with parents of pupils in the nurture group and for parents who do not speak English at home. Parents value these sessions and the consequent support offered to families and pupils benefit from these home-school links. The school continues to work hard to persuade more parents to become true partners in their children's education, but success is limited. In response, the school is planning a family education week to give parents some positive experiences of learning, so that they will feel more confident in helping their children. It is also apparent that the rather formal nature of written communications could deter some parents. To this end the school is currently producing a newsletter in newspaper format in the hopes that parents will be more inclined to read and respond to its content. There is currently limited information given to parents about what their children are learning and very few meetings where this information is delivered. Currently, there are no formal procedures for gathering parents' views and no joint parent and staff association. However, many parents support fund-raising and other special events such as the pupils' annual 'entertainments'. Few are more actively involved in the life of the school.

24. The school's good links with many local and other organisations are effectively used to enhance the pupils' learning. The school uses a wide range of outside resources such as visiting poets, police officers, museums, theatre groups and a residential journey to the Isle of Wight to support a range of subjects and the pupils' personal development. This exemplifies the well-rounded approach the school takes to learning. The school's commitment to the local community is illustrated by the weekly nursery 'open house' provided for all parents of young children in the locality.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Both leadership and management of the school are **effective** and vital factors in raising pupils' self-esteem so that they have a desire to learn and achieve well. School governance is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very strong leadership
- Leadership and management of English and mathematics are effective and as a consequence pupils' individual needs are met
- Work with pupils who have special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language is well led and managed
- Roles of some of the key staff are not fully developed at present
- The governing body supports the school well

### Commentary

25. The headteacher's very good leadership is central to the school's success. Her very clear vision for the development of the school is communicated well to staff who understand their role in its continued improvement. The headteacher has high expectations of the staff and pupils and is well respected for her determination that all pupils should achieve as well as they can. With justification, parents see this as an important strength of the school and a major reason for their children being happy and having a strong desire to learn. The leadership of the headteacher has created an excellent team spirit in the school. Pupils and staff work effectively together in the knowledge that each individual is valued highly. New initiatives are introduced sensitively and embraced wholeheartedly by staff. The headteacher is currently working without a deputy and, while there are very good reasons for the decision not to advertise the post at present, support at a senior level will further enable the head to bring many of her leadership initiatives to fruition.

26. School management is good overall. The school improvement plan suitably outlines the school's priorities for development. As yet, the plan is not being closely enough linked to the school finances and so it is difficult to evaluate expenditure in relation to pupils' achievement. Finances are managed effectively overall. The headteacher and governing body apply the principles of best value well. They compare the school's performance with similar schools, and this helps them set challenging targets. The school budget is set taking into account last year's spending, the school's objectives for development and any areas of priority discussed with parents and staff. Good budgeting has meant that during a period when numbers admitted to the school have dropped due to a falling birth rate, money could be carried forward from last year to maintain staffing levels. Governors are well aware of issues relating to falling numbers and plan strategically to maintain standards of provision. Numbers in the nursery class have risen, so the main concerns look likely to be alleviated.

### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	778382	Balance from previous year	71022
Total expenditure	778671	Balance carried forward to the next	70679
Expenditure per pupil	3041		

27. Rigorous monitoring of pupils' work in English and mathematics and analysis of their national test results helps the school in plan teaching and the curriculum. The co-ordinators for both subjects are working effectively to ensure that there is consistency throughout the whole school. Their work is ensuring that all pupils are fully included in learning and achieve as well as they can, and this is raising standards. The co-ordinators for special education needs and English as an additional language work effectively. Their work ensures that these groups of pupils throughout the school are given every opportunity to achieve well. At present this whole school approach is not taken by all co-ordinators, and while subject provision and standards are consistent within the year groups where

they have responsibility, there are currently a few inconsistencies in other year groups. For instance, from test results the school has identified that boys' achievements in science by the end of Year 6 are not as good as girls, but standards have not yet improved because no one has overseen the implementation of strategies to bring about improvements. The co-ordinator for science has up until now only had responsibility for Years 1 and 2.

