

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST HELEN'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

London

LEA area: Lambeth

Unique reference number: 100623

Headteacher: Mr W O'Doherty

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Brackstone  
21872

Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> September 2001

Inspection number: 234936

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 category:             | Voluntary aided                   |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 – 11 years                      |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                             |
| School address:              | Knowle Close<br>Brixton<br>London |
| Postcode:                    | SW9 0TQ                           |
| Telephone number:            | (0207) 274 4343                   |
| Fax number:                  | (0207) 274 6588                   |
| Appropriate authority:       | Governing Body                    |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Rev B D Heaphy                    |
| Date of previous inspection: | 29 <sup>th</sup> April 1996       |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members |                    |                      | Subject responsibilities  | Aspect responsibilities   |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|---|---|
| 21872        | Lorna Brackstone   | Registered inspector | History<br>Music  | What sort of school is it?<br>What should the school do to improve further?<br>How well are pupils taught?<br>How well is the school led and managed?<br>How high are standards?<br>a) the school's results and pupils' achievements. |
| 9465         | Jo Philbey         | Lay inspector        |   | How high are standards?<br>b) pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.<br>How well does the school care for its pupils?<br>How well does the school work in partnership with the parents?                                  |
| 3574         | Dr Kanwaljit Singh | Team inspector       | The Foundation Stage<br>Mathematics<br>Equal opportunities<br>English as an additional language | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?  |
| 11353        | Janet May          | Team inspector       | English<br>Art<br>Design and technology<br>Special educational needs                            |   |
| 15011        | Marion Wallace     | Team inspector       | Science<br>Information and communication technology<br>Geography<br>Physical education          |   |

The inspection contractor was:

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Bristol  
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## REPORT CONTENTS

|   | Page           |
|---|----------------|
| <b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>  | <b>4 - 8</b>   |
| Information about the school  |                |
| How good the school is  |                |
| What the school does well   |                |
| What could be improved  |                |
| How the school has improved since its last inspection   |                |
| Standards   |                |
| Pupils' attitudes and values  |                |
| Teaching and learning   |                |
| Other aspects of the school   |                |
| How well the school is led and managed  |                |
| Parents' and carers' views of the school  |                |
| <br>  |                |
| <b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>   |                |
| <br>  |                |
| <b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>  | <b>9 - 11</b>  |
| The school's results and pupils' achievements   |                |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  |                |
| <br>  |                |
| <b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>  | <b>11 - 12</b> |
| <br>  |                |
| <b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>                         | <b>12 - 14</b> |
| <br>  |                |
| <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>  | <b>14 - 15</b> |
| <br>  |                |
| <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>                                     | <b>15 - 16</b> |
| <br>  |                |
| <b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>  | <b>16 - 17</b> |
| <br>  |                |
| <b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>  | <b>17</b>      |
| <br>  |                |
| <b>ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE</b>  | <b>18</b>      |
| <br>  |                |
| <b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>   | <b>19 - 22</b> |
| <br>  |                |
| <b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b> | <b>23 - 37</b> |

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Helen's is a Roman Catholic school in Lambeth. It is bigger than most other primary schools with 253 pupils on roll. There are a similar number of boys and girls. Its pupils come from a rich cultural and ethnic background. Until September 2001 it comprised two sites but is now one site. Approximately half of the pupils are from Black-African heritage, one-sixth of Black Caribbean heritage and the remainder are of either white European or UK heritage. Four pupils are refugees from Uganda. Thirty-eight per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. This is above the national average. The number of pupils who use English as an additional language is very high at 77 per cent. Twenty-two per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register. This is broadly in line with the national average. Nearly two per cent of pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is above the national average. The school has not identified any pupils who are gifted or talented. The school is part of an Education Action Zone. The inspection took place during the second week of a new school year when 19 children in the Reception class had been in school for one week.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very effective school. From a very low base on entry into school pupils make very good progress and, by the end of Year 6, standards are above those expected for pupils at this age. Leadership and management are very good and all staff work very closely together. The school receives a much higher than average amount of money for each pupil, but it uses all its resources very well and provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils achieve very well in this school. Standards in English, mathematics, science, art and design and music at the end of Year 6 and in art and design at the end of Year 2, are above those expected nationally.
- The leadership and management of the school are of very high quality.
- The overall quality of teaching is good and teachers receive high quality support from well-trained assistants.
- The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Provision is good for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
- The provision for both spiritual and cultural development is very good.
- Parents have a very high opinion of the school and are provided with good quality information.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards at the end of Reception, at the end of Year 2 in all core subjects and in geography at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.
- The behaviour of a small minority of pupils.
- The use of information and communication technology to support subjects such as literacy, mathematics and music.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in April 1996 and since then it has made very good progress. All key issues have been thoroughly and effectively addressed. Consistent schemes of work in nearly all subjects ensure that skills are taught systematically and whole school assessment systems have been implemented. Pupils confidently develop investigative skills and they use them particularly well in the library. The use of information and communication technology has improved and pupils are using these skills across the curriculum. The quality of teaching and learning is now of a good

standard throughout the school and attainment has improved considerably at the end of Year 6. At the last inspection, the school accommodation comprised a main site and an annexe. Shortly before the current inspection took place, building work was completed and the school is now on a single site. This represents a major improvement since the last inspection. There is a shared commitment to improvement and they have a very good capacity to succeed.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

| Performance in: | compared with |      |      |                 |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |
|                 | 1998          | 1999 | 2000 | 2000            |
| English         | A             | C    | B    | A               |
| Mathematics     | B             | B    | B    | A               |
| Science         | C             | B    | A    | A*              |

| Key                |    |
|--------------------|----|
| very high          | A* |
| well above average | A  |
| above average      | B  |
| average            | C  |
| below average      | D  |
| well below average | E  |

Over time, very good progress is made from Reception to Year 6. Children start school with very poor skills in all areas of learning but leave school at the end of Year 6 with standards overall that are above the national average. Pupils make very good progress through the setting of realistic targets and the provision of booster classes, which gives additional support for all Year 6 pupils. Those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported and make very good progress.

As a result, standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 have been improving over the past four years. Standards in the Year 2000 standardised tests were above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. Compared to similar schools standards were well above average in English and mathematics. The results in science were in the highest five per cent of similar schools. Both the most recent unconfirmed results and inspection findings indicate that standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are above national averages. Standards in the foundation subjects of art and design and music are above those expected for pupils of this age. However, standards in geography are below what is expected of pupils nationally. All other foundation subjects, including information and communication technology, are in line with national expectations.

Over the past four years standards at the end of Year 2, in the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics, have been consistently well below the national average. Both the most recent unconfirmed National Curriculum test results and inspection findings indicate that standards in the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics are still below national averages. Standards in science are as expected for pupils of this age and compare with expected levels nationally. Standards in art and design are good and pupils are attaining levels higher than those nationally expected for this age group. Standards in all other foundation subjects, including information and communication technology, are appropriate for those expected of this age. Standards in geography are weak and do not match the nationally expected levels for this age group.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school                | Good. Pupils enjoy their time at school and like answering questions posed in both lessons and assemblies.  |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Satisfactory. Most pupils in Years 5 and 6 behave well in classrooms and around school but a significant number of pupils behave inappropriately. Many pupils play well together but there are incidents of over boisterous and argumentative behaviour.    |
| Personal development and relationships | Satisfactory. There is harmony between pupils from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds and most pupils enjoy working in pairs and groups. However, a minority of pupils do not respect each other or show sensitivity to each other's feelings. |
| Attendance                             | Good. Unauthorised attendance is below the national average but the school remains concerned about the number of pupils who have extended holidays. A number of pupils arrive late for school on a regular basis.   |

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Nursery and Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching    | Good                  | Good        | Good        |

*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.*

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good from Reception to Year 6 and this is an important contributory factor to the very good progress that is made by pupils throughout the school. Particular strengths in teaching found throughout the school are high expectations, the quality of day-to-day assessment and the use of homework, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Skills and subject matter are taught confidently and in a stimulating manner. Literacy and numeracy are taught effectively and good use is made of the recent national strategies to promote the pupils learning. The input of support teachers and assistants is of very high quality and this has an important effect upon the standards achieved in school. They work very closely with class teachers to provide high quality support for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. All support staff are well trained and the teamwork in the classrooms is exceptional. Occasionally the quality of learning is affected by the unsatisfactory behaviour of a minority of pupils. During this inspection 57 lessons were observed and only one was unsatisfactory. This was because the methods used did not take account of the differing levels of the pupils and skills were not developed appropriately.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment   |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | Good throughout the school. All statutory requirements are met and pupils receive an appropriately wide range of learning experiences.  |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs                               | Good. The good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they have full access to the curriculum. The work planned for them is matched to their requirements through an individual programme of learning that is regularly reviewed and updated.   |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language                       | Good. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive a good broad and balanced curriculum and are successfully enabled to take part in all school activities.  |
| Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good. The provision for both spiritual and cultural development is very good. The very strong Catholic ethos of the school permeates all facets and pupils are very well prepared to live and work in a culturally diverse society. Provision for moral development is good and provision for social development is satisfactory. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | Good. The school makes good provision for the education, personal support and guidance of the pupils. There are good procedures in place for monitoring attendance, absence and punctuality. The arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are satisfactory overall.  |

Parents' views of the school are overwhelmingly positive.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Very good. The headteacher and his deputy work closely together and are very well supported by all members of staff. The management of provision for special educational needs and English as an additional language is good.              |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Satisfactory. Governors are supportive of the school, fulfil their responsibilities appropriately and have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.  |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | Very good. Over time the deputy headteacher has been carefully analysing results in the standardised tests. Weaknesses in pupils' performance have been identified and strategies put into place.  |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Very good. The school development plan is carefully matched to the priorities within the school. Very good use is made of specific grants. All projects are carefully costed and best value principles are used to ensure value for money. |

There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation has been much improved now that it occupies one site but the playground areas for Years 3 to 6 are cramped. The school is well resourced and uses all its resources effectively.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most  | What parents would like to see improved  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like going to school.</li><li>• Teachers have high expectations and the children make good progress.</li><li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school with a problem or a concern.</li><li>• The behaviour is good in school.</li><li>• The quality of teaching is good.</li><li>• They are well informed about their children's progress and the school works closely with them.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li><li>• Their children are helped to become mature and responsible.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The right amount of homework.</li><li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li></ul> |

