

# INSPECTION REPORT

**St James' Church of England Voluntary Aided Infant  
School**

Tunbridge Wells

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118725

Headteacher: Mrs Judith Lees

Lead inspector: Jo Cheadle

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Inspection number: 257683

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	210
School address:	Sandrock Road Tunbridge Wells Kent
Postcode:	TN2 3PR
Telephone number:	01892 522301
Fax number:	01892 549271
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Jim Stewart

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. James' C of E is an average sized infant school with 210 boys and girls between the ages of four and seven. The majority of pupils come to the school from the immediate locality. The area is favourable in its social and economic context and is made up of mainly owner occupied properties. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, is well below the national average. Eighty per cent of the pupils are from white British homes. There are a few pupils from other backgrounds, including white Irish and European, mixed white and Caribbean, Asian and Chinese families. While some pupils speak English as an additional language, there are no pupils who are in the early stages of learning the language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements to support their needs, is lower than the national average. Standards on entry to the school are generally above expected levels. The school is involved in a number of national and local development initiatives, including Active Mark, Healthy Schools, Network Learning Community and We're Writers.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23233	Jo Cheadle	Lead inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language English Science
13895	Angela Smith	Lay inspector	
32136	Lesley Brookes	Team inspector	Foundation Stage <sup>1</sup> Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
31421	Sue Rogers	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education History Geography Personal, social and health education and citizenship

The inspection contractor was:

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

St. James' is a very effective school where pupils achieve well and develop very good social and personal skills. The headteacher's excellent leadership promotes very effective teamwork and there has been very good improvement since the previous inspection. The local community, parents, other schools and governors all play an important role in the life of the school. Overall governance is very good. The school provides very good value for the money it receives.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' work in many subjects exceeds nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2.
- The headteacher has an extremely clear vision of what she wants to achieve at the school.
- The school is very effectively managed, ensuring that all pupils are fully involved and achieve well.
- Learning opportunities are very interesting for pupils and the school promotes their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development very well, encouraging very good attitudes, good behaviour and a very good school ethos.
- Teachers' specialist skills and knowledge are not always utilised to the full to ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress in all aspects of music and art.

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

The school was previously inspected in March 1998. Since this time there have been very good improvements to the overall provision. As a result, high academic and personal achievements have been maintained. Standards have risen in information communication and technology and mathematics. Pupils' writing skills have improved. The curriculum has been developed well to create interesting and exiting learning experiences for pupils. Developments have been very effectively co-ordinated and the overall leadership of the school has improved significantly.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	A	A	A	A
writing	A	B	A	B
Mathematics	A	A	A	A

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

Pupils achieve well at St. James'. Children begin in the reception classes with overall skills and knowledge that are better than those expected for their age. Good provision for all aspects of their learning ensures that the majority of children exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the reception year. Alongside academic skills and knowledge, children learn to take turns, share their belongings, consider the needs of others and listen carefully when the teacher gives instructions. Through Years 1 and 2, the school's very effective focus on developing

pupils' social, spiritual moral and cultural awareness ensures that their enthusiastic approach to learning is maintained, they have very good relationships with each other and they understand the importance of behaving well and strive to do so. This is fundamental to their good achievements in all subjects, and overall standards by the end of Year 2 are better than would be expected. Pupils with special educational need achieve well overall. Many pupils with special educational needs reach nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2 and this signifies very good achievement in relation to their starting levels. Pupils develop a breadth of knowledge and understanding that prepares them well for the junior school. They leave the infant school with high academic standards, very good personal and social skills, and they are well prepared for the next steps in their education.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **very good** education for its pupils. The overall quality of teaching is **good**. Teachers make very good use of personal and academic information about pupils to plan effective lessons that build on pupils' existing skills and knowledge, encouraging good learning for all. The curriculum is very good and high priority is given to making learning very interesting. Pupils enjoy their lessons and good links are made between subjects so that they understand the relevance of what they learn. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. Useful and accurate individual education plans support teachers in providing suitable work that promotes pupils' good progress. Very good attention is given to pupils' health and safety and general levels of care and welfare are very high. The school's accommodation is very attractive and maintained very well. The school has very strong links with many parents, the community and other schools and these have a significant impact on pupils' achievements.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of school are **very good**. The headteacher's extremely clear vision for the school drives the work of the school purposefully. She is an excellent leader who provides very good opportunities for staff to improve their talents in order to support pupils' learning effectively. Senior and middle managers support her very well in maintaining the school's very good ethos, at the same time as continually improving the overall provision and raising standards. Governors are very knowledgeable, know the school very well, are highly supportive of the staff and promote the school very positively. Overall governance of the school is very good. Long-term developments and day-to-day business are very well managed. Administrative staff carry out their duties very efficiently and provide a very pleasant welcome to visitors and parents.

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

Parents are very happy with the opportunities provided for their children and the standards they achieve. Many help out in lessons and are very supportive of school events and activities. Children are very proud of their school. They think that their school is a very happy place and they feel safe and cared for. They show great enjoyment in their work and have very good relationships with their teachers.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The school has a very good understanding of what it does well and where it needs to improve. The priorities for development are identified in a very detailed action plan.

Currently, what the school needs to do to improve further is to make better use of teachers' specialist skills, talents and knowledge to ensure that pupils have consistently interesting, exciting and effective learning experiences in subjects such as music and art and design, so that their overall achievements are consistently good.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in subjects**

Children in the Foundations Stage (reception classes) achieve well and the majority exceed the goals for their early learning<sup>2</sup>. Pupils throughout the school achieve well to reach standards that are better than nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2. They develop very good personal and social skills that support them in their academic achievements and future learning. Pupils with special gifts and talents do well at the school. Those with special educational needs make good gains on their starting levels and many reach nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2.

