

INSPECTION REPORT

ENGLISH MARTYRS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wakefield

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 108256

Headteacher: Mr Bernard Martin

Reporting inspector: Ms Marjorie Glynne-Jones
2918

Dates of inspection: 18th-20th June 2002

Inspection number: 195664

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior school

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Dewsbury Road
Wakefield
West Yorkshire

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Martin Conlon

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2918	Marjorie Glynne-Jones	Registered inspector	Art and design Music	Information about the school The school's results and achievements How well pupils are taught? How well the school is led and managed?
9907	Bill Orr	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21060	George Brown	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology (ICT) Physical education Special educational needs	
8203	Shelagh Halley	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Geography History	
10053	Janet Simms	Team inspector	English Design and technology Provision for pupils with English as an additional language Equality of opportunity	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

English Martyrs is a popular voluntary-aided Catholic primary school, with a nursery unit providing 52 part-time places. With 265 pupils on roll, the school is average in size, and has fairly equal numbers of boys and girls in each year group. It draws most of its pupils from the immediate locality, while about one in seven pupils travels some distance in order to attend a Catholic school. The number of pupils from ethnic minority families, and of those for whom English is an additional language, is very low. A below average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds, which while average overall in terms of social advantage, includes some where there is high social disadvantage. A very small number leaves and joins the school during the year. An average proportion of pupils has a statement of special educational needs and the overall proportion with special needs is well below average. Pupils' needs include difficulties with speech, learning and behaviour, and physical impairment. When pupils enter Year 1, their work shows above average attainment. The school has been awarded Investor in People status.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

English Martyrs provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils overall, with strength in the Foundation Stage. The school is enriched by the Christian ethos, and benefits from the headteacher's strong leadership. Standards are below average by Year 6. As a result of staffing difficulties and some weakness in the management and monitoring of teaching and learning, pupils do not achieve as well as they should over Years 3 to 6. The school has begun to tackle this effectively. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and good in the nursery and Years R to 2. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average by the end of the Foundation Stage and by Year 2 in the work in English and science.
- Pupils with special needs make good progress.
- The school's values are put into practice with outstanding commitment in its day-to-day life and work.
- The partnership with parents is very successful.
- Relationships are excellent and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- There is strong action to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

What could be improved

- Standards are below average by Year 6 except in English, science, music and physical education.
- The limited time allocated to 'non-core' subjects restricts pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' progress is restricted by the lack of consistency in the way assessments are carried out and by the lack of comments in teachers' marking to help pupils know how to improve.
- Accommodation for art and design, design and technology and music, and the lack of a library, limit pupils' learning.
- Requirements for the design and technology curriculum are not fully met.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in 1997, improvement is satisfactory. Overall results have risen at the same rate as national results. In 2001, higher attainers in Year 6 performed as well as they should in English tests, did well in science but underachieved in mathematics. On the issues concerning more able pupils, the range of books and the schemes of work, there has been satisfactory improvement. Not enough progress has been made in extending pupils' creative and investigative work, although this is currently being tackled.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	C	C
Mathematics	D	C	D	E
Science	C	E	B	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

- At Year 6 in 2001, while their point scores were average, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in English and mathematics was below average, although well below average overall in relation to pupils' results when they were in Year 2; a small number of lower attainers achieved well.
- At the higher level there was a difference: in English the proportion was average; in mathematics it was below average, but well below average when compared with pupils' Year 2 results.
- In science, the proportion reaching the expected level was above average, while average when compared with pupils' Year 2 results. At the higher level, it was average.
- Since the last inspection, boys' results have risen faster than the national results for boys, while girls' results have remained much the same as girls' results nationally.
- Overall, results are improving at the same rate as national ones.
- Targets for English and mathematics in 2001 were challenging, although not reached. Those for 2002 are challenging, particularly for mathematics, reflecting the determination to raise standards. The 2002 English results were almost on target.
- At Year 2 in 2001, results in reading and writing were above average when compared with all schools and with schools with similar social circumstances.
- In mathematics, both these comparisons show below average results.
- This group of Year 2 pupils included a high proportion of pupils with special needs.
- In the work seen, standards are above average in the Foundation Stage, average by the end of Year 2 and below average by Year 6.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory at the Foundation Stage and over Years 1 and 2, but unsatisfactory over Years 3 to 6. In Year 6, pupils make up much of the ground they had lost over Years 3 to 5.
- The school has recognised that there is underachievement; action has been taken over the last year to remedy this, with improvements evident in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 5.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: pupils enjoy school, respond positively to their tasks and take pride in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good: pupils behave in a self-disciplined way in lessons and around the school; they are courteous towards other pupils and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Good: relationships are excellent. Pupils' skills in showing initiative are satisfactory rather than good because there are not enough opportunities for these skills to be developed.
Attendance	Satisfactory: the school's figure for unauthorised absence is better than the national figure.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Satisfactory

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

- Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory in English, mathematics and science, and in most other subjects, although pupils' past work in Years 3 to 5 shows unsatisfactory teaching in mathematics, geography and history.
- The strengths in teaching and learning are in the Foundation Stage and in English and science in Years 1 and 2.
- The weakness is in design and technology in Years 3 to 6.
- Teachers manage pupils very well in science, geography and history.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy in all subjects reflects the strengths reported above.
- Assessment in lessons and the marking of pupils' work are general weaknesses so that pupils do not have a sufficiently clear idea about how to make improvements.
- Overall, teaching and learning were good or better in six out of ten lessons, and very good in one out of ten.
- No unsatisfactory teaching was seen.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory quality in Years 1 to 6 and very good provision for the nursery and reception classes and for activities outside lessons. However, the overall judgement has to be unsatisfactory because requirements are not sufficiently met for all subjects. The time allocation for subjects is not supporting pupils' development well enough.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: the school is quick to adapt to the particular needs of individual pupils so that they progress well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall with significant strengths for spiritual, moral and social development, to which pupils respond wholeheartedly. There is scope for strengthening the satisfactory provision for cultural development.

Aspect	Comment
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall: teachers know pupils well. The school deals appropriately with matters of health and safety, except for the formal recording and monitoring of risk assessments. Arrangements for assessments are satisfactory in English, mathematics and science, good in the Foundation Stage, but unsatisfactory for other National Curriculum subjects.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Very good: every opportunity is taken to increase parents' involvement and parents hold the school in extremely high regard. Some of the required information is omitted from the prospectus.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall: good for English, the Foundation Stage and special needs. The headteacher gives a very strong lead in determining the direction of the school's work, and the school's aims are a powerful basis for its day-to-day work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good: governors play a strong part in achieving the school's vision for its development and for the partnership with parents and the community. They are well informed about most areas of the school's work, but have not ensured that the requirements for design and technology are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory: very good for pastoral matters and regarding parents' involvement. In the last year, this has developed successfully in academic matters to tackle weaknesses in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and in taking effective action to ensure improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good: funding is generally used well to gain the best benefit for pupils' learning. The use of additional resources for literacy support is not timetabled to the best effect and the space used is cramped. Overall, staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory, although there are shortcomings in accommodation for art and design, design and technology and music and in resources for English, design and technology and non-fiction library resources. A library is lacking.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching is good. • The school is led and managed well. • Their children like school. • Children make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • Children are expected to work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better arrangements for homework. • A more interesting range of activities outside lessons.

There were returns from 41 per cent of parents and carers and six per cent attended the pre-inspection meeting.

Inspectors agree with the positive comments about parents' views. The positive comments about teaching, progress, leadership and management are partly borne out by the evidence from the inspection, although in Years 3 to 6, the picture is generally satisfactory rather than good. The

inspection team agrees with the comment about homework, but finds the range of activities outside lessons to be very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children's achievement in the Foundation Stage is good because the provision is good, particularly in the nursery. Pupils enter Year 1 with above average standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were reported as average at the beginning of Year 1. Children get off to a good start.
2. By the end of Year 2, where overall, average standards are reached in the work seen, above average standards are maintained in English and science, an improvement since the last inspection, although not in mathematics, where standards are average. The main reason for pupils' satisfactory achievement at this stage is the good teaching which leads to good learning. This is reflected in the Year 2 results in national tests which are rising at much the same rate as national results.
3. In Years 3 to 6, the picture is different. From Year 2, there is a fall in pupils' standards to below average overall by the end of Year 6, which was not identified by the school until recently, helped by the 2001 PANDA. There are a number of contributory factors. Over the last three years, the school has had to contend with a number of long-term absences among staff, including co-ordinators for subjects, and the attendant issue of managing supply cover. One long-term absence continues. During this period, appropriate action was taken when teachers' performance was not up to scratch, although the school acknowledges that the action was overdue. Governors have focused on the quality of their recruitment procedures, making three appointments for the current academic year. The evidence in pupils' past work is that there has been unsatisfactory teaching. However, although this was recognised as an issue about the quality of teaching, it was not recognised as an issue affecting the quality of learning. The effect on pupils' achievement was not picked up in time to prevent the fall in standards. It was, however, picked up in the last year, particularly in relation to mathematics, and a thorough action plan for improvement put in place. A good system for tracking individual progress has been implemented, using the results of national and optional tests. All the signs are that in mathematics, things are set to improve well, although this is not yet showing through in the 2002 Year 6 test results. Nonetheless, pupils' national test results in Year 6 are keeping pace with national results.
4. A further factor is the way the school organises its curriculum and timetable. It has responded as it should to diocesan requirements for religious education; to national initiatives for literacy and numeracy; and has carried out revision to the planning in all subjects in response to Curriculum 2000. However, in making adjustments and 'fitting everything in', inadequate attention has been given to the effect on pupils' learning and whether the arrangements will result in pupils achieving as they should given their prior attainment at the end of Year 2. The current arrangements do not make this possible.
5. There are two aspects of the school's provision which restrict pupils' achievement so that it is unsatisfactory by Year 6, although satisfactory at the end of Year 2. The arrangements for assessment do not ensure that teachers have a clear knowledge about how well pupils are doing over time in all subjects. Except in English, mathematics and science, assessments are not carried out systematically, which means that teachers' planning cannot be effectively targeted at improvement. Additionally, the school's emphasis on encouragement and on building pupils' self-esteem is often unhelpfully seen to preclude teachers giving them clear evaluations of

the strengths and weaknesses in their work. Consequently, pupils are not sufficiently helped through teachers' marking or through the comments in class to understand where and how they need to improve.

