

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Portishead, Bristol

LEA area: North Somerset

Unique reference number: 109238

Headteacher: Mrs Cliona Paterson

Reporting inspector: John D Eadie

20191

Dates of inspection: 23rd - 26th June 2003

Inspection number: 246901

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 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: West Hill
Portishead
Bristol

Postcode: BS20 6LG

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Penny Harris

Date of previous inspection: 2nd - 5th March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20191	J D Eadie	Registered inspector	Educational inclusion Mathematics Information and communication technology Music	Information about the school The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9504	S Gurney	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
32207	J Thomas	Team inspector	Provision for pupils with special educational needs Provision for pupils with English as an additional language English Design and technology History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28686	E Walker	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Science Art and design Geography	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
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	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number on roll aged 4 to 11	206 (Broadly average)
Of these 26 are in the reception class	
Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	1.9% (Below average)
Percentage of pupils whose mother tongue is not English	0% (Low)
Percentage of pupils identified as having special needs	6.8% (Well below average)
Percentage of pupils with statements of their special needs	0.5% (Well below average)

The school is situated in a residential area in Portishead, just outside Bristol, and serves the Catholic community of Portishead and surrounding areas as well as an increasing number of non Catholic families in the locality. Most housing in the area is privately owned. Almost all the pupils are white. There is a small number of pupils of Asian heritage, though all of these speak English as their first language. Most of the pupils who have special educational needs have either behavioural or a range of learning difficulties. The pupils generally have above average attainment on entry to the school. The school will be moving into new buildings at the start of next term.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Joseph's RC Primary is a very good school. Standards are well above average by the time the pupils leave and they achieve well due to the good teaching. The headteacher leads the school very well and the school is well managed at all levels. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the time the pupils leave.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and the school is well managed.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The school makes very good provision for the pupils' personal development and this results in the pupils' very good attitudes to their school and their work.
- Systems of assessment are very effective in enabling the school to measure the progress that the pupils make.
- There is a very effective partnership with parents.
- There is a very broad curriculum which is significantly enriched by specialist teaching, and a very good range of trips, visitors and other extra-curricular activities.

What could be improved

These areas for development should be viewed in the light of this being a very good school; they are not weaknesses, rather pointers to refine the already good practice.

- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to research and develop their own methods of learning.
- The curriculum planned for the children in the reception class. The poor accommodation accounts for some of this.

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 March 1998 and has made very good progress since then, particularly in the last three years, since the arrival of the present headteacher. Although two key issues still need some work, the major issues have been addressed very well. For example, there were several weaknesses identified in leadership and management and very effective improvements have been made in all these areas. Standards have risen overall, particularly for the older pupils in the last three years. There is a strong commitment to improvement and the school is well placed to continue to move forward in its new building.

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
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A	A	B
mathematics	C	A	B	C
science	C	A	A	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The similar schools referred to are those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Despite the drop in standards in the tests in mathematics last year, standards have generally risen well in recent years. The lower standards in mathematics were unexpected and caused by two pupils not achieving as well as they could. The ambitious target that the school set for the pupils' attainment in this subject was missed although it was surpassed in English. The school had already put in place initiatives to raise standards in mathematics and these have been effective as unconfirmed results for this year show that standards in all three subjects have improved strongly. Standards in the tests at the end of Year 2 were well above average in writing and in the top five per cent of all schools in reading and mathematics. Standards have been uniformly high at this age for some years. Standards found in the inspection were well above average in English, mathematics and science both in Year 2 and Year 6. Good work was seen in art and design, design and technology, music and information and communication technology (ICT) in Year 2. Standards are above average in art and design and music in Year 6. Pupils of all ability levels achieve well during their time in the school. Those with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support they receive from teachers and learning support assistants and the good individual plans that are made for their progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school, work very hard and are enthusiastically involved in all the school has to offer.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in and around the school is good. Exclusions are rare and when they occur they are fully justified.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils are developing well into mature and responsible young citizens. Relationships are good.
Attendance	Rates of attendance are well above the national average. Almost all pupils arrive at school on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Very 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 quality of teaching and learning is good and almost all teaching seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory. Some good teaching was observed in all classes. The teaching of English and mathematics is good and the pupils learn the skills of literacy and numeracy well. The teachers plan well, ensuring that their pupils are given work appropriate to their needs. This means that the pupils are interested and keenly involved in the tasks and work very hard. This planning results in lessons having a good structure with previews at the beginning of lessons and reviews at the end so that the pupils clearly understand what it is that they have learnt. Particularly good use is made of the well-trained learning support assistants who provide support for lower attaining pupils and in specific subjects. The help they give is invaluable in ensuring that all pupils are able to take a full part in lessons and make good progress. Good use is also made of resources. For example, many teachers use the computers in their classrooms well to re-enforce the pupils' learning. The teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities for the pupils to conduct independent research or make decisions about their own learning. The teachers are good at meeting the needs of the range of abilities of the pupils in their classes and the pupils achieve well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a very broad and suitable curriculum for the pupils. The curriculum is enriched by specialist teaching and a very good range of trips, visitors into school and other opportunities outside the planned curriculum. The curriculum for the children in the reception class is less effective.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for those pupils with special educational needs. Their needs are identified early and clear individual plans are made and regularly reviewed to ensure that they make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for the pupils' personal development. Many opportunities are planned to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school places a high priority on providing a caring and purposeful learning environment, where the children feel valued and safe. Systems for ensuring the pupils' health and safety have improved considerably since the last inspection. Procedures for measuring the pupils' progress are very thorough but the systems for using these procedures to plan for the next stage of pupils' learning are not so well developed.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	There is a very effective partnership with parents who have positive views of the school. Very good information is provided for parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership for the school. Staff with management responsibilities support her well. All staff work as an effective team and there is an atmosphere of corporate support and encouragement throughout the school. The school is well managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. They are knowledgeable and very supportive and a particular strength of their involvement is their role in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is very good at analysing its strengths and areas for development. Very good plans are made to address the latter.
The strategic use of resources	The school is well staffed, resources for most subjects are satisfactory but the present accommodation is poor. All resources available to the school are used very well. The school does all it can to obtain the best possible value for money. Spending decisions are always taken in the light of the pupils' best interests.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children are expected to work hard. • Their children are making good progress. • Teaching is good. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • Their children like school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside school. • Information about their children's progress. • The school working more closely with parents. • Levels of homework.

