

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GRAVELEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Graveley, near Hitchin

Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117395

Headteacher: Mrs M Robinson

Lead inspector: Rajinder Harrison

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Inspection number: 266906

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Graveley Primary School  
School category: Voluntary Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 97

School address: Ashwell Common  
Graveley  
Hitchin  
Hertfordshire  
Postcode: SG4 7LJ

Telephone number: (01438) 351 377  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of Mrs Sybil James  
governors:

Date of previous 17<sup>th</sup> May 1999  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Graveley Primary School is a mixed-sex Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School for pupils aged 4 to 11. It is located in the village of Graveley near Hitchin, North Hertfordshire. With 97 pupils in four classes, it is small for a primary school. The school admits pupils both from the village and the surrounding towns and villages. It is regularly oversubscribed and many parents make significant journeys to send their children to the school, which has appeared in 'The Times' list of Top 200 Schools. The socio-economic indicators for the area are above average, and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (2.8 per cent) is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (13.4 per cent) is in line with the national average, but no pupils have statements of special educational needs. These special needs learning difficulties include speech problems and dyslexia and some behavioural problems. Most of the pupils are of White-British origin but 22 per cent are from a wide variety of other ethnic backgrounds, and for 10 per cent of children no information was obtained. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English (15.2 per cent) is high and two pupils are at an early stage of English acquisition. Movement in and out of the school is not high, with six pupils joining the school and four leaving other than at the usual times in the last year.

Attainment on entry is above average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18059	Rajinder Harrison	Lead inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Design and technology History Geography French Religious education English as an additional language Personal, social and health education
19361	Keith Ross	Lay inspector	
32846	Trevor Scott	Team inspector	Mathematics ICT Physical education
34431	Mary Usher-Clark	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Music

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very good school.** Teaching and learning are very good and, as a result, standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average. Overall achievement is good. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and pupils' personal development is very good. Overall leadership and management are very good. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Teaching is very good overall and 25 per cent of lessons were excellent.
- Leadership by the headteacher and key staff is very good and management overall is good.
- Standards in English and science are well above average at the end of Year 6, and standards in mathematics are above average.
- Standards in music and history are well above average, and standards in art and design, religious education and ICT are above average.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language is very good, resulting in their very good achievement.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is exemplary.
- Curriculum provision and procedures to monitor pupils' progress are very good.
- Governors, while very supportive of the school, lack rigour in the way they approach strategic planning to bring about improvements and do not always challenge the decisions taken.
- Pupils' punctuality is unsatisfactory and their written work is often untidy and poorly presented.
- There are limitations in the accommodation for physical education and library facilities.

Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. The school has addressed most of the key issues from the last inspection well. The curriculum is now very innovative and well constructed and enrichment activities are very good. Curricular planning is now much better and subject leaders keep a close eye on work in their subjects. Pupils' individual needs are addressed very well. The monitoring of teaching, learning and target setting is carried out very effectively. The improved quality of teaching has ensured the strengths of the school have been maintained. The Governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus now meet requirements fully. While overall accommodation is satisfactory, the limitations highlighted in the last report have not been fully addressed.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### *Year 6 results*

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

science	A*	A	A	A
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*Key: A\* - denotes the school is in the top 5% nationally; 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.*

**Caution is needed in interpreting these data, as the number of pupils in the year groups is small.**

**As a result of very good teaching, pupils make good gains in their learning and overall achievement is good.** Standards at the end of Year 6 match those reported in the last inspection. From the results of national tests and assessments in 2004, standards have remained well above average overall in English, mathematics and science for pupils at the end of Year 6 for the last three years. The school's overall results are in the top five per cent nationally. The school exceeded all its targets. Standards compare very favourably with those of similar schools.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with above-average attainment. A significant number are particularly good in their literacy and numeracy skills when they start school. Achievement is good and the majority exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year, and a significant minority work comfortably at Year 1 work. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make very good progress throughout the school because planning is very thorough and very good support is given to pupils who need extra attention. Achievement is good throughout Years 1 to 6. For pupils in the current Year 2, standards are well above average in reading, writing and science, and above average in mathematics. For pupils in Year 6, standards in English and science are well above average and they are above average in mathematics. Music is a strength of the school, with standards being well above average, as is the case for history. Standards in ICT have improved considerably since the last inspection and are now above average throughout the school. This good improvement is largely due to improved facilities for ICT and good training for staff. Standards in religious education, history and art and design are above those expected at the end of Year 6, because overall provision is good. The work sampled in other subjects is of at least above-average expectations.

**Pupils' personal development is very good** and is supported very effectively by the very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy school, form excellent relationships and have very positive attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is exemplary. They are very kind and caring towards each other and many take on responsibilities in a very mature manner. Attendance is satisfactory. However, pupils' punctuality is unsatisfactory, with many arriving late regularly, but the school is implementing strategies to resolve this immediately.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is very good. Teaching is very good overall** and excellent teaching was seen in every class. This is a considerable improvement from the previous inspection. Learning is very effective because teachers provide interesting and challenging work and pay very close attention to ensure pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities. Higher-attaining pupils are very well challenged through additional work. They enjoy the extra responsibility placed on them and are often keen to work on projects in their own time. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support pupils' learning, and a number of volunteers help in lessons regularly. Opportunities are sometimes missed to maximise the use of support teachers in some lessons. Insufficient

emphasis is given to ensure pupils' written work is of a standard that reflects their ability. Assessment procedures are very good and information about pupils' progress is generally very accurately used to match work to their needs. The curriculum and opportunities to enrich provision through visits and visitors to the school are very good. French is taught well throughout the school. Provision for personal, social and health education underpins many lessons and supports pupils' personal development very effectively. While the accommodation is satisfactory, the limitations highlighted in the last report continue to hamper provision for physical education, in that the hall is too small and cluttered with stored items and the library facilities are unsatisfactory.

The school takes very good care of its pupils and promotes a very positive ethos amongst the entire school community. Links with parents and the community are good. Links with other schools are very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management overall are very good. The work of the governing body is satisfactory.** Leadership by the headteacher is very good. She has created a very good learning ethos in the school and established very good teamwork. The leadership of key staff is also very good. All who work in the school are committed to the best possible standards and all staff know what they are working towards. Overall management in the school is good. Governors check on the school's performance but they do not always challenge the decisions taken or consider closely the school's strategic planning in order to set priorities for improvement. Governors work with the headteacher and her staff to ensure all statutory requirements are met.

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

**Parents** are very happy with the school. The information they receive about their children's work is good, and provision to consult with them regarding school matters is good. **Pupils** are also very happy with their school and are particularly positive about the relationships they form and all the 'exciting learning' they do. They feel they are well looked after and valued.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure governors take a greater role in the school's strategic planning to bring about improvements and challenge the decisions the school takes more rigorously.
- Improve pupils' punctuality and the quality of their written work.
- Improve the accommodation with regard to the teaching of physical education and library facilities.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils' achievement is **good** and overall standards are well above average at the end of Year 6.

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

- Standards in English and science are well above average at the end of Year 6, and are above average in mathematics.
- In the national tests in 2004, the school's overall average point score for pupils at the end of Year 6 places the school in the top five per cent nationally.
- Music is a strength of the school and standards are well above expectations as is the case for history.

- Standards in religious education, art and design and ICT are above expectations.
- As a result of very good provision, pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates.
- Opportunities are missed to make maximum use of the support teachers in some lessons to help pupils make even greater gains in their learning.

## Commentary

### Foundation Stage

1. Children generally enter the reception year with above-average attainment in all areas of learning. The areas of learning that, for a very small minority of children, are often well above average are their language and literacy skills and their numeracy skills. By the end of the reception year, while overall standards in these areas of learning remain above average, a significant number of children attain standards that are well above average and these children work, with confidence, at Level 1 of the National Curriculum in English and above average in mathematics. Standards are above average in children's social development and their knowledge and understanding of the world and they maintain the standards they have when they enter the Foundation Stage. Achievement in their creative development is good and standards are above what is expected of children of this age. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement regarding their physical development. Because assessment procedures are thorough, teachers pay very good attention to developing all aspects of the curriculum to ensure all children make good gains in their learning. Children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language often make very good progress as a consequence of the very good support they receive. Staff monitor children's achievements and ensure subsequent work matches their needs accurately, and very detailed assessments are recorded for each child. Most children exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage in most areas of learning and a significant number work confidently at work levelled at Year 1. Overall achievement is good.

### Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (19.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.6 (16.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.9 (19.5)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. In the national tests and assessments in 2004, standards at the end of Year 2 compared with schools nationally were well above average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing and science. Standards were below average against schools with a similar free school meals number. The results are not as high as reported in the last inspection. Although the overall results show that girls tend to outperform boys at the end of Year 2, there is little evidence to support this from the inspection. However, this data needs to be considered carefully when making any comparisons as numbers in each year group are small, and therefore the attainment

profiles in each year group make a significant difference to the results from year to year. The trend for improvement overall over the last three years is below the national level.

## Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.0 (28.3)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	29.7 (28.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	31.2 (31.3)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. The results from national tests and assessments in 2004 show that the standards at the end of Year 6 were well above average in English, mathematics and science when compared with schools nationally. This is broadly the same as in the previous inspection. The school improved against the similar schools' average since that time. The overall average point score for this year group places the school in the top five per cent nationally. The Year 6 tested in 2004 made very good gains when compared with their performance at the end of Year 2, so this year group's overall achievement was very good. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls overall. The overall trend for improvement over the last three years is below the national level. But once again, interpretation of data needs to be considered cautiously, with year group sizes fluctuating from year to year. Overall standards throughout the school have improved as a result of the improvements in teachers' planning and assessment skills.
4. In English, the standards attained by pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to the findings of the previous inspection and are well above average. Overall achievement is good. The school has placed significant emphasis on improving teaching and learning in English in the last few years with the development of a curriculum that is rich in opportunities to promote pupils' thinking skills and give them many opportunities to talk about what they are learning. The school engenders a real enthusiasm for learning throughout the school and a high proportion of pupils attains the higher levels in their language skills at the end of Year 6. Reading is a strength across the school, and most pupils read regularly both at home and at school. Very good attention is paid to developing pupils' comprehension skills and pupils use a very good range of vocabulary accurately. Standards in writing and speaking are well above average and the quality of work produced by some of the higher-attaining pupils is of a very good standard. Because of the creative way subjects are interwoven in a rich curriculum, literacy skills are practised very effectively across other subjects, which has the impact of raising standards further. Very good teaching ensures pupils of all abilities achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make very good progress because of the very good individual help they receive.
5. In the current Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are working at above-average standards in mathematics and pupils' overall achievement is good. Number skills are taught

particularly well and pupils' mental maths strategies are very good, although pupils do not always record their strategies clearly enough in their written work and cannot always explain how they arrived at their answers. A strong emphasis is placed on pupils working things out for themselves, resulting in pupils developing confidence in the methods that they pursue in their calculations. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged well and encouraged to work independently to extend confidence in applying their numeracy skills for multi-operational problem-solving. Pupils with special educational needs are given good individual support to ensure they make good progress. Opportunities are sometimes missed to organise smaller teaching groups, where additional support teachers are available, to help raise pupils' achievements even further.

6. Standards in science are well above average in the present Year 2 and Year 6 and overall achievement is good. There is very good emphasis on developing pupils' investigative and enquiry skills, and pupils of all abilities gain a firm understanding of the principles of scientific enquiry and the implications of fair testing. Pupils formulate hypotheses and record their findings independently, and strong emphasis is given to organising their investigations in a logical manner to ensure good understanding. They have a very keen interest in exploring and discovering and regularly use ICT to find out more about what they are studying. There is very good support for pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language and this enables them to participate fully and achieve well, although again, use of additional supporting teachers is not maximised to raise pupils' achievement even higher.
7. Music is a strength of the school. Provision is very good and enrichment activities add to the overall good experience pupils have, and their achievement is very good. Standards in history are also well above expectations at the end of Year 6 because pupils' enquiry skills are developed very well. They attain standards that are well above expectations, especially in their performance skills. Standards in religious education, ICT and art and design are above expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, an improvement since the last inspection. Provision for ICT has improved since the last inspection, resulting in these improved standards. The facilities and hardware have been improved and staff are beginning to use ICT in lessons in other subjects, recognising the need to develop this in order to raise standards further. Pupils learn with enthusiasm, enjoy these subjects and achieve well. From the work sampled in other subjects, standards are at least above expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language achieve very well because staff are very aware of their specific needs and support is targeted very accurately to address these needs.

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

Pupils have very **good** attitudes to work and their behaviour is **excellent**. Their personal social, moral and cultural development is also **very good**. Their attendance is **satisfactory** but punctuality is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The strong caring ethos of the school permeates all activities, and promotes pupils' very good personal development.
- Pupils follow the excellent examples set by staff and quickly learn the difference between right and wrong and behave extremely well.
- Pupils form excellent relationships with each other and with adults.
- Pupils are very caring and supportive of each other and the wider community.
- Punctuality is unsatisfactory.

## **Commentary**

8. Pupils' personal development is very good. They have very positive attitudes to learning and are very keen to participate in all that the school provides, both in lessons and out of school hours. Only on a few occasions, when work is particularly challenging, do a few lower-attaining pupils find it hard to sustain concentration, but teachers regularly use interesting techniques such as 'brain gym', songs and rhymes and physical exercise to re-engage everyone in learning. Pupils with special educational needs have the same attitudes and values as their classmates. All the school's activities successfully encourage pupils to be well mannered, courteous and polite. Pupils respond well to the very caring ethos of the school and willingly help each other in work and play. They enjoy school, and show pride in being members of the school community. Parents are very supportive of the school, and are very happy with the values the school promotes.
9. Pupils' relationships with adults and each other are excellent and have a positive impact on their learning. The school actively encourages older pupils to take care of the younger ones when they first start school, especially at break times and over lunch. As a result, the new starters always have a 'special friend' they can turn to for help. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. No incidents of bullying or harassment were seen during the inspection, the overarching factor in this being the ethos across the school that successfully encourages respect, tolerance and care right from the time children enter the reception year.
10. The headteacher and all staff pursue an ethos that promotes very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is a very orderly, productive and purposeful learning atmosphere that underpins all that the school does. The curriculum is very rich in opportunities for pupils to learn about the community in which they live and about how the differences between community groups are a cause for respect and celebration. Pupils from different faiths and cultural backgrounds are shown respect and esteem by their classmates when, for example, they have opportunities to lead discussions on religious and cultural matters. Pupils of all ages sit spell-bound by stories and music teachers introduce them to developing high levels of self-awareness and an ability to reflect on and make sense of the world around them. By learning how to evaluate and constructively comment on each other's efforts, pupils develop a very clear understanding of the importance of treating others with respect. Pupils regularly support local and international charities and are very aware of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves. Right from the reception year, children are shown how to act in a caring way towards each other by sharing resources and helping each other in learning. Teachers regularly model good practice in their day-to-day work and pupils listen attentively to the discussions that centre around personal, social and health education, where, for example, through

representations to the school council, a developing sense of citizenship and responsibility is encouraged. Pupils are very mature, confidently take decisions regarding settling down to their work and show good levels of initiative, as demonstrated by the school council's plans for playground improvements. Pupils' views are sought regularly as to how the school could make improvements and their suggestions are taken very seriously. Pupils are very happy with all that the school offers them.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003-4 (94.8%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	School data	0.0
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.*

11. Rates of attendance are broadly in line with the national average for primary schools but show a decline on the school's previous attendance figures. The school attributes this decline to more families taking holidays during term time. However, a bigger concern is the poor punctuality of a number of pupils. The delayed start disrupts an orderly beginning to morning lessons. The school has agreed to open the school earlier to enable parents to drop the children off in time for a prompt start at the beginning of the day.

## Exclusions

12. There were no exclusions in the last school year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **very good**. Teaching, learning, assessment and the curriculum are all **very good**. The weaknesses in accommodation restrict work in physical education and the library facilities are unsatisfactory. The school takes **very good** care of its pupils and provides them with **very good** guidance and support. Links with parents and the community are **good** and links with the local schools are **very good**.

### Teaching and learning

Overall, teaching and learning throughout the school are **very good**. Assessment procedures are **very good** and inform planning very effectively.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection and examples of excellent practice were seen throughout the school.
- Teachers have very high expectations and pupils learn very effectively.
- Assessment procedures are very good and ensure teachers plan work to match the needs of every pupil.
- Achievement is good because work is challenging and pupils are encouraged to think about what they learn.

- Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are supported very well.
- Teachers make very good use of teaching assistants and the help from parents is highly appreciated.
- Occasionally, insufficient use is made of the supporting teachers to lead the teaching of smaller groups so pupils make even greater gains in all lessons.
- Library facilities are unsatisfactory and the hall is too cramped and restricts provision for physical education.
- Expectations of pupils' written work are not high enough to reflect their ability accurately.