6. Pupils with special needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. In lessons and in special sessions to support their learning needs, they are taught well. In 1999 and 2000, a small number of pupils with a talent for mathematics was successfully entered for the higher level test. A list of gifted and talented pupils has yet to be finalised and planning is not always ensuring that they achieve as well as they should. By contrast, there is evidence in English, design and technology and music of higher attainers making satisfactory progress: they are provided with suitably challenging tasks in English lessons and many achieve well, especially in reading. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In Years 1 and 2, the very small number of pupils speaking English as an additional language progress as well as other pupils; they have quickly become fluent in English.
7. Staff are very clear about the targets they are setting for standards in Year 6. Pupils' achievement is now regularly tracked to show how they are moving forwards. Although the 2001 targets were not met, the school is confident that by 2003, pupils will be reaching the mathematics target. The work seen suggests this will be so.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Attitudes and behaviour are very good and personal development is good. The last inspection found that pupils were polite and friendly and responded positively to the structures and routines expected by the school. These attitudes have been maintained and pupils enjoy coming to school and learning. They arrive in good time and leave in a relaxed, orderly manner, often taking time to talk to friends or teachers as they go. Pupils always display positive attitudes to challenging tasks. They rise to occasions such as class assemblies for their parents. For example, when parents and other pupils laughed during a drama presentation about how people can change, the actors paused for a moment and then carried on confidently speaking their lines.
9. Pupils are pleasant in manner and positive in outlook. They are eager to accept responsibility for routine tasks around the school. At lunch in the hall, a Year 2 pupil helped a younger one to unwrap a chocolate biscuit; another, without being asked, held a door open for others to leave the hall. The pupils enjoy opportunities to contribute to lessons. For example, in Year 4 mathematics, some anticipated the teacher's next question, trying to be the first both to ask and to answer it. However, except in the Foundation Stage, there are only limited opportunities for pupils to take independent initiatives in lessons which restricts their personal development.
10. Pupils with special needs show good attitudes towards their everyday work. Most are keen to do well and this is reflected in the efforts they make in their learning and in their general response in lessons. They work particularly well alongside the rest of the class, supported by the class teacher or, in the case of pupils with a statement, by their support assistant. Most have very good self-esteem and take pride in what they do and what they achieve. This positive attitude to work has a beneficial effect on the progress they make. Their behaviour is very good and most concentrate well. However, there are few opportunities for them to make decisions about their own learning routines.
11. Relationships are excellent and a strength of the school. This was identified by parents both at the last inspection and at this one. Pupils co-operate well with each other and with adults and they are sensitive to each other's needs. They play and work together

constructively in pairs and groups. For example, pupils of different ages and representing a wide range of attainment, organise teams for football after school. In the lunch-break, boys and girls of varying ages mix and play good-naturedly together. Parents commented on one or two instances of bullying; they were very pleased with the school's prompt action in dealing with these.

12. The great majority of pupils behave very well and believe the discipline system to be appropriate and fairly administered. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils move around the school in a considerate way, wasting no time, and play outside in a high-spirited but responsible manner. When the whistle sounds, they 'freeze' immediately and line up quickly when instructed. In church after school, younger pupils willingly danced and sang in praise, responding to the music, and when finished, without reminder, they quietly and respectfully left the church building.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. However, the quality is better in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 than it is in Years 3 to 6. These findings indicate some falling-off in quality since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be good. There are a number of factors which have contributed to this situation: staffing difficulties, and shortcomings in the curriculum and in the monitoring by senior staff.
14. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This is an improvement since the last inspection, and also an improvement from the recent past, when it is very clear from pupils' books that there was unsatisfactory teaching. The amount of very good teaching is not as high as reported in 1997. The school's ethos and the quality of relationships between pupils and adults pave the way for most lessons to be pleasant occasions when everyone gets on with what they need to do. In Years 3 to 6, these positive features can mask the fact the work prepared is not always challenging enough for all pupils, so that they do not make the progress they should.
15. In the good or very good teaching and learning, the quality showed in the following ways:
 - *A number activity in the Foundation Stage:* a very good variety of strategies was used to suit the learning needs of different children, with tasks adjusted for different attainment; staff showed very good knowledge of individual children and high expectations; when praise was given, it was deserved.
 - *Literacy in Years 3 to 6:* the lesson started at a good pace and the teacher's lively and enthusiastic contribution engaged pupils' interest in technical vocabulary about pronouns; expectations were high and pupils were expected to behave well, be quiet and move sensibly when they needed; no time was wasted; pupils knew when the teacher stopped them as they read aloud, without anything being said, that they needed to improve the expression – and they did so; the teaching was encouraging, so that pupils were confident learners, but also sufficiently critical when necessary to be realistic in helping pupils to improve, so that they were effective learners.
 - *Numeracy in Years 1 and 2:* the learning target was shared well with the pupils; there was particularly good emphasis on pupils using mathematical language; very good relationships created a positive ethos so that pupils were willing to try; they made very good effort and remained 'on task' throughout the session; the teacher's questions kept pupils on their toes; relatively mundane work was made challenging which

heightened pupils' interest; consequently, and because tasks were matched well to individuals' attainment, all pupils made at least good progress.

- *Physical education in Years 3 to 6* there was a good warm-up; pupils enjoyed the activity, using stop-watches as they competed against their own previous times – a good link with numeracy; the teacher used demonstrations by pupils well to draw attention to and 'coach' aspects of technique; key vocabulary, such as *stamina*, *power*, and *pacing*, was introduced and reinforced well; there was good involvement of pupils all the time; the teacher gave good encouragement and pupils applauded those who had made significant improvement over time.
16. By contrast, the marking of pupils' work is a weakness, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and clearly reflects previous staffing difficulties and lack of rigorous monitoring. For example, pupils' English books show that the quality differs between teachers. Teachers' evaluation of pupils' work through the process of assessing, marking, target-setting and advising on improvement lacks rigour across the school. The marking almost always refers to attitudes and effort, not to what has been learned and how this could be improved. Remarks are often misleadingly encouraging: for example, commenting 'well done' when the work had deteriorated from the standard previously achieved or includes spelling errors. In mathematics, the marking is rarely more than ticks and does not make clear to pupils what they should be doing to improve. Some work in books and folders is unmarked. Some is undated, without a comment about this, so it is difficult to judge progress. Much work in science is unmarked; there is an occasional positive comment, but nothing challenging to move pupils on. In geography, the marking is similarly patchy and more concerned with presentation than with geographical content. In history and geography, remarks are largely positive, with little evaluative or developmental comment. Homework, although satisfactory overall, is sometimes not set, and is not always as well organised as it should be, especially for reading and for writing tasks.
 17. The teaching of pupils with special needs is good overall. Lessons and activities are well planned with their needs in mind and pupils are well motivated to learn. Activities are carefully chosen to ensure that progress, through gains in knowledge and understanding, is achieved in small and clear steps. Where possible, teachers and support assistants plan tasks similar to those for the class, offering support as appropriate. The recent decision to extend the amount of additional adult help available is having a positive effect on pupils' progress and their overall achievement. The daily, routine assessments of pupils' work, including marking, are used well to identify the next stage in learning. However, teachers and support staff do not make enough use of computer programs to help support the pupils, particularly in their work in numeracy and literacy.
 18. Overall, pupils' differing needs are satisfactorily met and are met well in Years 1 to 2 and the Foundation Stage, where teaching and learning are good. Pupils' work shows that this has not always been achieved in the recent past in Years 3 to 6, particularly in design and technology, history and geography. In these three subjects the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall at this stage. In other subjects, the quality is satisfactory, except in English where it is good. Literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactorily taught overall; this is done well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 2.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