Well over half of the parents responded to the questionnaires, and a good number attended the parents' meeting. As can be seen in earlier sections of this report, the inspectors agree wholeheartedly with all positive parental comments. On the aspects that parents would like to see improved the judgement of the inspection team is that:

- there is a very good range of activities outside school;
- the parents receive very good information about their children's progress;
- the school does work closely with parents, who provide very effective support;
- levels of homework are satisfactory and homework makes a good contribution to the pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The pupils make good progress and achieve well to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6.

Strengths in pupils' achievements are:

- standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 and Year 6;
- standards in art and design, design and technology, ICT and music at the end of Year 2;
- standards in art and design and music at the end of Year 6;
- the pupils make good progress through the school and achieve well.

Areas for development are:

- standards of handwriting and presentation.

2. Standards in the subjects of the curriculum seen in lessons and in the scrutiny of pupils' work are displayed in the following table.

Standards	At the end of Year 2	At the end of Year 6
English	Well above average	Well above average
Mathematics	Well above average	Well above average
Science	Well above average	Well above average
Art and design	Well above average	Above average
Design and technology	Above average	Average
Geography	Average	Average
History	Average	Average
ICT	Above average	Average
Music	Above average	Above average
Physical education	Average	Average

3. Attainment on entry is above average and the children make sound progress in the reception class to reach above average standards overall by the time they start the subjects of the National Curriculum in Year 1. They make good progress in their mathematical development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative development. The teacher has good subject knowledge for these three areas of learning and this is resulting in lessons being planned well to enable good progress.

4. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds give the attainment of the pupils in Year 2 last year as being in the top five per cent of all schools in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. Attainment was the same when compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The teachers' assessments of the pupils' attainment in science indicated that this was also well above average. A very good proportion of higher levels was gained in these tests. Standards

have been consistently high in recent years. Standards found in the inspection are not quite as high but are still well above average. This reflects the different abilities of the pupils in the current Year 2; these pupils are achieving well.

5. In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2002, attainment was well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics when compared with all schools. In comparison with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, attainment was well above average in science, above average in English and average in mathematics. Comparisons with schools with similar test results for seven-year olds in 1998 show that over the four years, the pupils made average progress overall. This progress was brought down by the standards in mathematics not being so good. The school had already analysed this weakness and had put in place plans to address it before the tests. These initiatives have been effective as unconfirmed results are significantly better this year. Standards were particularly good in science, with nearly two-thirds of the pupils achieving the higher level. Again standards in science look to be even better this year. Standards have risen significantly from the tests in 2001. Aspirational targets were set for the pupils' attainment and these were met in English but missed in mathematics. Standards have been variable in recent years. The two major reasons for this have been the small size of the groups taking the tests and the disruption that there has been to their teaching in some years. There has been a significant improvement in the last two years. Provisional figures for this year indicate further improvement. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in the tests at the age of seven or eleven. Standards found in Year 6 during the inspection were well above average in English, mathematics and science. However, standards of handwriting and presentation were not up to the standards of other aspects of the pupils' work seen.

6. As can be seen from the above table, standards are well above average in art and design in Year 2. Standards are above average in design and technology, ICT and music in Year 2 and in art and design and music in Year 6. Standards in music benefit from every class being taught one lesson each week by a specialist. Her enthusiasm and expertise ensure that pupils make good progress, not just in the lessons that she teaches but also in the lesson taken by their class teachers, who sit in on the specialist's lessons and use her planning to follow them up. In art and design, the pupils are experiencing a wide range of media. Their skills are developed well and they make good use of the digital camera to evaluate their work. This good evaluation is the reason behind the above average standards in design and technology in Year 2 as well. The co-ordinator for ICT takes Year 2. Her knowledge of the subject is resulting in the above average standards in her class.

7. The pupils of all ability levels generally achieve well and make good progress due to the good teaching. The school has provided a number of opportunities for the gifted and talented pupils. There are a number of very good opportunities in music and mathematics, for example, for those with particular gifts. Throughout the school, pupils identified as having special educational needs make good gains in their learning. In all classes, the school gives good levels of support and this means that the pupils work hard and achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. All parts of this aspect were deemed good at the time of the last inspection. The pupils' behaviour and their relationships with one another remain good but their attendance, attitudes to school and their levels of maturity by the time they leave are all now very good.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- the pupils' pride, enjoyment and enthusiastic involvement in all the school has to offer;
- the pupils are well behaved;

- their very good personal development helps them to become mature and responsible;
- attendance rates are very good and the pupils arrive punctually.

There are no areas for development in this aspect.

9. Pupils and parents alike are rightly proud of St. Joseph's. The pupils look happy and almost all agree they like school. Children are attentive, eager to answer questions and show enthusiasm for their learning. Most pupils work very hard and sustain concentration well. They co-operate and collaborate well in class and around the school. Older pupils help and look after younger ones. They are kind, care for each other and relationships between pupils are good. A good example is the "circles of friends" where a few pupils agree to befriend children experiencing difficulties so that they do not feel lonely or excluded. Older pupils and their parents appreciate the value of a Roman Catholic education. The pupils feel confident in their knowledge of right from wrong. They appreciate the opportunities for prayer and show reverence in their worship. A non-Catholic boy said he felt comfortable in the school and in no way excluded. Though looking forward to the advantages and opportunities the new school will provide, the children appreciate the beauty of the existing school's grounds. They also appreciate the very good range of extra-curricular opportunities offered and older pupils made particular reference to their enjoyment of residential field study trips. Pupils with special educational needs generally enjoy their tasks and work hard during lessons. They have good relationships with teachers and learning assistants and are actively encouraged to succeed.

10. Parents agree that the pupils' behaviour is good. In class it is often very good and during worship it can be excellent. Bullying is rare and known instances of bullying are swiftly dealt with. Exclusions are very rare and recent examples were both exceptional and justified.

11. The pupils are given ample opportunity to take on responsibilities around the school. The best example is the school council where all but the very youngest children have to make a presentation and face a formal election invigilated by a local councillor. The pupils feel they have real ownership of the school and are able to make improvements, for example by raising money for playground equipment. All the pupils are encouraged to help in school with a variety of chores. The younger ones return registers to the office and help tidy their classrooms while older pupils help in the dining room, ring bells and are trusted to show prospective parents and other visitors around the school. By the time they leave, the Year 6 pupils have become articulate, mature young people. Their very good attitudes and good behaviour have very positive effects on their achievement and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching and learning is good and has been maintained since the last inspection with significantly more very good teaching.