## Commentary

13. Teaching has improved since the last inspection, when it was judged to be good overall. It is now very good and excellent practice was seen across the school in a range of curriculum areas. The headteacher has recruited some excellent members of staff and her expectation of high quality teaching is supported by very good opportunities for staff development. Planning and assessment have improved considerably and with clearer target-setting and use of assessment information to inform planning, standards overall have improved throughout the school. Partnerships with other schools and institutions have broadened teachers' awareness of very good practice and the 'learning to learn' initiative is helping teachers raise the quality of learning that goes on in their lessons. Parents are very happy with the quality of teaching their children receive and pupils say they enjoy their 'learning', and this is supported by the fact that they are very attentive in lessons and enjoy what teachers plan for them.

### Example of outstanding practice

**The excellent music lesson observed in the Year 5/6 class moved at a lively pace, as pupils explored rhythm, dynamics and texture when playing percussion instruments.**

The teacher's excellent expertise in the subject and her very skilful planning and organisation of activities ensured pupils made excellent progress in this lesson. She reviewed previous learning asking probing questions to draw more comments and observations from pupils. Every pupils was fully involved and even when questions were challenging they were prompted sensitively to express their ideas. The lesson developed effortlessly as pupils moved from talking and listening activities to performing tasks and their co-operation in working together was excellent. They were encouraged to reflect on their learning, and confidently evaluated how they might improve their performing skills further. Everyone enjoyed the experience, the atmosphere created in the lesson was inspirational and as a result achievement was very high.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
8 (25%)	12 (37.5%)	8 (25%)	4 (12.5%)	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. Children in the Foundation Stage make good gains in their learning because teaching is well structured and teachers and support staff present interesting and entertaining activities that engage children's interest and enthusiasm for learning and exploring. The few that are initially hesitant in interacting with others are guided very gently into joining in as quickly as possible. Excellent use is made of the nursery nurse, who regularly plans and prepares excellent lessons for the youngest children that are educational and fun. Staff and volunteer helpers ensure children of all abilities,

especially those with special educational needs, make very good progress. Even at this early stage the children start talking about their 'learning' as opposed to 'work' and regular time is given to encourage them to 'plan their learning' so that they start to take responsibility for what they achieve in the day.

15. Throughout the school, teachers present pupils with very well thought-out tasks and activities and use a wide range of 'hands on' approaches so that pupils learn through their experiences. Strengths in teaching include the very high expectations that teachers have of pupils to behave well, try hard and think about what they are learning. Staff know their pupils well and the very good assessment procedures they use inform their day-to-day planning very accurately. Explanations and instructions are very clear, work is challenging and lessons run at a lively pace. Their subject knowledge is very secure, and they have a very clear understanding of pupils' previous work from the records that are kept on each pupil's achievement. Also, because the school maximises teachers' specialist expertise, teachers teach to their strengths across the school and this informs their planning even more accurately.
16. Teachers ask searching open-ended questions and set pupils challenges or problems to solve. Pupils learn how they need to operate to get the work done successfully, sometimes in single-ability groups and sometimes in friendship groups, so that they learn from a wide range of experiences. Preparation for lessons is very good. Resources are selected very carefully to ensure they fulfil the tasks, and support materials are carefully designed to match individual pupils' needs. Teachers build in good opportunities to use ICT to support learning, for example, for research in history, art, literacy and numeracy. Pupils have many good opportunities to work independently and find out for themselves information to share with others. As a consequence, pupils become very confident in organising their time and taking greater responsibility for 'planning their learning'.
17. Pupils settle to written tasks or practical activities confidently. Very occasionally, when tasks are not so clear or the presentation is slightly over-long, a small number lose concentration because they have to sit for too long. When this happens, staff introduce strategies such as 'brain gym', songs and rhymes and physical activities to re-energise excitement and interest. Classroom assistants are deployed very effectively to support individuals or groups of pupils in order to help them meet their targets and participate fully in all that is going on. In this way, those with special educational needs or those learning English as an additional language often make very good gains and attain standards in line with their classmates. The school values very highly the help parents give to their children's learning. However, opportunities are missed to maximise the availability of support teachers who work in some lessons. For example, these additional teachers often carry out the same duties as the classroom assistants, rather than taking smaller teaching groups to raise achievement even further. Because relationships are so good, teachers encourage pupils to turn to each other for support if no adults are immediately available. These acts of kindness and mutual respect are modelled wholly on the way staff show high regard for each pupil.
18. Teachers encourage pupils to present their work to the class at the end of lessons, being appropriately praised and applauded for their efforts. Because strong emphasis is placed on pupils thinking about their learning and evaluating their success, they

learn to identify how they might improve what they have achieved. In many lessons, pupils are encouraged to evaluate the success of their classmates and they do so very constructively. Teachers frequently ask pupils, 'What do you think you have found out today?' or 'How do you think you can improve your work?' Teachers probe pupils' knowledge and understanding skilfully in order to assess achievement and some continue such questioning when marking pupils' work. In the very best marking, comments are detailed and well constructed to guide pupils into making the required improvements to achieve even greater success. However, this level of marking is not consistent and few comments are made regarding the untidy presentation which detracts from the quality of recorded work pupils have to reflect on when referring back to previous learning. Assessment is very thorough and teachers use the information they gather to identify how well each pupil has achieved. Pupils are set individual targets in English and the marking often refers to these targets. Higher-attaining pupils regularly work at targets that are particularly challenging and that often require independent research or additional work in their own time.

## The curriculum

The school provides a **very good** and very well enriched curriculum for all its pupils. There is a **very good** match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of all pupils. Resources are **good** and accommodation is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is imaginative and innovative and enhances learning.
- Provision of extra-curricular activities substantially enriches the curriculum.
- The school's accommodation has many limitations.

## Commentary

19. The curriculum is very good, with very good opportunities for enrichment, particularly in music, which is a strength of the school. There are a number of examples of curricular innovation that are supporting pupils' learning. Teachers and pupils talk about 'learning' rather than working and the curriculum is designed to encourage thinking and investigation skills rather than just focusing on imparting knowledge and information. Flexible grouping arrangements across year groups enable pupils to work with others of similar abilities. Higher-attaining pupils work with the appropriate year group to suit their needs. Parents are consulted regarding any 'fast-tracking' for their child and such provision is monitored carefully to ensure pupils learn confidently within this arrangement. The use of staff expertise to teach to their strengths is particularly effective in helping to raise standards.
20. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs or who learn English as an additional language is very good. Pupils work with the year group closest to their own abilities and they achieve as well as other pupils. The school is committed to the frequent use of brain and finger gym as strategies to sustain concentration levels during lessons. A few high-achieving pupils at the upper end of the school have the opportunity to learn Latin through the partnership arrangements with other schools. The school places a very strong emphasis on ensuring the needs of all pupils are met as closely as possible in all that is offered to them.

21. The curriculum is enriched by the provision of French lessons, which start in the Foundation Stage. Provision for music is very good and a strength of the school. A high number of pupils learn to play musical instruments to a very high standard. Sporting activities outside the school day promote a healthy interest in fitness and competition and many pupils take advantage of the range of sporting clubs the school offers throughout the year, often in partnership with other organisations. The very good range of extra-curricular activities, including visits and visitors for all year groups, enriches pupils' learning. The school makes very good use of the local theatre and museums. Most pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 attend clubs.
22. Pupils' personal, social and health education is developed well through a well-constructed programme. The school nurse visits to talk to the older pupils about sex education and personal hygiene. Relationships are excellent and the school encourages pupils to care for and respect the school environment and each other. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education.
23. Teachers are suitably qualified and staff expertise is used to good effect as teachers have the opportunity to teach to their specialist strengths. This year an extra teacher on the staff gives subject leaders time away from the classroom for attending training sessions, checking on the quality of teaching in their subjects and monitoring standards. There is also extra support in some lessons. Visiting teachers for tuition to play musical instruments offer high quality teaching and further enhance music provision in the school.
24. Resources to support teaching and learning are good. The recently constructed sensory garden is an attractive feature adding to pupils' outdoor experiences. The school's spacious playing fields and adventure playground provide pupils with attractive play areas. However, although the quality of the accommodation is judged satisfactory, and classrooms are well furnished and of adequate size, it has a number of limitations. There has been no improvement made to the inadequate hall and small, unattractive library since the last inspection report. Books are not displayed to encourage independent research because space is very limited. The library access is through a classroom and music lessons held in the library disturb the work in the adjacent classroom. The range of items stored around the hall further cuts down the space available, particularly for physical education, and these items constitute a health and safety hazard. While the school overcomes the limitation of the hall space by conducting some physical education lessons with half classes, the arrangements are only possible as a result of the generous levels of teaching staff. There is still no designated medical room and there is as yet no disability access to the school to comply with current regulations.

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

Provision for pupils' care, welfare and safety and the steps taken to seek and act on pupils' views are **very good**. The advice and guidance for pupils are **very good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a very safe and caring environment in which pupils learn very well.
- Very good induction procedures help children in the Foundation Stage settle quickly into school routines.
- Very good arrangements for child protection are in place.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school makes determined efforts to listen to pupils and values their views as part of the school family.