19. There is a satisfactory range of suitable learning opportunities for pupils of all ages. However, in geography and design and technology, the school provides insufficient time for the full range of National Curriculum requirements to be taught. Both these subjects are alternated with others in the timetable: geography with history and design and technology with art and design. All subjects except English and mathematics, are taught in the rather overcrowded, relatively short afternoon timetable, where teachers do not have enough time to teach all the elements in sufficient depth. There is satisfactory planning for these subjects, but it is not fully implemented in design and technology and geography. Consequently, the balance of the curriculum and the progression of pupils' skills and knowledge are unsatisfactory, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Although there is improvement since the last inspection, computers are still under-used across all subjects. By the end of Year 6, pupils are not well-prepared for the full range of subjects they will encounter at secondary school.
20. Provision for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall, with good attention to literacy skills but inconsistent attention to numeracy skills across the school. In English and mathematics, the school provides particularly well for lower attainers. Very low attaining pupils in literacy benefit significantly from two initiatives for support, for which they are withdrawn from lessons in 'afternoon subjects'. This restricts their opportunities to achieve well in subjects other than English and mathematics, however. The room used for these sessions, the 'Tardis', is too small. The lack of a library providing a space for quiet reading or research, particularly disadvantages older pupils. The school's positive action on the key issue from the last inspection, through purchasing a new reading scheme, was partly prompted by parents, a good example of the successful partnership with parents.
21. Pupils with special needs follow the same curriculum as other pupils and are generally taught in their class, and this is to be welcomed. In Years 3 to 6, pupils enjoy taking part in extra-curricular activities with other pupils. The support provided focuses on reading and written work and this has a good effect in helping their progress across the range of subjects. Pupils' individual targets are usually well adapted to their needs.
22. Extra-curricular activities are a strength. Provision includes sports and music activities, subject clubs and a computer club. There is a wealth of opportunity for all pupils, from the youngest to the oldest, to take part in activities in the church, such as the 'sing and praise' sessions. The school successfully takes part in local tournaments in swimming, netball, football and cricket. Year 6 pupils go on a residential retreat where there are opportunities for guided reflection. Visiting artists and musicians extend pupils' relatively restricted experiences in the arts. The contribution of the local parish and religious community to pupils' learning is very strong, as reported in 1997. Contacts with other local Christian fellowships, such as the Methodists, contribute well to the school's involvement with the wider community. All year groups have a satisfactory personal, social and health education programme, based mainly on the 'Here I am' programme, through the sharing of personal experiences. Sex education and drugs education are handled as part of this programme in Year 6.
23. The school's relationship with the local Catholic secondary school is good and pupils know some of its staff well. Year 7 liaison staff make effective provision for supporting pupils at transfer, some of which was observed. Many pupils have brothers and sisters at this secondary school and Year 6 pupils spoke enthusiastically about moving on.

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

24. Pupils' personal development is provided for very well. Spiritual, moral and social aspects of provision are still significant strengths: they promote very good responses from pupils who enter wholeheartedly into the opportunities offered for their development. The religious ethos underpinning much of the curriculum leads to a high level of spiritual awareness on pupils' part, clearly evident as they pray, sing praises and reflect on the feelings of others. On many occasions, pupils' respect for others was observed, not only in the structured opportunities for prayer and reflection, but in their concern for the needs of others and the highly positive relationships within the school. Assemblies are excellent occasions, providing valuable opportunities for pupils to express their ideas, often presenting these to their parents who, in turn, show a high level of commitment and interest in these events. Such events affirm the partnership between home, school and church which celebrates the school's fundamental belief in the development of the 'whole child'. Pupils show great delight in singing and making pleasant sounds with their voices. Some pupils were clearly moved when their predictions in a science experiment proved to be correct. Prayers and praise at the start and end of the school day are calming, reflective moments. The school is firm in its philosophy that all the education it provides for pupils is a religious education.
25. An integral part of the school's philosophy is pupils' moral development. Pupils adhere willingly to the high expectations of the code of behaviour which provides a clear framework for dealing with behaviour of all kinds. However, it is seldom necessary for staff to emphasise the code because it permeates all the school's expectations. The code fits well with most parents' and children's wishes. Adults' interventions, such as those that follow arguments between pupils, take the form of mediation, where different pupils' views of a contentious incident are sought and considered respectfully. Pupils learn to respect the codes of fairness and integrity. However, they could take much more responsibility than they are currently offered, especially as they get older. The Year 6 prefect system is a helpful development towards this.
26. Similar strong principles underlie the school's provision for social development. Pupils are helped to become responsible and receptive people and to be good ambassadors for their class. Through all lessons, qualities such as consideration for others, concentration and social skills are promoted. There is high commitment to including all pupils equally, although the aim to provide equally good opportunities for all pupils is sometimes confused with providing exactly the same opportunities. For example, there is limited provision specifically for pupils with special gifts and talents, although this is beginning to receive attention. Able mathematicians have been supported through being entered for extension papers in national tests and able musicians benefit from instrumental tuition. Older pupils feel that the school does too much to protect them from reasonable risk, for example when they are using tools for resistant materials in design and technology. There are not many formal opportunities for pupils to put forward their viewpoints, although the school has recently sought the views of the older pupils and is now considering establishing a Pupil Council. Pupils generously support a number of charities, such as Catholic Care.
27. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The curriculum and the timetable give precedence to English, mathematics and religious education. Contributions from other subjects are limited, although pupils' experience of music, through singing, is rich. However, while pupils have good opportunities for personal development in subjects such as art and design, music and physical education, there are fewer opportunities provided in other subjects for individual expression or creativity.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. The school takes satisfactory care of its pupils. In 1997, it was reported that parents were rightly confident in the pastoral care the school provided for its pupils. Parents still have high confidence in the school and strongly agree that it cares for their children well. Procedures for child protection meet requirements, although not all staff are fully aware of those to be followed. The school knows this and is tackling it. Teachers and support staff are very good role models for pupils and take every opportunity, for example in circle time and assemblies, to emphasise their commitment to high personal and ethical standards. Teachers know the pupils very well. They work closely with parents, who are consulted regularly, to ensure that pupils' educational, spiritual and welfare needs are met.
29. There is good handling of health and safety matters. Arrangements for dealing with accidents and emergencies are good and records are appropriately maintained. Lunch- and break-time supervisors, who have attended pastoral training, are vigilant. Three staff are trained in first aid, one a qualified nurse. Information about individual medical needs is available in the reception office and the supply teachers' handbook. However, the health and safety committee does not meet regularly enough and formal recording and monitoring of risk assessments are not carried out satisfactorily.
30. Checks on attendance are satisfactory. Registers are meticulously maintained by class teachers and monitored by the headteacher. Parents are required to contact the school to confirm reasons for absences and unexplained absences are closely monitored. The school works closely with the education welfare service over pupils causing concern. Good attendance is encouraged through lessons and by teachers' knowledge of pupils and contact with their families. These approaches help to maintain the low levels of unauthorised absence.
31. The school rightly deserves its good reputation for welcoming pupils with additional needs. It provides a caring and supportive atmosphere in which learning is fun and achievable for those with learning difficulties. There are measurable targets for progress which are carefully monitored, with detailed records of regular assessments to ensure that at least satisfactory progress is being maintained. Links are very effective with outside agencies which offer specialised support, and there is very good communication between staff and with parents.
32. Parents and staff agree that good behaviour is 'a way of life' at the school. There are effective systems for bringing this about. The home-school partnership agreement reflects the school's policy of 'productive co-operation with parents and pupils'. Formal rules for behaviour are simple and pupils fully understand teachers' expectations and their mutual responsibilities. There is a good anti-bullying policy and full records of any incidents of bullying are kept.
33. Teachers know their pupils well. Any concerns about pupils' progress are brought to the attention of the headteacher and parents. There are regular meetings with parents, both formal and informal, at which their child's progress is reviewed. Parents know what their child's targets for improvement are; these are recorded in progress reports and discussed with them.
34. Arrangements for assessing and monitoring pupils' achievement are however unsatisfactory overall because the picture is a mixed one. Although there is an assessment policy, there is no school-wide co-ordination of procedures. At the Foundation Stage, procedures are good and the information gained from assessments is used well to guide planning. In Years 1 to 6, in English, mathematics and science,

the procedures are satisfactory. Pupils' national test results in Year 2 and Year 6 are analysed to identify trends over time, including for example, any differences in the performance of boys and girls. The school has recently begun to use this information to check whether pupils are achieving as well as they should, to clarify the next steps in their learning, and to determine where additional classroom support should be allocated. The detailed tracking system being developed is enabling the school to set challenging but achievable targets for improvement. In other subjects of the National Curriculum, however, similar assessment and tracking arrangements are not in place. Staff are aware of this and are taking action to make improvements. Since the last inspection, when procedures were found to be satisfactory or better in all subjects, arrangements have faltered, but are currently being re-established.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. The school works very well with parents and welcomes every opportunity to increase their involvement through initiatives such as parent-partnership courses on such topics as ICT, parents as helpers in school, and mathematics.
36. Parents' views of the school are extremely positive. Responses to inspectors through completed questionnaires, at the parents' meeting and in individual discussions, indicate virtually unqualified support for the school, which they perceive to be very good. Parents are particularly pleased about the very smooth transition from the nursery to the main school, the welcoming atmosphere and caring ethos, co-operation with parents and the school's spiritual teachings. Parents believe that ICT, which has been relatively weak, is now improving. The inspection team endorses these views.
37. There is very good involvement by parents in the work of the school. They assist in the school and attend class assemblies. At the two class assemblies seen during the inspection, all pupils had at least one parent present, an impressive achievement. Parents stayed afterwards for refreshments and to talk to pupils and teachers. A number of parents regularly gives structured assistance in lessons through hearing pupils read, giving support in literacy lessons and helping with photocopying. Some parents help on two or more days each week. Much informal help is given both by parents and parishioners and much energy goes into fund-raising. With other helpers, parents have built walls, created a garden area, and provided playing resources and a summer house in the playground.
38. Relationships with parents of pupils with special needs are positive and effective. They are regularly consulted when their child is first placed on the school's register for special needs. Most make welcome contributions to their child's new targets after the termly review of progress. On a voluntary, but regular basis, a few parents have become very experienced in helping with any aspects of pupils' work they find difficult, such as reading for information.
39. Good information is provided for parents. There are regular and detailed newsletters, other occasional newsletters and perceptive and helpful annual reports. Over 80 families receive the school's weekly newsletter by e-mail and the school's website provides very good information for parents. There are however, some omissions from the school's prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents. An 'open house' is held every Tuesday after school, when parents visit their children's classrooms for informal discussions with the teachers and to meet other parents. Parents are consulted regularly on matters such as targets for their child's personal development. As a direct result of the consultation on the school development plan, the school spent £3000 on a new reading scheme. Parents are invited to complete response forms with

comments on any issue they wish to raise. There are regular meetings between parishioners, parents and teachers for prayer and discussion. Many parents make regular and generous covenanted donations to support the school's building programme.