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

- For the past 4 years, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels or better in national tests has been well above the national average.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well because the school focuses clearly on providing broad and interesting experiences that promote their personal and social development hand-in-hand with academic progress.
- Standards in all subjects are better than nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2.
- While pupils do well to reach good standards in singing and develop a good knowledge of artists and their work, the skills and talents of staff and parents are not always used as effectively as they might be to improve pupils' overall achievements in these subjects.

#### **Commentary**

1. The school has a very clear understanding of what children know and can do when they start in the reception classes. Overall levels are better than would be expected on starting school, but some children find working as part of a large group something of a challenge. Teachers understand that they must build on good levels of knowledge and understanding, but also support children in their personal and social development to ensure that their motivation, independence, behaviour and collaborative skills are equally well developed. The school provides successfully for children's all round development in the reception classes and the majority exceed the goals expected for learning by the end of the year. Through Years 1 and 2, great emphasis is placed on maintaining high academic standards while encouraging consistently positive attitudes to learning and a lively interest in school. Here too, the school is successful. Pupils' individual needs are quickly recognised and catered for. Those with special needs are supported sensitively and effectively. Teachers understand that pupils learn in different ways and plan to meet these needs. Because the school has a determined approach to including all pupils, and because pupils with specific needs are well supported, standards remain high by the end of Year 2 and the proportion of pupils who reach the expected level or higher in national tests is consistently above or well above the national average.

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<sup>2</sup> Early Learning Goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They mainly refer to achievements children make in connection with: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

## Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.9 (18.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.0 (15.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.3 (18.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 69 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Pupils do well at the school because their learning is interesting and enjoyable. All experiences encourage academic progress alongside the development of personal, social and citizenship skills. Pupils are encouraged to reach high levels, but there is a very firm understanding that expectations should be realistic and appropriate to the age of the pupils. By the age of seven, pupils build successfully on their starting levels and the majority reach standards that are better than would be expected for their age. Some pupils with special educational needs do very well in relation to their starting levels, because additional support enables them to reach the nationally expected levels in literacy and numeracy. Moreover, at the end of Year 2, pupils have developed high levels of confidence, they are inquisitive and use their initiative, and they work positively with each other and independently. These characteristics serve the pupils well when they transfer to the junior school.
3. While basic skills in literacy and numeracy are very important to the school, pupils are encouraged to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding equally in all subjects of the curriculum. Pupils achieve well because their knowledge is broad and deep and they develop the skills to talk about what they know with real understanding. Standards by the end of Year 2 are better than nationally expected levels in all subjects.
4. While pupils do well to reach overall good standards, there are specific aspects of some subjects where standards are not as high as they might be because the school does not always make the most effective use of the individual skills and talents of members of staff to ensure that all pupils achieve well. This is the case in the development of musical composition and instrumental skills and some artistic techniques. While this is a very relative weakness in the overall standards and achievement picture, differences in pupils' achievements were noted in music and art and design lessons during the inspection. Pupils' achievements were good when lessons were led by subject specialists, or by teachers with particular skills and talents.

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

The pupils' attitudes to school, and their behaviour and personal development are **very good**. The pupils are confident, self-assured, friendly and polite and they enjoy coming to school. Pupils' attendance is in line with the national average.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are very positive.
- Relationships between pupils, and pupils and teachers, are very good.
- Behaviour is good overall, but there are times when teachers have to firmly remind pupils of the expected standards.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

**Commentary**

5. Children in the reception classes develop positive attitudes to their work and are interested in what they do. The pupils are enthusiastic about their school and appreciate the friendly and supportive treatment that they receive from their teachers. They enjoy all of their experiences in school. Large numbers of pupils take part in the range of clubs and activities that are available. In lessons, pupils work conscientiously and seek to do their best. Attendance is satisfactory and broadly similar to the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. The school supports parents and carers in encouraging the regular attendance of all pupils. Most arrive in good time for the beginning of the school day and are ready to begin lessons promptly. There have been no exclusions.

**Attendance**

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.5	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

6. Behaviour is almost always good because it is expected of the pupils. It is particularly good where the teaching is stimulating and fully engages them. On occasions, in lessons that do not fully capture their interest, pupils do not always behave appropriately and are less able to concentrate. At times, individual pupils have to be reminded that their personal needs cannot always immediately be responded to, and this is a hard lesson to learn for some. Pupils' conduct during breaks is sensible and responsible. Their efforts and good behaviour are recognised and celebrated by praise, and through the awarding of points. Relationships between pupils are good. They are co-operative and mutually supportive. They get on well together when at play and yet are suitably competitive when it is appropriate. Incidents of anti-social behaviour are very rare. Pupils become suitably mature by the time they leave the school.
7. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Art and music, as well as aspects of lessons, contribute well to their appreciation of the world around them. They particularly enjoy dance in many forms, creative as well as traditional dances from other countries, such as Greece. They welcome a range of visiting musicians, including performers from the junior school. Reception class pupils gasped in wonder at the newly hatched chicks in their classroom. Assemblies give pupils very good opportunities for

reflection and contemplation. They are developing well their understanding of the values of friends and family.

8. Pupils develop a very clear understanding of right and wrong through the example of all the adults in the school. Expectations are prominently displayed through class rules and are consistently reinforced. The ethos of care and consideration for others pervades the school at all levels. Teachers and lunch-time supervisors have 'Good Books' in which to record instances of care for others and really good behaviour.
9. The pupils' social development is very good because of the very wide range of experiences in which they participate. The range of extra curricular activities and visits out of school is very good. Pupils develop respect for others and their opinions, and an understanding, appropriate for their age, of today's moral and social issues. A 'buddy' scheme ensures that all feel included in play at break times and the school council has a voice in many aspects of the school's day-to-day organisation.
10. The pupils' cultural development is well provided for through religious education lessons, which include investigation of various faiths and cultures. Reading schemes, photographs and posters extend awareness of various lifestyles. Visits to places of worship, such as the local church, are used to provide insight about how people worship. Pupils visit relevant places of interest related to their own and others' heritage. The range of visitors to school, for example, African drummers and storytellers, further enriches pupils' cultural development.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

Pupils are provided with a very high quality of education. Teaching and learning are good overall. The curriculum is very well planned and interesting for pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are very well cared for, supported and guided in their education. Very good links with parents, the local community and other schools have a significant impact on pupils' achievements.