## Commentary

25. The headteacher correctly gauges the strength of this aspect of the school's provision and the findings of the last inspection have been maintained. There is a clear commitment to pupils' welfare and safety at school. The excellent relationships between staff and pupils ensure a caring and supportive ethos, where pupils feel safe, secure and happy. Overall, there are very good procedures to ensure that equipment is regularly safety-checked and there are frequent audits of the premises. Risk assessment for trips and outside visits is thorough and detailed. However, there are no formal written records of whole-school risk assessment or of day-to-day health and safety concerns and any action that needs to be taken.
26. Parents support the view that children new to the school benefit from a well planned and welcoming induction package that ensures secure and smooth settling in. Of particular merit is the school's system of using older pupils to act as 'buddies' to the new arrivals to ensure that they have a friend and someone to turn to for help or guidance. The school also puts on workshops for parents so they can effectively support their children's learning, which they do very well.
27. The school gives a high priority to child protection matters. For example, there is a 'come and tell' policy about anything pupils want to talk about. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils with special educational needs are very good and, as a result, these pupils are secure and happy in their learning. The school ensures that effective additional help is provided and there is plenty of adult support.
28. Whilst there are very effective procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress which contributes significantly to all pupils' learning, there is no formal recording for pupils' emotional and personal development. A well-established school council is used effectively to involve pupils in decision making and in seeking their views on many aspects of school life that affect them directly. In addition, pupils are encouraged to approach the headteacher and other adults in the school with their ideas for change or improvement, which are always listened to. Pupils show pride when explaining their contributions to the design and creation of a multi-sensory garden.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents and the community and has forged **very strong** and effective links with other schools and colleges to the benefit of pupils.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very happy with the school and hold positive views about the quality of education provided and the values promoted.
- Involvement of parents overall in helping their children at school and at home is very good.
- A small but significant number of parents do not ensure pupils are punctual.
- There is a very active and supportive Friends of Graveley Association (FOG).
- Very good links with schools and colleges benefit pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

29. Parents express very positive views about the school and are generally very satisfied with all aspects of the school's provision. They are especially pleased with the academic standards achieved, quality of teaching and the high levels of care provided for their children. However, a small number of parents spoken to during the inspection express concern that the school is not always open in time to ensure their children's punctuality. The school is implementing strategies addressing this immediately. Nevertheless, there is also a lack of support by some parents in ensuring their children arrive at school on time and are ready for a prompt start to lessons.
30. The statutory information for parents is good overall and shows the essential ethos and character of the school. The omissions in the governors' annual report to parents highlighted in the last inspection have been addressed. Reports to parents of their children's progress are detailed and personal and targets for improvement are clearly linked to weaker areas of performance. Standards achieved in all subjects are clearly shown, together with an explanation of attainment target levels. This information, together with a formal opportunity in the spring term to discuss children's progress, ensures parents have important and relevant information about their children's standards and progress. The school has consulted parents about the format of these reports and on the format for parents' meetings, and received a very positive response.
31. Parents' commitment to their children's education and enjoyment of school life has a very positive impact on pupils' personal and intellectual development. A small but significant number of parents regularly provide help in classes and the school values this. Additionally, some parents through their employment have enabled the school to benefit from the expertise of specialist support, for example, through science and design and technology initiatives, where children learned about aerodynamics. A hard working and active 'Friends of Graveley' (FOG) organises social and fundraising events to provide additional resources for the school. For example, they provided a substantial sum of money towards the cost of the newly created multi-sensory garden, new computers and trips out of school.
32. The school has a considerable input into initial teacher training and encourages the development of good practice. As a result, pupils benefit from more adult support in classrooms. Other important links include working with a triad of higher-achieving schools. Benefits include sharing good practice and joint staff training. In addition, this partnership working provides pupils with opportunities to attend Latin lessons if they wish and also the partnership schools organise workshops, for example, in chemistry for interested pupils. Additionally, a link with a university project 'Learning to Learn' has enabled the school to take on some beneficial strategies, for example, measuring the effect on children's learning of the attitudes of staff and pupils.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management of the school are **very good**. The leadership by the headteacher and other key staff is **very good**. Overall management is **good**. Governance is **satisfactory** and all statutory responsibilities are fully met.

### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and manages the school well.
- There is very effective delegation of responsibility for management and leadership in school and teachers manage subjects well.
- Some subject leaders have too many key areas of responsibilities and are unable to lead and manage them all as well as they would like.
- Curricular strengths and interests of other adults in the school are used well to encourage very good learning and teaching.
- The headteacher has the full confidence of the governing body.
- The governing body provides insufficient challenge to the senior management team and does not consider closely enough the school's strategic planning in order to set priorities for planning.

### Commentary

33. The headteacher provides very good leadership. She works very closely with other key staff to manage the school effectively and to ensure that high standards are maintained. She promotes a very good ethos where the pupils are very well cared for and have very positive attitudes to learning. She ensures all who work in the school are committed to the highest possible standards for all pupils and all staff know what they are working towards. The needs of pupils of all ages, backgrounds and ability are met very effectively.
34. Delegation of responsibility is now a feature of leadership and is proving very successful with the enthusiastic subject leaders, who clearly motivate pupils and other staff. Their leadership is very good, as is the management of special educational needs provision. The deployment of support staff is particularly effective in meeting the needs of all pupils, but particularly those who need additional support and guidance, thus ensuring their very good achievement. The school has a very strong team of dedicated teachers who use their individual interests and expertise, for example, in music, science and ICT, to support learning throughout the school. Curricular strengths and interests of other adults in the school are also used well to encourage very good learning and teaching. For example, in physical education, a teaching assistant who has a netball coaching qualification supports learning of this game. An increase in staffing has enabled the school to develop its curricular provision and monitor teaching and learning. However, too little emphasis has been placed on determining and measuring the impact of this deployment of extra staff on the raising of standards and pupils' overall achievement.
35. Many teachers have a heavy workload as subject leaders and co-ordinators and they work hard to manage their responsibilities very effectively. However, one or two subject leaders have too many areas of responsibilities and are unable to lead and manage them all as well as they would like. For example, there are some

inconsistencies in the way activities such as marking and untidy presentation in pupils' workbooks are addressed across the school.

36. Monitoring of teaching is thorough and the findings lead to very good opportunities for continuing professional development. The school's involvement in partnership work with Initial Teacher Training and institutes of higher education is very good and benefits staff development considerably. Performance management procedures are now in place and are used to bring about improvement, although there are too few links with the school development plan. The plan developed in partnership with the staff and governors has a clear focus on tasks to be completed but does not clearly state the intended impact on learning and standards. The priorities and success criteria in the plan are not sufficiently sharp and do not enable the school to evaluate how well it has done and then set further targets for improvement.
37. The school evaluates its performance very well to ensure that standards remain high. Staff share detailed information gathered from the analysis and interpretation of all the available data to consider areas for further development in specific subject areas. However, in setting the long-term strategic plan for school improvement, opportunities are missed to make better use of this very good information by setting success criteria against which the school can measure its improvement. Whilst governors are also totally committed to maintaining the school's high standards, they do not have a sufficiently clear view of how, for example, the extra spending on staffing this year will impact on raising standards. They have a limited overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses and therefore do not always question or challenge the school as to what is being done to bring about improvements. Because they have great confidence in the headteacher, they rely too heavily on her and her staff to develop strategies for improvement. Although some of the governors visit the school regularly and see it in action, procedures for carrying out purposeful monitoring against agreed criteria in the school development plan are limited. Too much of the responsibility for innovation, for determining the school's direction and for evaluating its success depends on the headteacher and a few of the governors directly employed in the school. The governing body is involved in strategic planning but does not always focus closely enough on the intended outcomes for pupils in order to evaluate success more accurately. In addition, the key issue regarding accommodation highlighted in the last inspection has not yet been fully addressed. Governance overall is satisfactory.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	368,569
Total expenditure	353,793
Expenditure per pupil	3,216

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	46,977
Balance carried forward to the next year	61,752

38. The day-to-day management of the school's finances is good. The school has satisfactory procedures in place to ensure that it considers the principles of best value, although these are not rigorously applied when measuring the impact on standards and achievement. The headteacher has been very successful in attracting

funding to create an attractive sensory garden for pupils to learn from and enjoy. However, the school has not managed to make improvements to the inadequate library and storage space for equipment currently stored in the hall. Money set aside for building developments has been spent on additional staffing and equipment for developing ICT further. The current-carry forward is earmarked to build an extension to the library this year. In light of the very high standards attained and pupils' overall good achievement, the school gives very good value for money.