40. The Parents and Teachers Association is very well supported. The objectives are both for fundraising and social activities and these activities link closely with the aims of the school. In the previous year, the association raised over £2000 to support improvements to ICT and provided equipment for netball, football and the playground.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The headteacher, with strong support from the governors, provides leadership which has a very clear educational direction. The school's Christian values are put into practice with outstanding commitment and consistency by all members of the school community. It is this quality that draws parents into their very effective working partnership with the school. The Catholic ethos is a felt reality in the day-to-day work of staff and pupils.
42. Overall, however, leadership and management are satisfactory because this considerable strength is tempered by a significant weakness in management. It is not that the school is unable to implement systems consistently and effectively because it does so very well in some areas, for example in implementing the Literacy Strategy and in all the arrangements involving parents. It is that the consistency and commitment with which staff have focused on pupils' achieving as well as they can in their subject studies have not been nearly as effective as the religious and pastoral focus which is a significant school strength. Nonetheless, the evidence from the inspection is that the situation is now being turned round, stimulated by the evaluations of results in national tests provided in the PANDA, which show that there is underachievement. The school now has a mechanism for checking that it is doing as well as it can to secure good learning and achievement through tracking pupils' levels of attainment. The system is being applied to mathematics and a start is being made in English. This development illustrates well how the school is now evaluating whether it is achieving the best value for pupils by its provision.
43. Leadership and management of subjects are satisfactory overall, and never less than satisfactory. In English and the Foundation Stage they are good. Given recent staffing difficulties, it is to the school's credit that arrangements for co-ordinating subject provision show growing effectiveness. The commitment to improvement is high; the skills to bring it about are being securely established and given a good lead by the headteacher in mathematics. Completed monitoring sheets of lesson observations in mathematics show a considerable increase in rigour and detail in comparison with those in other subjects. While the quality of monitoring overall is unsatisfactory, some of the practice in mathematics over the last year is good. It bodes well for the future.
44. For the provision for pupils with special needs, leadership and management are very good. There is good liaison and effective communication with all support staff as well as with the class teachers, who have overall responsibility for ensuring that pupils with special needs make at least similar progress to others in their age group. However, the school's strategy to support lower attainers through withdrawing them from 'afternoon' subjects is counter-productive, as it limits their achievement in the subjects they miss.
45. Governors carry out their responsibilities well, playing a very strong part in working towards the shared vision for the school's development. They are very well informed

about what is happening in school and fully involved in the strategy to improve standards and provision in mathematics, although previously they had not checked closely enough on standards in all subjects. They give their time generously, contributing with energy and commitment to the school's partnership with parents and the community. Appropriate performance management arrangements are contributing helpfully to the thrust to improve teaching. Financial resources are used well, and grants used effectively for the purpose intended. Expenditure per pupil is considerably higher than in most primary schools. This level of funding is used effectively to improve pupils' learning experience, particularly through attention to accommodation. The recent good refurbishment for the Foundation Stage and the 'imminent' ICT suite are good examples. This new resource has the potential to promote pupils' ICT skills very well. The school uses new technology effectively for management purposes, particularly for communication. The improvements are bringing the accommodation up to scratch to reflect national developments in the curriculum and to achieve best value.

46. The particular strength in the school's attention to achieving best value is the extent and quality of its partnership working with parents and the community. All members of the school's family, pupils, staff, parents, governors, parishioners and the local community, are involved in the consultation which characterises the school's approach to developing its work. The change to a new reading scheme is a good example.
47. Overall, the school is adequately staffed, although currently affected by long-term absence. Learning resources are satisfactory except in design and technology, where the deficiencies prevent the full range of the curriculum being taught. Accommodation restricts the activities in art and design and design and technology, and the use of the over-reverberant hall for music activities limits the development of keen listening skills. The lack of a library for research and independent study limits the development of pupils' study skills.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to ensure that pupils' achievement is at least satisfactory from the nursery to Year 6, the governors and staff should:
- (1) Raise standards in all subjects in Years 3 to 6 by:
 - ensuring that the organisation of the curriculum and the teaching day enable pupils to achieve satisfactorily over time in all subjects
 - extending the successful strategies for raising standards in mathematics to all areas of the curriculum.Paragraphs: 3, 4, 14, 44, 63, 64, 66, 67, 72, 84, 87, 91, 92, 97, 103, 107
 - (2) Ensure that the allocation of time for the 'non-core' subjects enables pupils to achieve at least satisfactorily through:
 - identifying a strategy for planning the curriculum which ensures progression in skills
 - ensuring that withdrawal for specialist support does not restrict learning opportunities in 'non-core' subjects or result in an 'unequal deal'.Paragraphs: 4, 19, 44, 87, 92, 98, 99, 100, 101, 105
 - (3) Implement school-wide procedures for assessment and ensure they are consistently carried out through:
 - establishing a manageable yearly schedule for assessment in all subjects
 - providing training for all staff in evaluating standards in all subjects.Paragraphs: 5, 34, 70, 80, 95, 105, 110, 118
 - (4) Ensure that pupils receive sufficient evaluative comments about their work, so that they know how they can make improvements, by:
 - implementing and monitoring a school-wide approach to providing feedback to pupils, both orally and through marking work
 - incorporating evaluative discussion of ideas, events (in school and beyond) and work as an integral part of pupils' learning activity throughout the school.Paragraphs: 5, 16, 70, 80, 87, 90, 92, 98
 - (5) Seek to improve the accommodation to meet the requirements of art and design, design and technology and music by:
 - providing workshop and wet areas with sufficient space for imaginative and safe practical work
 - providing working space for music in which the acoustic supports rather than hinders pupils' listening skills.Paragraphs: 47, 92, 115
 - (6) Meet fully the requirements for design and technology.
Paragraphs: 19, 91, 94, 95

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	24	20	0	0	0
Percentage	0	8	50	42	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	239
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	20

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	12	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	17
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	27	27	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (88)	87 (91)	94 (94)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	15
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	27	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (91)	90 (94)	87 (94)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	18	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	11	16
	Girls	11	10	16
	Total	24	21	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (64)	62 (57)	94 (79)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	12	15
	Girls	14	11	15
	Total	29	23	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (61)	68 (50)	88 (61)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	264
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25 : 1
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	186

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26 : 1

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9 : 1
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	507,630
Total expenditure	490,789
Expenditure per pupil	1,979
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,530
Balance carried forward to next year	23,371

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	239
Number of questionnaires returned	99

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	25	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	33	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	32	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	35	14	1	0
The teaching is good.	83	16	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	26	6	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	16	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	20	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	71	24	4	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	82	17	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	74	22	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	35	9	2	8

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS

THE FOUNDATION STAGE

49. Children start the Foundation Stage in the nursery and reception classes after their third birthday. They come with a range of attainment, although it is not possible to judge standards at this early age. Their work shows that children achieve well over the two years, resulting in above average attainment in all areas when they start the National Curriculum.

Communication, language and literacy

50. A particular strength is the development of language and vocabulary in the nursery. Nursery children extend and develop their listening and reading skills by playing 'Lotto' games and matching sounds they hear on tape. They listen well, helping each other to identify sounds and match them to a picture. In story and rhyme sessions, they repeat familiar phrases with relish, beating slow and fast rhythms to accompany songs. They very much enjoy stories, and help to tell them. They can retell stories with many details, explaining what has happened. All adults take every opportunity to extend and develop language. They tell stories well, engaging all the children through their very good eye contact and body language, good use of the voice and clear emphasis and articulation.
51. The early writing of more able children has many recognisable letters, and some write their names correctly with the use of capital and lower case letters. The good teaching is enhanced by displays of the vocabulary of opposites, well illustrated to aid understanding. The writing corner and message board encourage children's developmental writing. Reception teachers and classroom assistants work hard to develop children's language and vocabulary, encouraging children to expand their answers from one word or phrase. All children are confident speakers, although one or two do not always speak clearly. A small group of reception children use tape-recorders independently to listen to stories. They support their reading and comprehension work from the school's reading scheme by using related computer programs. The majority of children understand and explain terms such as *title*, *author* and *illustrator*, and their understanding is helped by the expressive reading of their teachers. The more able children are secure in their understanding of how to use exclamation and question marks in sentences. The majority can read many common words, recognising initial and final sounds. Most of the older children spell simple words accurately, sounding out the letters. They support their work on a visit to the bird sanctuary with brief, simple accounts and practise their writing skills in the classroom 'Post Office'. Their completed writing work shows good tracing skills and the beginnings of independent writing. Children match picture-rhymes and tell stories from sets of pictures. They make books successfully, for example about their visit to the local supermarket.