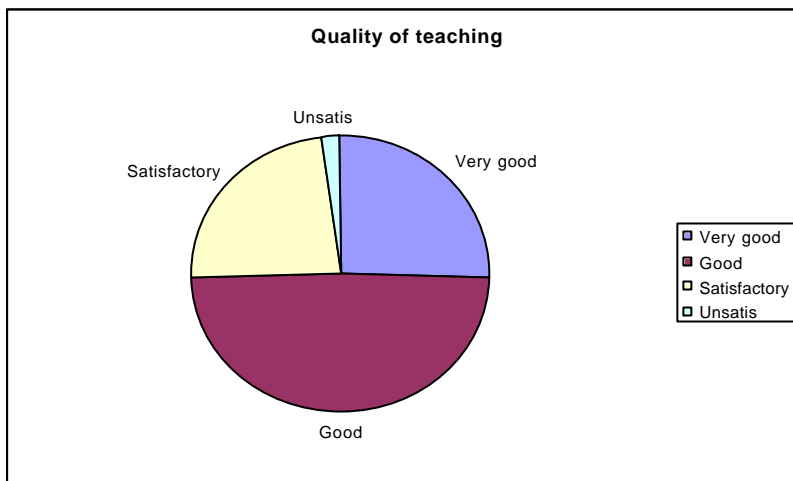
Strengths in teaching and learning are:

- the teachers' planning;
- the use of specialist teachers for music and speech and drama;
- the contribution made by learning support assistants;
- the use made by teachers of resources.

Areas for development are:

- the use of time in some lessons;
- the consistent management of pupils' behaviour;
- to increase opportunities for independent learning;

- the teachers' use of assessment.



13. During the inspection much of the teaching observed was good or better, as demonstrated in the pie chart above, and nearly all teaching was at least satisfactory. The quality was significantly better in Years 1 and 2, where nearly all teaching seen was good or better. The main factor that accounted for the better teaching for the pupils of this age was that their teachers set a better pace through the lesson, ensuring that their pupils were consistently challenged to work. They also had higher expectations of their pupils' performance and behaviour. The pupils rose to these expectations, worked hard and behaved well.

14. The teachers planning is thorough and sets out clearly what it is that they wish to teach and the work they will give to the pupils to help them learn. This was seen in a good literacy lesson in Year 1, where the teacher had planned very well so that the lesson had a very clear structure enabling pupils to progress well in using expressive adjectives. She had also planned work to challenge the pupils of differing abilities very well. The pupils were therefore working hard and achieving well while doing this written task.

15. The school makes good use of specialist teaching for music and drama. The music co-ordinator teaches all classes for half of their music time each week. Her expertise ensures that standards are above average in this subject. Her enthusiasm is infectious and the pupils become fully involved in their lessons. This was seen in a lesson in Year 6 where the teacher was using some pupils who learnt instruments as well as involving a good number of others in accompanying the complex song they were learning. The pupils were trying hard to produce a pleasing end result and were certainly enjoying the experience. The specialist teaching of drama is also benefiting the pupils. In a lesson seen in Year 2, the teacher was following up the pupils' work in literacy on the *Sea Monster*. The pupils were fully involved as the teacher had them performing as sea monsters.

16. Learning support assistants make a very good contribution to the pupils learning. There are a good number of these assistants and a number of volunteers, particularly parents, who also offer good support in classrooms. A particular strength of this provision is that there are assistants assigned to some subjects. This means that in art and design and science, for example, the teachers can rely on support in their lessons. This extra support enables the pupils to undertake a full range of practical activities. The pupils with special educational needs receive good teaching and learning support assistants help them in small groups and class work. Tasks are generally matched appropriately to the pupils' needs. All staff are sensitive to pupils' specific needs and work hard to help each individual to improve.

17. The teachers make good use of resources to aid the pupils' learning. For example, in a number of lessons the teachers made very good use of the computers to demonstrate and for the pupils to work on appropriate software. However, there were insufficient opportunities for the pupils to undertake research or work out their own ways of tackling work. Too often they are told by the teachers what they are to do and how they are to do it, with little opportunity of going outside the set task.

18. There are occasions when time is not used well in lessons. For example, in some lessons the pupils sit and listen while instructions are given to each group in turn, rather than setting each group to work as soon as they have received their tasks. The pupils also find the extensive period of revision before the national tests boring. Although the pupils' behaviour is managed well in most lessons, there are occasions when there are inconsistencies in the application of the behaviour policy. For example, most teachers encourage good behaviour with positive re-enforcement. Occasionally some use more negative tactics and pupils who exhibit attention-seeking behaviour are not dealt with well. There are also occasions when the results of the thorough assessments in English and mathematics are not used to ensure that pupils are making the best possible progress. For example, instances were seen when pupils had not mastered skills which the teachers thought that they had covered in previous years. Further instances occurred when the teachers started with work that was too easy for many pupils.

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

19. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for the pupils in the reception class which is based appropriately on nationally expected standards. For all other pupils there is a very good curriculum in place which is broad and relevant to their needs. Good progress has been made in curricular provision since the last inspection.

Strengths in the curriculum are:

- the breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum;
- the effectiveness of strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy;
- inclusion of all pupils in curriculum activities;
- provision for pupils with special educational needs;
- the range of visits and visitors to support learning;
- provision of extra curricular activities;
- the very good links with partner schools;
- the very good provision for the pupils' personal development.

An area for development is:

- the curriculum in the reception class

20. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and there is good provision for sex education, attention to drugs misuse and personal, social and health education. Considerable improvement has been made in provision for ICT since the last inspection. Whilst the pupils have some opportunities to carry out research and investigations, there are still insufficient opportunities.

21. The school day is longer than in most other schools. As a Catholic school, a higher percentage of time is appropriately allocated to the teaching of religious education. The school also sets aside more time than other schools to the teaching of ICT. However, this strategy has effectively contributed to an improvement in standards in this subject.