28. The quality of subject co-ordination and the roles and responsibilities of senior managers have been difficult to maintain in recent years due to many staff changes. The headteacher and governing body are committed to appointing the most effective people to the team and, as with the role of deputy, their strategy is to ensure that staff of high quality are appointed who are committed to the school's high expectations. Once appointed, the very good induction procedures ensure that staff settle quickly and soon learn how things work. This was very evident during the inspection and there is very real capacity for the work of senior and middle managers to improve quickly. They are supported very well in their professional development to enable them to achieve their full potential. This helps to explain why this is such a happy school.

29. Governors are committed to the school and have every confidence in the headteacher. They share a common vision with her and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. This is an improvement since the last inspection. They provide good direction and support. For example the governor responsible for finance has worked closely with the school in the development of the ICT suite. Governors visit the school regularly to ensure that they have a clear grasp of its strengths and weaknesses. They have recently received training to be kept informed of current developments. As a result they have reviewed their committee structure so as to focus more clearly on monitoring the curriculum.

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** overall and the nursery provides **good** experiences for the school's youngest children. Children attend the nursery part-time in the mornings only. When they join the nursery, some children have knowledge and skills that would be expected for their age and a few exceed these levels, but the vast majority are at levels well below those that would be expected. Levels are particularly low in aspects of language and communication and personal and social development. A high proportion of children need support for a range of learning and social needs. Some children attend the school's nurture group. The nursery provides a bright, stimulating and supportive start to learning that prepares children well for their transition to the reception class in the September or January before their fifth birthday. The Foundation Stage as a whole is a very nurturing environment, and the effective teamwork of all adults ensures that children achieve well. They are effectively supported in understanding the expectations of school life and how to work and learn together. They achieve well in their social and personal development in particular and are happy and enjoy their work. However, there is limited time for children to reach the goals that are set for all aspects of their early learning so at the end of the reception class overall standards are below expectations.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

#### **Main strengths**

- Social skills are emphasised in a very caring learning environment
- There are well-established routines and high expectations for children's behaviour
- There is good focus on developing language skills through social and personal development

#### **Commentary**

30. Children achieve well in their social and emotional development and most will reach the goals for early learning in this area. The very caring and nurturing learning environment planned for the children in the nursery and reception classes effectively supports the development of their social skills. The children relate well to one another and to adults and respond very well to instructions and praise. They are happy at school and generally play co-operatively. A range of turn-taking activities are planned to encourage the children to share with others. The children learn to tidy up equipment and put things away. The nurture group very effectively supports those children who find it most difficult to co-operate and join in activities.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

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

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

- There is a strong focus on the development of children's speaking and listening skills
- There are very few examples of children's early writing on display, so appreciation and interpretation of written work is not stimulated
- Children and parents who speak English as an additional language are well supported

#### **Commentary**

31. Children achieve well in the development of their language and literacy skills, but the majority will not reach the goals expected by the end of the reception class. In the nursery, children begin to play at writing and some attempt to write their name. Children in the reception class learn to name and form their letters correctly and make good progress from copying to the beginnings of independent writing. There is however, little evidence of children's writing on display around the

classroom and the environment does not stimulate an appreciation of written language. Children listen with increasing attention and extend their vocabulary. Some sustain interesting dialogue when they play with their friends in the role-play areas. Children greatly enjoy sharing books with adults and some joined in with the retelling of the story of the Three Little Pigs using glove puppets. Bilingual assistants provide good support for children who speak English as an additional language. This support is extended to parents, which has a marked impact on how well children acquire the basics of English.