Mathematical understanding

52. In the nursery, adults make good use of language about 'positions' at every opportunity, including outdoor activities, for example encouraging children to go *under*, *over* and *through* equipment. They challenge children to count the numbers of those present, and some count confidently to 20 and beyond. Their mathematical language is developed when children make a graph of their favourite ice-pops, matching the most popular colour to the graph. Children have studied colours and shapes around the

school and use ICT to support their learning. They sort and order by size objects such as bulbs and plastic teddies. In activities which focus on mathematics, teachers and teaching assistants note individual strengths and weaknesses on assessment sheets to assist with planning future lessons. The mathematics area is well supplied with objects for sorting, with shapes, numbers and colours, and a display of the number of the week, *eight* during the inspection. Reception children investigate capacity through the use of containers of a variety of sizes, also funnels and tubes, using the language of *bigger* and *smaller*, and *more* or *less*. Their counting skills are developing well through board games requiring the use of dice. They sing number rhymes confidently and competently to reinforce their learning, for example 'Five Little Frogs Sitting on a Well', showing the correct number of fingers when counting on and back.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

53. Particular strengths in provision are computer skills, early science and the making aspects of design and technology.
54. Children in the nursery enjoy using their 'night-time corner' to investigate light and dark, and night and day. Their comments are scribed by adults, for example, 'Bats come out at night' and 'You have to have a torch because it's too dark to see.' In small-group activities, adults discuss loud and soft sounds, using a variety of materials, such as feathers, stones, lentils and sand, describing the materials as well as the sounds they make. Children cut and stick slim paper rods independently, joining them with sticky tape to make cheerleaders' batons. They make ice-pops, using the nursery refrigerator, to observe how some changes in materials can be reversed. A small group planned an obstacle course using a range of outdoor equipment; the children recorded on paper the layout using a series of drawings and symbols. Two computers are always available for children to use and their familiarity with programs and symbols, and their dexterity in pointing and clicking, dragging and dropping, is developing well. Part of the classroom is a 'building site' devoted to construction with large equipment, including the notice 'Please wear your safety helmet at all times.' Children use their 'small world' equipment on a town map. Photographic evidence of work done over the year shows children in a role-play of a christening and a variety of activities in food technology, such as baking potatoes in their jackets and scrambling eggs in a microwave oven. They design and make models, selecting their own methods of joining and adapting their design as the work progresses. They show increasing control and skill when using small tools and equipment. Some of their models are based on their observation of houses in the immediate neighbourhood. They make simple maps of their journey to the local church and learn the names of flowers and bulbs, making an ongoing observation record of how the plants grow.
55. Reception children explore water as a habitat for 'mini-beasts' with weed, stones and plastic creatures. The role-play area is currently the 'Bird Watchers' Tea Room', although most children enthusiastically 'catch butterflies' rather than take refreshment. Children use computers competently for work on recognising letters of the alphabet in preparation for learning keyboard skills. They make paintings and mobiles of spiders successfully in connection with their topic. Children explore gravity with kites made from carrier bags. They look closely at the similarities and differences in fruit, noting patterns and changes and using their senses to taste, touch and smell. They use their numeracy skills accurately to record their work in tables and charts, and use malleable materials effectively to make a variety of shapes to support their mathematical learning. Children explore 'pushes and pulls' when making puppets, and squash, roll and squeeze playdough confidently. Children planted seeds to grow at home to celebrate 'new life' at Easter.

Creative development

56. Particular strengths are the use of music and imaginative role-play in learning. Paints, paper and aprons are always available in the nursery for children's free choice of activities. Children sing nursery rhymes and make loud sounds with shakers. They sing competently and with enjoyment and look closely at flowers they are painting. Some 'go camping' in the tent, choosing appropriate clothes for the purpose. Children successfully create three-dimensional vases of flowers and identify parts such as stems and petals. They use their developing skills in art and design to demonstrate their understanding of the differences between night and day. They make life-sized paintings of themselves. Much use is made of role-play – for the Post Office, Bob the Builder's office and the Bird Watchers' tea room – where children carefully adapt their speech and mannerisms to the character they are playing. Their control of tools such as paint brushes is developing well.
57. Reception children successfully create pasta decorations for the shells of their snails in their 'minibeast' topic. They use glue-sticks and spreaders with increasing confidence and dexterity. Others weave ribbons in wicker structures, explaining the process as they go along. In role-play, children use their experience of a walk through the woods and make good attempts at building nests as a result of their visit to a bird sanctuary. Their completed work shows their success in making collages and printing with leaves. They successfully paint trees with blossom using their fingers.

Physical development

58. The outdoor environment is particularly well-used in the nursery and reception classes to develop children's physical skills. Children walk, run, hop and climb confidently, exploring fast and slow movements, walking on tiptoe and responding enthusiastically to adults' challenges to 'go high/low'. They thoroughly enjoy the obstacle course, exploring different ways of movement, and are well accustomed to helping to tidy away after themselves. All adults encourage children to use fine motor skills, for example to chop vegetables or use glue. They use a range of large and small equipment with increasing skill and control. Resources for the outdoor area encourage co-operation with the provision of carts for two or three children to use together.

Personal and social development

59. There are well-developed relationships between children and all adults, and from their earliest days, children are taught about what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. There is good fostering of independence and co-operativeness, with appropriate planned resources and activities. For example, snacks and drinks are available at any time in the nursery. Children sit at a table where the biscuits are laid out (in a protected container) and an adult supplies the drink. Most children wash their hands and go to the toilet independently. Children's art skills are used to encourage their expressiveness when adults scribe their happy and sad feelings. Most children complete an 'All About Me' book which includes their likes and dislikes, and the pictures they have drawn.
60. Teaching and learning are good overall, and occasionally very good. Particular strengths are the planning in the nursery and the teamwork and class management in the nursery and reception classes. The curriculum and the teaching in the Foundation Stage are monitored by senior staff. Overall provision is very good, particularly in the nursery. Procedures for observation and assessment, and the recording of the

information gained, are very good. All staff have a good understanding of the curriculum and the learning needs of young children. They are aware of areas needing development and are committed to making improvements.

61. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and there have been good developments in accommodation and outdoor provision. Improvement is satisfactory.

ENGLISH

62. By Year 6, standards in the work seen are average. This reflects the Year 6 national test results in 2001, which were average. Pupils performed better in English than in mathematics, but not as well as in science. Their results were average compared with schools in similar social circumstances. Over the last three years, results have been maintained at an average standard. However, in 2001, Year 6 pupils did not fulfil the potential they had shown in Year 2. They did less well than was expected by their prior attainment. The 2001 results in the Year 2 national tests and assessments were above average, showing particular strengths in speaking and listening. Over recent years, results in reading and writing have been above average compared with all schools and with schools in similar social circumstances. Year 2 results in English have been better than those in mathematics. In the work seen, standards by Year 2 are above average.
63. Pupils start Year 1 with a good grounding in English skills from the Foundation Stage and with above average attainment. They learn well and make the progress expected by Year 2, where attainment is sustained at an above average level. This above average standard was shown by the current Year 6 pupils at the end of Year 2. However, over several years, a very worrying fall-off in pupils' achievement has been occurring during Years 3, 4 and 5. It is only comparatively recently that the school has taken effective steps to begin to rectify this. Although current pupils have been achieving well in Year 6, they had previously lost too much ground to pull their standards up to where they should be, given their attainment by Year 2. Pupils have been underachieving in the school between the ages of eight and ten. The standards of those currently in Year 6 fell to below average by the time they left Year 4, with most pupils making insufficient progress and many regressing. The school now has simple tracking mechanisms in place which highlight this decline clearly, but had no such procedures in place to identify the decline early enough to avoid it. Although monitoring of teaching was happening, it was insufficiently rigorous and was not focused on pupils' standards and achievement. The unsatisfactory quality of teaching in the past was a key reason for pupils' decline in attainment. The school has now overcome most of these constraints on pupils making appropriate progress, but attainment in the current Year 6 is only average. This represents underachievement for these pupils, despite their much better achievement over Year 6.
64. The National Literacy Strategy is fully established in all year groups, with all literacy sessions occurring during the first lesson in the morning. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to read and write satisfactorily, with the good practice they bring from the Foundation Stage forming the basis for continuing their good handwriting script. Most pupils write legibly and well, using joined script and even-sized letters by Year 2. Reading is generally good, with many pupils showing above average skills in the technical aspects of sounding out and pronouncing words. They read with good expression by the time they are seven and articulate meaning well through good intonation and rhythm when they read aloud. Pupils whose reading and writing skills are weaker are supported by the Early Literacy (ELS) and Additional Literacy (ALS) initiatives, which give them helpful additional opportunities for individual or small-group literacy sessions in the afternoons. While this is good for the development of English, it deprives pupils of

experience in the 'afternoon' subjects such as art and design and history. Not enough thought has been given to providing this valuable support for lower attainers through work in other subjects.