22. Adequate policies and good schemes of work are in place for all subjects. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are understood well and delivered effectively. Additional classes to boost the pupils' performance in English and mathematics are organised in Year 6 and these also take into account the needs of the highest attaining pupils. The school makes good use of specialist staff to teach music, physical education and speech and drama. In Year 3, one lesson of French is taught each week and the pupils are making very good progress in speaking a foreign language. Instrumental tuition in violin, brass, piano, flute, drums, saxophone and clarinet is also available. This takes place at different times each week so that the pupils do not miss out on other learning. The school has its own orchestra and a very good gospel choir.

23. All pupils have equal access to the full range of opportunities that the school provides. Staff and governors are aware of the need to ensure that all pupils are fully included. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. Early identification of pupils who need specific help is a very positive aspect of the work of the school. The tasks set in class are well matched to the pupils' abilities and the pupils are well supported by learning support assistants and the special needs co-ordinator. Specific activities are provided for higher attaining pupils and some pupils, identified as gifted in maths, receive support from the link secondary schools. No significant differences in the opportunities offered to boys and girls were found.

24. The school works hard to overcome the limitations posed by its current buildings. For example, very good links have been established with other schools, enabling staff and pupils to use ICT, science and sports facilities at two local secondary schools.

25. The curriculum is enriched by a very good programme of activities and clubs which take place at lunchtime and after school. These include a wide range of sporting, music, drama and academic activities. Pupils have many opportunities to perform to different audiences and to celebrate their work. Numerous visits are organised to places of interest, such as to museums, theatres, churches and local towns. These visits provide valuable learning experiences for the pupils. In addition, a residential visit to the Black Mountains is available to pupils in Year 6. This journey contributes effectively to the pupils' personal and social development as well as to their learning. Very good use is made of visitors, with artists, musicians and theatre groups all providing valuable learning experiences for the pupils.

26. Provision for the pupils' personal, health and social education is good. In recognition of its commitment to healthy living and eating, the school is working towards national accreditation as a 'Health Promoting school'. Through the school council, the pupils have an opportunity to debate topics of interest and to have a voice in relevant aspects of school life.

27. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is very good. The pupils are very aware of the spiritual aspects of life in the school. They respond positively to the opportunities they are afforded in the regular patterns of worship. Older pupils use the chapel for private prayer as an integral part of their lives. They respect and value this facility that gives them, in the course of their daily life in school, a place where they can find peace and quiet from the noise and bustle of the classroom. The pupils respond well to new learning and express their inner feelings through expressions of wonder about the success and achievements they discover in lessons. In a science lesson the discovery about the complexity of the heart as both a vital organ and a muscle rather than something that reflects emotion was positive and used as a good learning opportunity.

28. The pupils have a very clear and good understanding of what is right and just as opposed to what is unfair and wrong. The ethos of the school promotes this aspect very well and encourages pupils to work toward the corporate interest of the school. Occasionally, classroom behaviour is loud and some pupils are unaware that they are dominating a lesson by calling out or using equipment belonging to others. Where behaviour is good, teachers have high expectations and apply the classroom rules in a consistent manner. This is not the case throughout the school. Pupils are very much aware of those who are not as fortunate and initiate fund-raising schemes to support an African orphanage and lend their support to other worthwhile causes.

29. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. They manage the inevitable disagreements in a mature and responsible manner, looking to resolve issues rather than confront each other. Very good use is made in many lessons of encouraging pupils to work collaboratively on tasks thereby encouraging each other so that results and contributions pupils make to lessons are good. Older pupils support younger pupils well and spend time with and value their achievements. Assemblies value individual pupils' achievements both in and out of school and self esteem is raised when the school recognises their efforts. Many pupils speak very proudly of their school and its success. They are confident and well prepared by the time they leave Year 6 to move on to new schools because of the very good transition projects which are in place.

30. The pupils' cultural development is very good. The school goes to considerable lengths to ensure that pupils are exposed to a wide and very different range of cultural experiences throughout the school. Pupils are very aware of economic issues affecting poorer countries in Africa. The pupils support and have links with an African community. They take part in a range of festivals including art and design and music. Pupils appreciate different styles and tastes, they explore the work of a range of artists from various cultures including both European and African art and use their techniques in work in art and design. The pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures is heightened through the school's good use of visits to galleries and other places of interest. There is a good range of musical opportunities and instruments to reflect different styles. There are missed opportunities to use ICT to make pupils aware of other faiths and traditions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. At the time of the last inspection the care and guidance for the pupils was deemed at best satisfactory. Attendance was unsatisfactorily monitored and there was unsatisfactory provision for health and safety. Since then the school has made great progress. Procedures for child protection and to ensure the pupils' welfare, together with the monitoring of their academic, performance are all now very good.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- the ethos of care which permeates the school;
- the emotional and personal support and guidance given to pupils;
- promoting good attendance and punctuality.

An area for development is:

- to create systems for assessment in subjects that presently have none to enable teachers to measure the pupils' progress.

32. The school has very good procedures to ensure child protection. All the staff have had basic training and are aware of the need to be vigilant. The behaviour policy is effective. Rare instances of bullying are quickly dealt with. Staff are given training to help pupils resolve conflict and "hassle logs" can be effective in diffusing tension. Healthy living is promoted well

through assemblies and personal, social and health education. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and drink plenty of water. A visiting cardio-fitness specialist has encouraged the pupils to take exercise and the school has run a successful “skipathon”. Attendance is very well monitored and there is a system of first day response to any unexplained absence. Health and safety procedures are now satisfactory. Due to the unsuitability of the site, things are less than perfect but risk assessment takes place and real hazards have been addressed.

33. The teachers know their pupils well and have very good relationships with them. Parents like the way that each child is treated as an individual and made to feel special. The pupils’ personal development is mainly tracked informally through this knowledge, but class teachers’ general comments on annual reports provide a good written record.

34. There are good induction procedures for children entering the reception class. Children joining later in their school career are given a “buddy” to help them settle in quickly and easily. The pupils spend the last day of the summer term with their new teacher and this helps them start the new academic year with confidence.

35. The school caters well for all the statutory procedures for the care of its pupils. However the quality of care and concern at St. Joseph’s is almost tangible. It can best be summed up by the comments of a parent. “A kindness permeates the school. There is an ethos of love and a wonderful community spirit.”