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

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

39. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Children enter the reception class with levels of attainment generally above those expected nationally. They make good progress and by the end of the Foundation Stage, all children have met the early learning goals, with a significant majority attaining levels above and a few well above those expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy skills. The overall improved provision, especially the very good and sometimes excellent teaching, has enabled standards to be raised. Pupils' learning is

very good and the excellent support from the nursery nurse greatly advances the children's achievement. Very good planning, based on topics, ensures that there is a good mix of teacher-led and child-initiated activities within each day. Children enjoy choosing to do their own activities at the "Planning Board". This has proved such a good initiative that it has been successfully introduced into the Year 2/3 class. Very good assessment procedures inform future planning and ensure a good match of appropriate work. All children are suitably challenged and are able to achieve high standards. Children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are provided for very well so that their attainment matches that of their classmates. Their overall achievement is very good. A very good induction process involves the new parents attending a workshop and demonstrates how they can help their children to learn.

40. The enthusiastic co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management. The spacious classroom provides a well-organised, rich learning environment with many separate activity areas. However, there is no quiet library area for children to sit comfortably and share books. The accommodation has improved since the last inspection with the recent addition of an attractive multi-sensory garden, where children have more opportunities to explore the world around them. This was a commendable community project involving parents, governors, staff, pupils and friends of the school. Outside provision could be further enhanced by the addition of some all weather protection outside the classroom, to enable its use all year round. Access to the school's library is through this classroom, which is used for extra music tuition, which at times is disruptive and distracting for the youngest children.

## **PERSONAL SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The children's behaviour and relationships are excellent.
- There is a very good induction programme.
- Children are happy and confident to work independently and together in groups.

### **Commentary**

41. Teaching and learning are very good and, as a result, children achieve well in their personal development and exceed the expected goals. Teachers' planning and organisation of the day are very meticulous and children are made aware of the high expectations placed upon them in everything they do. Children start the day calmly and are confident in their routines. Their behaviour is exemplary as they slip unobtrusively from activity to activity. A very effective induction procedure ensures parents know how they can help their children's learning. Pupils from Year 6 help the new children to settle into routines at playtimes and lunchtimes. There are excellent relationships between adults and children and with each other. Children play confidently with one another and clearly enjoy each other's company. They interact well and organise themselves sensibly. This was particularly evident in the role play area where children enacted a wedding. The proceedings were very authentic

following a lesson on Christian weddings as part of their family topic. All children manage to get themselves ready for outdoor play activities and their independence is encouraged. As a result of very good teaching, they quickly develop very good attitudes to learning.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Every opportunity is given for speaking and listening.
- Excellent development of phonic skills.
- Inadequate areas for quiet reading and browsing through books.

### **Commentary**

42. Children come into school with well-developed communication skills. A great emphasis is placed on speaking and listening skills during all lessons and children take turns to speak and are very articulate. Teaching is very good because it is so well thought through to match the needs of each child, and children achieve very well in this area of learning. All children have the opportunity to learn French from the beginning of the Foundation Stage. In the writing area, children successfully practise their writing skills. Many children write their own name with well-formed letters and know what upper and lower case letters are. Development of phonic skills is particularly good, as seen in the excellent lesson using a cookie monster puppet to eat cookies that begin with the appropriate letter. Equally, Stripey Sam, with his sparkly, silver and starry sack, took the children into the garden to search for items beginning with "s". This captured the children's imagination and advanced their learning. By the end of the Foundation Stage, all children know their letter sounds and many children write good sentences. Some children can read when they come into school and when they leave the reception year; because of the very high emphasis placed on developing children's literacy skills, some are reading books aimed at Year 1. The love of reading is fostered as children always sit very attentively to listen to stories. The opportunity to sit quietly and browse through books at leisure is limited by the lack of any specially arranged comfortable area for such independent time. All children achieve and many exceed the early learning goals by the end of their reception year and learning is very good. A high number of children are working at Year 1 levels and overall achievement is high. Standards are well above average in this area of learning.

### Example of outstanding practice

In an excellent mathematics lesson led by the nursery nurse working with the youngest children in the Foundation Stage, children had very clear guidance as to what was expected of them and, as a result, made very good gains in their learning.

The planning was very carefully thought through so that children followed each step attentively and were eager to engage in the independent activities, where they had to consolidate their skills in recognising and naming 2D shapes through a lively set of games. The wide range of resources attracted children's interest and curiosity. They confidently moved from task to task, keen to explore the challenge in each task. Volunteer helpers were very well briefed and every child received the individual help they needed to succeed. Their learning was thoroughly assessed throughout and the summing up at the end indicated high achievement for all. The learning was fun and a number were reluctant to finish when the lesson ended.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective use of resources promotes learning.
- Very good planning ensures a good balance between structured activities and informal learning through play.

### Commentary

43. A significant number of children enter the reception year with well-developed number skills. Every opportunity is taken to count and extend mathematical knowledge through counting games and familiar rhymes. Teaching is very good and staff make very good use of the assessment information they gather to ensure work is matched to children's ability and interest. Practical activities using a wide range of attractive resources are very carefully planned to encourage number recognition, counting and ordering. Children accurately count to 20 and, by the end of the year, they confidently add and subtract numbers. Learning is very good and wherever possible children's mathematical knowledge is extended. For example, when making models of cars and aeroplanes using large grocery boxes, children accurately name the 2D shapes they choose. Opportunities for sand and water play and weighing activities further develop their mathematical concepts. Children are on course to reach and many exceed the early learning goals by the end of their reception year and their overall achievement is good.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good use is made of the attractive multi-sensory garden as an outdoor classroom.
- Rich and varied activities provide children with a wide range of knowledge and skills.
- Good links are made with the other areas of learning.

## **Commentary**

44. Children's awareness of the world around them is fostered through a wide range of exciting activities. Teaching and learning are very good and, as a result, children achieve well. Staff plan very lively and interesting experiences for children to learn from and lessons run at a lively pace so that their interest is maintained throughout. For example, children enjoy using trowels to put flowering plants into the garden border and learn how worms are good for the soil. During a lively lesson on phonics, children went outside and followed a simple map to find and collect objects beginning with the letter of the day, thus reinforcing their literacy skills very effectively. Through skilful teaching introducing new concepts step by step, children learn about their senses and the day, date, month and weather are discussed each morning. In their topic books, children find out what is magnetic and non-magnetic, identify and sort vehicles that cause pollution and those that don't. The role play area is changed according to the topic, for example, as a hospital and presently as a Christian church, complete with an altar. Children have good opportunities to use computers and have well developed mouse and keyboard skills as seen in a lesson on rhyming words where children were learning to delete and transpose upper and lower case letters. In another lesson, children are shown how to save and print out data and how to use the digital camera. By the end of the year, children are above average in their attainment in this area of learning.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

45. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on the quality of provision or teaching of physical education. However, children have opportunities to ride on wheeled toys, play in the outdoor playhouse and use the large outdoor climbing apparatus for climbing and balancing. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Children use small tools confidently, holding pencils, glue brushes and paintbrushes correctly. They cut out with scissors and use rolling pins and tools to cut out "play dough" letters competently. The lack of an all-weather canopy limits access to the outdoor environment in bad weather.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good opportunities are provided for singing.
- Good role-play opportunities.

### **Commentary**

46. Teaching, which is very good, places a very good emphasis on opportunities to support children's creative development. Children paint at an easel confidently applying colours and use a range of brushes and their fingers to form letters. Staff provide them with large brushes and glue to construct models from large boxes and develop a sense of shape and size in their designs. By regular interventions, staff discuss these designs with the children and encourage them to consider improvements. In the construction area, two children concentrated on making "limos that could be driven either way up". Children sing nursery rhymes tunefully at every opportunity. They enjoy their lessons being interspersed with singing games to reinforce concentration and learning and staff introduce such opportunities to make learning fun and very good as a result. Classroom role-play areas are frequently changed to develop their imagination. Good use is made of drama during lessons to reinforce learning. As a result of the good teaching and learning, children of all abilities achieve well and standards are above those normally seen in children of this age.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision for English is **very good**.

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

- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well above average because teaching and assessment are very good.
- Pupils have very good opportunities for speaking and listening.
- The subject is led and managed very well.
- Pupils' written work, while generally very good in content, is untidily presented, with little reference to the good handwriting skills they learn.
- Library facilities are unsatisfactory.