65. Year 2 pupils are confident and articulate speakers who use a good range of vocabulary, both in conversation and when given the opportunity to speak publicly. They use ICT co-operatively and sensibly, for example in a paired exercise where pupils were converting statements into questions. When teachers use the electronic whiteboard, pupils interact confidently with the program, moving sentences and words around the board competently. All pupils, including those with special needs and higher attainers, generally maintain the momentum of good progress in lessons during Years 1 and 2.
66. Pupils in Year 3 maintain this good progress in lessons and current pupils are not experiencing the decline in standards reported in paragraph 63. Attainment in the Year 4 lesson seen was average. Evidence in pupils' English books and elsewhere, however, indicates that Year 4 work is inconsistent in quality, with most pupils making insufficient headway over the year. Pupils' reading skills in Year 4 are average, although these pupils reached above average standards at Year 2. Their achievement is unsatisfactory. Similarly in Year 5, although pupils' attainment is broadly average, it is below the standard of which pupils are capable, because their previous learning has been unsatisfactory. Across these three years, the provision ensures that pupils with special needs make satisfactory progress.
67. In Year 6, pupils' achievement significantly improves, although higher attainers are not always stretched enough. The weaknesses in skills were identified early on and both pupils and staff have worked hard to pull attainment up. Reading and oral work remain strengths, as elsewhere in the school, but the quality of writing of too many pupils still pulls their overall standard down. When pupils were writing a narrative about their recent visit to Eden Camp, recounting the story of their day, attainment matched the range expected although many pupils are slow in writing and lack confidence. This contrasts with their speaking and listening skills, where they are quick to understand and enter confidently into discussion and debate. Pupils' writing is generally better in fiction than in non-fiction. Analysis of work in several subjects shows pupils to be generally weaker in writing non-fiction across the curriculum, for example when writing up science experiments and findings. In these aspects, pupils' writing is below average overall. Taking into account pupils' varying levels of attainment across different aspects of English, current attainment in Year 6 is average, although these pupils reached an above average standard in Year 2. Nonetheless, their improvement over Year 6 has been commendable.
68. Teaching and learning are good overall. The quality is never less than satisfactory, and generates good learning in most lessons. This reflects a significant improvement from the quality of pupils' previous learning in some year groups. Pupils' work shows clearly that some teaching has been unsatisfactory for those in the early junior years. Staff follow nationally recommended guidelines flexibly to create suitable variety in their literacy teaching and understand aspects of language well. Expectations are high and teachers employ a satisfactory range of methods to interest and engage pupils in learning. Puppets used interactively by teachers in Year 3 and in the ELS groups, for example, make for good learning and create fun for younger pupils. Teachers' use of the interactive whiteboard involves pupils in English learning as well as in using ICT as a tool to aid that learning. However, the cramped conditions in some classrooms, particularly for older pupils, restrict arrangements for group work. Teachers and pupils overcome these difficulties with good grace and pupils learn well. In all lessons, pupils'

good attitudes and behaviour help them to focus on their work, although there are not always enough opportunities for them to organise their work for themselves.

69. The newly acquired reading scheme materials are used effectively, particularly when pupils are learning to read in Years 1 and 2. All become independent readers by Year 6. This purchase has gone some way towards dealing with the key issue from the last inspection about ensuring pupils' access to an improved range of reading materials. However, the decision to use the room which previously housed the library for other purposes and to create classroom libraries has limited the improvement. Current arrangements are satisfactory for younger pupils who are still learning to read and mainly using the reading-scheme books. For older pupils, particularly higher attainers who need access to a wide range of reading matter, these arrangements do not provide a rich enough resource for them to develop the bibliographic expertise now expected by Year 6. The lack of a library, combined with the present lack of ICT hardware and software, prevents pupils from having regular access to the range of book-based and ICT-based information they require, especially of non-fiction. Pupils in Year 6 speak of a time when they frequently visited the local library for such access, but this has ceased. Pupils have no opportunity to browse among books, to read quietly in a calm, contemplative environment and they are not experiencing the research opportunities which good library provision offers. The quality of English teaching is adversely affected by this, but nonetheless, pupils' basic reading skills are developing well because of good teaching of skills.
70. The English curriculum is managed well and there is a clear view of the shortcomings in standards and achievement. Very recently the school has started to reverse the decline in progress as pupils move through Years 3, 4 and 5. The positive effect of staff developments has been accurately evaluated. Current deficiencies are well recognised. The useful new tracking mechanism, now operating in all years, is timely, as it identifies and demonstrates weaknesses, providing a means of demonstrating pupils' underachievement in a simple graphical form. This assessment tool is a retrospective one, however. It cannot prevent the fall in standards which has already occurred but is able to show how the decline is being reversed. Teachers know the National Curriculum levels their pupils are attaining and teacher assessments are generally accurate. However, teachers do not use the levels as a basis for marking or setting individual targets. Although there is a school policy for assessment, the way assessments are used to help in planning varies across year groups. Teachers' marking of pupils' work, while often very encouraging, does not focus sufficiently on helping pupils to have a clear understanding of how to improve their work, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
71. Because of the decline in pupils' achievement in their 'middle' years in the school, the overall picture of attainment by the end of Year 6 is below that reported at the last inspection. In almost all other aspects, the quality has been maintained. The National Literacy Strategy is fully integrated into the teaching and a new reading scheme and materials are successfully established. Overall, the improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

72. By Year 6, standards in the work seen are below average. This reflects the 2001 results in the Year 6 national tests which are below average compared with all primary schools, while low when compared with schools in similar social circumstances. Between 1997 and 2001, pupils' performance fell to below the national average for their age group. In some years, it is the relatively small proportion of pupils reaching the

higher levels that keeps overall results below average. The 2001 Year 2 test results are below average and below average when compared with schools in a similar social setting. Again, the main reason is the relatively small proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels. Over the past three years, results have been average. The work seen reflects this average standard.

73. Over Years 1 and 2, achievement is satisfactory but by the end of Year 6, a significant number of pupils do not achieve as well as they should. There are no differences between the attainment of girls and boys over time and there are no issues relating to equal opportunities in the subject.
74. By the end of Year 6, pupils have worked with an appropriately wide range of mathematical ideas. However, they frequently lack the strategies to handle numbers with confidence, speed and accuracy. This is shown in their attempts to solve mathematical problems and when they apply numeracy skills in other subjects. Pupils' mathematical diet is not particularly broad and areas like data handling and aspects of measurement receive too little attention. Higher attainers work particularly well on percentages and clearly know the relationship between these and other forms of fractions. Some pupils in Years 5 and 6 have become adept at operations such as estimating and rounding up and down. Pupils' work on shape, however, is not always considered in sufficient depth, although most know the properties of some familiar shapes and they work on angles accurately. Over Years 3 to 6, too many pupils struggle to use correct mathematical terms. Particularly in Year 4, pupils are not challenged to work at sufficient speed and in a number of year groups, significant numbers of pupils present their work untidily, paying insufficient attention to correct layout. Over Years 3 to 6, pupils experience too narrow a range of tasks and sometimes show a lack of confidence when faced with 'word problems' that ask them to think mathematically in different ways and to apply previously learned skills to new situations. Handling and interpreting data present particular difficulties. Some work, such as that done in Year 5 on capacity and the 24-hour clock, and in Year 6 on volume and area, illustrates the standards that pupils can achieve given good teaching and learning opportunities.
75. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound grasp of the four rules of number and many can add and subtract confidently and accurately. Most recognise that *difference* means *subtract* and *total* means *add*, and can select the appropriate mathematical process to achieve the right answer. Average numbers of pupils show sharpness in their mental skills and significant numbers use mathematical language accurately, for example when using expressions such as *more than* or *doubling*. During one lesson, almost all pupils used a number line to calculate accurately the difference between large numbers such as 89 and 47.
76. Thanks to the effective work in Years 1 and 2, many pupils understand the relationships between numbers and processes; they recognise repeating patterns of numbers as an aide to learning their tables. Much of the work for practice in Years 1 and 2 is completed on small whiteboards, work which is subsequently erased. Work is not done in exercise books so that it can be re-assessed by the teacher or revisited by the pupils. Pupils' completion of tasks in commercially produced texts show that many have a sound grasp when 'shopping' and giving change to amounts of up to 30 pence or more. Pupils measure using centimetres. Almost all recognise and name successfully basic shapes such as squares, triangles and oblongs, and know something of their basic properties. The arrangement of sums on paper is not always accomplished neatly enough to prevent errors.

77. Teaching and learning in the lessons seen are satisfactory. However, it is clear that over a period of several years, teaching in Years 3 and 4 in particular has not ensured that pupils reach an appropriate standard. Overall, therefore, the quality in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory. There are some strengths in the current teaching of mathematics in Years 2 and 6 and teaching and learning are improving rapidly across the school. Despite this, the current standards reached by pupils over Years 3 to 6 are a direct reflection of the periods of inadequate teaching which have occurred previously. Teachers' expectations of what pupils could and should achieve are still too varied and this has an adverse effect on the daily progress pupils make. By contrast, in Year 2 work on using a number line to calculate quite complex subtractions, the teachers' high expectations brought both success and enjoyment to the pupils.
78. In the most effective lessons, teachers share the learning targets with the pupils. These are established for each working group and are pursued rigorously throughout the session. In other lessons, some pupils do not understand what is being asked of them, explanations are not immediately clear and tasks, at best, consolidate learning rather than extend it. Despite these inconsistencies, pupils apply themselves well to work in the subject, behave well, and respond positively to the activities given to them and during oral work. While the school has made good inroads into adopting the National Numeracy Strategy, in practice the teaching does not follow a consistent pattern across the school. There is not enough opportunity, for example, for pupils to explore mathematical ideas for themselves or to use their own initiative in learning. Most lessons show teachers firmly in control of their class and little time is lost because of inadequate organisation. In Year 6, the standards of higher attainers have been raised by increasing the range of adult help available to them during the week. The teaching of pupils with special needs is satisfactory overall and frequently good. All pupils have equal access to the mathematical curriculum.
79. Leadership and management are satisfactory, although there have been obvious deficiencies in the past. These have largely resulted from a lack of rigorous monitoring of pupils' performance which has led to the underachievement of some. Over the past 12 months, there has been a unified drive to raise pupils' standards in mathematics, particularly in Years 3 to 6. This has been triggered by a totally appropriate action plan for mathematics which has begun to tackle head-on some of the deficiencies identified during this inspection. This plan has been overseen by the headteacher, the co-ordinator for the subject and the governors, and is undoubtedly having a considerable effect in raising standards. Evidence suggests that the performance of the current Year 5 pupils is on course to exceed the already challenging targets set for them by the school. It is important that this new momentum continues and that the monitoring of standards, as well as of the quality of teaching and learning, continues apace. Individual pupils and the performance of groups of different attainment are now closely monitored. The results of statutory and other standardised tests are used well to track pupils' progress. Staffing levels, accommodation and learning resources are all satisfactory, but ICT is used insufficiently to help consolidate and extend pupils' learning.
80. The assessment of pupils' work is a general weakness in the teaching. There is no school-wide approach to the marking of pupils' work and the standard of marking varies unacceptably. In a relatively few isolated instances, the teacher makes it clear to the pupils what they have to do to extend and improve their work. In other books, work was either left unmarked or the marking showed little emphasis on pupils developing additional strategies to help them make improvements. The day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is not planned for successfully. Consequently, the results cannot be used effectively to set new targets for learning or to help pupils improve. Other forms of assessment are carried out well and meet requirements.