The inspection team agrees with the vast majority of the parents' positive views but is unable to agree that behaviour is consistently good. The inspection team is unable to corroborate the negative views of the parents because the amount of homework and the wide variety of out of school activities are considered good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Children start the Reception class with very poor skills in all areas of learning. All children including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make consistently good progress in the Reception class. They are eager and keen to learn. However, as most children speak English as an additional language and start from a very low base, their attainment in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development is still well below what is considered appropriate for their age when they leave the Reception class. Children's attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world, personal, social and emotional development and physical development is also below what is considered appropriate for their age but creative development is as expected for their age when they start Year 1. Good progress is also made in Years 1 to 2 and, although it is clear that they have made good progress in relation to prior attainment, standards are still below average. Good progress continues to be made from Years 3 to 6 and, by the time that they are ready to leave St Helen's, pupils' standards are above average. Overall, this represents very good progress in their learning.
2. During the past four years since 1997, results in the standardised tests at the end of Year 2 have been consistently well below average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to all schools nationally. When compared to similar schools, standards have been below average in these subjects. However, results in standardised tests at the end of Year 6 have been improving over the past four years. In both English and mathematics test results were above average in comparison to all schools nationally. They were above average in comparison to similar schools. Standards in literacy and numeracy are good. Results in science were well above the national average and very high in comparison to similar schools.
3. Both the recent unconfirmed National Curriculum test results and inspection findings indicate that by the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average for pupils of this age. However, standards in science are average and this is because the subject receives a strong emphasis throughout the school. The school has been carefully monitoring standards in Years 1 and 2 and has felt for a long time that the pupils' progress was hampered by their presence at the annexe site where the class organisation comprised of two parallel Reception and Year 1 units. The school has now successfully amalgamated the two sites and a pure Reception class has been created to cater for the new Foundation Stage. The school is very hopeful that standards at the end of Year 2 will now start to improve.
4. Standards in art and design are above those expected nationally for this age group. Standards in the foundation subjects of design and technology, information and communication technology, history, music and physical education are in line with nationally expected levels for pupils of this age. Standards in geography at the end of Year 2 are below national expectations. This is because skills are not progressively taught and, as a result, there are weaknesses in the pupils' understanding of geographical vocabulary.
5. Inspection findings confirm that, by the end of Year 6, standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are above average. This means that more pupils in St Helen's than in other schools attain appropriate standards. Some are working at higher levels in the National Curriculum programmes of study than would be expected for their age. The unconfirmed National Curriculum test results of 2001 show very good achievement because this particular cohort had a high number of pupils with special educational needs and behavioural problems. The good results were achieved through very careful monitoring over time, realistic target setting and high quality support. Accelerated achievement by the end of Year 6 can also be explained by high quality expectations on the part of the teacher and improved attitudes on the part of the pupils as they mature. This is particularly evident in Years 5 and 6.

6. Standards in art and music by the end of Year 6 are above those expected nationally for this age group. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are fully involved in these activities. For example, all pupils are given an opportunity to learn to play musical instruments and the rich diversity of the programmes of work ensures that pupils of differing ethnic backgrounds are fully included in all musical activities. By the end of Year 6 standards are in line with national expectations in the foundation subjects of design and technology, information and communication technology, history, music and physical education. However, standards in geography are below the nationally expected levels because pupils have not been consistently taught geographical knowledge and skills.
7. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well and make good gains in their learning because of the effective procedures for identifying those needs. They make consistently good progress throughout the school because of the good teaching and effective support in class. They are well supported in literacy and numeracy. All pupils are fully included in every aspect of the school's work, having access to extra-curricular activities and to school visits.
8. The school sets realistic targets for further improvement and is making good progress in achieving them. They carefully look at individual pupils in each cohort and make specific plans to raise attainment. For instance, improvement is very clear with the results of the Year 6 cohort in 2001; targets were continually raised as the achievement of the pupils' rose in response to the additional support that was given.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Although the last inspection found both behaviour and personal development to be good, it is currently satisfactory. Parents report that pupils are happy and eager to come to school. Pupils are friendly and polite to visitors and never miss an opportunity to smile warmly and greet visitors in the corridors and classrooms.
10. In Reception, children are keen, interested and participate well in all activities. They are learning to share equipment and tidy up after the activity. Children behave well and adults quickly correct those who lack concentration and become restless. A wide range of stimulating activities keeps children interested.
11. Pupils enjoy their time at school. Many pupils, particularly those in Years 5 and 6 arrive in school well prepared and keen to work. These pupils settle quickly, listen carefully to their teachers and apply themselves conscientiously in lessons. All pupils, even the very youngest, enjoy answering questions posed in lessons and assemblies and contributing to classroom discussions.
12. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school is satisfactory overall. Most pupils in Years 5 and 6 try hard to concentrate in lessons and in these classrooms there is often a quiet working atmosphere where work is tackled with interest and where pupils display maturity. However, a significant number of pupils in Years 1 to 4 behave inappropriately in school and their attitudes to school and their work are unsatisfactory. While there are many pupils who understand the boundaries between respect and disrespect, there are some pupils who do not. These pupils do not listen to their teachers, talk consistently throughout lessons and lack concentration. This unacceptable behaviour has a disruptive effect on lessons and often distracts other members of the class. There are also incidents of poor behaviour disturbing assemblies and prayers. Many pupils play well together in the playground. However, some are over boisterous and argumentative and occasionally relationships become tense. A minority of pupils do not respect each other or show sensitivity to each other's feelings and on occasions, some pupils are unkind to each other. The school appropriately temporarily excluded two pupils during the last academic year.
13. Relationships are satisfactory overall. There is harmony between pupils from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Most pupils enjoy working in pairs and groups. For instance,

in a Year 6 science lesson, pupils were grouped together purposefully, researching what happens when different materials are mixed with water. Pupils enjoy the extra-curricular activities offered by the school and join various sports and after school clubs. The school choir is well supported.

14. Pupils with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language have good attitudes to their work. They behave well because their interest is sustained as a result of the very good support in the classroom. This has a positive impact on the progress made by pupils in developing the basic skills in reading and speaking and listening.
15. The school's attendance rate is over 96 per cent and above the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. The school remains concerned about the numbers of pupils who have extended holidays to visit relatives in other countries. As stated in the last report, punctuality is still seen by the school as a cause for concern with a number of pupils arriving late on a regular basis. There is no difference in the attendance of pupils with special educational needs or those who use English as an additional language.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

16. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good from Reception to Year 6 and this is an important contributory factor to the overall very good progress made by pupils. No overall judgement on teaching was made in the last inspection report but there were a number of unsatisfactory lessons recorded. During this inspection there was only one unsatisfactory lesson observed and current findings indicate that the quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly.
17. Throughout the school all teachers have very high expectations of the pupils and this promotes positive attitudes to learning. For example, in a Year 6 history lesson pupils were not only required to find factual information about the evacuation programme during the Second World War but were also encouraged to explore how the evacuees must have felt during this time. Day-to-day assessment is used very well and teachers skilfully identify the key areas of learning that are required to improve standards. This is clearly achieved through high quality marking, a very good knowledge of the pupils and detailed feedback for improvement. This was evident in a Year 5/6 physical education lesson when the teacher made very good use of demonstration by pupils to increase their understanding of the skills that were being taught.
18. The teaching of skills and subject matter is confident and stimulating. Both literacy and numeracy are taught effectively and good use is made of the recent national strategies to promote pupils' learning. Resources throughout the school are used imaginatively and well-intentioned demands are carefully made on the intellectual, physical and creative efforts of all the pupils within the school. For example, very good use is made of original sources in history lessons to encourage the interest and imagination of the pupils. All teachers use a wide variety of teaching methods, which are effective in the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Challenging questions are used to consolidate, extend and confirm what pupils know and understand. Lessons are well paced and are clearly focused on the content. Relationships are positive and pupils are well managed in all classes throughout the school.
19. Teacher's planning is very good in the Foundation Stage where references are made to the development of the nationally recommended curriculum for this age group. Planning is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Good use is made of homework in Years 1 to 6, particularly to support literacy and numeracy skills. The use of homework in Years 3 to 6 is of a very high standard and this has a very positive impact on the progress made by all pupils. Tasks to do at home are given out in most subjects and pupils willingly undertake these activities. For example, in music, Year 6 pupils are given simple compositions to write at home.
20. Occasionally, the quality of learning is affected by the unsatisfactory behaviour of a minority of pupils. For example, despite the very good efforts of the teacher in a Year 1 geography lesson, the pupils' learning was impinged by the restless and poor behaviour of a small group of pupils.

21. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs or use English as an additional language is good throughout the school and enables them to make good gains in learning. The requirements of individual education plans are built into daily activities. Designated support staff and classroom assistants provide targeted, unobtrusive support to meet individual and group needs. This ensures that all pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school community and that all develop good levels of self-confidence. Teachers are skilled in targeting questions to ensure that all are included in whole class oral work. Individual education plans are kept up to date and targets reviewed regularly.
22. The work of both support teachers and assistants is of very high quality and this has an important effect upon the standards achieved in school. They work very closely with class teachers to provide high quality support for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. All support staff are well trained and the teamwork evident in the classrooms is exceptional.
23. The only unsatisfactory lesson was observed in physical education. There were weaknesses in the teacher's knowledge of the subject and delivery was confused. The organisation of the lesson failed to take account of the differing levels of the pupils and they did not make any progress in their learning.

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

24. Curricular provision is good throughout the school and is an improvement since the last inspection. All statutory requirements are met and pupils receive an appropriately wide range of learning experiences. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, which includes teaching them about sex education and the misuse of drugs, is good. English and mathematics are given an appropriate proportion of curriculum time. This has contributed to the improved pupils' National Curriculum test results in Year 6. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are well established and have a very positive effect on pupils' learning in English and mathematics. In all other subjects, except music, the school uses nationally recommended schemes of work and these provide clear guidance for staff. The school policies in all subjects are old and have not been reviewed since 1996. For example, English and mathematics policies do not mention the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies that are well established in the school. The school is in the process of developing an overview of the whole curriculum to ensure appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum and progressive development of pupils' knowledge and understanding.
25. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is well planned to meet the latest national guidance for children aged 3 to 5. The steps in all six areas of learning are well covered through the provision of a good range of stimulating activities. Appropriately strong emphasis is given to children's personal and social development, communication, language and literacy development and mathematical development.
26. The good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils for whom English is an additional language ensures that they have full access to the curriculum. Teachers ensure that the work planned for pupils with special educational needs is matched to their requirements. This is carried out through an individual programme of learning, which is regularly reviewed and updated. There is good support from trained classroom assistants who ensure that the quality of learning is good. The requirements in the statements of special educational needs are being met.
27. Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is very good. The school has a commitment to equal opportunities, which is ensured through the equal opportunities policy and the aims, the general philosophy and ethos of the school. The school's broad curriculum gives pupils of all ethnic minorities good opportunities to gain confidence through religious education, art, music, geography and history. For example, European and African music enriches pupils' understanding of many differing traditions. A large number of boys and girls participate equally in the very wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Specific provision

is made for artistic, musical, sporting and social activities. Music tuition is provided in violin and cello. This is free of charge to give every pupil an equal opportunity to take it up.