### **Teaching and learning**

The overall quality of teaching is **good** and pupils learn effectively. Teachers make very good use of assessment to plan for new learning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The basic skills of many subjects are taught well, so that pupils quickly establish a firm foundation of essential knowledge and understanding that enable good progress to higher levels.
- Teachers have realistic and very clear expectations for pupils of varying abilities and work is planned well to support and challenge learning at an appropriate level.
- Links between subjects are used very well to make learning relevant and very interesting for pupils.
- In a few lessons, teaching assistants did not contribute effectively enough to pupils' learning.
- The pace of some lessons observed was slow and pupils' found difficulty in concentrating.

### **Commentary**

11. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of the basic steps in learning to ensure good achievement. They introduce new learning clearly and build on new concepts layer by layer so that pupils have a firm foundation of knowledge and understanding. Teachers are skilled at checking that pupils have understood accurately before moving on. They ensure that learning is consolidated before challenging pupils to move on. This not only ensures that pupils learn well, but also develops confidence and self-esteem.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7	14	6	0	0	0

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

12. Teachers know their pupils very well, both in terms of the standards they reach in their work and their personal characteristics and needs. They make very good use of this information to plan lessons that are suitably challenging for pupils of varying abilities. The school's procedures are very thorough and teachers' make consistent and very good use of tracking information to plan effectively for the full range of pupil ability. There is a clear recognition that the highest attaining pupils in school need also to develop appropriate age-related social and personal skills and interests. While teachers' expectations are consistently high, the challenge to achieve high standards is not at the expense of destroying pupils' enjoyment of learning and the opportunity to have fun at school. Pupils with special educational needs are supported sensitively and effectively, and because suitably levelled work is provided for them, they confidently join in with new learning.
13. Pupils learn well because teachers make lessons relevant to their age, interests and experiences. Links between subjects are used very effectively to make learning meaningful and relevant. For example, in a geography lesson observed, learning of geographical knowledge took place alongside the development of personal, social and citizenship skills as pupils discussed and found out about climate, food crops and typical exports and imports of food produce to and from Greece. They learned that climate determines the types of food grown in a country, how the people live, traditional customs and cultural differences and also that countries cannot survive in isolation. Pupils recognised that good citizenship values interdependency. This new learning was possible because the teacher made relevant links between what the pupils knew from previous learning in other subjects.
14. Teaching assistants have participated in very relevant and useful training to develop their skills and knowledge. In the majority of lessons, it is very obvious that their support for pupils has a very positive impact on their learning. Overall, they are highly effective in their work. However, in a few lessons observed, teaching assistants were not as fully involved as they might have been and needed to be directed by the teacher to support pupils in the best way, despite having clear tasks to carry out during the lesson. At times they did not use their initiative to check pupils' behaviour or levels of concentration to ensure that the lesson ran smoothly. This meant that pupils' attention wandered at times and their learning was affected.

15. Where teaching and learning were graded as satisfactory, the common weakness was the pace of the lesson. When teachers talked for too long, explained and repeated group tasks to the whole class rather than for specific groups, and where the introduction to new learning was overly long, pupils sometimes found it difficult to concentrate and became restless. In some lessons, the behaviour of a few pupils also resulted in lulls in learning for the whole class. When pace was slow, the lessons lost their sparkle and pupils' attention wandered. When pupils were not actively involved, but required to listen for too long, their learning slowed and achievements and outcomes were satisfactory rather than good.

## **The curriculum**

The school has as a **very good** curriculum that is very well planned to meet pupils' needs in a highly effective way. Curriculum enrichment is very good. Accommodation and resources are also both very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a rich and varied curriculum with very good cross-curricular links.
- There is very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- The school provides a very good range of additional activities that enhance the curriculum and motivate pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning.
- The school environment is well maintained and provides a very stimulating well-organised learning environment.
- The school has a very inclusive planned curriculum that incorporates good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Relative weaknesses in the provision for some foundation subjects affect pupils' achievements in aspects of their work.

## **Commentary**

16. The curriculum is broad, balanced and carefully planned to promote pupils' high achievement. It makes exceptionally good use of cross-curricular links. This ensures that pupils see lessons as relevant to their experience. It also ensures the consolidation of basic skills through planned time for teaching mathematics and English in other subjects. All subjects meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has focussed well on the development of literacy, numeracy, and ICT skills and very good attention has been given to links between subjects. In art and design and music, the best use is not always made of existing staff skills to ensure that subject development and delivery are as effective as they might be. While this is a relative weakness in the school's curriculum, the impact is that in some lessons, pupils do not make as much progress as they should and this will affect their overall achievement. There is a very effective programme for the development of personal skills and social responsibility is planned and delivered through all subjects. The school's curriculum is very well matched to the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of the vast majority of pupils. Pupils are prepared well for the next stages in their education.
17. Pupils with special educational needs are catered for well. The schools' needs analysis and subsequent target setting ensures very good equality of access and opportunity for this group of pupils and their particular learning and behavioural needs are effectively supported. Activities are successfully tailored to meet their needs and additional help is provided where necessary. They have full access to all the activities on offer including extra-curricular experiences.