81. The subject has made unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection. although standards are beginning to rise over Years 3 to 6, and the school is improving its provision for mathematics.

SCIENCE

82. By Year 6, standards are broadly average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Most pupils, having previously underachieved for the reasons reported in the English section, are now beginning to make gains in Years 5 and 6. However, the under-emphasis on scientific enquiry persists from Years 1 and 2. In Year 6, pupils make rapid improvement and standards are recovering to the average level reported at the last inspection. Year 6 pupils know the dangers to health from substance abuse, for example from tobacco. They recognise the need for healthy food and hygiene as a protection against micro-organisms. They are aware of possible hazards in the home, and the need for safe storage of cleaning fluids and sharp objects. Most of them know that not all drugs are harmful, for example antibiotics, but are also aware that drugs should be kept out of the reach of children. Their completed work is generally presented well, with handwriting of an above average standard and closely observed drawings. It shows good gains in knowledge and understanding in a number of areas: of plants and the conditions for their growth; electrical circuits; animals and their habitats; and the reversible and irreversible changes in solids, liquids and gases. Some of pupils' findings are presented in tables and charts, but there is no evidence of ICT being used for this purpose. Too much use of worksheets restricts pupils' independence in writing and limits their achievements because they are not free to write up their own findings and explore their own ideas.
83. Standards by Year 2 are above average, although not enough emphasis is given to investigative science. Pupils' achievement is good. Year 2 pupils accurately complete worksheets recording the life cycle of frogs and butterflies. They make careful records of their observations of the progress of frogspawn. Where teaching was good, they used the terms *opaque* and *transparent* accurately. Pupils predict what will happen to various materials when they are heated, for example cotton, chocolate, bread and cheese. Their predictions are sensible and they give convincing reasons for them.
84. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers manage pupils very well. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not always set themselves a good pace for their work and generally the teaching does not stimulate this. The new scheme of work is firmly based on national guidance and there is good coverage of most aspects of the subject. It has not been in place long enough to have the positive effect of raising standards and achievement that is planned for. The short-term planning shows that teachers' expectations are not high enough over Years 3 to 6; they often set the hypotheses to be tested themselves, rather than helping pupils to develop their own ideas and experiments. There are satisfactory assessment procedures in place at the end of topics and pupils record their results in their achievement folders. The cultural context of science is not sufficiently explored and there are few planned opportunities for pupils to experience the wonder of phenomena, which limits the subject's contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Science activities make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' social development through paired and group discussions and activities.
85. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Senior staff are keeping a 'watching brief' on the subject in the absence of a postholder. Documentation shows that the role has not been effectively carried out in terms of monitoring and evaluating

the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning. Resources are adequate, although there are shortages in ICT support for the subject.

86. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. After a decline, standards are now returning to the levels previously reported.

ART AND DESIGN

The school arranges its curriculum so that art and design is taught in the afternoons, alternating half-termly with design and technology. Lessons were observed with pupils in Years 3, 4 and 6.

87. By Year 6, the standards pupils reach are below those expected and they do not achieve as well as they could. The main reason is the lack of opportunity pupils have to explore ideas, develop skills systematically and sustain them over time, a result of the timetable arrangement. This applies to technical control, in particular drawing skills, as well as to skills in evaluation. Much of the work in Year 3 sketch books reflects stereotypical images rather than ideas from direct experience, for example in paintings of birds and flowers and in some portraits. However, some work on patterning shows a feel for shape and colour. Year 4 portraits show effort in 'looking closely' by higher attainers, for example at the way hair grows. The chair designs in the sketch books are weak in comparison with the work observed in a lesson where pupils were encouraged to look closely at drawings of chairs, albeit, not at actual chairs. Year 5 drawings of pots show some attempts at shading and use of a colour wash. The work in Year 6 pulls ideas together so that pupils develop some understanding of drawing from direct experience and utilising images from a digital camera, for example in the photographs and paintings on display of the gazebo and bridge in the school grounds, and in full-length paintings of other pupils observed in an art lesson. Year 6 pupils comment and answer questions about their work and other people's, but lack confidence in exploring and comparing ideas for themselves.
88. There is insufficient evidence in pupils' work and on display to judge the standards by the end of Year 2.
89. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 work diligently in lessons, focusing well on the task. They listen carefully to teachers and some offer responses to the points being made. The good relationships and good attitudes help them to persevere, even when some frustration is experienced because skills are inadequate.
90. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory. Units of work are planned with care, but are not handled to ensure continuity in learning. Not enough attention is given to drawing skills. This is shown in pupils' drawings in their work in other subjects as well as in their sketch books, although their science books include some careful observational drawing. Teachers give good encouragement to pupils, both in marking and in comments in lessons, but do not balance this sufficiently with evaluative comments showing pupils not only what needs improving but how to do it.
91. Leadership and management are satisfactory and approached with enthusiasm. There is a clear idea about developing the subject across the school and plans are being developed for this. Standards remain below average. Since the last inspection, the work in art and design has been affected by staffing difficulties affecting its co-ordination and by the school's response to national requirements for literacy and numeracy. Pupils' learning is restricted by the lack of suitable working spaces for art and design activities. Nonetheless, revised schemes of work, utilising national

schemes, are in place and there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. Improvement overall is satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

The school arranges its curriculum so that design and technology is taught in afternoons, alternating half-termly with art and design. No design and technology lessons were scheduled during the inspection

92. Standards by Year 6 are below average and pupils do not achieve as well as they could. This applies to all pupils, those with special needs as well as gifted and talented pupils. Their achievement is restricted by lack of time in the curriculum and by unsatisfactory resources for the different elements of the subject. Consequently, pupils' work shows a weakness in skills. Resources for aspects such as resistant materials, and tools such as saws and hammers to use with these, are inadequate to give pupils a satisfactory experience. This is also true for food technology across all year groups. Year 5 pupils have recently made bread, but Year 6 spoke of very little food technology in their entire school experience. The situation is similar for the control aspects of the ICT curriculum. Although the school has a computer-operated mini-robot, pupils do not use this beyond Year 2. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 lack understanding of the control aspects of the curriculum. The pupils themselves recognise the lack of progression in their design and technology skills and experience. They do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of the processes of investigating, designing, making, modifying and evaluating. Not all classes have folders where design work is developed and no evidence of appropriate written evaluation was seen. This was confirmed in discussion with pupils who do not use the appropriate vocabulary of design and technology. For example the word 'design' itself is absent in discussions.
93. By Year 2, standards are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1, who were building two-storey houses from blocks of various types, had designed their work, could talk about it sensibly and had thought carefully about the materials and construction. They had explored options for the shape and slope of the roof by standing with arms outstretched to gauge the angle of the roof they would require. They had given due consideration to the relative sizes of different rooms for adults and for children. Pupils in Year 2 have recently made tractors with axles and wheels which move and which show sound planning and construction.
94. The work seen shows that teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teachers are much less confident about teaching design and technology than they are about teaching other subjects; pupils say they do far more art and design than this subject. Although the school now plans its design and technology work around published schemes and has designated units of work for each term, these are often not complete. No projects seen between Years 3 and 6 show the whole process from investigation to final evaluation. Teachers are hindered in their attempts to promote better learning by too few resources for the subject and by the accommodation in their classrooms, which is unsatisfactory for many elements of the subject. ICT is seldom used for design and technology, so the control aspects are insufficiently covered. Electrics and electronics are taught in science, but pupils have no understanding of these in relation to design and technology.
95. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. However, staff are aware of the shortcomings in provision and have plans to improve standards, rightly aware that a significant investment in resources is needed. Because teachers do not assess pupils' standards in design and technology against national criteria, pupils'

National Curriculum levels are not known or recorded. Arrangements have been lacking for supporting staff by providing subject-specific training to give them greater confidence in teaching the full range of subject elements.

96. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 has declined since the last inspection. Although pupils remain as enthusiastic as reported then, their experience of design and technology across the school has diminished. Improvement in this subject is unsatisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

No geography lessons were scheduled during the inspection.