36. Procedures for assessing the pupils’ progress in English, mathematics and science are very good. Every year, the pupils’ results from a range of tests are carefully collated and their progress against their targets in English and mathematics is carefully monitored. Pupils are set clear targets in these subjects and they are aware of what they are expected to achieve. Every unit in the science curriculum is assessed to National Curriculum levels and pupils are very aware by the time they are in Years 5 and 6 which level they are achieving and how to improve their knowledge and understanding. Parents are made aware of individual results and the progress their child is making. Good use of the results of assessment has been made to plan the next stages of pupils learning. The marking of pupils work is good, providing clear guidance how pupils can improve their work and what they need to do in order to achieve the next target. In other subject areas, assessment is not as well developed. As a result, the next units of work are planned on generalised levels of information and not on what pupils know, understand and can do.

37. The school keeps good records of the progress made by the pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans for these pupils are written clearly and include measurable targets to help them improve. These are reviewed each term and in Year 6 involve the pupils in assessing their own progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The school’s partnership with its parents was deemed good at the time of the last inspection and is now very good.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- the parents’ support for the school;
- the quality and quantity of information given to parents.

There are no areas for development.

39. Most parents have very positive views about the school. They say the teaching is good, their children are expected to work hard and they make good progress. Their children like school and are helped to become mature and responsible young people. The school has good links with the parents of the pupils with special educational needs. The parents are informed of their children's targets in writing and given an opportunity to discuss them with the class teacher. Parents take a full part in annual reviews of pupils' statements of special educational needs.

40. A significant minority of respondents to the pre-inspection questionnaire feels there are insufficient extra-curricular activities and that the school does not work closely with them. Neither of these issues was raised at the pre-inspection parents' meeting nor by any parent interviewed. Inspectors feel the range of clubs, visitors, educational visits and field trips is very good and well above the average offered in primary schools. Links with parents are also very good. The school opens twenty minutes early every morning to enable parents to talk to teachers or see their children's work. At least ten parents and grandparents help regularly and voluntarily in classes. Others willingly help with visits and on an ad hoc basis. The PTA is hugely supportive and raises considerable sums annually to enhance resources. During the inspection many parents came in with goods to donate for the forthcoming school fete.

41. Another complaint from some parents was that they were given insufficient information about their children's progress. Again inspectors find this complaint unjustified. Annual reports meet statutory requirements and are detailed and informative though targets are not always specific. Parents are offered at least three formal consultation sessions per year and daily opportunities to meet teachers. There were a few complaints about afternoon rather than evening consultations but, when necessary, teachers are always willing to make appointments at other times. General information given to parents is very good. They are given packs about how to help their children at home and details about the curriculum to be studied. Details of events are given in newsletters and letters home. There is even a parents' notice board listing all the letters they should have received. This gives them a double check on the reliability of "pupil post"!

42. The very good links parents have with the staff and the help given at home make a very positive contribution to the pupils' achievement and progress. Parents, pupils and staff are all proud of their school. There is a real community spirit in St. Joseph's.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The headteacher leads the school very well, ably supported by staff with management responsibilities. The school is well managed at all levels. School self-evaluation is very good and all resources are used very well. The school is very good at ensuring that all spending decisions are taken with the pupils' best interests at heart. All this represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when there were a number of weaknesses in leadership and management. There is a good number of teaching and other staff. Resources are generally satisfactory but the present accommodation is poor.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- the leadership of the headteacher;
- the management of many co-ordinators;
- the active involvement of the governing body;
- the quality of the school's self-evaluation;
- the management of the school's finances;
- the number and quality of the learning support assistants.

Areas for development are:

- the accommodation;
- to further develop the role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring of standards in their subjects;
- to improve the resources for the reception class.

44. The headteacher, in the comparatively short time she has been in the school, has moved the school forward considerably. This has come about because of her very clear sense of direction and ability to create a strong teamwork ethic amongst the staff. The staff have responded very well to this and many of the subject co-ordinators are managing their subjects very well. They have created very effective plans to raise standards. For example, the first priority when the headteacher joined the school was to raise standards in English. This was accomplished relatively quickly and the focus then moved on to mathematics. Standards in this subject have improved considerably in the last year, and it has gone from being the weakest of the tested subjects to being almost the strongest. Other subjects have not been neglected and standards in science and ICT have also been raised significantly. However, an area for development is to widen the role of co-ordinators in monitoring standards in their subjects. The co-ordination of special educational needs is good. The school spends its additional funding well to provide support from learning support assistants and to improve resources for learning.

45. The governors are very involved in the management of the school. They are knowledgeable and supportive and are far more involved than most in strategic planning for the school. For example, they attended, with the staff, a strategic planning day in early September to finalise the school development plan. The finance committee of the governing body is also taking a long-term strategic view of budgeting requirements. The aspects for development in the school development plan are clearly linked to the professional development of staff. All governors are attached to particular subjects or aspects of the school. This gives them a clear focus when they make their regular visits to the school.

46. The school is very good at identifying its strengths and areas for development and creating plans to address the latter. Evidence of this is the improvement in standards over the last three years. Although a great deal of energy has been expended, both by governors and staff, in progressing the building of the new school, nothing has been allowed to stand still in the meanwhile. Both governors and management within school are very involved in the monitoring of progress on all fronts. Although the present development plan expires at the end of this term, the governing body, over half of whom are new within the last couple of years, has put in place a rolling plan for the future.

47. Management of finances is very good, both in the short and long term. The administrative staff in the school monitor spending very well in the short term and the finance committee of the governing body oversees this very effectively. The school has sensibly not spent any more than necessary on the present building over the last couple of years, enabling a small surplus to be taken forward to be spent on extra facilities in the new school. All spending decisions are taken on the basis of their impact on the pupils' learning.

48. The school has sufficient teachers and a good number of experienced learning support assistants. These support staff along with a good number of volunteers, particularly parents and grandparents, contribute significantly to the provision for the pupils. Resources are generally satisfactory, although there are good resources for music and ICT. The accommodation is poor and in poor condition, but the school is to move to a new building at the start of next term. The school gives very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. In order to continue to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- (1) ensure that the teachers plan for their pupils to learn and use research skills as frequently as possible and have more independence in making decisions about their own learning.
(Paragraphs: 17, 20, 76, 79, 85, 94, 109, 115)
 - (2) in planning the curriculum for the children in the reception class in the new building, ensure that it mirrors the practice and intention of the nationally recommended curriculum for children of this age.
(Paragraphs: 50, 53, 54–59, 64, 65, 67)

In addition to the issues above, the governors should consider the following for inclusion in their action plan.