28. The curriculum is also enriched through booster classes for Year 6 pupils twice a week and regular swimming lessons for seven out of a total of nine classes. Higher achieving pupils are given an appropriately challenging curriculum and are well supported. For example, two pupils have been provided with an opportunity to attend mathematics sessions in Brunel University for two terms. This has helped them to enjoy and extend their learning in mathematics. A variety of after school clubs such as drama, poetry, choir, art, recorders, chess, computer and sporting activities further enrich the curriculum.
29. The school makes good use of the local community and surrounding area to support pupils' learning beyond the classroom. A variety of visitors such as nurses and doctors, police and the fire services come to the school to speak to pupils. Local residents come to talk about their experiences during the war. This extends their knowledge and understanding of the world and extends the programme for personal, health and social development. The very good range of visits out of school further enhances the curriculum. Pupils undertake a residential visit in Year 6, which provides a wide range of learning opportunities for social development.
30. The school has good constructive links with other educational institutions. Representatives from the seven local secondary schools are invited to speak to the Year 6 pupils and their parents. Parents visit these schools with their children before making a choice of secondary school. Year 6 pupils spend a day in a secondary school to familiarise themselves with the routines. The school enjoys good relations with other primary schools in the area through curriculum co-ordinator meetings and sporting events.
31. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and reflects the findings of the previous inspection report.
32. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. The school tries hard to develop attitudes and values consistent with the school's Mission Statement and the strong Catholic ethos. School assemblies provide a good basis for pupils' spiritual development during which pupils are guided well to reflect on the theme of the assembly. However, they are less successful when only one adult is present because not all pupils remain quiet and reverent. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to listen to music and this is a strength of the school. Singing during assemblies is particularly good; pupils sing with joy and expression and listen well as they enter.
33. Provision for the moral development of pupils is good. All adults working in the school present good role models of fairness and good humour. Throughout the school day, especially when incidents of poor behaviour occur, pupils are taught to understand clearly the difference between right and wrong and the impact of their actions on others, particularly during the headteacher's assemblies. During the week of inspection a Year 3 class discussed the reason for class rules and classroom behaviour during circle time. There is a comprehensive behaviour policy, although some teachers do not consistently use the prescribed sanctions to ensure good behaviour. There is effective emphasis on reward for good behaviour and it was noticeable how pleased pupils were to receive house points. Pupils devise their own classroom rules at the beginning of each term with the support of their teachers.
34. Provision for the social development of pupils is satisfactory. The school encourages pupils to work and live harmoniously together. They have opportunities to work together in lessons and are encouraged to co-operate well during their daily activities, particularly in Years 5 and 6. For instance, a group of six older pupils worked well together in groups, planning a play script. Younger pupils enjoy acting as monitors and helpers for their teachers. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given appropriate responsibilities but are not always encouraged to be involved with the welfare and behaviour of the younger pupils at lunchtime. For example, some pupils display anti-social behaviour, such as shouting, and this is not always controlled. Pupils raise commendable sums for charities to develop an understanding of the differing needs of other groups in society. For instance, recently, pupils collected enough money to provide a number of radios for the prisoners of Brixton prison. The residential trip in Year 6 offers pupils the

opportunity to live at close quarters with a wide range of people in a situation that is very new to most of them. The school ensures that this activity will only take place if they consider that relationships between pupils are harmonious.

35. Pupils are provided with very good opportunities to develop their knowledge and appreciation of their own and other cultures. This is a strength of the school. There is a wide range of cultural traditions within the school and pupils are urged to undertake research of their countries of origin and share their experiences so that others can develop knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils were asked to wear a suitable national costume for a special cultural assembly. Throughout the curriculum pupils develop good awareness of different life styles, values and beliefs that are prevalent in different countries. The school follows the 'Here I Am' programme and pupils learn about different faiths such as Hinduism and Judaism with visits to a synagogue, when possible. Pupils have opportunities to study the English culture through visits to the local area, museums and the theatre. Work in English history, such as the Victorian project, informs pupils about bygone days in this country. Pupils in Year 6 are studying the work of British past and present authors and poets. The school choir takes part in a number of choral festivals in the church.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

36. The school makes good provision for the education, personal support and guidance of the pupils. The school also provides a caring and supportive environment with a friendly atmosphere and pupils are happy to come to school. The last inspection report praised the staff's sensitivity to pupils' social circumstances and this is still the case. If needed, pupils feel they can turn to a member of staff of their choice for help and guidance.
37. The arrangements for promoting the welfare, health and safety of pupils are satisfactory overall. The designated person for child protection is the headteacher. He is fully trained and ensures that all members of staff are aware of child protection procedures. The headteacher is confident that any concerns would be reported immediately. There are appropriate policies in place to support health and safety with a number of first-aiders on hand if needed. On the week of inspection it was found that the school did not have an accident book to record minor accidents of pupils during the school day. This omission was immediately remedied and both an accident and incident book were provided. Pupils who feel ill or distressed can rely on the very effective school's medical supervisor to listen to their concerns and give care, comfort and support. The school is spotlessly clean and tidy thanks to the efforts of the site manager and his cleaning team.
38. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are satisfactory overall. The staff try hard to ensure that pupils understand that good behaviour is expected at St. Helen's. Pupils enjoy receiving stickers, stamps and house points for good behaviour. During an assembly on the week of inspection, the headteacher voiced his disappointment at certain pupils' behaviour, especially in the classrooms. Throughout the school, pupils' classroom behaviour is variable. The school has a number of strategies to address poor behaviour. It is noticeable that, when there is extra adult help, behaviour improves. Some class teachers take a firm stand with pupils who are not behaving appropriately, imposing sanctions when necessary and this works well. However, other class teachers, especially in Years 1–4, are not always implementing the sanctions outlined in the behaviour policy to ensure that lessons are not disturbed. Parents are invited to visit their children's class during lessons if poor behaviour persists. Lunchtime supervisors endeavour to keep a watchful eye on pupils behaviour in the playground at lunchtime, especially in the area called 'the cage' where over boisterous behaviour sometimes occurs. The school is currently changing procedures in the lunch hall to ensure that it is not overcrowded. However, despite this the noise levels in the lunch hall, though tolerated by the staff, are unacceptable and could be upsetting for the younger or quieter pupil. Parents are confident that, if a problem with bullying is experienced, the class or headteacher will deal with it immediately and effectively. The school does not have an anti-bullying policy but reference is made to bullying in the school's prospectus and 'Home-School-Child Agreement'.

39. There are good procedures in place for monitoring attendance, absence and punctuality. Registration takes place before both sessions and attendance is recorded correctly in class registers. The headteacher monitors registers personally. The school has put in place good strategies for improving attendance and punctuality by continually making parents aware of their relevant responsibilities through newsletters. The headteacher is equally vigilant in his efforts to ensure that pupils are collected from school on time in the afternoon.
40. The monitoring and support of pupils' personal development are good and all pupils are well supported. The class teachers know their pupils well and keep a close eye on their personal development. Personal, social and health education are promoted through religious education and assemblies. Circle times give pupils the opportunity to discuss their feelings and sometimes their concerns. Pupils in Year 6 act as house captains and librarians. Younger pupils have more simple tasks such as returning registers, tidying classrooms and monitoring duties. Pupils are encouraged to think about the feelings of others. This was the theme of a special assembly during the week of inspection, when pupils were asked to pray for the victims of the American disaster and their families. Pupil's personal development is enhanced through many school outings, which include a school journey.
41. Procedures for tracking, monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are very good in the core subjects of English and mathematics. The outcomes of assessments are used effectively when making long-term decisions about the curriculum and how to raise pupils' attainment. Pupils' prior attainment is noted, tracked and the progress made is recorded. The school has very good systems for setting targets for improvement based on the rigorous analysis of all assessment. The very good progress made by pupils is carefully recorded. Teachers determine pupils' targets and support them to achieve these. As a result, despite the very low prior attainment, pupils make very good progress and, by the end of Year 6, achieve standards above the national average in English and mathematics and well above in science. Assessment procedures are very good in the core subjects and are developing well in other subjects. However, there are no assessment systems in geography. Most crucially, the outcomes of assessment are well used to improve curriculum planning in English, mathematics and science and are used well in other subjects except geography.
42. The school identifies and meets the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs. There is good liaison with outside agencies and the information they provide is used when planning individual educational plans. The school has effective procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs; it complies with the Code of Practice. There are effective assessment procedures for placing pupils on the register. The register is regularly reviewed. The co-ordinator is given time to fulfil this role and monitor progress of pupils on the register. There are also good procedures for assessing and identifying the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

43. Parents' views of the school are overwhelmingly positive. Parents confirm that their children enjoy coming to school and they are pleased with the progress they make. They feel that behaviour is good overall and have nothing but praise for the school's standards of pastoral care. Parents who responded to the questionnaire, the many parents who attended the meeting with the registered inspector and those interviewed on the week of inspection, were appreciative of the commitment of the headteacher and his staff and their aims and expectations for their children.
44. The school recognises that liaison between home and school is most important and has endeavoured to maintain and improve the positive relationships with parents outlined in the previous report. The building of good relationships with parents starts before children enter the school when parents have a chance to visit the school, tour the building and meet members of staff. The quality of information to parents is good overall. The school's prospectus and annual governors' report are welcoming. Professional documents are clearly written for parents and pupils to understand. Parents receive weekly newsletters advising them of school activities, news and events. For some Portuguese parents who do not speak English fluently, there is a translator at the school. The school has provided parents with curriculum meetings

to raise their awareness of the literacy hour and numeracy strategy. Parents receive simple fact sheets at the beginning of each half term. These contain information on current topics and make parents aware of what their children are learning in the classrooms. There is an annual meeting for parents of pupils in Year 6 to discuss important issues such as work expectations, booster classes and secondary school. The many parents who attend appreciate this meeting.