18. Since the previous inspection, the school has worked very successfully to enrich the curriculum through visits and clubs. Visits and activities are carefully planned to facilitate learning through first hand experience. Year 2 pupils, for example, were seen preparing and enjoying a Greek picnic that incorporated Greek dancing as part of a project on Greece. The whole school participates in an annual visit that boosts social skills as well as academic learning. Other initiatives have included the introduction of Brain Gym, a specialist programme to improve readiness for learning and co-ordination. Sport is also very well reflected in the programme of school clubs. Singing, dance and French are among other activities that are on offer every day. There has been very good improvement both in curriculum enrichment and in the curriculum overall since the previous inspection.
19. The quality and range of learning resources and accommodation is very good. There have been some very good improvements since the previous inspection. There are sufficient teachers and trained teaching assistants to meet the school's needs. Most teaching assistants are efficiently deployed and make a significant contribution to children's learning. The accommodation is well kept, attractively presented and supports the delivery of the curriculum very effectively, both indoors and out. The adventure play area for the Foundation Stage children is a particularly good asset. The quantity and quality of resources are very good overall and facilitate the delivery of the curriculum in all subjects.

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

The school has **very good** provision for promoting pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. The support and advice given to pupils is **very good**. The school is very active in seeking and valuing pupils' views, and involving them in the development of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Child protection procedures are very good.
- The school provides high quality support for promoting pupils' personal development.
- The school is very keen to seek, value and act on pupils' views.

### **Commentary**

20. The high quality care and support offered helps pupils to feel secure in school and this enables them to concentrate well during lessons and to achieve good standards. Pupils are well supervised during the school day and all adults in the school know pupils well. All members of staff are trained to deal with any medical or welfare needs of pupils and they are vigilant about the pupils in their care. All members of staff receive regular training in child protection procedures and they support the headteacher very effectively in this important aspect of care. Induction arrangements for the reception children and for pupils joining the school in other year groups are very good. Pupils settle into school routines very quickly and soon feel part of the school community.
21. The school liaises with support staff and outside agencies and most teaching assistants are thoughtfully deployed to give effective support for a variety of pupil needs. The school is keen to ensure that pupils can rely on all working in the school to listen to their concerns and to offer informal help and advice if necessary. Pupils find this helps them to feel safe and sound in school. Praise and encouragement for pupils' academic and personal

achievements are a high priority in the school and teachers foster the development of personal and social skills very well. The school takes pupils' views seriously and is very good at involving them in putting forward ideas and projects in school. The very good procedures for the induction of new pupils take account of the individual needs of each child and enable pupils to make a good start in the school.

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

The school has **very good** partnerships with parents, the community and other schools.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is very keen to involve parents through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.
- The school provides high quality information for parents about the work of the school and pupils' progress.
- The school has very constructive links with partner schools, colleges, the parish and the local community.

### **Commentary**

21. Parents have a high opinion of the school and appreciate the school's warm and welcoming environment. The headteacher deals with concerns or complaints immediately. Parents value the open relationships in the school and feel positive about approaching staff when necessary. Many parents work hard to support the school's provision, both in school and at home. There is a very active Parent Friends Association and this arranges many social and fundraising activities for parents and pupils. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are very well involved in discussions and decisions made relating to their children. The school values and respects parents concerns and comments and works with parents very effectively to ensure that good provision is made for each child and they are well included in all that the school has to offer.
23. The school provides clear and helpful information for parents, including good written annual reports to inform parents of how well their children are doing. Most school information is also made available through the school website. This encourages parents to support their children's learning at home and helps to raise pupils' achievement. The school is very active in gaining parents' views on a range of issues and frequently engages with them in informal dialogue and workshops with the aim of encouraging parents to take a dynamic role in supporting their children's education.
24. The school has very well-developed partnerships with local schools and these have resulted in the development of numerous very successful shared events and initiatives. There are highly productive links with the local colleges and community, and the many visitors to the school enrich the curriculum provision and give pupils valuable insights into the wider world. The well-developed partnership with the on-site linked junior school also provides opportunities for pupils to develop confidence and social skills. This provision enables most pupils to enjoy a smooth transition into the next stage of their education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**



The leadership and management of the school are **very good**. The headteacher is an excellent leader, inspiring, motivating and developing her staff as far as she can. The senior management team supports her very well. Teamwork is a strength of the school. The governing body supports the school very well and governance overall is very good. Improvement in leadership and management since the previous inspection has been very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership and vision provided by the headteacher is excellent.
- Management by the headteacher, senior management team and key co-ordinators is very good.
- Very good performance management, excellent monitoring procedures and very good staff development are highly effective in improving the work of the school.
- Governors support the school very well and are exceptionally knowledgeable about the school.
- Strategic planning does not make explicit enough links with improving pupils' achievement.

### **Commentary**

25. The headteacher has outstanding vision and manages the school very effectively. She has created a strong team of staff that work very well together, continuously striving to improve. The headteacher is very good at empowering staff through personal example and through very purposeful identification of staff needs and training. As a result, staffing is stable and staff enjoy working in the school and are clearly developed very successfully. Performance management is used very effectively to support these objectives.
26. The senior managers work very well together and all manage their own responsibilities and subjects very effectively. Subject management is good overall and particularly effective in English and mathematics. The management of the provision for music, while satisfactory overall, does not always ensure that teachers' specialist skills are utilised effectively. Day-to-day management systems are very efficient and the school runs smoothly. Administrative support is very well organised and carried out professionally and pleasantly. Data is very well used to track pupil performance and to ensure that each pupil's needs are met. An excellent system for monitoring of lessons ensures work in all subjects is looked at and evaluated on a regular basis. Targets for improvement are set as a result, and effective action is taken subsequently to ensure continuous improvement.
27. Very good performance management systems ensure that all staff are part of a learning community and their skills, knowledge and understanding are continuously developed. Considerable time has been spent in training teaching assistants and this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning in most cases. Very good staff attitudes and relationships throughout the school result in a school ethos and atmosphere that is highly conducive to learning. The site manager works very hard to maintain this very effective learning environment and, together, the staff have succeeded in delivering good overall improvement in the school since the previous inspection.
28. School strategic planning identifies relevant priorities and includes detailed and useful subject plans. However, the school improvement plan is a very lengthy document and therefore not user friendly. Most importantly, the links between the development work planned and the impact of action on standards and achievement are not always made

clear enough. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to measure the difference that has been made to pupils' achievements as a result of actions taken.