### **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

#### **Main strengths**

- Older children join in with number rhymes with increasing confidence
- Children use mathematical language as they play and there is a good range of activities in the Reception class to encourage this
- Practical activities effectively support children's learning of mathematical language

#### **Commentary**

32. Children achieve well in mathematics and are able to count and add in both play activities and more real situations. The majority of children, however, do not meet the goals expected by the end of the reception year. They sort and compare objects and begin to do simple practical additions and subtractions. Activities are well planned to develop numeracy skills and mathematical language. In the nursery, sand and water activities give the children opportunities to learn mathematical language such as *more than*, *less than*, *full* and *empty*. Children are encouraged to join in with number rhymes and count using fingers. The skills and understanding of higher-attaining children are suitably extended and they learn to count beyond ten and begin to tell the time. In the reception class, a wide range of mathematical activities are planned to help children match objects to numbers and to make comparisons between capacity and size.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

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

- There are good opportunities for the development of information and communication technology skills
- Role-play areas are well resourced
- Children have many opportunities to build using a range of resources
- There is no direct access to the outdoor provision for children in the reception class

#### **Commentary**

33. Children achieve well on starting levels. The majority of children, however, need more time to reach these levels and standards are below expectations. They make good progress in learning the days of the week and in observing the weather. During the inspection, they were delighted to have the opportunity to play out in the snow and talked about how cold and slippery it was outside. They enjoy talking about their families and homes. The children begin to explore ideas such as light and dark and what torches and lights are used for. While thinking about their topic 'People who Help Us', which focussed on the lollipop lady, they learned that reflective jackets glow in the light. The children cut and join things using a variety of tools and materials. The confidently use the computer mouse and open and close down programs independently. There are well-resourced role-play areas offering children the opportunity to explore and find out for themselves.

## **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are well-planned activities to develop children's physical control and coordination
- Children have access to a wide range of small and large equipment for construction activities
- The nursery garden lacks climbing apparatus and there is no direct access to outdoor provision for the reception children

### **Commentary**

34. Children achieve well in physical development and standards are in line with expected goals by the end of the reception class. A range of activities are planned to develop the children's fine motor skills, including opportunities to cut and paste, trace and use stencils, draw, paint and use finger puppets. There is no climbing equipment in the nursery garden but good physical activities take place in the hall. Opportunities are provided for children to travel through, over, across, and under apparatus and to climb, jump hop and skip. They have the opportunity to use wheeled toys as part of the outdoor curriculum. Children learn to catch and throw with reasonable control. Most of the children have a good idea of space for their age. The reception class has limited access to outdoor provision and children have to be taken by the teacher or an assistant to use the nursery garden. Therefore, children can not independently choose when to play outdoors. The class teacher makes good use of the local park to support the outdoor curriculum.

## **Creative development**

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Planning indicates a good range of opportunities for creative development
- There are good resources for this area of the curriculum
- Role-play encourages the children to use their imagination, but some children need encouragement to be independently creative

### **Commentary**

35. Many children need great encouragement to use the creative areas but they achieve well in creative development and learn to enjoy painting, using brushes to produce bold, colourful work. However, standards are lower than the goals expected by the end of the reception year. Children in the reception class show increasing observational detail in their work and cut straw and sticks into appropriate lengths to cover their houses for the Three Little Pigs. They sing with enjoyment and are developing a sense of melody and rhythm. In imaginative play the children are increasingly able to sustain a character or role, such as mother or child.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

#### **Main strengths**

- Teaching is of a consistently good quality throughout the school
- Ways of checking how well pupils are doing are effective and support teachers in planning well for new learning
- Arrangements for teaching in Years 3 to 6 ensure that all pupils are working at a pace and level that helps them to achieve well
- The subject is well led and managed
- Resources for the subject are good and motivate pupils to learn