- Ensure that systems of assessment are in place for all subjects and that the results of assessment are used to help teachers plan for the next stage in pupils' learning.
(Paragraphs: 86, 97, 106, 111, 117, 131)
- Ensure that there is consistent application of all policies.
(Paragraphs: 18, 28)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	51

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	13	25	12	1	0	0
Percentage	0	25.5	49.0	23.5	2.0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents about 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)	206
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	14

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	21	12	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	21	21
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	33	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (97)	100 (94)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	21	21
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	33	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (97)	100 (97)	100 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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
	2002	12	21	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	12
	Girls	19	17	19
	Total	31	28	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94 (93)	85 (97)	94 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	18	15	18
	Total	30	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (87)	82 (86)	91 (97)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	189	1	0
White – Irish	5	0	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	2	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, 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)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.0
Average class size	29.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	168

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	399 077
Total expenditure	401 649
Expenditure per pupil	2 055
Balance brought forward from previous year	29 819
Balance carried forward to next year	27 247

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)	0
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	206
Number of questionnaires returned	112

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	36	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	50	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	55	4	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	48	14	3	1
The teaching is good.	62	36	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	51	13	6	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	31	9	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	25	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	35	47	13	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	36	55	5	4	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	43	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	36	32	13	3

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

50. The provision for children in the reception class is satisfactory. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection. The children are working in the six areas of learning that is appropriate for this phase of their education. The classroom conditions are such that it is not sufficiently stimulating to encourage the children to explore and develop their imaginative and creative skills. The outdoor play provision is unsatisfactory. The teacher is looking forward to providing a more interesting and exciting environment for the children in the new school.

Strengths in the provision in the reception class are:

- the good relationships between the teacher and children;
- the teaching of the basic skills in mathematics and creative development;
- the progress the children make in reading.

Areas for development are:

- to plan all lessons to clear learning objectives;
- to extend the opportunities for the children to explore areas of interest so that they can be stimulated to discover areas of learning for themselves.

51. When they enter school the children have had a variety of pre-school experiences within a number of different settings. There is a well planned induction programme which helps the children to settle in. Parents are involved and they feel welcome through a series of meetings both before and after entry to school. Very good links have been forged with the local pre-school groups so the children recognise the staff before coming to school.

52. Attainment on entry to the reception class is above average overall, but shows there are some differences in the ability of the children. The greater differences are within the emotional needs and levels of confidence the children display and in their response to school. The children make good progress and quickly settle into school. Their progress at present is monitored through the North Somerset monitoring profile whilst the teacher is preparing to use the national profile to record the achievements of the children as they enter Year 1.

53. By the time they leave the reception class all children have achieved the expected standards in every area of learning except in their physical development. The curriculum meets the recommendations of the six areas of learning. The children are provided with appropriate and worthwhile activities in all areas of learning, with an appropriate emphasis placed on literacy and numeracy. However, the lack of adjacent outdoor facilities does not allow sufficient opportunities to extend their physical development. Teaching is satisfactory in the reception class. The classroom support is good but is not sufficient to meet all the needs of the children throughout the day. The lack of involvement caused by the structure of the lessons means that the learning support assistant is not used to best effect. The medium term planning is detailed but the daily planning lacks clear learning objectives and does not show the different tasks for different levels of ability apart from lessons in literacy and numeracy. The classroom is not conducive to the learning styles of young children; it does not stimulate or excite the children to investigate and explore different and interesting situations.

Personal, social and emotional development

54. Provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development is satisfactory. The beginning of the school day is an important part of the children's learning and the teacher ensures that the classroom is ready for pupils and their parents. They are welcomed to the classroom individually and wait quietly for registration to begin. The children do not engage in any activity other than talking to each other as they wait for the register to be taken.

55. The children behave well and respond to directions quickly when they are interested in the discussion and activity. However, they are often fidgety if the discussion is too long and they quickly become disengaged from the activity.

56. By the end of the reception year most children will reach the nationally expected levels for this area. The children's independence is satisfactory but they are not entirely confident in selecting appropriate tasks and often wait for directions before beginning an activity. A few have some difficulty in working alongside other children but the learning support assistant intervenes very well to ensure these children make good progress in this area of learning. The children are encouraged to tidy away at the end of sessions. They listen well to stories and are confident in offering their ideas when asked. They react well and enjoy being part of the larger group. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory and the majority will achieve the expected standards by the time they become Year 1 pupils.

Communication, language and literacy

57. Speaking and listening skills are well developed in most areas of children's learning. Every session begins with a discussion and concludes with a review of the lesson. The teacher uses these opportunities well to extend the children's speaking and listening skills so that the majority of them make good progress and are confident in contributing to the discussions. The children handle books correctly and show positive attitudes to reading. Many of the children recognise initial sounds and key words to build up their reading skills well. They read with some expression and are very interested in using pictures to tell the story in their own words. They recognise the importance of the author and some children can identify the purpose of the contents page of a big book. The children make good progress in their reading. Higher attaining children are extended well.

58. The children are very responsive to questions and introduce their own thoughts and knowledge to a discussion. They work hard and discuss their task together. They have an enthusiasm and want to talk but in some literacy lessons they are required to listen and focus on specific detail within the lesson rather than discuss and share an interesting poem or story. Lower attaining children do not yet respond to the specific details or the intricacies of the language session.

59. Teaching is satisfactory, lessons are planned on the basis of the national literacy strategy but not enough flexibility is exercised to take into account the maturity of the children. The teacher engages the children in discussions but the material does not interest the majority. The children become restless and are not willing to respond appropriately to the tasks they are asked to do. When they are active and involved in learning phonics they respond well to a whole class game matching the toys to the initial sound. Some opportunities are missed to extend pupils writing skills because the activity involves colouring or drawing on worksheets. There are too few informal opportunities to explore for themselves and gain independence in their learning.

Mathematical development

60. The teaching of mathematical knowledge is good. All the children have good and varied opportunities to learn mathematical skills in the activities they are offered. All the children can count confidently up to twenty and can sequence the numbers in the correct order. They recognise patterns and use them well to help them solve a missing number puzzle. The teacher re-enforces mathematical vocabulary very well as the children recognise two-dimensional shapes. She directs her questions concisely towards children of different abilities who respond well, using phrases for example, "A rectangle has two long sides and two short sides. A square has four equal sides". Higher attaining children are able to discern the difference between two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, recognising and describing the shape by name as a sphere or a pyramid, describing the shape well and the number of faces on different shapes.