29. Governors are very well informed and extremely clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Together with all the staff they have taken a substantial role in writing the school development plan and they monitor this systematically at meetings. They also make regular visits to liaise with teachers and monitor different aspects of the curriculum, making very thorough and useful reports to inform school development. Governors have a firm handle on the school's finances and there are clear procedures for ensuring that best value is gained from financial decisions taken.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	510,664
Total expenditure	455,437
Expenditure per pupil	2,629

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	46,311
Balance carried forward to the next	55,226

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

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

The overall provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

30. The pupils in the reception class receive a good start to their education. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed and there are very good plans for further improvement. Very good quality planning and assessment systems contribute to the effectiveness of these early years of education. Standards on entry generally cover an above average spectrum. The majority of the children are assessed as being above average, with particular strengths in their speech and language and general communication skills. By the end of the reception year, most children will have exceeded the goals set for their early learning.

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

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

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

- Children develop levels of personal independence well.
- Children develop effectively the ability to work collaboratively.
- Children concentrate for long periods aided by an interesting and stimulating range of activities.

#### **Commentary**

31. Most of the children are confident and have established good relationships with one another, the class teachers and the classroom assistants. The focus on sharing and taking turns means that they behave very well and are encouraged to be considerate of others. Teaching and learning are good and this encourages pupils' good achievements. Most children will exceed the expectations for learning in this aspect by the end of the reception year. Children's interest and attention is captured well by the enthusiasm of the staff and by the imaginative use of resources. These qualities, together with intelligent and sensitive planning, ensure that concentration is fostered and maintained well. All the children receive plenty of praise and encouragement. This is effective in building up their self-esteem and confidence. Their personal independence is effectively fostered and children were observed preparing the table, amassing resources and equipment, and putting on their own aprons for a 'junk' modelling session.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

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

- Children's writing skills are promoted well.
- Children's speaking and listening skills are developed effectively.
- Early reading skills are encouraged well.

## Commentary

32. Teaching and learning are good overall and children achieve well to reach standards that are better than would be expected. Good opportunities are provided for children to extend their speaking skills through all areas of learning. Most already have well-developed speaking and listening skills and talk enthusiastically about what they are doing, as well as sharing news from home. They love being read to, and readily offer their own ideas and opinions which adults treat with interest and respect. Reading and writing are encouraged effectively in a variety of ways. Children were making their own books about mini-beasts that they had created and describing their life cycles. Those children whose reading skills are in the early stages are encouraged well. They all have reading books and many are beginning to read simple texts. They are encouraged to take home books to share with parents and relatives. Classrooms have a good range of picture books, fiction and non-fiction, which are readily available and accessible to the children. All children write their names unaided and their letter formation is virtually always correct. Many write independently. Good use is made of classroom computers to support children's early reading and writing skills.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children count with confidence.
- Their number skills are used across a good range of curriculum areas.
- Their mathematical vocabulary is developing well.

## Commentary

33. Children make good progress in their early understanding of number, shape and measure and achieve well in relation to their starting levels. Most children exceed the goals for early learning. Many handle simple calculations with numbers to ten and 20 and the more able handle quite large numbers competently. Games and puzzles, specifically designed to support early understanding of number, are available. Teaching and learning are good overall. The staff use resources effectively to support number work and children are enthusiastic about their lessons. They created 'snakes' from a range of different resources, such as bricks and play dough, and used paper caterpillars to compare the lengths of the snakes. The children progressed to measuring their snakes using metre sticks and metre measuring wheels. Good use of a range of resources captures and holds children's interest effectively. Their use of mathematical vocabulary is developed well.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to explore and learn about their world in the classroom, outdoors and further afield.
- Children have good understanding of simple scientific concepts and can apply them successfully.

## Commentary

34. Children make good progress in this area of learning because they have plenty of opportunities to experience a wide range of activities. This is as a direct result of good teaching that ensures good achievement over time. Standards are better than would be expected at the end of the reception year. Children show a curiosity and interest in all activities presented to them. There was great excitement as chicks hatched from eggs kept in an incubator in the classroom. The children effectively learn about their world by observing, handling and discussing a variety of objects. They plant sunflower seeds and vegetables in their outdoor classroom, making close observations of seedling growth. All activities are used well to extend the children's vocabulary, as they describe what they see and experience. They quickly learn to use computers and are developing good control of the mouse. All the adults use questioning well to develop children's vocabulary and use of language to explain their thoughts and ideas, and to encourage children to think about their world and appreciate the wonder of it.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills through a range of activities both indoors and outside.
- Children develop their expertise in the use of pencils, scissors and other small tools very well.

## Commentary

35. Children have access to an excellent outdoor classroom. It includes many different activity areas, such as climbing equipment and a slope and turning circle on which to ride bikes and scooters. The area is in frequent use and is a valuable asset to the early years curriculum. There are regular sessions in the school hall for gymnastics and dance. Planned physical education sessions are used to develop children's large muscle skills and co-ordination and good use is made of the equipment in the school hall. Small movement skills are developed through the use of pencils, brushes, scissors, and small construction apparatus. Children have good opportunities to manipulate a range of small equipment with dexterity. As a result of consistently good teaching, children make good progress in their learning and achieve well in relation to their starting levels. Most children exceed the goals for early learning by the end of the reception class.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have plenty of opportunities for imaginative play.
- Access to a range of resources for creative work promotes freedom and independence.