#### **COMMENTARY**

47. The standards attained at the end of Year 2 in the 2004 tests and assessments were above average, but below those at the time of the last inspection. Variations in the attainment profile for small year groups account for these fluctuations from year to year. At the end of Year 6 in the tests and assessments of 2004, standards were well above average, as was the picture at the time of the previous inspection. Overall standards for the current pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above the national average and pupils achieve well. Because pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are given very good individual support, these pupils make very good gains in their learning, often attaining standards in line with the national average. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
48. Teachers provide many interesting and challenging opportunities to enable all pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills. Time devoted to pupil talk is very high and teachers pose questions for pupils to consider their thoughts and ideas. Equally, they urge pupils to ask questions and thus gain confidence in their ability to reason

and debate when necessary. Pupils of all abilities enjoy these discussions and those who are hesitant are supported sensitively by the very good individual support they receive from the high number of adults often available in the classrooms. Opportunities for pupils to share their ideas in presentations in front of groups and the whole class are frequent across all areas of the curriculum and because such activities are established as early as in the reception year, most are eager to participate. Relationships in the school are excellent and pupils know that their efforts are valued and, as a result, they learn to speak confidently and articulately.

49. The school promotes amongst its pupils a keen desire to learn and hence reading skills are of a very high standard throughout the school. Many children start school with a keen interest in books and pupils are heard reading regularly. For example, excellent use of support staff in a lesson in the Year 3/4 class ensured every pupil worked to their tasks successfully. Very good individual support is given to lower-attaining pupils and those with English as an additional language by support staff and a regular supply of volunteer helpers. While pupils throughout the school enjoy stories and poetry, they are equally enthusiastic about exploring non-fiction materials as they enquire and learn more about the topics they pursue. Literacy lessons encompass all subjects and skills of reading for information, for example, permeate all lessons. Intense questions such as 'What do you think this is telling you?' and 'Why do you think that?' make pupils read beyond the text and interpret what they read more closely. The very good rendition of an excerpt from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in the Year 5/6 class helped pupils develop a clearer understanding of how they can use expression to convey a range of different meanings to the same phrases. The vast majority of pupils enjoy reading and many read widely in their own time because the school fosters a very positive attitude to reading. The library facility is very limited and unattractive. It is too small for pupils to use readily as a reference and research base in order to pursue independent work. This was an area highlighted in the last report as an issue too.
50. Pupils' writing skills are developed well as they progress through the school and standards are well above average. They have a very secure understanding of how to convey their ideas on paper lucidly and have a very good range of vocabulary that they apply confidently. For example, the 'books' which pupils in the Year 5/ 6 class have written for younger children are extremely well thought through and entertaining. Handwriting skills are taught well and pupils regularly use computers to produce their recorded work. However, the emphasis on recorded work in the school is not very strong so that what pupils can actually do is not always accurately reflected in what they produce in their books. From the work sampled, much was incomplete and set out untidily, often with many errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. In one instance, although the content was of above-average standard, the pupil was not able to read back their own writing because of the untidy handwriting and the high number of careless errors. Although examples of well-presented work were evident, especially when pupils had worked on special projects and work for display purposes, the quality of presentation is an issue.
51. Teaching and learning are very good. The school has placed significant emphasis on improving teaching and learning in English in the last few years with the development of a curriculum that is rich in opportunities to promote pupils' thinking skills and gives them many opportunities to talk about what they are learning. This has enabled the

high standards seen in the last inspection to be maintained and opportunities to apply literacy skills in other subjects have improved. Expectations are high, lessons run at a brisk pace and teachers use the assessment information they have to plan work accordingly. The marking in the Year 5/6 class is of a very high standard and provides pupils with very clear information about what they have done well and how they might improve their work further. This practice is not consistent throughout the school but all pupils receive regular feedback about their work and there is a high emphasis placed on pupils evaluating their own work and that of others in a very constructive manner. In the very good and excellent lessons, the activities and challenges set are carefully measured against pupils' prior attainment and this ensures pupils remain fully involved. Resources are used to very good effect to promote pupils' enthusiasm and interest in what they are learning. Because of the school's innovative curriculum, where subjects are interwoven into topics, literacy skills are not taught in isolation. All the learning has a clear purpose and pupils quickly grasp what is required of them and work well with each other, irrespective of differences in ability and age. Teachers model good practice and encourage lively interactions between pupils. They use praise and encouragement effectively and the regular use of 'brain gym' and bursts of singing or physical exercise, especially with the younger children, help pupils remain on task, even when work is challenging. Teaching assistants and support teachers are used to help individuals and groups of pupils effectively and teachers ensure the work they plan is matched accurately to pupils' needs so that they achieve success. In occasional lessons, the introductory part of the lesson is slightly too long to hold the attention and interest of all pupils fully, especially those who are lower attaining. In these lessons, maximum use is not always made of the supporting teachers present, to lead the teaching in smaller groups.

52. The subject has a very high profile in the curriculum and a great deal of time has been given to develop provision. It is very well led and managed by a knowledgeable and meticulous co-ordinator. She monitors planning to ensure that the statutory curriculum is covered and acknowledges that pupils' written presentations and the library facility need improvement. She also monitors pupils' performance and progress in their day-to-day work and their test results. The information gained from these activities helps identify where teaching needs to be improved in order to raise standards further and what targets each pupil should aspire to, based on what they have already achieved. Pupils are made aware of their individual targets and this encourages them to take greater responsibility for their own learning.

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

53. The school ensures pupils apply their literacy in other subjects effectively to extend their awareness of language for different purposes, for example, reflective writing in history and religious education and report writing in science. Throughout the school, valuable time is given to question-and-answer sessions and at every opportunity pupils are encouraged to think about their learning. Activities such as 'talking partners' encourage pupils to exchange ideas and opinions in many lessons. Pupils use non-fiction books and the Internet to research information regularly in their topic work and develop an enthusiastic interest in working independently. For example, pupils in the Year 3/4 class applied very good reading and note-taking skills to identify information relevant to their research on the Romans.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 because teaching and learning are good.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good and activities are well organised.
- Pupils experience a wide range of activities and have very good opportunities to share their work with others.
- Occasionally, some of the least able pupils find work too challenging and support teachers are not used to maximum effect.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work but teachers' low expectations of presentation mean that some pupils do not set out their work clearly, which hinders assessment and feedback.
- Marking is inconsistent across the school, which means that many pupils are insufficiently aware of what they have to do to improve.

### Commentary

54. Standards for pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are above average and overall pupils achieve well. A significant number of pupils make good progress and by the end of Year 6 these pupils attain well-above-average standards. For example, half of the pupils attained the high Level 5 in national tests of 2004. The school's targets suggest results may be similar in 2005. However, there are significant variations in the results from year to year, depending on the overall attainment profile of each year group, especially as year groups are relatively small. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language often achieve very well because they receive good individual attention from support staff.
55. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and organise learning well. As a result, pupils engage enthusiastically with a wide range of mathematical activities; for example, in Year 2, pupils collect data and interpret it successfully by representing it on appropriate graphs. In one activity, pupils threw two dice and collated their results on paper and drew bar charts to illustrate the data, while others asked questions to evaluate each other's understanding. Pupils also work confidently with shape and space activities where they accurately identify, for example, 3D shapes placed one on top of another. There is a strong emphasis placed on pupils' thinking and reasoning skills in order to learn well. By the end of Year 6, pupils gain relevant experience in all areas of mathematics and apply their understanding to complex multi-step sums that require more than one operation. For example, regular attention is given to providing pupils with data to interpret and explain to others using correct mathematical terminology, graphs and diagrams, as necessary to make their explanations clearer. Teachers encourage them to explain their calculations in order to assess the level of understanding and use this information to challenge the more able and support those who need additional help with the basic skills. Occasionally, the demands placed on some of the lower-attaining pupils are too high and a few struggle to stay fully involved, especially during

presentations that are over-long and complicated. On these occasions, opportunities are missed to divide pupils into smaller teaching groups, especially where additional teachers are available in a support capacity, in order to raise achievement by all.

56. Pupils use a variety of mental strategies to solve number problems but these usually remain unrecorded, which means that it is more difficult to assess the way pupils have used their mathematical knowledge. In some of the work seen there was an over-reliance on worksheets and formal exercises, which restricts the pupils' ability to demonstrate and evaluate their own mathematical understanding. However, pupils indicate they enjoy these formal exercises and try hard to better their previous performances. They have regular opportunities to work with others and discuss the strategies they are applying in their calculations. For example, in a lesson in the Year 2/3 class, there was good use of partner talking to share mathematical ideas and the teacher's skilful questioning helped promote pupils' mathematical thinking.
57. Some teachers have low expectations of how carefully and clearly pupils record their work in books. This means that a number of pupils do not take care over setting out their calculations neatly enough to ensure others can follow their workings out. This makes it difficult for both pupils and teachers to know how well they are doing. Marking of pupils' work in Year 6 is very good and refers back to what pupils set out to learn and how well they achieve. However, this level of good practice is not consistent across the school and there is insufficient use of targets that the school sets, by all staff, to ensure that all pupils know what they must do to improve.
58. Leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator's subject knowledge is good and she has growing awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She supports the work of her colleagues and monitors planning, teaching and learning. There is good use of the information gathered from pupils' year on year progress to set targets for the school. The co-ordinator recognises that the analysis of national tests is not yet sufficiently detailed to identify clearly which aspects of the subject are taught especially well or which aspects need to be developed further.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

59. Teachers regularly apply numeracy skills well in many lessons. In physical education, pupils record times; in science, they produce graphs; in design and technology and art and design, they develop their skills in measuring and applying 2D and 3D shapes in their designs; in music they learn to count beats accurately in order to perform musical items and in history they regularly use timelines to understand the time gaps between major events they study.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

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

- Standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Leadership and management from the science specialist are very good.
- Teaching and learning are very good and pupils know how to improve their learning.