61. Children explore a range of well directed activities to consolidate their understanding. Children with special educational needs are eager to use a computer game to match shapes to names. They achieve well and enjoy the success, whilst some children extend their vocabulary by responding well to the learning support assistant's questions when they describe the shape in the 'feely bag'. All the adults interact well within the groups and give the children opportunities to voice their thoughts and thereby develop their understanding.

62. The teacher has used her day-to-day assessment well and identifies different mathematical targets within her planning so the children's progress can be measured and the work matched according to their needs. Children make good progress and all achieve the nationally expected levels by the end of their reception year.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. The children are interested and enthusiastic when they are challenged to think about how to make windmills work or why bubbles move through the air. They are eager and receptive to each other's ideas as they explore options to make the windmill move faster. They describe in some detail the use of force to make objects move and whether they need to push by blowing the bubbles or how a propeller will make a boat move through the water.

64. The teaching overall is good. Children have different opportunities, including the use of ICT, to explore a wide range of topics and they are very responsive to asking and pursuing 'why' and 'how' questions. Individual themes are set up to explore different topics and activities which support the lesson objective. Often these activities are set up for the lesson and do not give the children ongoing opportunities to discover for themselves or to use their imagination and extend their speaking skills in a play situation.

65. The classroom equipment is not always sufficiently attractive or inviting for the children to respond to questions or ideas about the toy shop or to handle toys from the past. The themes offer good opportunities over the year for all children to achieve the early learning goal in this area. There are missed opportunities to extend the higher attaining children so that they can organise their own ideas and investigate a variety of situations both in and out of the classroom.

Physical development

66. The finer skills needed by the children are developed well by the activities in other areas of learning. They manipulate tools well and use scissors, paintbrushes and pencils to good effect within a wide range of activities. They spread beads out and develop intricate patterns as they thread them carefully, naming colours and size in a regular pattern and

using number patterns well. They form letters successfully and enjoy using cursive writing patterns following the well-prepared models, which they copy carefully. The opportunity to use chalk to compose large pictures on paving stones outside is good

67. The lack of an outdoor area adjacent to the classroom impedes the progress children make within this and other areas towards achieving the expected standards. There is a regular session using the playground as an outdoor area. The children enjoy and co-operate well with each other in simple games. The teacher introduces the rules, which are respected by the children as they play a warm up game. They have a good sense of fair play and use the space well, avoiding bumping into each other. The satisfactory range of equipment available to the children is not utilised to best advantage, some of it being too small or of insufficient variety. The recent additions from the parents association have improved the quality of the provision in this area. The broad sweep of the lesson does not extend the children's imaginations or develop their social skills sufficiently. The children enjoy using bats and balls but are not taught specific skills so they can manage the equipment in a positive way in order to play with, rather than alongside each other.

Creative development

68. The children are very enthusiastic and develop their creative skills very well. The very good use of specialist teaching in art and design and music helps all the children to make very good progress towards achieving the early learning goal in this area. The good use of the toys and a collection of teddy bears is used to focus the children's attention on developing their drawing skills. Adults are very skilled, both in encouraging the children to develop their vocabulary and in using their suggestions, which requires them to look in some detail at, for instance, the shapes in their drawings of the bear. This enables them all to make very good progress and achieve very good results.

69. Music sessions are fun and children sing with great enthusiasm and enjoyment. In assembly they sing with gusto and very much share the song with older children. They listen carefully and respond well to the musical patterns they hear. They are very aware of what they are expected to learn within the session and are seated carefully so that everyone can be involved. The children work very well together, learning how to select their partner in order to sing the 'Good morning' or 'Good evening' song to those on the right and left of each other. They are very aware of the accompaniment and recognise the beat and interval between the verses. The activity promotes a good understanding of the rhythm and matching the action to the words and also develops their listening skills well.

70. A particularly good feature of these lessons is the teacher's very good sharing of the learning objective and recognition of whether the children have achieved it. The children contribute well to these discussions, entering into some detail about their learning and how they achieved the target.

ENGLISH

71. At the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are well above average. The pupils make good progress due to the good teaching. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- standards in the pupils' speaking, reading and writing;
- the quality of teaching;
- the pupils' attitudes towards their learning;
- links to other subjects;

- the enthusiasm and commitment of the co-ordinator;
- provision for the pupils with special educational needs.

Areas for development are:

- standards in handwriting;
- the provision for the library;
- opportunities for independent learning and writing.

72. Standards in speaking are very good throughout the school. The pupils speak clearly and expressively and adapt their speech to suit different occasions and audiences. Most pupils delight in learning new words. For example, Year 2 pupils came across “profusion”, “penetrated” and “luminous” in their reading and were keen to learn the meanings of these words and use them in their own sentences. In all subjects, the pupils broaden their vocabulary such as by learning “ascending and descending” in music and “absorbent and malleable” in science. The pupils develop confidence and skill in performing by taking part in school assemblies and drama.

73. Standards in listening are good. The pupils generally concentrate well in lessons and respond appropriately to the questions or instructions they are given. On occasions, pupils become so excited by their tasks that they forget to listen attentively and have to be reminded about listening when someone else is speaking.

74. Standards in reading are very good throughout the school. The enthusiasm displayed by the teachers and the very good encouragement and support of parents, results in most pupils enjoying reading and having a love of books. A “contact book” is used effectively as a link between parents and teachers and provides a record of the pupils’ progress. By the end of Year 2, the pupils read confidently and expressively, showing awareness of the text and audience, and talk about what might happen next in a story and about books they like. They understand where to find the index and contents pages in information books and use these effectively to find information. By the end of Year 6, the pupils read an extensive range of texts ranging from the scientific works of Stephen Hawkin to the fantasy world of J. K. Rowling. They discuss texts and authors in detail, give opinions about characters and select relevant information to support their views. For example, one Year 6 pupil described “Friend or Foe” by Michael Morpugo as “a gripping story about two evacuee boys who are taken away from their home in the busy streets of London, to the calm, peaceful life in the country living on a farm.” He concluded that, “Although there could have been more description of London at that time, it is a brilliant book which is worth reading.”