45. The school holds regular, well-supported parents' meetings to discuss pupils' progress and actively encourages informal contact at any time by parents. Parents are emphatic that, should they have any concerns, the class or headteacher would see them immediately without an appointment. Parents are encouraged to help their children at home with reading and spellings. The inspection finds that it is noticeable that those pupils who do get this support from their parents make good progress. Parents are satisfied with the new format of the pupils' annual report. The reports evaluate performance and effort clearly in all subjects and set targets for the forthcoming academic year.
46. Parents are satisfactorily involved in the life of the school. They complete a home/school agreement but, as stated in the last inspection report, few help in school. The school is grateful to those parents who do offer assistance with reading and outside activities. There is currently no Parent Teacher's Association, which was disbanded last year due to lack of support. The headteacher is hoping that some parents in the school may now be interested in re-establishing this association so that social and fundraising events, such as the summer fair, can take place. However, parents give full support to class assemblies, special festivals and concerts.
47. The parents of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are fully involved in the identification of their needs and there are good communication channels between home and school. Pupils with special educational needs are set targets for parents to support. The parents of pupils on stage 3 to stage 5 are involved in reviews of their child's progress when outside agencies are involved.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

48. One of the main reasons for the success of pupils at the end of Year 6 is the very good leadership and management of the school. The headteacher and his deputy work closely together and are very well supported by all members of staff. This strength has been maintained since the last inspection. Governors are supportive of the school, fulfil their responsibilities appropriately and have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The headteacher, governors and staff have understood for some time that standards could be improved at the end of Year 2 if the school functioned on just one site. The very recent amalgamation onto the main building area has been realised through the hard work and determination of all involved with St Helen's. The move has been managed very well and very good use of strategic planning has ensured that a high quality team is now in place. The school's aims are implicit in the life of the school and it very successfully serves the diverse nature of the community. All those involved in the day-to-day life of the school have a shared commitment to improvement and have a very good capacity to succeed.
49. Over time, the deputy headteacher has been carefully analysing results in the standardised tests. Weaknesses in pupils' performance have been identified and strategies put into place to remedy them. For example, careful analysis has been made of children born during the summer months who have only two terms in Reception and their progress is carefully monitored and supported. The headteacher and his deputy know both the strengths and weaknesses of both the teaching and non-teaching staff and staff development well chosen.
50. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who use English as an additional language are well managed. Both are well organised and good records are kept. The special educational needs co-ordinator meets regularly with class teachers, the support teachers and support assistants. The impact of this is seen in the improving standards in literacy and numeracy.

51. The headteacher makes very good use of independent financial advisors to create a development plan that is carefully matched to the priorities within the school. For instance, adult/pupil ratios are maintained at a very high level to ensure that all pupils are fully included in the life of the school. Very good use is made of specific grants. For example, the new computer suite has been funded from a grant and a specialist teacher for information and communication technology has been made available through the educational action zone scheme. All projects are carefully costed and best value principles used to ensure value for money.
52. The school has a very good match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. All individuals are used very well to support the needs of the pupils. The very efficient administration officer is well supported by a highly skilled clerical officer; both ensure that the day-to-day work in the office runs smoothly. The school is well resourced and these resources are all used effectively to support the learning of the pupils. The accommodation has been very much improved now that the school occupies only one site. The new teaching areas are delightful and the staff have received very well the decoration of all teaching rooms. However, the playground area for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is cramped. For example, problems arise in outdoor physical education lessons when there is insufficient space available for all the pupils to move around in. There are also very few staff toilets available for the numbers of staff now currently on this site. Good use is to be made of the former premises officer's house as a music room and monies from last year's budget have been carried forward to fund its redecoration.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

53. In order to further improve standards of attainment, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- a) Improve standards in all areas of learning at the end of the Foundation Stage by:
- using the outdoor play area as an integral part of the teaching area;
  - enlisting parental support to improve children's communication, language and literacy development; and
  - planning further the future possibility of on-site nursery provision.
- (Paragraphs 1, 62, 67)
- b) Improve standards in writing in Year 2 by:
- providing pupils with further opportunities to widen their vocabulary; and
  - further developing their writing strategies through varying opportunities to write for differing purposes.
- (Paragraph 76)
- c) Raise standards in geography at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 to meet national expectations by:
- developing a progressive programme of geographical skills that systematically develops geographical enquiry, knowledge and understanding of places, processes and environmental change.
- (Paragraphs 114-117)
- d) Improving the behaviour of a small minority of pupils by:
- ensuring the consistent implementation of sanctions, which are outlined in the behaviour policy.
- (Paragraph 12)

- e) Extending the use of information and communication technology to support the work of other subjects, particularly in literacy, design and technology and music.

(Paragraphs 77, 113, 138)

In addition to the key issues above, the following should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- providing further opportunities to predict, devise and plan their own investigations in science (paragraph 97); and
- raising the profile of physical education throughout, further developing teacher confidence in the subject and monitoring progress through the school (paragraphs 141, 142).

## ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

54. As at the last inspection, the school continues to make good provision for the many pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils make good progress. Over 80 per cent of pupils are learning English as an additional language and over 25 per cent of these are at the early stages of language acquisition. The main languages spoken are Yoruba, Twi, Portuguese and Luganian. The school has recently taken responsibility for managing the budget for Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant and has appointed its own staff. The co-ordinator works for 0.8 (full time equivalent) and manages the service well. Additionally the three bi-lingual classroom assistants effectively support pupils and parents in Portuguese and West African languages.
55. All pupils in Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 have been assessed and the stage of language acquisition has been determined and recorded. All teachers and assistants are given this information to enable them to give systematic support. Most children who have English as an additional language start the school in the Reception class but, during the past academic year, eight pupils who joined the school started in a variety of different year groups. Test results are analysed on gender and ethnicity basis and support is provided to combat under-achievement. The current analysis shows that Portuguese pupils are under-achieving. The school has appropriately employed two classroom assistants who speak Portuguese to support pupils' learning.
56. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress throughout the school. The school has a supportive learning environment and ensures suitable opportunities for all pupils to develop their understanding of English. They are well integrated in the school life and are well cared for by the school. Mutual respect and tolerance of others' feelings, values and beliefs underpin the good relationships within the school. There are good procedures for assessing and identifying the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language. The progress of those who speak English as an additional language is regularly reviewed to ensure that their targets remain sufficiently challenging.
57. There is good verbal communication with parents. Bi-lingual assistants provide information about school activities or about the achievement of their children. Interpreting services are also used to get information about pupils from parents. Parents are encouraged to speak their home language with their children to consolidate their skills.
58. The co-ordinator for English as an additional language provides good leadership. She monitors the progress and standards achieved by pupils. A register of pupils on the stages of language acquisition is kept and their progress is monitored. Extra support is given to those whose progress is slow.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 57 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 40 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

|            | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number     | 0         | 18        | 22   | 16           | 1              | 0    | 0         |
| Percentage | 0         | 32        | 39   | 28           | 2              | 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   | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)      | 268     |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 101     |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs   | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 5       |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 73      |

| English as an additional language                       | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 228          |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year                                       | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 8            |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 2            |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 3.9 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 0.0 |
| 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 (Year 2)

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  | 2000 | 14   | 27    | 41    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 9       | 10      | 11          |
|   | Girls    | 21      | 18      | 25          |
|   | Total    | 30      | 28      | 36          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 73 (70) | 68 (65) | 88 (76)     |
|   | National | 83 (82) | 84 (83) | 90 (87)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 11      | 12          | 10      |
|   | Girls    | 21      | 25          | 25      |
|   | Total    | 32      | 37          | 35      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 78 (73) | 90 (78)     | 85 (81) |
|   | National | 84 (82) | 88 (86)     | 88 (87) |

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  | 2000 | 19   | 24    | 43    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 15      | 17          | 19      |
|   | Girls    | 19      | 22          | 24      |
|   | Total    | 34      | 39          | 43      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 79 (72) | 91 (88)     | 85 (81) |
|   | National | 75 (70) | 72 (69)     | 85 (78) |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 13      | 15          | 18      |
|   | Girls    | 18      | 20          | 21      |
|   | Total    | 31      | 35          | 39      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 72 (81) | 81 (84)     | 91 (84) |
|   | National | 70 (68) | 72 (69)     | 79 (75) |

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

|                                 | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      | 45           |
| Black – African heritage        | 130          |
| Black – other                   | 10           |
| Indian                          | 0            |
| Pakistani                       | 0            |
| Bangladeshi                     | 0            |
| Chinese                         | 0            |
| White                           | 83           |
| 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     | 2            | 0         |
| Black – other                | 0            | 0         |
| Indian                       | 0            | 0         |
| Pakistani                    | 0            | 0         |
| Bangladeshi                  | 0            | 0         |
| Chinese                      | 0            | 0         |
| White                        | 1            | 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) | 16.4 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 16   |
| Average class size                       | 30   |

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 14  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 232 |

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | N/A |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | N/A |
| Total number of education support staff  | N/A |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week    | N/A |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult           | N/A |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Financial year                             | 2000/01 |
|  | £       |
| Total income                               | 841,947 |
| Total expenditure                          | 796,971 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2,919   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 28,459  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 73,434  |

### **Recruitment of teachers**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years   | 3 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years   | 3 |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)  | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)                           | 3 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 268 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 119 |

### Percentage of responses in each category

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 86             | 13            | 1                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 70             | 29            | 1                | 0                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 68             | 29            | 0                | 0                 | 1          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 55             | 29            | 13               | 3                 | 0          |
| The teaching is good.  | 76             | 21            | 0                | 0                 | 1          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 76             | 21            | 2                | 0                 | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 74             | 24            | 1                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 84             | 15            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 71             | 25            | 2                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 82             | 15            | 0                | 0                 | 3          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 75             | 19            | 1                | 0                 | 3          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 58             | 28            | 6                | 0                 | 7          |

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

59. There is one class in the Foundation Stage, which is a step in education prior to starting the National Curriculum in Year 1. Children are admitted to school in September and January following their fourth birthday. Older children have three terms in Reception and younger children have two. At the time of the inspection, there were 19 children who had started the school the previous week. There is one full-time qualified teacher and a full-time classroom assistant. Additionally, the Foundation Stage co-ordinator and a classroom assistant who speaks Portuguese, support children for three sessions a week. Most children have attended nurseries before they come to school. There was no report on the Foundation Stage in the previous inspection so it is not possible to judge any improvements made.
60. Good induction procedures ensure that children quickly settle into the routines of the Reception class. Children and parents are well prepared before they enter school as most of them have good established links through the Church. The headteacher meets all parents and children to explain the school rules and regulations before the start of the term. Once they are in school, the deputy headteacher invites all parents to discuss the curriculum.
61. The school follows the Early Learning Goals, the nationally recommended Foundation Stage curriculum in Reception. This consists of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Each area of learning is made up of four stages or '*stepping stones*', from which both progress and standards can be measured.
62. Children enter the Reception class with very poorly developed skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. This is confirmed by the baseline assessments conducted with these children. All, except two children, have English as an additional language. Six of these children are on the early stages of language acquisition and one child is not speaking any English. Children's skills in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development are underdeveloped. Pupils make good progress in all areas of learning and this occurs because of the good teaching. Information is collated on entry into school and this is used effectively to provide appropriate support. For example, children with special educational needs are identified after these assessments have been made. The Reception teacher is well supported by the classroom assistant and all staff work well as a team. They plan their work with a clear focus on children's individual learning needs. The staff provides a range of stimulating activities in all areas of learning. However, at times these are over-directed. The staff give clear instructions and encourage children to listen carefully. All staff use praise effectively to motivate the children, to engage them in learning and to promote their self-esteem. The indoor area provides a stimulating learning environment. The outdoor area is not used well to extend the curriculum and this is a weakness.
63. As most children speak English as an additional language and start from a very low base their attainment in communication, language and literacy development and mathematical development is still well below national guidelines when they leave Reception class. Children's attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world, personal, social and emotional development, physical development and creative development is below national guidelines when they start Year 1.