- Very good emphasis is placed on investigative work.
- Pupils' work is poorly presented and does not reflect their good achievement.

### **Commentary**

60. In the tests and assessments of 2004, standards were broadly average at the end of Year 2 and were well above average at the end of Year 6. For current pupils standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievement is good because of the very good teaching from the science specialist and high expectations of pupils throughout the school. The improvements in the quality of teaching and assessment have ensured standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Lower-attaining pupils and those learning English as an additional language are given good support and guidance to achieve success, and higher-attaining pupils are given challenges that involve a high level of independence.
61. A strong emphasis is placed on investigative and scientific enquiry skills and pupils are challenged to ask and answer their own questions in order to solve problems. Health and safety is always stressed before each investigation and pupils behave very sensibly. Skills of observation, prediction and hypothesising are rehearsed regularly through lively class discussions and pupils have many opportunities to work collaboratively in small groups. Very good planning ensures there is a good balance between independent activities and whole-class discussions. Pupils organise themselves sensibly during practical tasks and class discussions. Very good questioning during lessons ensures all pupils are challenged to think in scientific terms. They are expected to think things through, consider and then investigate their ideas and form reasoned explanations for their conclusions. They are encouraged to record their findings independently to back up their conclusions to present to others. Such high expectations result in pupils' learning being very good.
62. Pupils are given time to discuss their findings and they explain their ideas very confidently. Teachers encourage pupils to question each other and thus they learn from each other's errors and successes. Well-marked work guides pupils' future learning, but work is sometimes untidily presented, with some recording being messy and incomplete. In addition, pupils pay little attention to the accuracy of scientific diagrams. During the inspection, younger pupils learnt about their senses and older pupils demonstrated very good knowledge of the properties of solids, liquids and gases. At the end of Year 2, most pupils have a reasonable grasp of fair testing and higher-attaining pupils offer ideas of variables to keep constant in a fair test. Older pupils use scientific terms confidently and understand the importance of repeating tests.
63. Leadership and management are very good. The very knowledgeable science specialist monitors teachers' planning, monitors lessons in the Foundation Stage and gives very good support to the staff. Because she teaches science across the school, she has a very clear overview of standards and achievement. She recognises that there is a need to review the science policy and revisit assessment and pupil tracking, although assessment procedures are very good. There are good links with local industry that have funded training and pupils' visits to places of scientific interest.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils develop a wide range of computer skills through the good, clear, direct teaching of ICT.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Use of ICT is being developed well across the curriculum.
- Target setting is not yet established for pupils to know how to improve their work.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to independently select ICT as a tool to solve problems.
- The subject leader spends a disproportionate amount of time on technical support to ensure that the computers work well.

### **Commentary**

64. Standards are above those expected nationally of pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 for pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs or those learning English as an additional language. Standards have improved since the last inspection as a result of the improvements in teaching and overall provision for ICT. Overall achievement is good. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader's enthusiasm and subject knowledge are very good. She has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, with a clear strategic plan for development. However, she does spend a considerable amount of time setting up equipment for others and trouble-shooting when technical hitches arise. Support for staff training has been good but there is an awareness of the need to ensure that staff expertise is continually up to date.
65. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Skills are now taught systematically and most pupils make good progress. Pupils cover a good range of work although little evidence was seen of pupils' work in control technology. Many pupils demonstrate confidence and a real enjoyment in using computers to support their learning. By the end of Year 2, pupils use word processing, change font and colour, place borders around their work, change size of text and insert graphics confidently. Pupils are keen to apply their ICT skills to solve problems and receive good support from adults who work with them. For example, in work seen from pupils in Year 6, spreadsheets have been used to solve a mathematics challenge presented to them and in a mixed Year 3 /4 class, pupils designed their own interactive story books using text, picture and sound files. However, the teacher often directs this work and there are few opportunities for pupils to independently choose ICT to help them solve problems.
66. The scheme of work has been updated and modified to ensure that most pupils are sufficiently challenged, but some higher-attaining pupils do not always make the progress they should because assessments are not detailed enough to ensure they work to their full potential in each lesson. Although assessment procedures are in place, they are at an early stage of development. Pupils keep a portfolio of work but there is little written feedback to indicate levels of attainment or to what extent pupils were supported in their work. Targets for improvement are not set and pupils have limited ideas about what they need to do to improve.

67. There have been significant improvements in provision and equipment since the last inspection. The school now has four new laptops and two interactive whiteboards as well as computers in each classroom. Wireless technology ensures that computers are connected to the Internet and this is used to support the teaching of other subjects. With dedicated teaching of computer skills by the subject leader throughout KS1 and KS2, standards have risen to above national expectations. There has been good progress in the development of the subject since the previous inspection.

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

68. ICT is used satisfactorily in some other subjects. In literacy lessons, pupils use ICT to correct and edit their work and create interactive storybooks. There is a good use of the Internet to find information to support research skills and these are applied well in history. However, pupils are often directed in the use of ICT and are not confident in independently selecting ICT as a tool they can use at will. The subject leader is aware of this and has plans to increase the opportunities for children to be involved in more open-ended problem solving activities requiring ICT skills.

### **HUMANITIES**

There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about overall provision in **history** and **geography** because only two lessons were observed in history and none in geography.

69. In **geography** the curriculum is good and is delivered through a topic approach where links with other subjects are made very clearly. There is appropriate continuity in the way pupils learn new skills and acquire knowledge. For example, in a guided reading session in the Year 3/4 class, pupils explored information regarding mountains, oceans and space and the teaching was so well developed that pupils assimilated facts and information enthusiastically, asking questions of the adults when not sure about something. The school promotes a lively interest amongst pupils to learn more about the countries pupils in the school originate from and this allows pupils to pursue learning about contrasting cultures and traditions, often researching information in their own time. Pupils have a very mature understanding of how climate and physical landscapes influence lifestyles around the world. The educational opportunities are enriched well by visits, such as to the local area and the coast, and the residential visit encompasses learning across a wide range of subjects very effectively.
70. From discussions with pupils in Year 6 it is evident that standards in **history** are well above expectations and the school's creative approach to learning through topics means that pupils have a very secure understanding of how learning in different disciplines is linked together. For example, pupils in the Year 3/4 class know that because of the geography of the rugged landscape on the English-Scottish border, it was difficult for the Romans to invade the land of the Picts and thus the wall was built to keep the 'barbarians out'. Pupils gain good historical knowledge and understanding of Britain and the wider world. They describe characteristic features of past times and they suggest reasons for the main events and changes in the various periods that they study confidently. Teachers help pupils develop their skills in looking for evidence by posing questions and setting research challenges that underpin the learning. Pupils use ICT to find information and develop their arguments to explain their

understanding to others. Resources are used very effectively to enrich pupils' experiences; for example, Victorian artefacts to reflect on how domestic appliances have evolved over time and consider why. They have a very good understanding of how events in history relate to each other over time and what impact these events had on people's lives immediately and long term. However, there is insufficient emphasis given to written work, both with regard to what is recorded and how well it is presented. This limits how accurately pupils reflect back on what they have learnt and recall the level of detail they covered.

71. Visits and visitors are used well as sources for historical enquiry. Good use is made of local museums and historic houses. Members of the local community provide information about life in the past. The co-ordinator is new to the role but does have a good understanding of the curriculum. She has made a satisfactory start to auditing curriculum coverage and resources but as yet has no clear measure of standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject is well placed for future development.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision for religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching of different religions promotes pupils' awareness of other faiths and cultures.
- Pupils from a wide range of faiths are encouraged to support the learning of their classmates.
- The subject makes good contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers make very good use of visitors, resources and artefacts to support teaching and learning.
- Assemblies and opportunities for discussions in other lessons support learning well.