## Commentary

36. Children have a wide range of opportunities to develop their creativity. Teaching is of a consistently good standard and children's learning is good. By the end of the reception year, most children will exceed the goals set for them. They use a wide variety of pencils, paints and collage to create images. Work on display shows examples of many different techniques and media. Children handle clay and play-dough and use a variety of tools to create different effects. They learn to sing a number of songs and rhymes, and are given opportunities to listen to music as well as playing percussion instruments. They have many good opportunities to use their imagination through role-play. There is a good stock of puppets and dressing-up clothes to promote imagination and the role-play areas frequently reflect topics. At present the children play enthusiastically in the 'mini-beast world' and 'Noah's Ark', acting out the roles with gusto. Children's achievements in this area of learning are good.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1

### ENGLISH

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

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is very well led and managed.
- The curriculum is very interesting and pupils enjoy their lessons.
- Speaking and reading skills are much better than would be expected by the end of Year 2.
- There is good focus on the development of creative and imaginative skills in writing.

#### Commentary

37. Pupils achieve well in English to reach levels that exceed national expectations by the end of Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively and make good gains on their starting levels. They most often reach the nationally expected level by the end of Year 2. The subject is very effectively led and developed by a knowledgeable and well-organised co-ordinator who clearly understands pupils' needs. Her development of the subject has focussed very appropriately on creating a broad and interesting curriculum that promotes pupils' interest, enthusiasm and enjoyment in learning. Pupils achieve well, because work in English capitalises on their well-developed reading and speaking skills to incorporate themes and ideas from many other subjects that make lessons interesting. For example, grammar and punctuation skills are taught through discussion relating to social and personal issues or through interesting topic work that links learning in many subjects. During the inspection, teaching and learning in English were of a good quality, but wider evidence from pupils' work, teachers' planning, general subject development and consistently high national test results would suggest that teaching and learning in English are generally of a very good standard. Improvements since the previous inspection have been good.
38. Pupils' have very good reading skills and speak very accurately and confidently. They begin school with good levels in both of these areas, but the school does well to maintain pupils' interest while developing skills further. Reading resources are carefully chosen to attract boys and girls and there is a good range of books to promote an understanding of multi-cultural issues. Non-fiction books are used very effectively to promote knowledge and understanding in many subjects, both through guided reading sessions and in daily opportunities for pupils to simply browse and enjoy books. Similarly, discussion and question and answer sessions are used very effectively not only to practise and amend spoken English, but also to consolidate new learning. Talking partners, with whom pupils can try out what they want to say before making a contribution to the whole class discussion, not only allow pupils the opportunity to make sure that the information they talk about is accurate, but also that the way they say it is clear and intelligible.
39. The current focus on developing creativity and imagination in pupils' writing is promoting effective learning and improving standards. Teachers have participated in very useful professional development and research that has brought about good developments in writing. Careful analysis of pupils' work has indicated where there are some gaps in the achievements of boys and girls and this had been a key area for improvement. Writing tasks are very well supported by opportunities to talk and create stories orally. Story boxes, where themes are represented in a decorated shoe box, are used very effectively



by pupils to play and act out stories that lead to writing activities where appropriate. Because children enjoy what they do, they are motivated to use their imagination and be creative. In creating stories, they mimic language from books they have read or stories they have heard. As they become confident in using this language in a spoken format, they begin to use extended vocabulary and more complex ideas in writing. Teachers use a wide variety of writing activities, such as creating laminated instruction cards, books and newspaper reports that enable pupils to try out and improve their skills without necessarily knowing that the lesson is a writing lesson. In one class, pupils happily wrote lengthy notes about a customer's holiday requirements in the class tour agency, a task they most probably would have found to be a great chore had it not been seen to part of their game.

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

40. Language and literacy skills are promoted very well through all subjects of the curriculum. Teachers effectively introduce and use subject specific vocabulary. They help pupils to develop grammar and punctuation skills through interesting and enjoyable activities in many lessons. Reading is used as a tool to access new knowledge from books and other information sources. Pupils' good skills on entry to the school are fully exploited and extended to ensure that they gain the most from learning in other subjects and are well prepared for future education.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Assessment of mathematics is very good. Pupils' progress is very well tracked and suitable targets are set for the end of Year 2.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- There are very good links with other subjects, especially ICT.
- Homework is used very well to support learning in lessons.
- Teaching of mathematics is good, resulting in good learning and achievement, especially for a significant proportion of pupils with special needs

### **Commentary**

41. By the end of Year 2 standards in mathematics are above nationally expected levels. All pupils make good progress from the end of Year 1, but pupils with relatively weaker skills and special needs make especially good progress. Test results for 2003 indicate that the school has a much smaller proportion of pupils achieving low scores, than other similar schools. It also has a much larger than average proportion of pupils achieving Level 3 scores. Overall results are well above national averages. The majority of pupils make good progress throughout the school because the quality of teaching and learning is good.
42. The school makes very effective use of their analysis of test results to ensure that suitable provision is made for all pupils. Individual targets are set for the end of Year 2, enabling teachers to be very clear about work to be covered and to support pupils with special needs. The scheme of work has been revised to ensure that the large proportion of pupils entering Year 1 with good mathematical skills for their age are consistently stretched.

43. Mathematics teaching throughout the school is good. The teachers benefit from continuously good training and development and make good use of the structure of the national Daily Mathematics Lesson. There is a good amount of work in the books indicating coverage of all the expected areas. The work is beautifully laid out and most marking is well annotated, noting what pupils can do. Pupils were observed being encouraged to use their own methods of calculation, as would be expected but there is not enough evidence of this in recorded work. Teachers make very good use of resources to deliver interesting and relevant lessons that engage pupils. Lessons are well planned to match pupil ability but teachers and teaching assistants are not always sufficiently aware of what is happening in each group during independent work. Good practical homework is linked carefully to class topics and is very successful in encouraging interest in the lessons. Excellent classroom displays reinforce mathematical processes and vocabulary.
44. Pupil attitudes to mathematics are generally good because of good relationships. Pace flags at times in lessons and then pupils become less engaged. Pupils are very clear about what they are learning and ways in which they can improve because the school is part of an assessment project that is successfully promoting these objectives.
45. The teacher in charge is enthusiastic and very well organised. She maintains consistent, careful monitoring and goes to great lengths to support and develop staff. She is also involved in, and successfully promotes, new local initiatives. There has been good improvement in mathematics since the previous inspection, when pupil achievement was judged to be satisfactory.

#### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

46. Very good links have been made between mathematics and other subjects. Links between mathematics and ICT are particularly strong, having been planned explicitly into the curriculum. Software is carefully selected so as to directly support the learning in mathematics lessons. Other links are not explicit, but staff make good use of subjects such as geography and science to promote and develop mathematical thinking.

### **SCIENCE**

The provision for science is **good**.

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

- The subject is well led and managed.
- Pupils' skills in experimenting and investigating are developed effectively.
- Good use is made of the school and local environment.
- Pupils' individual work does not always clearly demonstrate how well they are doing in science.

#### **Commentary**

47. Pupils achieve well in science to reach standards that exceed the nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2. Good leadership and management have ensured suitable changes to how and what is taught. As a result, work in science links well with other subjects and resources effectively support teaching and learning.

48. Teaching is good in science and pupils learn well in lessons. There is very good focus on the development of pupils' skills in experimentation and investigation and this supports their overall good achievement and attainment. Teachers effectively encourage pupils to find out for themselves and begin to answer their own questions through research and experiments. Pupils are excited by these opportunities and develop increasingly effective skills in organising their work. Pupils have ample opportunity to carry out investigations. They make well-informed predictions using their scientific knowledge and understanding and devise ways to test the predictions they make. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a fair test and explain clearly why fair testing is important. Pupils make good links between what they learn in science and other subjects, for example, geography, art and design and design and technology.
49. The school has superb grounds that are used well to support learning in science. Pupils are highly motivated to find out about plants, trees and mini-beasts around the school and specific areas have been effectively cultivated to support this work. As a result, pupils learn facts about life forms very successfully and understand why certain mini-beasts can only be found on certain types of grass or undergrowth, for example.
50. The school has given careful consideration to encouraging consistently good attitudes to work in science and an enjoyment in learning. There is recognition that the need to record work in every lesson is rather tedious and sometimes spoils the joy of investigations and experiments. However, because pupils do well in the subject and develop high-level skills, it is important that the school has a very good record of these successes in order to track pupils' progress and achievements over time. Work in individual pupils' books sometimes shows evidence of standards at the same level, especially in the recording of experiments. In discussion with pupils, however, it is extremely clear that the learning taking place in a recent experiment was at a much higher level than that at the start of the year. These levels were not demonstrated in all samples of work, and on transfer to the junior school it would be difficult to show evidence for certain pupils' high levels, even though teacher's have very accurately assessed their achievements.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Resources for the subject are good.
- Staff are enthusiastic, confident and knowledgeable.
- Good links are made with other subjects.
- Resources are not used as well as they might be for whole-class teaching.

### **Commentary**

51. Standards are above expectations at the end of Year 2. Improvements in the teaching of ICT and in the resources available have been good since the previous inspection. There are computers in each classroom and these are used well to support and extend work during lessons. The school has valid reasons for not developing a dedicated ICT suite, but teachers do not always use available resources, such as the digital projector, to support whole-class teaching. When children have to gather round one classroom

computer, it is difficult for all of them to see clearly, despite careful seating arrangements. Some pupils become fidgety and lose concentration and this affects how well they learn.

52. Pupils use a range of tools when drawing. They use word-banks to help them write and produce text with a range of punctuation and structures. They search and find information on CD-ROM and on the Internet. Pupils use programmable devices and are becoming adept at the use of digital cameras, using them to record their own work as well as producing material for lessons such as geography.
53. Pupils achieve well. They obviously enjoy their lessons in ICT and in the lessons observed most could do something new by the end of it. Their word processing skills improve noticeably as they get older, although in some cases keyboard skills are underdeveloped. Pupils show confidence in their use of ICT and more able pupils are producing simple reports for projects in other subjects, such as history, using text and graphics. They are introduced to an increasing variety of software.
54. Teaching and learning are good overall, and were consistently good in the lessons seen. The planning is good and is adapted from the plans to suit each class or year. The majority of lessons are good because teachers are familiar with the software and confident with the hardware. Teaching assistants have good levels of knowledge, enhanced by specific training, and are well deployed to help anyone with a problem.
55. ICT is well led and managed and suitably resourced. The whole school is committed to improvement. The budget is well spent and there are clear plans for development. The co-ordinator provides expertise and is a confident role model for her colleagues. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. This subject has gone from a situation where teaching was limited, to every class having regular taught sessions together with opportunities to use ICT skills in other subjects.

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

56. The use of ICT across the curriculum is being developed well and examples were seen in many lessons. Collections of pupils' work shows clear links across a variety of subjects.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **History and geography**

No history lessons were seen, as geography was the focus for learning at the time of the inspection. However, the extent of pupils' good work in books and on display around the school, lengthy discussions with pupils and a thorough scrutiny of teachers' planning, clearly indicate that the provision for both subjects is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are very good links between the two subjects and with other subjects of the curriculum that make learning meaningful and very enjoyable.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and motivate pupils to be inquisitive and find out for themselves.