#### Personal, social and emotional development

64. Although good progress is made, the majority of children will not achieve the final stage of the '*stepping stones*' in the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage. In a significant number of lessons, children show interest in activities such as singing number rhymes, finding a matching shoe and using materials to produce texture in their pictures. However, they do not

always sit quietly when the teacher is talking and often interject with their own responses. They find it hard to share equipment and materials and wait for their turn. Teaching of personal, social and emotional development is good and forms an integral part of teaching throughout the day. Much emphasis is placed on good behaviour, working and playing together or alongside each other. Children respond well to the wide range of stimulating activities. They are learning to concentrate for a suitable length of time and accept the social rules of taking turns to speak when they sit in a circle and hold a ball to signify their turn. With the support from the generous staffing, when there are three adults for 19 children, their concentration improves and they are able to sit and participate fully in the numeracy and literacy times. They listen carefully and complete their tasks. Both boys and girls and children of different ethnic groupings develop good attitudes towards learning as a response to the skilful management of the teacher. The Catholic ethos of the school supports children to learn to be quiet and reflective at prayer times.

#### Communication, language and literacy

65. Children make good progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing during the time they spend in the Reception class, but are still well below the national guidelines by the time they start Year 1 of the National Curriculum. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff use very good questioning skills to develop children's vocabulary. They respond appropriately and make relevant replies. For example, in role-play in the 'house' the children ask each other what they would like for breakfast. Learning is good because they listen carefully to sentences suggested by adults. However, most children reply using one-word answers. The children are also encouraged to form letters by carefully observing adults drawing them in the air and expressing sounds and words linked to them. For instance, in one session children were making collage pictures of the letter 'm' and were learning the sound the letter makes. Apart from one child who knows the names and sounds of the letters of the alphabet, the others have poor skills. Children enjoy listening to stories and adults support them in talking about the pictures in the big books and sequence stories, correctly ordering the beginning, middle and end of a story. They learn to read their own names and names of their peers. For example, children find their name card when they arrive and place them on the board and learn to recognise each other's names. Children enjoy writing and are learning to copy-write their names. All, apart from four, who can write their names and some other recognisable letters, are making marks and explain what they have written. Children are on Stage 1 of the '*stepping stones*' in their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. They take books home to read but there are no other strategies to enlist parental support to improve children's communication, language and literacy development.

#### Mathematical development

66. Children make good progress in mathematics but, by the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum, the majority are achieving standards that are well below the national guidelines for this age. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Most children are on Stage 1 of the '*stepping stones*'. For example, in one lesson the children were learning to recognise rectangular, circular, square and triangular shapes. They could match shapes but could not give the names of the shapes. Children match cutlery and plates on a table, sort objects into big, little and middle-sized and sequence the clothes for dressing a doll. Through number games and rhymes, staff provide opportunities for children to count to ten, which most children can. They count and match objects to ten, but most are not yet able to recognise numbers to five. All children, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, participate fully. Children sometimes count in their own language and staff both accept and praise their efforts.

#### Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Children make good progress in the development of their knowledge and understanding of the world but do not achieve the national guidelines by the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Most children are working within Stage 2 of the '*stepping stones*'. The quality of teaching and learning is good. From a range of well-planned activities, children learn to talk about how mummies and daddies look after them now and when they were babies. They learn

to experiment and build with construction materials. There are many opportunities for structured play and exploration during the sessions to which children respond well. However, the outdoor area is not used as an integral part of the daily curriculum. This restricts the children's choice of equipment and the development of their own ideas. When using the computer, children learn to manipulate the mouse to operate the program on the screen. They increase their precision when dragging items across the screen and are able to sequence the dressing of the bear quickly. Children taste and learn about some of the different cereals available to them for breakfast and are able to express preferences. They learn about properties of water when they are involved in floating and sinking experiments.

#### Physical development

68. Children make good progress in their physical development and, because of the good quality of teaching, they learn many new skills using their bodies. However, by the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum, they are still below the national guidelines for their age. Currently, they are on Stage 2 of the '*stepping stones*'. They are developing an awareness of consideration for others and negotiate their space well when using wheeled toys in the playground. Children are able to find space well, jump in and out of hoops, stop and start, move and 'freeze like a statue'. However, the very accessible climbing apparatus in the playground is not used to develop children's balancing and climbing skills. Children are learning to use tools, materials and equipment with a fair degree of dexterity. They demonstrate good levels of co-ordination when emptying and filling containers.

#### Creative development

69. Children make good progress and meet the national guidelines for their age by the time they join Year 1. Most children are on Stage 3 of the '*stepping stones*'. The quality of teaching is good and this enables children to develop successfully their creative skills. They are encouraged to use pencils, felt tips, crayons and paints to present their ideas through drawing and painting. The children are provided with a wide range of different types of materials, which they are encouraged to explore. Adults promote the use of texture in paintings and develop the children's understanding of colour. They are successfully taught an appropriate range of songs, action rhymes and this encourages their musical skills.

### ENGLISH

70. At the end of Year 2, standards of work achieved in English are below the national average. At the end of Year 6, pupils are working above the national average. This means that, in comparison with most schools, more pupils are working at the national expected level and there are a number of pupils working above this. The previous inspection reported below the national average at the end of Year 2 and just below the national average at the end of Year 6. This change at the end of Year 6 reflects the close monitoring of standards, the thorough analysis of standardised test results and the introduction of booster classes. These initiatives have clearly had a positive impact. There has been a continuing improvement of standards over the last three years, particularly at the end of Year 6. Compared to similar schools in the Year 2000 National Curriculum test results, the school was well above average at the end of Year 6 and below at the end of Year 2. Inspection findings indicate that standards in Year 6 are being maintained.
71. At the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in speaking is average. Good teaching enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, to make good progress. Many start Year 1 with limited communication skills although they have made good progress in the Foundation Stage. By Year 2, pupils are able to respond to questions and ideas in discussions. Most of the pupils confidently talk about their work at the end of lessons. They listen carefully to the teacher and take an interest in what others have to say.
72. By the end of their time in school, standards of speaking are above average. In Year 6, pupils understand the meaning of a wide range of words and confidently act out their play scripts from *Black Beauty*. Most pupils enjoy their opportunities to contribute to class discussions and to a

wider audience in school productions. However, there are a number of pupils from Year 1 to Year 4 with poor listening skills. Their inattentiveness slows progress.

73. Standards of attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 are in line with the nationally expected level and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress. Most read simple texts with confidence and fluency. They work out words they do not know by using letter sounds, by reading ahead and by using pictures. The pupils recognise and use punctuation to help read with meaning and expression. By the end of Year 2, they begin to show preferences for different types of books. Specific library lessons, conducted by a trained library assistant, help pupils to develop research skills and encourage their enjoyment of reading. Parental support for pupils' reading has a positive effect on standards.
74. By the end of Year 6, most pupils' attainment in reading is above average. They show a real understanding of a range of literature and are able to identify key features and themes in stories. Pupils know how to use reference systems effectively to gain information they require for their work. The good library enhances this progress. It is well stocked and carefully organised, resulting in many pupils using the resource regularly to expand their reading. The library and research skills have improved since the last inspection.
75. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make very good progress and weaknesses are carefully targeted. For example, lower achieving pupils in Year 3 are given additional literacy support. The use of information technology, to help with improving literacy skills in Years 3 and 4 is helping their reading comprehension. The home/school reading programme is also used successfully throughout the school to ensure that the pupils make consistent progress.
76. Standards in writing for pupils at the end of Year 2 are below the national average. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand the importance of organising their work so that it follows a sequence and a few write interesting sentences. Higher achievers leave a space between words and know when to use capital letters and full stops. Handwriting is joined and presentation is generally good. However, average and lower achievers require teacher support with their writing, which is frequently a mixture of joined and print. Spellings are inaccurate and frameworks for stories are required for support. The range of vocabulary and use of language also lacks breadth. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, pupils demonstrated effectively the use of adjectives to describe food. The higher achievers were able to work independently whilst the lower achievers completed this activity with good support from a classroom assistant. All the pupils were fully included in this lesson and good progress was made because of the good teaching and the high level of support staff.
77. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 standards of writing overall are above the national averages. This is because of the good teaching and more focus on raising attainment in writing. By the end of Year 6, higher achieving pupils use a sophisticated sentence structure in their work and this is a good indication of rising standards. Pupils in Year 6 competently plan, edit and revise their work, improving the quality. They understand a range of narrative and literacy techniques used by authors. The range of writing is good and most pupils use argument, commentary, narrative and dialogue effectively. The literacy hour has given pupils good structures to support writing. Good progress is currently being made. Pupils use their writing skills well across the curriculum. Throughout the school there are good examples of poetry writing. There are some good examples of information and communication technology skills being used effectively to promote literacy but its use has not been sufficiently developed.
78. Pupils show positive attitudes in English. They enjoy discussions and most are enthusiastic workers. Most pupils settle to tasks quickly and older pupils demonstrate well-developed independent learning skills, which are put to good use during the group work session in the literacy hour.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In the older classes it is very good. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs

and for the pupils who have English as an additional language is also good. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of English and use this effectively to produce efficient learning. Teachers expect pupils to concentrate in lessons but have to work very hard to achieve this, particularly in Years 3 and 4. This effort from the teachers has a positive effect on the quality and quantity of work produced. Teachers expect pupils to behave well and high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are seen in Years 5 and 6.