97. Standards by Year 6 are below average and pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Pupils' work shows limited understanding of places, patterns and processes. Their development of skills such as map-making and map-reading is limited as a consequence of the school's previous staffing difficulties. Pupils have produced a very small amount of work but show good achievement in plotting oceans and continents on a world map. In a study of noise pollution in the school they use their numeracy skills to present the results as a table. They accurately complete rather low-level tasks such as providing a colour-key to a map of the local area. There is little use of personal research or independent and reflective writing, and the use of ICT is unsatisfactory.
98. Pupils' work shows that, overall, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. A contributory factor to this is the limited amount of time available for the subject and the persistent staffing difficulties in the current year. Pupils' work shows that they all tackle the same tasks at the same level and that activities are not well-matched to their previous attainment. Teachers' marking is generally encouraging, but there is little comment to tell pupils how well they are doing and how they can improve the standard of their work.
99. The evidence is insufficient to make a secure overall judgement on standards, teaching and learning in Years 1 to 2. Pupils' work shows that their mapping skills are in the very early stages of development by Year 2 because insufficient time has been allocated for the subject.
100. There is satisfactory management of the subject overall. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the role, but this is not sufficiently developed in terms of monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and teaching. Both the subject policy and scheme of work are firmly based on national guidance but, because of the low allocation of time, are not fully implemented. The lack of display reflects the low profile of the subject in school. The school recognises that resources are limited.
101. Since the last inspection, there has been a decline in standards. The school's response to the time allocations needed for national initiatives in literacy and numeracy, and the requirements for religious education, have resulted in limited time for the subject. Improvement is unsatisfactory.

HISTORY

Two lessons in Years 3 to 6 were observed.

102. By Year 6, standards are below average overall and pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Pupils' work shows good knowledge and awareness of the effect on

children of being evacuated from their homes during World War Two, and communicates a 'sense of time', but no evidence of their use and interpretation of different sources of evidence. This weakness in the development of skills in historical enquiry also shows in the work on Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece, where much is copied from one source. Over Years 3 to 6, there is little evidence in pupils' work of personal research and independent writing, the use of ICT and the application of numeracy skills.

103. There is insufficient evidence to judge the standard of work by Year 2.
104. In the lessons seen in Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning were satisfactory overall and on occasion, good. In Year 5, while pupils' skills are underdeveloped, pupils' work shows that teaching in the current year has resulted in more rapid improvement than previously. However, tasks are not always well-matched to levels of attainment and the more able pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The range of evidence available shows that teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall because the skills of historical enquiry, such as the use and interpretation of primary sources like artefacts and documents, are given very little attention.
105. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Staff have a clear understanding of what needs to be done, but, because of a lack of non-contact time, there is insufficient attention to monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and the teaching. The policy and scheme of work are soundly based on national guidance. However, they are not fully implemented throughout the school, which leads to unsatisfactory development of pupils' skills of historical enquiry. The time available is not used well enough to raise standards through studying topics in sufficient depth. There are no formal procedures for assessment so that teachers have little to go on when planning future lessons. Display shows some celebration of pupils' achievements, but is not used as a helpful learning resource.
106. Improvement since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Only a limited amount of work in ICT was scheduled during the inspection. The school is on the verge of obtaining its own computer suite to make access to computers easier and more flexible for both staff and pupils.

107. By Year 6, standards are below average, showing a fall from the average standards reached by Year 2. There are no marked differences between the attainment of girls and boys. Over Years 3 to 6, pupils struggle to keep up because they lack regular practice on school computers. This is a problem of resourcing that is about to be resolved. Pupils' skills in interrogating and retrieving information is still at a rudimentary stage. They have limited experience in several important areas, such as the use of spreadsheets and learning how to use sensors and other elements of monitoring and control. As a consequence, they do not achieve as well as they should. While some younger pupils use data to plot graphic images of items such as favourite colours or television programmes, this is not extended sufficiently in Year 6. A small number of pupils has used exciting visual and audio packages such as 'PowerPoint' to create a bank of information, but this type of resource has not been used widely enough. The use of the Internet and CD ROM remains at a basic level. Recently, the school established an e-mail contact with a school in Jamaica and is preparing material for sending by e-mail. Several pupils have learned how to operate the digital camera and have used it for their work in art. However, there are several areas relating to the

communication and handling of information where pupils have insufficient experience. These include the ability and opportunity to generate and communicate their ideas in different forms, using text, tables, pictures and sound. While a few show evidence of word-processing skills, these skills are insufficiently used by pupils as a means of correcting, improving and displaying their finished work. Missing in the work of many pupils is the use of ICT to support their learning in other subjects.

108. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build well on their familiarity with a wide range of activities using computers developed in the Foundation Stage. Year 1 pupils also learn how to use a basic tape recorder and gain much pleasure from recording and playing back sounds they create as part of a science lesson. For some pupils, this is quite an astonishing, almost spiritual experience. By Year 2, pupils' access to a range of educational software supports their growing skills in filling images with colour and moving these around the screen. Using a mouse, they play games which increase their knowledge of giving instructions to the computer. Pupils learn how to program a robotic toy by tapping instructions into its memory and then watching it follow a pre-arranged course. During a literacy lesson, pupils used a projector and large interactive whiteboard to help build up key words. Many pupils use technical vocabulary relating to ICT confidently.
109. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and on occasion, good. Teachers have grown in confidence as their national training takes effect and shows in their willingness to plan ICT as an integral part of the work in all subjects. This planning is helping to support pupils' everyday progress and to generate enthusiasm for ICT. Pupils' response to work with computers is generally good and they behave in a mature manner when working in pairs or small groups at one machine. However, although teachers have the computers in use for much of the day, the 'hands-on' time for pupils is insufficient.
110. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A policy is implemented ensuring that all pupils have equal access to computers at some time. The decision to fund a new computer suite has only recently been accepted and it is envisaged that this new resource will do much to raise standards and strengthen the contribution of the subject to other areas of the curriculum. The current arrangements for assessing pupils' work and skills in ICT are unsatisfactory, as is the current level of resources. Standards have fallen slightly since the last inspection. Nonetheless, overall, the school has made satisfactory progress in the development of the subject since then.

MUSIC

The evidence of work in music is limited. There is a lack of tape- and/or video-recordings of work other than in singing. Singing sessions in Years 3, 5 and 6 and music lessons in Years 1 and 2 were seen.

111. By Year 6, standards are average. In singing, boys and girls control their voices effectively. They convey a good feel for rhythm, keep time well, make the words very clear, shape the phrases well and communicate the sense of the song expressively. They sing with good accuracy in pitch and make a resonant sound over a good range of pitch. In rounds and songs with different parts, they hold their own part confidently and successfully. Most show very clearly that they enjoy singing. Pupils' compositions in Year 5 show good control of rhythm and tempo and effective use of repeated patterns of pitch.
112. By Year 2, pupils' attainment is at the expected standard overall and their achievement is satisfactory. Their singing skills are above average for their age; they sing

expressively in assembly, with good accuracy and clear diction. Pupils show good listening skills and a secure sense of timing, for example, anticipating a chanting and clapping refrain in a rhythmic way and coming in with their part 'spot on'. They keep a pulse going steadily when clapping. These skills and skills in choosing sounds and patterns for their own music are not evident to the same extent when pupils use instruments. Year 1 pupils show above average skills in singing and maintaining a pulse. They tap on their knees along with recorded music and can clap and count 'One, two, three' in time to recorded music.

113. Pupils show good attitudes towards music activities and behave well, particularly in Years 1 to 3. They listen carefully to the teachers' instructions. However, few opportunities for independent work were observed.
114. Teaching is satisfactory overall and on occasion good or very good. Class teachers taught their own music lessons during the inspection in the absence of the specialist teacher. Because the school's planning is good, they were able to continue the work in progress. The least developed aspect of the curriculum, although clearly evident in the termly plans, is composing activities. In the nursery and Years R to 6, and in assemblies, pupils show above average singing skills which reflect effective teaching over time through regular accompanied singing sessions. Pupils' singing contributes to the corporate experience of worship in a profoundly moving way.
115. Leadership and management of music are satisfactory overall, with evidence of good practice over time. What is not in place is a system for recording pupils' attainment in the required aspects of the curriculum, including recordings of pupils' compositions. Since the last inspection, the improvement is satisfactory. However, where lessons take place in the hall, pupils' learning is still adversely affected by the over-resonant acoustic.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

No lessons in physical education in Years 1 and 2 were scheduled during the inspection. It is therefore not possible to judge the standards achieved by Year 2. Pupils were observed in activities in athletics in Year 6 and minor games in Year 4.

116. By Year 6, standards are broadly average and most pupils achieve satisfactorily. Those with special needs make good progress. Pupils' records show that they reach average, sometimes above average standards in swimming, reaching at least the nationally required standard of 25 metres. They show increasing skill in running and throwing as a prelude to more advanced athletic activities. All pupils show improving technique when throwing a bean-bag with the correct arm action and using follow-through movements. They improve their sprinting skills by competing against their own previous times over a similar distance. Pupils' personal development is extended during physical education activities.
117. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and take good account of pupils' previous achievements. Good attention is paid to safety and with pupils' good response, leads to satisfactory progress in skills. Both pupils and staff wear suitable kit for lessons which contributes to the obvious enjoyment and improved self-esteem. Teachers use their voices effectively in outside activities and pupils respond well to instructions. Because teaching emphasises technique appropriately, many pupils improve their performance in the thirty-minute sessions, helped by demonstrations from teachers and pupils. Pupils' progress in lessons is supported well by their good attitudes and very good behaviour.

118. The management of physical education is satisfactory. In a relatively short time, staff have done well to raise the status of the subject, ensuring that all elements of the curriculum are taught to all year groups and that work is progressive and focuses on skills. Teachers' files show that the subject planning is adequate, and that in Years 1 and 2, pupils build on the skills developed in the nursery and reception classes. The subject contributes well to pupils' social development. The range of sporting activities has been extended and the school recently ran its own 'World Cup' tournament; pupils take part in these activities enthusiastically. However, there are no arrangements for assessment, and the monitoring of pupils' standards and the quality of teaching and learning is not carried out rigorously enough. Resources are adequate for the needs of the curriculum and the provision meets requirements. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.