### **Commentary**

57. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their work in geography and history because lessons are really enjoyable and very interesting. In all lessons observed, the most significant strength was the exceptionally good links made between subjects that gave relevance and meaning to learning. In their topic about Greece, pupils knew not only that Greek salad was made with Feta cheese, but they also understood why Greek people use cheese made with goats' milk more often than cheese made with cows' milk. They talked confidently about the climate of Greece, the rocky terraces and the suitability of goats' feet for climbing. They could explain why olive trees grow well in hot climates. They made Greek salads and talked about the ingredients, revealing a real understanding of the Greek way of life. Greek dancing taught in physical education lessons encouraged pupils to develop their understanding of another culture to even greater depths. This new learning was consolidated and celebrated through the experience of a Greek picnic in the grounds of the school for all pupils in Year 2. Parents and younger siblings were invited to join the pupils. They ate Greek salad and pitta bread and drank fresh lemon juice. Greek music was played and pupils danced in the sunshine. This experience ensured that what they had learned would stay fresh in pupils' minds for a very long time. Standards are better than would be expected by the end of Year 2.
58. As no lessons were seen in history, overall judgements about teaching and learning cannot be made. Teaching and learning in geography are good. Teachers are skilled at providing experiences for pupils that leave lasting memories. They plan carefully to teach new skills and knowledge in a variety of ways that ensure pupils are all included in lessons and achieve well. Resources are used effectively to stimulate, enthuse and promote good learning. Support staff contribute effectively by asking relevant questions and show interest in what pupils think and know. In the lessons seen, teachers demonstrated good knowledge of the topic and this ensured that pupils demonstrated good historical and geographical understanding.

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

No lessons were seen in design and technology, and too few in physical education, to enable overall judgements to be made about provision in these subjects.

59. **Design and technology** was sampled through scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and the subject co-ordinator's file. The school follows a suitable programme of study covering all statutory aspects of the subject. Elements of design and technology are used well in other subjects. In art and design lessons, for example, pupils used their designs for sea creatures to organise materials and create sculptures where different methods of joining and securing were used.
60. Photographic evidence for **physical education**, as well as the co-ordinator's file and teachers' plans were studied. Two lessons, and parts of two more, were observed. Evidence indicates that the school provides suitable opportunities in all aspects of the statutory programme of study and pupils reach standards that are better than would be expected at the end of Year 2. As at the time of the previous inspection, the teaching of dance and pupils' enjoyment of dance activities are particularly positive.

### **Art and design**

The provision for art and design is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils throughout the school take part in a good range of art and design activities.
- Pupils reach standards that are above the nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2.
- Artistic skills are effectively developed alongside a broad knowledge and understanding of artists and their work.
- Pupils' work is valued and is attractively displayed in classrooms and around the school.
- The school does not always make the most effective use of the specialist skills of staff and parents to promote even better learning for pupils.
- Assessment effectively involves the pupils themselves.

## **Commentary**

61. Pupils take part in a good range of activities that successfully promote and extend their skills, knowledge and understanding, and provide good opportunities for them to work in both two and three dimensions. This ensures that they achieve well. Pupils are developing knowledge of the work of well-known artists, for example, producing their own seaside pictures in the style of Seurat. Pupils' work is attractively displayed around the school, and is often enhanced by interactive labels that draw the observer's attention to key skills, methods or other items of interest in the individual displays.
62. Teaching and learning in art and design are good. Lessons are well planned and presented. In the best lessons, teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and are successful in supporting pupils to develop the necessary skills for their independent work because they are able to demonstrate skilfully and effectively. They make good suggestions for ways in which pupils' work might be improved. There are generally good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of their classmates. In most classes, teachers encourage pupils to use sketches to practise newly acquired skills and for preparatory work, such as the collection of ideas and materials. Pupils have very positive attitudes to art and design, and are keen to talk about their work and to point out their contributions in classroom displays. They work well together in small groups and pairs, and share resources readily.
63. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management for the subject, and has carried out a range of monitoring activities. Through the use of questionnaires, pupils are involved well in assessing their own skills and abilities, as well as identifying skills that they found difficult. Although there have been some educational visits where pupils have been able to look at art work from different eras and cultures, the use of trips to support pupils' understanding of art in its widest sense is under-developed.

## Music

The provision for music is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils sing tunefully and know a broad repertoire of songs.
- The school has a dedicated music room, which is well-resourced.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to experience live performances.
- The expertise of the music specialist is not used as well as it might be across the school.

### Commentary

64. In assemblies, as well as during the lunchtime singing group, pupils were heard singing tunefully and with good understanding of rhythm and syncopation. Approximately 60 children attended the singing group, membership of which is voluntary. The session was led well by the headteacher and the music co-ordinator and the children were keen and enthusiastic. They sang a number of quite complicated songs with good awareness of diction, breathing and dynamics.
65. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In a very good lesson with a mix of reception and Year 1 children, pupils used the percussion instruments (as well as their voices and clapping and stamping) well to conjure up musical pictures of the sea in its many moods. They recalled a school visit to Hastings and discussed the sounds that they heard the sea make. They are learning how to write down their compositions in pictorial form and use them when they perform. Performances and assemblies for parents and relatives contribute to pupils' musical experiences
66. Some pupils are learning to play the recorder in an after-school group, led by a parent. There is currently no other instrumental teaching. Pupils from the adjacent junior school, who are learning to play a range of instruments, visit regularly to perform for the infants. They have also benefited from visits by a range of instrumentalists including brass players and African drummers.
67. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a part-time teaching post in the school, which means that she has not yet had sufficient time to influence the development of music across all classes. Assessment and monitoring of the subject are developing appropriately. Currently, most teachers are responsible for leading music sessions for their own classes. In the lessons observed, learning was more effective when a teacher with specialist skills led the class. Currently, however, specialist teaching is not used as effectively as it might be across the school.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

68. While no specific lessons were observed in this area during the inspection, the school places high priority on the development of pupils' personal and social skills, and an understanding of healthy lifestyles and the responsibilities of good citizenship. There is a clear programme of study for this work as a separate area of the curriculum, but in practice, evidence of the very good development of skills is clearly seen in many lessons. Pupils develop very good personal and social skills that support their overall achievements. Examples are recorded in numerous sections of this report.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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