80. Teachers plan lessons carefully and are clear about what they expect pupils to learn by the end of the lesson and this is shared with the pupils. In both key stages, the implementation of the literacy hour is effective and is particularly successful in developing pupils' critical awareness of the texts they read. All the elements of the literacy hour are well orchestrated, which adds depth to pupils' learning. Teachers adapt the hour appropriately to suit the ages of pupils. Teachers organise their lesson well and use a variety of strategies to keep pupils interested. All teachers use good questioning at the beginning of sessions to help pupils recall previous work and make links with new work. This promotes good learning as pupils explain their understanding and teachers reinforce ideas. In the very good lessons, teachers have high expectations and ensure pupils are constantly challenged. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and time is valued and used effectively. Resources are well managed and suitable to the activity.
81. The numerous support staff are used very effectively to help small groups or individuals. Assessment of all aspects of English is very good. The day-to-day assessment contributes well to the lesson plan and delivery. Support staff assist the assessment process by noting pupils' achievements. Pupils are set individual targets that are focused carefully on their individual needs.
82. There is very good leadership for the subject. This ensures a clear understanding of the strengths of the subject and areas to develop, which are identified in the annual development plan. Teaching and learning are monitored by the co-ordinator. Work is sampled from all classes to track coverage of work and pupils' progress. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are set for three lessons a week but this was not taking place during the inspection because the assessment of pupils' levels was still in process.

## **MATHEMATICS**

83. Standards are well below the nationally expected level at the end of Year 2 but are well above the national average by the end of Year 6. All pupils make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
84. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 have risen over the last three years. There have been very good improvements in National Curriculum test results since the last inspection. The overall trend has been better than the national trend and this is mainly due to the introduction of the numeracy strategy and the focus of mathematics throughout the school. In Year 2000, the results were well below the national average and below those of similar schools. Girls performed better than the boys. The results of Year 2001 are similar, but have no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. This is because the school provided extra support to improve boys' attainment. Extra support was also given to Portuguese pupils who were identified as an underachieving group in the previous years. Now there is no significant difference in the attainment of different ethnic groups.
85. The results of Year 6 pupils have also risen over the last three years and have improved since the previous inspection. In Year 2000, the results were above the national average and well above those of similar schools. Results of Year 2001 are similar to those of the previous year. The school has consistently achieved higher than the targets set for the Years 2000 and 2001. The majority of Year 6 pupils are working at above the nationally expected levels for their age.
86. By the end of Year 2, the higher achieving pupils are beginning to understand place value to 100 but are not able to use place value to 1000 and cannot work out problems in money using decimals. Their skills in adding and subtracting three digit numbers by a written method are

not well developed. The average achieving pupils are using materials such as straws to make bundles of ten. The lower achievers are still learning the concept of ten. However, most pupils know the names and properties of two-dimensional shapes.

87. Progress is accelerated from Year 4 when it becomes good and, by the time they are in Year 6, their overall achievement is very good. Year 4 pupils have good understanding of number and learn strategies to add thousands, hundreds, tens and units by re-grouping numbers. Higher and average achievers in Year 5 work comfortably with decimals, fractions, angles and co-ordinates. They are clearly working at levels higher than those nationally agreed for this age group. Year 6 pupils confidently divide, multiply and use their knowledge of subtraction and division to solve problems. They understand the concept of probability and appropriately use vocabulary such as, 'certain', 'no chance', 'even chance', 'random', 'likely', 'possible' and 'unlikely'. Higher achieving pupils cover areas of the mathematics curriculum beyond the nationally agreed level for their age and this results in very good achievement and above average attainment.
88. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. This shows good improvement from the previous inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy is used effectively in the school. It has a very positive impact in raising pupils' achievement particularly in mental calculations and the use of mathematical vocabulary. Teachers give due emphasis to mental and oral work at the start of the lesson and pupils enjoy the short and sharp sessions that require high levels of concentration and effort. For example, in a Year 5/6 class, pupils enjoyed learning strategies to multiply larger numbers such as  $24 \times 6$ ,  $240 \times 6$  and  $2400 \times 6$ . Teachers skilfully adapt the content and method used to meet the differing needs of pupils. An appropriately high proportion of direct teaching keeps the pupils on task throughout each lesson. The teachers share the learning objectives with the pupils and this helps keep teaching and learning focused on the concept being taught. Teachers use their good subject knowledge well to explain a wide range of mathematical concepts. Other very effective features of the good quality teaching are high teacher expectations, quick pace, very good use of support staff and opportunities for pupils to work in pairs to discuss findings.
89. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and assess what the pupils have learned. The information gained is used very effectively to plan the next stage of work. In most lessons, work is suitably matched to the differing levels of attainment and higher achieving pupils are given appropriately challenging work. Teachers and pupils make effective use of the good range of resources for this subject, including white boards, digit cards, 100 squares and games to use on computers and laptops. This use of resources helps to extend pupils' mathematical understanding. Homework is regularly set and usefully consolidates and extends pupil's knowledge and understanding of number.
90. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported by assistants and teachers and they make very good progress overall. This is due to the good quality support they receive from the learning support assistants, which helps to boost the pupils confidence. There is also a great deal of effective team teaching. Class teachers teach together with the co-ordinator for English as an additional language. This good staffing ratio gives teachers an opportunity to explain the vocabulary clearly so that pupils can understand the concepts well. All staff are aware of the needs of these pupils and they put appropriate emphasis on teaching the key mathematical vocabulary. For instance, in a Year 3 lesson the teacher taught the key vocabulary associated with subtraction, emphasised it during the lesson and reinforced it in the plenary session. This helped pupils to understand the concept and use the skills to solve mathematical problems.
91. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good because the teaching is effective. For example, they respond very enthusiastically when challenging work is set. The older pupils are attentive during whole class teaching and during sessions when they work individually. The younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 need reminders to pay attention. The generous staff-pupil ratio in some lessons helps pupils to pay attention and listen carefully.
92. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The teacher who has management responsibility for the Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 2 provides very good

support to the mathematics co-ordinator. The role of the co-ordinator has improved since the last inspection. The very effective systems for monitoring and evaluating both teaching and learning have contributed to raising standards. The co-ordinator for Years 1 and 2 is very aware of the low standards and there is a clear action plan to improve standards through a focus on pupils' English language skills.

## SCIENCE

93. Standards at the end of Year 2 meet national expectations. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average for this age group. This is because more pupils are achieving the expected levels and some are working beyond these. In Years 1 and 2 very good progress is made and they achieve very well. This very good progress continues as pupils move through the school and achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs and pupils learning English as an additional language also make good progress in their learning. Over the last four years standards have continued to rise and the school has managed to maintain good standards. The achievement is very good because of the consistently good quality teaching and the skilled intervention and support of the classroom learning support assistants. Science is planned effectively and receives a high focus throughout the school.
94. Since the last inspection, standards have continued to rise and the school has worked hard to improve the quality of the investigative work. Consistently high standards are achieved because of the effective way lower attaining pupils, pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs are supported in their learning at an appropriate level, which ensures very good progress. As the inspection was held in the second week of the autumn term less practical work was observed. However displays around the school, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with pupils suggest that this is a strong feature and contributes to the impressive learning achieved by all pupils. Pupils achieve well in tests because the school is very well organised and implements a rigorous programme of revision in Years 2 and 6, which successfully supports all pupils.
95. In Year 2, higher achieving pupils understand how materials change and can identify the process of making a woolly jumper from the sheep's back to the finished garment. They have a sound understanding of what living things need to remain healthy. Lower achieving pupils in Year 2 understand how to make an electrical circuit successfully light up a bulb and they record their investigation. Pupils in Year 1 have a sound understanding of their senses and body parts. The skill of observation is well developed; pupils describe accurately the difference between the candle as it burns and the candle when it has been put out.
96. In Year 6, higher and average achieving pupils have a good understanding of plant life and are able to confidently discuss the process of photosynthesis and the importance of carbon dioxide. Both Years 5 and 6 confidently explain the difference between soluble and insoluble materials and use clearly labelled diagrams to explain their findings. Their observational skills have developed well and they confidently explain the process of evaporation and condensation. Year 6 pupils also talk enthusiastically about experiments such as when they investigate micro-organisms like mould growing on bread. They also have a good knowledge of scientific procedures and all pupils are able to explain clearly how to make a test fair. Pupils in Year 3 have a sound awareness of the importance of healthy diets and are able to select food with sugar in them. They understand that smoking is not good for humans and can describe the effect of cigarettes on the lungs.
97. However, not all areas of learning are taught thoroughly and opportunities to record investigations in a systematic scientific way are inconsistently developed. Scrutiny of work in Years 3 to 6 shows that pupils write up their own investigations but evidence of pupils predicting, devising and planning their own investigations is less well developed.
98. Throughout the school the quality of teaching in science is very good. The pupils show good attitudes and behaviour to their learning in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is particularly good when firm discipline and well-organised teaching methods ensure appropriate achievable steps to learning. Good lessons are effectively planned and delivered. This contributes to good attitudes, growing confidence, knowledge and enthusiasm for science. However, occasionally

behaviour is unsatisfactory in the younger classes. Swift intervention from classroom support assistants ensures learning is very good.

99. Teaching is often enhanced by the very good team teaching between the class teacher and support staff. This encourages pupils to focus on learning and to continually make an effort, any slippage in concentration is spotted immediately and lack of concentration is dealt with speedily. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher skilfully guided pupils to observe a vase of lilies.
100. Pupils with special educational needs and lower achieving pupils received reinforcement from the classroom assistant and this gave them confidence to answer questions about the parts of the flower and their functions such as the stem, leaves and flower. The impressive collaboration between class teacher and support staff in many lessons contributes to the very good pace of lessons. The generous classroom support is used to maximum effect and the resultant learning for all pupils is good. Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to reinforce literacy skills. For example, in a Year 5/6 class pupils were investigating what happens when solids and water are mixed together. The skilful use of questions helps pupils gradually extend their thinking and reinforce and consolidate learning. The teacher asked 'What do we mean by separate, dissolve and saturate?' and constantly reminded pupils of the words and their meaning throughout the lesson. Vocabulary was extended and, by the end of the lesson, the continual reinforcement resulted in all pupils understanding the different meanings. The pupils respond well to the good teaching and have a positive attitude to the subject. For example, they remember and talk enthusiastically about investigations.
101. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, they have an enthusiastic approach and lessons move along at a rapid pace. This ensures pupils are well challenged, motivated and learn well. They plan effectively, ensuring activities are matched well to the abilities of their pupils. This means that all pupils are challenged appropriately and gain confidence in their ability to learn. Pupils work hard and are often supported by up to three classroom support assistants in one class. Teachers target questions appropriately to all pupils, gradually extending thinking and knowledge from the pupils and extending it, building confidence and knowledge.
102. Science is used very well across the curriculum to reinforce other subject areas such as mathematics and information and communication technology. Pupils in Year 3 research information from the internet where they find out about teeth and healthy eating. They also measure temperature of different substances and record their findings in bar and pie charts.
103. The co-ordinator is an experienced teacher and ensures science is very well co-ordinated. This makes a good contribution to the quality of teaching and learning within the school. The school is using national planning and guidelines. Weekly and daily planning is done very well. The school have yet to develop their own longer term planning, adapting published resource material to suit the needs of their own school, teachers and pupils. Assessment procedures are good but not all teachers use their assessment to inform their planning. The co-ordinator has monitored and recorded teaching throughout the school.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

104. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 most pupils attain standards that are above the nationally expected levels and achievement is very good throughout the school. The wide range of imaginative and colourful painting and clay work displayed in classrooms and around the school celebrates pupils' achievements and demonstrates that good standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Art continues to be a strength of the school.
105. Pupils' skills, techniques and understanding of the visual elements have been systematically developed as they move through the school. In Years 1 and 2, pupils experience a range of activities and media enabling them to explore pattern, colour and shape. They are introduced to paint, brush and crayon and learn to control these well. Throughout the key stage there are good examples of cross-curricular links. For example, a display of work done by Year 2 pupils depicted the Great Fire of London, illustrating the use of pastels to achieve realistic colourful

skies. Previous work on the study of seeds and fruit demonstrates how pupils had carefully observed objects and drawn them with developing accuracy and skill.