#### **Commentary**

36. Current Year 2 standards are in line with expectations. The proportion of pupils who reach the expected level by the end of Year 6 is gradually improving, but overall standards are below expectations. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in English and make good gains on their starting levels. Pupils who start with better levels achieve suitably levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. Some pupils with special educational needs achieve very well and reach the nationally expected levels by the end of Year 6. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve equally as well as all others. Those who are in the early stages of learning English are well supported and learn to speak with increasing accuracy and confidence. Teachers understand pupils' language needs very well, plan effectively and promote their learning through challenging, yet realistic targets. Because starting levels are low for many pupils, the development of language and literacy skills is an integral part of learning in all subjects and for this reason teachers provide them with consistently good opportunities to develop their basic skills. Teachers have good subject knowledge in English. They plan interesting and lively lessons. Pupils enjoy learning and this is fundamental to their good achievement.

37. There are good procedures for finding out how well pupils are doing in English. They highlight progress from lesson to lesson, throughout a year group and from year to year. This information is collated carefully to show the often very small, but nonetheless very important steps that pupils make in their learning. Teachers use the information well to create very suitable individual targets for pupils. Lessons are planned effectively because teachers know exactly how well pupils have previously understood. Assessment information guides teachers in setting targets and creating tasks for groups in lessons that are very relevant to their needs. Setting arrangements in Years 3 to 6 make very effective use of assessment information to group pupils accurately and plan the most beneficial work for them. These arrangements are having a positive impact on standards and the proportion of pupils achieving the levels expected of them is rising. Higher-attaining pupils are provided with suitable challenges and lower-attaining pupils are effectively supported to achieve well. Higher-attaining pupils who speak English as an additional language are provided with some specialist support to encourage good progress.

38. Leadership and management of English are successful. There are two co-ordinators for English and their work is increasingly effective because they recognise their joint responsibility for whole-school action and developments. They have established that the process of learning cannot be confined by end-of-key stage timings, particularly where the proportion of pupils with special needs and lower-attaining pupils is high. They fully understand that strategies must be relevant to the pupils, whatever their age. Good use is made of tracking information to follow pupils' progress, and the impact of teaching methods is measured by these outcomes. As yet, the co-ordinators have had limited opportunities to observe teaching and learning as it happens and so strengths of teaching are not fully built upon and relative weaknesses eliminated. This aspect of their role is an area for improvement.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum

39. This is a strength of the school's work. Because teachers understand that pupils' language and literacy skills need consistently good attention, planning for learning in all subjects focuses on the development of speaking skills, vocabulary and accurate grammar. Many good examples were observed during the inspection. In dance sessions, specific dance vocabulary was taught to pupils who used it in their own contributions. In music, the teacher explained why songs make use of inaccurate grammar for specific effects when one pupil questioned why the words were 'Daisy and me', rather than 'Daisy and I'!

## MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths

- Pupils achieve well in mathematics
- Teaching is consistently good, with an emphasis on teaching the language of mathematics and strategies for problem solving
- There are good ways of checking how well pupils are doing
- The analysis of assessment data is used effectively in teachers planning
- The subject is well led and managed

### Commentary

40. Standards in mathematics are broadly in line with expected levels at the end of Years 2 and 6. There are very few pupils who achieve better than expected levels and therefore statutory test results are lower than national averages. Based on pupils' starting levels, achievement is good for the majority. As a result of effective use of the national strategy for numeracy, setting arrangements in Years 3 to 6 and good-quality teaching, pupils achieve well. The proportion of pupils who achieve the nationally expected levels is gradually improving. In 2003, the majority of pupils achieved the individual targets that had been set for them and made good gains on their starting levels.

41. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and some very good teaching was observed. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons with clear learning objectives and expected outcomes. They establish the key vocabulary to be used in learning and suitable emphasis is placed on the development of mathematical vocabulary throughout the school. Each classroom displays the focus vocabulary for the current numeracy theme and effectively provides pupils with reminders during lessons. Pupils learn well because work is well matched to their individual needs and teachers ask thoughtful questions to pupils of different abilities. All staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and pupils respond well to these expectations. They clearly enjoy their work and feel a sense of achievement during lessons. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support individual or small groups of pupils. Teachers make good use of plenary sessions to reinforce the learning objectives and to assess pupils' learning. Marking is of a consistently good quality throughout the school and makes effective reference to the learning intention for the work. Examples seen contained some useful comments to help pupils improve their work. Presentation in pupils' workbooks is good.

42. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The mathematics co-ordinator has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses. A well-devised action plan concentrates suitably on the areas for development, which include challenge for the higher-attaining pupils, assessment, the development of teaching and learning and monitoring throughout the school. The co-ordinator has worked closely with the local education authority's consultant for numeracy to develop the use of plenary sessions in lessons to extend pupils' problem solving skills.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

43. Pupils use and extend their numeracy and mathematical skills suitably in other subjects. In an art lesson they created rotating, repeating and symmetrical patterns. In science they created frequency charts and tables.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1 and standards are in line with expectations
- In the current Year 6 standards are below national expectations
- Teaching has a strong emphasis upon developing the pupils' investigational skills
- Teaching is very good in Years 1 and 2
- Subject leadership is good in Years 1 and 2, but unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6

### Commentary

44. At the end of Year 2 in 2003, teachers' assessed that a lower proportion of pupils' achieved the nationally expected level in science and no pupils gained the higher Level 3. Work in pupils' books and that seen during lessons show that standards are now in line with national expectations and there are pupils working towards the higher level. Pupils achieve well. In Year 6 tests in 2003 the proportion achieving the expected level was very low compared with national averages. Very few pupils gained the higher Level 5. Trends over time show that girls do better in the science tests than boys. Inspection findings show standards of work to be below the nationally expected levels in Year 6. The majority of pupils, however, make satisfactory achievement on their starting levels. Among the higher attaining pupils, boys do less well than girls.

45. Standards are better in Years 1 and 2 because assessment of pupils' progress is being managed more effectively. Analysis of pupils' work throughout the school has resulted in a strong focus on the development of pupils' investigative skills. As a result, in Years 1 and 2, pupils gain good enquiry skills and their knowledge is underpinned by a good understanding of scientific concepts acquired through challenging practical and investigative tasks. By Year 2, pupils make good use of their own experiences to predict possible outcomes. They are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants who rigorously focus on developing their reasoning skills. Teachers ask challenging questions and then support pupils well with their written answers. For example, in a year 1 lesson the teacher asked the pupils if the tests they were carrying out was fair. A boy who was having difficulties with his explanation was prompted to say, "The test was fair because...". The boy then replied, "The test was fair because we used five spoonfuls of water to test each piece of material." He was then helped to write down his answer and was encouraged to read the answer back. This consolidated learning and he achieved a good standard. In Year 6, many pupils are unable to show how much they have learned in the work that they do, because their writing skills are weak. Not enough consideration is given to devising ways of demonstrating learning so that strengths and weaknesses in standards can be accurately assessed. During the Year 6 lessons seen, higher-attaining girls dominated discussions. Boys were not given enough opportunities to clarify and organise their thinking, nor enough support to write detailed conclusions to their experiments.

46. Teaching in science is satisfactory overall. Some very good teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2 and standards are improving as a result. In particular, pupils were encouraged to improve their observational skills. For example, a teacher in a Year 2 class gave pupils very clear directions on how to observe the changes made in materials that had been stretched. As a result a pupil was able to describe that a piece of rope was not elastic because its length had not increased when it was stretched. All teachers plan carefully for lessons, making sure that what they want pupils to learn is clear. In Year 6, the teacher planned two science sessions in one day. The first lesson concentrated on developing the pupils' investigational skills by carrying out a series of experiments on how to separate soluble and insoluble materials in water. At the end of the day, a shorter lesson was given to revise what had been learnt and to apply their new knowledge in another experiment using

different materials. This consolidated pupils' learning well and allowed the teacher to assess the progress pupils had made.