### **Commentary**

72. From the one excellent lesson observed in the Year 5/6 class and from the range of work sampled and discussions with pupils, learning is very good. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and overall achievement is good. Standards have improved since the last inspection because teaching is now very good and very good use is made of teachers' expertise to teach to their strengths. Pupils have very good opportunities to talk about the subject and express their thoughts and ideas. For example, in the excellent lesson seen, pupils considered the impact of believing in something so strongly that they might be willing to fight for it, as in the story of Hanukah. The discussion allowed them to express personal beliefs and two pupils of two different faiths were keen to explain to their classmates why specific traditions and rituals were so fundamental in their religions. In this outstanding lesson a great deal of emphasis was placed on pupils being encouraged to think about their feelings and reflect on how people of different faiths conduct practice that impacts on their day-to-day life. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 indicate an above-average

understanding of the importance of God and being aware of the needs of others and the importance of different festivals and celebrations to the respective faiths. Although no lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, learning is good and the limited recorded work seen reflects good opportunities for pupils to write down their ideas and observations about stories they learn from the Bible and also from the Jewish and Muslim faiths.

73. Teaching and learning are very good. Because teachers move between classes working to their strengths, provision is of a high quality. Subject knowledge is very good, and activities engage pupils' interest well, using a good range of resources effectively to support learning. Where pupils from other faiths are willing, they are encouraged to talk about their religious practices at home and places of worship. Members of the local community and parents of these pupils are regular visitors to the school, leading presentations that are to do with specific calendar events in different faiths. For example, during the inspection, pupils were shown how and why Hindus celebrate Divali and pupils benefited from the interesting multi-sensory experience during the assembly. In Year 2, pupils start to learn about other faiths and as this develops through the school, their awareness of other cultures and traditions is enhanced. Pupils in Years 3-6 pursue very detailed learning on Hinduism, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism as these reflect the make-up of the school community, and compare and contrast these with what they know about Christianity. Although recorded work is minimal and sometimes poorly presented, some very good and highly detailed work was seen in the Year 5/6 books.
74. Pupils are encouraged to think about the moral and social implications of what they learn in religious education and thus develop a greater awareness of how they and others feel about specific issues. Acts of collective worship also enrich the curriculum, as do visits to places of worship. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is very new to the role and as yet has had insufficient time to review teaching, learning and standards. However, plans are in place to carry out these activities and consider where the subject needs to develop.

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

Only two lessons were observed in **art and design**, three in **physical education** and none were seen in **design and technology**, so no overall judgements are made about provision in these subjects.

75. The work on display for **art and design** in classrooms and corridors indicates that standards are at least above those expected at the end of Year 6. Pupils develop skills in observational and three-dimensional work well, and good emphasis is placed on pupils interpreting their ideas and using their imaginative skills confidently. Techniques of colour mixing and colour blends begin as early as the Foundation Stage and as pupils progress through the school, they experiment with pastels, watercolours and a wide range of materials to create their ideas. In the very good lesson in the Year 2/3 class, pupils carefully selected yarns to depict autumn shades that they had previously decided on by observing trees, leaves and berries in the school grounds to weave their wall hangings. In an equally good lesson in the Year 5/6 class, the teacher skilfully guided pupils in their clay pot designs, modelling their ideas on a wide selection of images available to them, for example, African designs. Pupils take

great care with and pay attention to their work and enjoy their learning. There is a clear emphasis on design and ideas are modified as pupils explore the materials available to them and make changes as a result of their findings. For example, pupils have used ICT to develop designs to print on T-shirts, with some importing photographs into their designs. Examples of their work are displayed attractively around the school and framed items are sold to raise funds regularly.

76. The subject is led very well by a very talented co-ordinator who works hard to ensure that the subject enjoys high prominence in the curriculum. She enriches provision by organising visits and special events and by enhancing multi-cultural aspects of the subject. Visiting artists work with pupils and the work of celebrated artists helps pupils appreciate a wealth of culture and style they can learn from. The art club attracts considerable interest where pupils have excellent opportunities to extend their learning and work on individual and group projects. Pupils are regularly involved in creating large-scale scenery for school performances, working alongside adults and contributing their ideas to such pieces of work. A recent project to produce a tiled mosaic for the new sensory garden involved every pupil and the resulting piece of work is of a high standard and a very attractive feature.
77. In **design and technology**, although little work was available to see, good emphasis is placed on the skills of design and evaluation of projects. For example, a display of paper masks in the hall from the Year 2/3 class shows that pupils have considered their designs carefully. Following the making stage, they have reflected on their results with ideas and comments as to what they found difficult, what they like about their mask and how they might improve on it. Even more valuable is that pupils learn to constructively evaluate each other's work, thus learning from their friends. Pupils in the Year R/1 class have built imaginative lollypop stick rafts for their teddy to float on and the links with science and design and technology have been explored well. In a mathematics lesson, in the Year 2/3 class, it was evident that pupils are familiar with how to set about solving problems as they considered the design of their house for a dog. The overall standards of the work seen are above expectations.
78. Since the last inspection the school has been unable to find a solution to the lack of hall space. Because the opportunities for indoor **physical education** provision are sometimes limited, pupils have to take part in sessions outside, which is not always appropriate in adverse weather conditions. In one of the lessons seen, pupils from Year 3 warmed up appropriately in preparation for their netball activities and knew the importance of this. The netball coach skilfully introduced the basic rules and skills pupils required to play the game. By the end of this lesson most pupils had a firm grasp of how to pass the ball and play as a team. Pupils' achievement in the Year 2/3 class was very good as pupils practised their skipping skills enthusiastically, listening carefully as to how to co-ordinate the jumps with the turning rope. Behaviour is nearly always very good and in the lessons observed there was a due regard for safety. Pupils respond well to the teachers' instructions and enjoy their lessons. Strengths and interests of specialist teachers and other adults in the school with particular expertise are used well to support teaching and learning. The school is aware of the need to ensure that coaches who are not qualified teachers are adequately supervised when teaching pupils.

## **MUSIC**

Provision in music is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management are very good.
- Pupils receive very good teaching from music specialists.
- Pupils enjoy performing to a very high standard.

### **Commentary**

79. The standards in music at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well above expectations. Achievement is very good. All pupils experience a rich musical curriculum and they compose and play music to a very high standard. It is a strength of the school and has improved since the last inspection.
80. In assemblies, the quality of pupils' singing is joyful and of a very high standard. During the whole-school singing assembly, all pupils joined in and clearly enjoyed performing. They sang a song in two parts with ease and sang the very modern school song, which includes a rap section, with good expression and a sense of fun. Equally, all pupils sat quietly to listen to a lengthy piece of instrumental music. As a result of the very good teaching, pupils respond enthusiastically and enjoy learning. The talented co-ordinator uses her expertise to manage and lead the subject and her very high expectations result in the high achievement throughout the school. Because she leads on the teaching throughout the school, she has a very good awareness of pupils' attainment and uses the higher-attaining pupils to model musical skills to others. Pupils of all abilities are successfully encouraged to achieve well because the teaching is of a very good quality. Very good planning ensures that there is good curricular linkage with other subjects. In an excellent lesson, older pupils explored cyclic patterns often found in African music using tuned and percussion instruments and the final performance was of a very high standard. In another very good lesson, younger pupils developed their awareness of different sounds using percussion instruments. They successfully composed short musical phrases to portray the sounds of fireworks and hot air balloons. Pupils clearly understood and used musical terms such as timbre, dynamics, pitch and tempo accurately. The good ranges of resources are well used, maintained and attractively stored to be accessible to all.
81. Almost half of the pupils in the school take extra music lessons. Specialist teachers come into school and teach a wide range of different instruments, including the flute, recorder, guitar, cello and violin. Negotiations have taken place since the last inspection and some of these lessons take place before school and during break times, and at other times to fit in with the timetable more appropriately. Music clubs further enrich the subject. The whole school shares musical success and musicians take part in a variety of special events. For example, the school choir has sung in the local town theatre, performed at the Royal Albert Hall, and performs in a local old people's home regularly.

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

82. No lessons were seen in this area of the school's work, so no judgement is made about overall provision. The school sees pupils' personal development as an important part of its work and this is reflected well in its very good ethos. Provision for personal, social and health education underpins the whole curriculum and discussions, for example, on health and fitness occur in science and physical education lessons. The school is considering working towards the healthy schools' initiative to support current provision. The current programme includes work on diet, health and hygiene, developing good relationships, dealing with strong emotions, sex, drugs and personal safety. Regular visits from the school nurse and other public services enrich the work of the school and add well to pupils' learning. The school council is an active group of pupils who promote initiatives that include fundraising activities and the school regularly consults with pupils about developments they would like to see in the school.

## **PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

*Inspection judgement*

*Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
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How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</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	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
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).*