106. Pupils continue to make good progress throughout Years 3 to 6 because teachers have good subject knowledge. Art and design makes a good contribution to cultural development. Pupils gain a good knowledge of the work of a wide range of artists from old masters to modern day artists. For example, in Year 6 they experience painting in the style of Turner, Van Gogh and Hockney and build up a good background knowledge of the painters and how they worked. They use a wide range of media including pencil, charcoal, pastels, acrylic and watercolours. Year 6 pupils also paint high quality landscapes and their sketches are of good quality. Pupils in Year 4 make effective Greek artefacts in clay. This supports their knowledge and understanding of life in Ancient Greece. Pupils use information and communication technology well to support their learning through the use of art packages and to retrieve information about aspects of art from the internet. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and those pupils who have English as a second language is also good. All pupils are fully included in lessons and are able to express themselves in a variety of differing media.
107. Only one art and design lesson was observed during the inspection and therefore no overall evaluation on the quality of teaching can be made. However, discussions with pupils about their work and observations of teachers' documentation show that art is appropriately taught. Teachers' planning is good, learning is enhanced by the good use of visual materials to focus pupils' attention and specific skills are illustrated. In the lesson observed, resources were well organised and perceptive questioning challenged the pupils and was helping to develop their observational skills. Teachers sensitively display pupils' work and this has a very positive impact on their attitude towards the subject.
108. The curriculum provision is good and well supported by visits to art galleries and museums. There are good links across other subjects. The enthusiastic and well-informed co-ordinator provides in-service training and organises the popular art club. This contributes well to the curriculum. Resources are adequate and well organised. The library has a good range of books to support learning. Assessment procedures are informal but effective. The subject co-ordinator maintains an overview of learning in the subject through the scrutiny of teachers' planning and of pupils' completed work.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

109. It was only possible to see two lessons during the inspection. Judgements are also based on examination of planning and previous work, photographic evidence and discussions with staff and pupils. This indicates that by the end of Years 2 and 6, attainment in design and technology is in line with the national average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well. There have been good improvements since the last inspection. A detailed scheme of work with links to the science curriculum is in place. The scheme of work informs teachers' planning and ensures progression in pupils' learning as they move through the school. There is now a suitable balance between the elements of designing, making and evaluating.
110. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use construction kits and a wide range of materials to make models. In Years 3, 4, 5, and 6 pupils design and make suitable artefacts using materials such as wood, textiles, food, and electrical components. They also successfully evaluate their work when supported by adults. For example, in a Year 2 lesson about food technology, pupils were making chocolate rice 'krispies'. They were encouraged to recognise the reasons for good hygiene and the importance of safety when melting their chocolate. All of the pupils learnt that heat changes a material and this understanding was due to the skilled questioning by the teacher.
111. Pupils in Year 6 enthusiastically tackled the design of a 'Whoomsy Bar'. They looked at various commercial products and, with adults' support, evaluated them in terms of useful information and appearance. This lesson demonstrated their ability to maintain interest over

several weeks as they researched, planned, made and evaluated their product with varying degrees of support. Skills of collaborative work were very good. They discussed ideas freely and shared resources, listened with interest to each other's suggestions and discussed practicalities in a mature way. Further investigation on food wrapping for homework was eagerly accepted. Throughout the school pupils are interested in design and technology.

112. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was good. The Year 6 lesson was of high quality, very well organised and executed and provided very good challenge for the pupils. During these lessons teachers made good use of support staff. Pupils were managed well and this enabled the pupils to concentrate on the tasks set. The good plenary session enabled the pupils to achieve well.
113. The recently appointed co-ordinators are enthusiastic and have started to focus on class observations. Targets for the subject are clearly focused on improving standards. The new assessment procedures are informative and manageable. Resources have been evaluated and are now more accessible to teachers. The use of information and communication technology within the development of planning, designing and making is a weakness.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

114. Standards in geography are below the nationally expected levels for both pupils at the end of Year 2 and 6. However, all pupils, including pupils with statements of special educational needs and pupils who are learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in their learning, although their progress is not as good as in many other subjects. Considering the good teaching in the school and the very good level of support for all pupils, standards could be better. Due to national initiatives and focus on other subject areas there have been insufficient opportunities to develop the subject since the last inspection. The school is aware of the need to develop geography and has identified it in the school development plan.
115. Standards in geography were below national expectations in the last inspection and support for pupils learning English as an additional language was insufficient to help pupils gain the expected standards. However, although no progress has been made in raising standards, the school now ensures that pupils learning English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class. These pupils now make the same progress in their learning as average and higher achieving pupils. Pupils' work indicates that the programmes of study for the National Curriculum are taught as pupils progress through the school. What is not clear is a progressive development of geographical skills that systematically develops geographical enquiry, knowledge and understanding of places, patterns and processes and environmental change and development.
116. Pupils in Year 2 are able to write about Caribbean fruit and identify animals from England and Australia. They start to develop orientation, map work skills and recognise human features in places. For example, in Year 1 pupils can identify parts of the school such as drain pipes, the playground and are developing the ability to identify their classroom on a map. However, their awareness of suitable geographical vocabulary is limited and these skills are not developed as pupils progress through the school.
117. Year 6 pupils research information such as capitals of the world and temperature conditions in different parts of the world. Higher achieving pupils in Year 6 locate their country of origin in the atlas and trace it. Average pupils find the flag of their chosen country and draw it and they research population figures. They use maps and they write about the tropical rainforest but the quality and quantity of the written work about the rainforest areas is unsatisfactory. For instance, evidence of how geographical changes affect activities, lifestyles and the inhabitants are limited. However, not enough attention is given to discussing the damage to the environment. Map work skills are sufficiently developed. In a lesson about rivers in Year 4, learning was judged to be good but attainment was hampered by a lack of vocabulary, experience and understanding of a river. In this lesson the pupils struggled to discuss activities on the river and had no concept of the differences between the River Thames in London and the same river in Oxfordshire. Higher and average achieving pupils knew the

river joined the sea but most did not know the word 'estuary' and basic geographical vocabulary was weak. Use of ICT to develop the subject is limited.

118. The quality of teaching is good in lessons but learning over time is not consistent. Teachers make lessons interesting by encouraging pupils to learn about their country of origin. For example, in a Year 6 class they knew and understood facts about their country of origin, such as why Ghana was called the Gold Coast. Pupils were encouraged to talk about the different climate, language and way of life but explanations were basic and lacked detail. Teachers use questions well, for example 'What is another name for money?' Teachers are well organised and they provide clear expectations and tasks. This encourages pupils to develop their thinking and enthusiasm for the subject. The well-planned lessons stimulate pupils' interest. The good teaching ensures a good pace to learning. In Years 1 and 2 teachers use behavioural strategies well but the behaviour of some pupils continually undermines the good teaching. As a result the learning is not as good as it could be.
119. The co-ordinator has specialist subject knowledge and is enthusiastic about geography. The co-ordinator is eager to develop the subject and has the knowledge and ability to achieve this goal. However, there has been no opportunity to deliver staff training because of national initiatives and other priority areas within the school. As a result, it has not received the rigorous focus it needs to ensure standards are raised. Resources are satisfactory but could be better considering the wide range of pupils within the school. The school is starting to use the local environment to extend learning. For instance, good use is made of the River Thames and pupils in Year 4 visit this as part of their river study.

## **HISTORY**

120. Standards in history are in line with national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress throughout the school.
121. Insufficient evidence during the previous inspection meant that no judgement was made on standards although progress in historical skills was considered weak because the planning was inconsistent. The introduction of a scheme of work in Years 1 and 2 and the use of the nationally recommended programmes in Years 3 to 6 has ensured that all pupils have equal access to consistent coverage in history and are fully included in all activities related to this subject.
122. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand the difference between 'then' and 'now'. For example, they know that when they were babies they played with different toys to those they play with today. They also talk about the food they eat now compared to that when they were younger. Pupils refer to famous people from the past such as Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole and confidently contrast the 'old' with the 'new'. For example, they describe how houses long ago were lit with candles and enthusiastically compare seaside holidays today with those from the past.
123. By the end of Year 6, pupils have an appropriate understanding of the importance of original sources. For example, they have found out about VE Day through photographs and know that extracts from newspapers from the time provide ideal sources of information. They use first-hand evidence from visiting speakers and to find out how people were really affected by the war. For instance, a local man from Fulham explained how his son had died in the bombing of London and this enabled them to understand the implications of losing a member of family as a result of war. Good use is made of literacy skills in Years 5 and 6 to promote the subject. For example, pupils write imaginary accounts of war experiences and also use their letter writing skills to create accounts of this period in history. Historical skills are developed systematically from Years 3 to 6. In Year 3 pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of life in Roman Britain and good quality teaching ensures that learning opportunities are made interesting for the pupils. For example, pupils enjoy talking to both their peers and adults about everyday life in Roman Britain and are given the opportunity to learn information that they are able to relate to. For instance, the pupils really enjoy talking about the type of toothpaste used by Romans, which was made from mouse brains! In Year 4 they learn about

the Ancient Greeks and factual information is enlivened by visits to local museums. By Year 5 they are learning to use evidence to investigate historical facts. This happened in a Year 5/6 class who were finding out what it was like for children living in Victorian Britain by looking at old photographs and contemporary authors such as Charles Dickens in small groups. These were well supported by additional teachers and classroom assistants who ensured that the pupils remained on focus.

124. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well planned and good use is made of a wide variety of resources. Good input from both support teachers and classroom assistants ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress. For example, in a Year 6 history lesson, groups were encouraged to create little plays, which encouraged the pupils to empathise with evacuees during the Second World War. Pupils who had limited experience of the English language were encouraged to act out their feelings with the help of an experienced and well-informed classroom assistant. In a Year 5/6 lesson the teacher portrayed both her enthusiasm and knowledge of the Victorian era by dressing up in the clothes of the period and this further motivated the interest of the pupils.
125. A nationally recommended scheme has been introduced to support curriculum planning in Years 1 and 2 and extend the progression of skills in Years 3 to 6. The co-ordinator has worked hard to improve resources in Years 1 and 2 and is keen to develop monitoring systems throughout the school. The use of information and communication skills to support this subject is developing well and pupils confidently use research programs to find out about historical facts. Numeracy skills are also appropriately developed in their use of time lines and recording of historical dates and events.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

126. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are as nationally expected for pupils of this age. All pupils including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress and overall achievement is good.
127. Since the last inspection there has been a notable improvement in the standards achieved by pupils and the quality of the provision and teaching. The key issue to develop staff competence so that information and communication technology could be used effectively across the whole curriculum has been successfully addressed. All staff have received planned programmes of training and continue to receive support. This has greatly enhanced their confidence and ability to teach the subject. The school has worked hard to improve hardware. A network of computers has enhanced the provision and there is now one in every classroom with access to the internet. There is also a suite of computers giving pupils access to an independent learning program. There is a clear plan for development and a progress plan review. The school is participating in a programme, which involves training parents in ICT skills. It has also benefited from training through the Education Action Zone and has recently employed a technician to advise on the new equipment. The school pilots learning materials and, during the week of the inspection, they received a delivery of 8 laptops for use in the Year 5/6 class, which were rapidly put into use.
128. Improved planning has resulted in raising standards from below average to average. By the end of Year 2 pupils understand that information can be presented in a variety of forms. They make good progress in using the computer to enter text and to use software to reinforce reading and number skills. The pupils use a drawing and painting package to design faces using different colours. They successfully make shapes in different sizes and fill them with colour. Pupils use the mouse confidently but keyboard skills are slow. They can type in lower and upper case, know how to use bold font and explain clearly how to print and save their work. Pupils write poems such as 'I like' and use both capital letters and full stops appropriately. Higher achieving pupils are able to produce a symmetrical picture independently. They create graphs to show the results of a science investigation 'How the distance the car travelled was affected by the steepness of the slope' and are also able to

enter information to show, for example, birthdays. Lower achieving pupils write simple sentences and are beginning to edit their own work.

129. Last year pupils in Year 6 produced their own multi-media presentation called 'My future' and higher achieving pupils added sound to their work. Pupils describe how to use the internet and how to send e-mails. They also have a good awareness of the moral implications of using the internet because these had been clearly identified. Year 6 pupils eagerly used the new laptops for the very first time during the inspection week and were introduced to a new project. They adapted to the mouse pad control very well and made good progress during the week. Higher and average achieving pupils are able to design their own front covers. They select colour and background design and both plan and create their own title and wording. Pupils make good progress because they are so well supported by adults.
130. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 have access to a suite with 10 computers. Pupils select their own programs and the suite provides good opportunities for pupils to improve their spelling, mathematics and comprehension skills across the curriculum. For example, a higher achieving Year 6 pupil was working on long multiplication sums. However, pupils' skills in controlling techniques are less developed and experiences of sequencing events are limited. Pupils are well motivated and work with enthusiasm enjoying the challenge of the work. They are able to identify and assess the progress they have made.
131. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Planning is a strength and learning and skills are clearly identified. Teacher are very well organised and well supported by classroom support staff. The pupils are also well supported by wall displays that remind them of the procedures. These are also written in Portuguese and this ensures that all pupils can understand the guidelines. This enables pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs to work at an appropriate level and make very good progress. Explanations are always very clear and tasks are given in achievable steps to enable all pupils to progress well in their learning. Lessons are no more than satisfactory when explanations cannot be followed up by immediate opportunities for pupils to use the computers. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 make very good use of the suite because the programme of provision is so well organised.
132. The co-ordinator is well organised and works well with a consultant to plan and improve provision. Opportunities have been provided for the monitoring and evaluation of the subject. Assessment is thorough and clearly identifies achievement and progress in learning. The school has worked hard to improve the hardware provision. While there are examples of the use of information and communication technology to support the work of other subjects, this aspect could be developed further with improved software particularly in literacy, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology and music. The co-ordinator recognises this is an area for development.

## **MUSIC**

133. By the end of Year 6, standards in music are above those expected nationally for pupils of this age. Standards are as expected nationally at the end of Year 2. The progress made by all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, is very good throughout the school.
134. By the end of Year 2 pupils are able to recognise a wide variety of instruments and know that they are used to represent sounds, moods and effects. For example, they have studied 'Peter and the Wolf' and know that different instruments were used to portray the animal characteristics within this story. They listen to music well and respond carefully to rhythms and beats. For example, in a Year 1 lesson pupils confidently responded to each other in song showing that they had an appropriate awareness of rhythm, pitch and melody.
135. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to sing a wide variety of different songs and they perform confidently in public. They have a good knowledge of musical vocabulary and use accurate terminology to describe note values, key signatures, chords and scales. Pupils are able to follow simple notation patterns and create their own short compositions using accurate musical structures. Their ability to recognise and repeat rhythmic phrases is of high quality and has

been well developed as they have moved through the school. Pupils also have a good understanding of the way in which music is used to reflect different intentions. For example, they are familiar with Vivaldi's Four Seasons and know that this music has been used to portray autumn, winter, spring and summer.

136. Singing throughout the school is of a good standard. Pupils' diction is clear and they know many of the words from memory. They understand that there are different types of ways to sing and they both sing in two parts and are able to perform unaccompanied. The school is rightly very proud of all its performances and musical events, which are so prominent in the life of the school.
137. This very good progress in music occurs because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Music specialists teach the pupils in both key stages. Their very good subject knowledge and confident delivery has a good impact on the progress made by the pupils. Management of pupils is firm and all lessons follow a good pace. This ensures that they gain a good understanding of musical knowledge and skills. A wide range of positive strategies is used to maintain their interest and the very best learning takes place when adult support is provided within the sessions. Although most pupils are enthusiastic and well on task there is always a small minority of pupils who quickly become restless and insist on chatting incessantly.
138. One of the main reasons why standards are good in music is because it is given a very high priority within the school and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are provided with a very rich programme of study. The headteacher is the subject co-ordinator and undertakes his role using his considerable expertise. He has devised his own scheme of work, which appropriately caters for its wide cultural diversity and makes a very positive contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of all pupils. For instance, music from all around the world is part of the very rich curriculum and pupils are keenly encouraged to appreciate the differing types of music through international evenings and a wide variety of visitors. All pupils are fully included within the music provision. For example, the school pays for tuition for cello and violin lessons. A wide range of musical extra-curricular activities are also available for pupils to enjoy and this has a positive impact on their social development. However, the use of information and communication technology is underdeveloped and this is a weakness.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

139. Standards in physical education are average at the end of Year 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. Standards are below average in Year 1. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement for Year 2 pupils. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Evidence of standards achieved was limited as the inspection took place in the second week of the autumn term and teachers were still establishing guidelines and procedures. No gymnastics, dance or swimming was observed during the inspection week. Planning indicates that these activities take place but no judgement could be made on the quality of teaching or standards achieved in these activities. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 indicates that pupils use apparatus but no evidence was available to show pupils' compositional skills in gymnastics and dance.
140. From Year 1, all pupils experience a weekly swimming lesson. Many pupils are unable to swim when they come to the school. Pupils make satisfactory progress in swimming but many are unable to achieve 25 metres by the time they leave the school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 perform appropriate warm up stretches prior to activity and they link their scientific knowledge to these sessions. For example, pupils have a good knowledge of the effects of exercise on their body and they understand why they are doing the activity and the effect of exercise on their body. They can talk about the importance of an active life-style and understand the importance of maintaining health and fitness levels. Pupils also know it is important to warm up prior to exercise. By Years 5 and 6, co-ordination is well developed and most pupils in these year groups are able to throw under and over-arm with good control. The pupils know and practise the no contact rule in a zone passing game of four attacking players versus four defending players. Higher achieving pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a good understanding of the

principles of attack and defence average. Lower achieving pupils in this age group are developing an understanding of this skill. Pupils' ability to observe and comment on their own and others' work is well developed. They suggest ways to improve their own and others' performance. In the better lessons, all pupils including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are fully involved in the lessons. Pupils co-operate well with each other and quickly move into different size groups.

141. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory with instances of good teaching in Years 3 to 6. There has been no significant development in physical education to raise the quality of teaching or standards. Generally the standard of teaching in physical education is not as good as in other subject areas and could be better. Only two of the teachers observed teaching, changed for their lesson and this did not provide a good role model for the pupils. Some pupils were allowed to wear jewellery during physical activity. In the good lessons, the learning was good because the teachers had a good understanding of the subject and this was communicated to the pupils. For example, in a Year 5/6 lesson, the teacher had good subject knowledge and ensured that pupils' warmed up appropriately before the lesson. Lessons were well planned and this contributed to the pupils' positive attitude to the subject and their enjoyment of the activities. In the good lessons, the teacher used demonstrations well. For example, in the Year 5/6 lesson, the quality of throwing and catching improved after pupils had observed a good demonstration of these particular skills. All pupils are fully identified in planning. Extension activities are planned for the higher achieving pupils and easier activities are used to encourage the lower achievers. This enables all pupils to achieve and be challenged by the work. Teachers use observation skills well and intervene with appropriate teaching points to guide pupils in their work. In Year 3 pupils are very aware of the importance of not raising their sticks above shoulder height because the teacher demonstrates this very well and explains the reasons and safety factors clearly. A weakness in teaching occurs when teachers do not progressively link the activities and pupils are either under or over challenged by the activity; for example, moving too quickly into a large game before developing the necessary skills to cope with the larger numbers. Learning is also disrupted in younger classes because of disruptive behaviour of a significant number of pupils.
142. The co-ordinator is young and enthusiastic and has the drive and interest to raise standards. However, accommodation for physical education could be better. The outdoor area is satisfactory for younger pupils but space for older pupils is limited. Plant pots in the middle of the playground create an extra safety hazard for older pupils who need additional space to be fully extended in their games lessons. The outdoor space for older pupils is very noisy and the surface of the playground is uneven. Resources are adequate. The co-ordinator has not monitored lessons throughout the school. The co-ordinator does record attainment in swimming and gymnastics but assessment in physical education is underdeveloped. This has a negative effect on the monitoring and evaluation of standards throughout the school.