47. The subject co-ordinator took over responsibility in January and does not have whole-school responsibility. The quality of her leadership and management is good in Years 1 and 2. It has provided clear direction for improvement over the past year with successful results. Targets are being used effectively to raise standards, and the emphasis upon improving pupils written skills with the regular use of writing frames has helped pupils with special educational needs and who have English as an additional language achieve well. There are still inconsistencies in the quality of pupils' work in Years 3 to 6 however, as the new co-ordinator's role has not been extended into these year groups as yet. The monitoring of work has not been as rigorous in these classes. While pupils make satisfactory progress, overall boys are still achieving less well than girls. Leadership and management of science in Key Stage 2 are therefore unsatisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good use is made of specialist technical and teaching support
- Older pupils do not have enough experience in the use of remote sensing and control
- The computer suite is well designed
- Pupils do not use their ICT skills enough in other subjects

### **Commentary**

48. Standards by Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations and pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection. Analysis of work, lesson observations and discussion with pupils shows that teaching is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2, pupils are confident when using the mouse to control programs and can use 'clip art' to match simple text. They make a good start at programming floor robots and learn how the accuracy of their commands affects the movements of the machine. Teachers plan to ensure this also develops their speaking, listening and writing skills. By Year 6, many pupils use computers to edit text and design spreadsheets. Although success with spreadsheets can be limited by weak numeracy skills, teachers are alert to this and good support ensures that lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs learn as well as others. Higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged enough, and despite being given opportunities to work independently, they lack skills to pursue their own lines of enquiry. They will sit and wait to be told what to do next. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject. They recognise the impact of ICT on everyday life. When interviewed, pupils could not clearly describe how computers can sense changes in materials and control devices. Examination of pupils' work shows little evidence of practical work in this area.

49. The co-ordinator has recently taken over leadership of the subject. She has made a good start and is already beginning to make an impact on the raising of standards. In this short time she has begun to develop a more rigorous assessment of what pupils can do and has compiled a useful portfolio of pupils' work to show the standards that are expected for each age group. There has been little monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, and so the school does not yet have an accurate picture of standards or whether pupils are achieving as well as they should. A technician, who is also a fully qualified teacher, supports the school very well. He works regularly in the school attending to technical difficulties. As a result, teaching is not hampered by technical problems. He is also on hand to help staff develop their ICT skills. Two lunchtime clubs also benefit the development of pupils' skills, particularly for pupils who do not have access to computers at home. The computer suite is well designed so that all pupils can see the interactive white board when sitting at the machines. This helps them follow instructions carefully. Pupils are able to work on their keyboards and compare their progress with that of the teacher carrying out a demonstration.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

50. Not enough use is made of pupils' ICT skills in other subjects. The links made in the school's curriculum planning are not developed fully enough in lessons. During the inspection, there were some good examples of ICT skills being used and developed in other subjects, such as geography in Year 2, but opportunities were not regularly provided for pupils to make use of ICT skills to enhance and extend their learning in other subjects.

## HUMANITIES

### Religious education

The provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths

- Teaching and learning are good
- Pupils have good verbal recall of past work
- Learning in religious education contributes well to the school's ethos and principles

#### Commentary

51. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectation of the agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, but evidence was gathered from samples of pupils' work, scrutiny of planning and discussions with pupils and teachers. Planning fully covers the syllabus requirements and pupils have regular opportunities for studying religious education. In a Year 1 class, pupils discussed the importance of a sense of belonging and shared family photographs and stories with others. Through their study of the world's major faiths, pupils learn about the central beliefs, life styles, holy books and rites of passage from each religion and begin to understand how religion impacts on people's lives. The school works hard and is successful in forming a harmonious community with ideals for inter-faith understanding.

52. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of the major stories and celebrations involved in festivals such as Diwali and Christmas and were able to talk about gods, prophets and holy books from Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Pupils' knowledge is combined with a respect for their own beliefs and those of others. Pupils' in Year 6 were provided with opportunities to reflect and discuss spiritual aspects of belief during a lesson on the important events in the life of Jesus. Pupils' attitudes to learning in the lessons observed were good and they showed an interest in learning about beliefs and values and how different groups of people live their faith.

53. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides support for colleagues and knows which areas need further development. She works closely with the teacher with responsibility for pupils from minority ethnic groups. Together they support the development of teachers' subject knowledge and resources for the subject. This ensures that the development of pupils' language skills, cultural awareness and knowledge of religions is effectively supported. Teachers organise lessons and resources well and planning shows clear learning objectives and planned outcomes. Pupils learn effectively as a result.

#### History

The provision for history is **good**. As a result of the limited time available and the agreed focus for the inspection, work in geography was not sampled.

#### Main strengths and weakness

- Work in history is well planned to make learning very relevant, practical and good fun
- Learning is enriched by a variety of visits and visitors and good use of resources

## Commentary

54. Standards in history meet expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve well in the subject, because learning is good fun and involves pupils in very practical activities. Work is planned to involve pupils in a wide range of experiential situations, so that they learn through their own thoughts and feelings. There are many photographs of such activities on display around the school. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils dressed in Victorian costume and were taught in the hall by their teachers, sitting in rows and using chalk and slates. They learned how school today differs from the schools of Victorian times and talked about their preferences. A 'Viking' came to teach Years 3 and 4, bringing with him a wealth of resources that enabled the pupils to sense what life as a Viking was like. They took part in acting out the Viking creation story that linked well with their work in religious education. They made coins, handled pots and other utensils and bartered with the Viking to sell their wares. The session gave pupils a very real understanding of how Vikings lived and why they lived like this. Historical myths, such as that Vikings continually wore horned helmets, were dispelled and pupils consolidated their understanding that facts are sometimes distorted by time.

55. Teaching in history is good because effective consideration is made of the ways that pupils learn and retain information. Many pupils at the school struggle to read and write, but when they see and participate, they remember well. Leadership and management of the subject are good because essential focus is given to this learning style in the whole-school organisation of the subject. Good value is gained from the resources used in history, because when pupils talk about what they know and how they can find out, they demonstrate standards that match the expected levels for their ages.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### Art and Design

Provision for art and design is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above nationally expected levels
- High quality displays in each classroom, the halls and corridors are a significant feature of the school
- Artwork is used very effectively to support other subjects
- Portfolios of pupils' work are not compared with national curriculum levels

## Commentary

56. Standards in art are above expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve very well. The wide range of artwork displayed throughout the school gives clear evidence of these standards and pupils make good progress in learning artistic skills balanced with developing an understanding of artists, their influences and their work. Pupils use a range of media and techniques to create interesting work. The school continues to focus on the practice of imitating famous artists work and there are excellent displays based on the work of Modigliani, Pieter Mondrian, Monet and Rousseau. Pupils have produced drapes for display using techniques such as printing, tie-dye and wax batik. All pupils develop a range of skills in drawing and painting, printing, textile weaving and three-dimensional works in paper, collage and clay. They develop their speaking and listening skills through discussion related to their artwork during lessons.

57. Teaching in art is very good. Very good support is given to individuals to improve their technique and to develop their ideas. Girls and boys alike have very positive attitudes towards their work and they display real pleasure in showing their work to adults and each other. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. The school also works with visiting artists to inspire pupils' work. A visiting sculptor worked with pupils using Withies (hazel reeds), for example. Appropriate emphasis is placed on health and safety issues. Progress in art is supported by an after-school art club which is very well attended. Artwork is used very effectively to support other subjects. For example a display of the water cycle was used during a science lesson to reinforce the pupils' understanding of

evaporation and condensation. Pupils are able to explore ways of making, alternating, rotating, repeating and creating patterns in their design work in information and communication technology.

58. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator continues to inspire both teachers and pupils. She has a good understanding of standards throughout the school and has developed several portfolios of pupils' work. However, the work is not compared with national curriculum levels. The co-ordinator is keen to develop family learning opportunities through art, to engage families more creatively with the school. Resources are good and very well organised. There is good emphasis on the presentation of pupils' work and this is evident in the high-quality displays throughout the school. Displays contribute significantly to the creation of an attractive and stimulating school environment.

### **Design and Technology**

59. No design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection, but work was sampled and pupils spoke to inspectors about their experiences. Standards meet national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. The scheme of work meets national curriculum requirements and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the subject. Year 6 pupils talked confidently about the shelters they had made after studying the local environment to identify different types of structures. They conducted appropriate tests to evaluate the best examples and gave reasons why these structures were successful. All staff have recently received training. The assessment of pupils' skills is still in its early stages of development.

### **Music**

Provision in music is **very good**.

### **Main strengths**

- Standards are above nationally expected levels
- Teaching is very good
- Pupils develop good performance skills
- The subject is well led and managed

### **Commentary**

60. The provision for music is well led and managed by two teachers, one of whom is a part-time specialist teacher who works with pupils in Years 3 to 6. Both teachers play the piano and make a positive contribution to the quality of pupils' singing and performance skills. In lessons seen, pupils singing improved as teachers allowed them to listen and practise. Teachers demonstrated well and made their expectations clear about what the outcome of learning should be. Pupils were not scared to have a go. In a Year 6 lesson, the desire to improve was very evident and boys and girls made equal efforts to use the right facial expressions, diction and volume in their rendition of 'Daisy, Daisy'. Work in lessons in Years 3 to 6 had good links with their learning in history and added to pupils' overall understanding of the past.

61. There is good balance between learning singing and composition skills and, through both aspects of learning pupils gain a very good understanding of how to perform well. This contributes well to their social and personal development as they grow in confidence. The majority of pupils enjoy performing, and singing is equally as enthusiastic in assemblies as it is in music lessons. All pupils are happy to join in, even Year 6 boys, and many learn words to songs by heart because they really enjoy participating. The school has wisely continued to use resources to maintain the additional specialist teacher, fully recognising the contribution that this makes not only to standards in music, but also to pupils' very good achievements overall.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths

- Pupils achieve well because teaching focuses effectively on the development of skills
- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection
- Pupils enjoy their work

### Commentary

62. Standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve well. Good teaching focuses on the development of skills and, as a result, pupils in Year 2 can aim a ball with increasing accuracy, work collaboratively in a team and put simple gymnastic movements together to make a sequence. By Year 6, these skills are further refined to catching the ball on the move, stopping to pivot and throwing accurately to other members of the team. The school uses specialist teachers well to give pupils a wide range of activities and competitive sports. Members of the local hockey club instructed pupils on how to dribble a ball round obstacles during a Year 6 games lesson. In a Year 3 and 4 dance lesson the specialist teacher's very good subject knowledge enabled pupils to learn quickly. They danced confidently as gods, giants and dwarfs to a musical interpretation linked to Greek mythology, making links with their work in music and history. Work in dance has improved since the last inspection.

63. Pupils enjoy the lessons because teachers are enthusiastic and give good direction and support. On a very cold day during the inspection, all pupils were keen to go outside to practise games skills. They work collaboratively and concentrate well during lessons. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The two co-ordinators work well together and have devised suitable schemes of work. They have begun work on an updated action plan that focuses on ways to assess the skills that pupils learn. They are beginning to forge links with local secondary schools to benefit the transition of pupils to their new schools by ensuring that the pupils' future teachers have a clear picture of the skills pupils have learned.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

64. The curriculum section of this report evaluates provision for pupils' personal, social and health education as **good**.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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