75. Standards in writing are well above national standards. In Years 1 and 2, scrutiny of work shows that the pupils learn to write in a variety of formats including stories, instructions, reports, personal reflections, descriptions of characters and poetry. They develop their ideas in sentences, usually using capital letters and full stops. Pupils in Year 1 used adjectives and alliteration to add interest to their sentences, for example, “The black and white puppy rolled in the dark and spooky cave;” “A crafty cat caught a cod.” In handwriting, the pupils form letters accurately. They are taught to add “flicks” to letters as soon as they enter school and this helps them progress smoothly from printed to joined handwriting.

76. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils further refine their skills of drafting and editing before producing a final copy of their work. Through their work in other subjects, the pupils have very good opportunities to write for different purposes. For example, Year 2 pupils wrote a story in geography about adventures that Katie Morag might have had, Year 3 pupils wrote information books in history about Ancient Egypt and, in design and technology, Year 5 pupils wrote instructions about making bread. However, worksheets are frequently prepared by the teachers for the pupils to record their work. As a result, the pupils are not challenged

sufficiently to think for themselves, to organise their thoughts, to make decisions about layout and to write independently. This inhibits their creativity and slows down the rate of progress the pupils make in writing.

77. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. All teachers plan effectively using the national literacy strategy and identify clear learning objectives which are shared with the pupils so that they have an understanding of the focus of the lesson. The teachers have good subject knowledge and teach the basic skills well. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, the teacher effectively built on the pupils' prior knowledge of vowel sounds (ee,ea,y) to spell "ie" words such as "chief, brief, field and mischief."

78. In one lesson seen in Years 1 and 2, teaching was very good. In this lesson, the teacher had very high expectations of what the pupils could achieve and set challenging targets. Clear learning objectives were shared with pupils, open questions were asked to discover what the pupils understood and a wide range of teaching methods, including drama, were used to engage the pupils' interest. As a result, all the pupils took a full part in the activities. They were challenged well and made very good progress.

79. Teaching is less effective when teachers spend too long talking at the start of lessons whilst the pupils listen. This allows some pupils to daydream and miss out on learning. When pupils read aloud with the teacher, have time for discussion with a partner or in groups, and use individual whiteboards to practise language skills such as spellings or grammar work, they are actively involved in the learning and make good progress. Classrooms are generally not organised to promote independent learning. For example, dictionaries and thesauri are not readily available on tables, and interesting vocabulary, complex sentences, connectives, for the pupils to refer to in their writing, are not on display. As a result, the pupils rely too heavily on adults in the classroom to provide them with answers to questions rather than finding this information for themselves.

80. Pupils enjoy lessons and are keen to learn. They usually listen politely, work hard and collaborate well with each other. However, there is some variation in standards of handwriting and the general presentation of work.

81. The co-ordinator for the subject is very new to the role but in a short time has provided effective support for teachers and has identified appropriate areas for further development and training. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported by learning support assistants and make good progress. Resources are satisfactory overall although the current building places considerable constraints on the library which, while being tidy and well organised, is dark, unwelcoming and under-stocked.

MATHEMATICS

82. Standards are well above average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection, with standards rising particularly well this year. The pupils make good progress due largely to the good teaching.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the standards being achieved;
- progress since the last inspection;
- the progress that the pupils are making;
- the quality of teaching;
- the thorough systems of assessment;
- the leadership of the subject.

An area for development is:

- to use the assessments made to set targets for individual pupils or groups, achievable in the short term.

83. In Year 2, about two-thirds of the pupils are achieving above average standards. For example, in a lesson observed the pupils were able to work out the missing number in a multiplication sentence quickly. They spoke about multiplication and division being inverse operations and some even said that “multiplication is commutative, but division is not.” In Year 6, scrutiny of the pupils’ books showed that over half of the year group is working at above expected levels and almost all the rest are working at average levels. The average attaining pupils are working confidently in four quadrants in graphs and have a clear understanding of positive and negative numbers and do calculations with them. Below average attainers find the angle sum of a triangle and show a good understanding of probability.

84. Standards have risen significantly in recent years, and particularly in the last year, when mathematics has been a focus for improvement. A number of strategies have been put in place to raise standards, one of the most effective being the use of investigational mathematics. In all lessons seen, the teachers were using the mental session at the start of the lesson very effectively. As well as this, there is evidence in the pupils’ books of an emphasis on problem solving and investigative work. This is a major contributor to the standards being achieved and the good progress that the pupils are making. A further significant contributory factor to this progress is the good teaching of the subject. The teachers have good subject knowledge and are planning well in line with the national numeracy strategy. They challenge the pupils with their questioning. For example, in a lesson seen in Year 2, the teacher was constantly asking the pupils to explain their reasoning. The teachers are good at ensuring that the pupils receive work appropriate to their needs, and the pupils with special educational needs make good progress relative to their abilities due to this and the good levels of support that they have from learning support assistants.

85. The teachers are also good at using mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum, so re-enforcing the skills learnt. For example, the pupils display results in science and geography in graphical form and practise their measuring in physical education. Good use is made of ICT. For example in some lessons a computer was used to demonstrate techniques, and in a number of lessons the pupils were using computers to practice skills. Although the pupils do much of their work on worksheets, these usually allow them to select their own method of working.

86. Systems of assessment are very thorough. As well as the results of national tests, the pupils take the optional national tests in other years and use is also made of standardised tests to measure the pupils’ attainment. A careful check is therefore made on the progress of each pupil and those in need of extra help are quickly identified. Those who are doing particularly well are also identified and special provision is made for them. For example a group of Year 5 pupils do their mathematics with Year 6, so they are being very well challenged. There is also one boy who has been identified as being especially talented who is working on his own programme of study well beyond the primary curriculum. At present, although targets are set for the pupils at the start of each term, these targets are generally the same for the whole class and based on the key learning objectives for the term. The systems of assessment are not yet being used to identify targets for individuals or groups so that they know what they need to do to improve in the short term.

87. The subject is very well led. The co-ordinator has produced very clear plans for improvement and is largely responsible for the progress made recently. Her analysis of the results of assessment is exemplary and she knows exactly what is needed for the next stage of development.

SCIENCE

88. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of teaching is good and the pupils make good progress. The school considers the needs of all pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. The improvement the school has made since the last inspection is good.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the quality of teaching;
- the active involvement and enthusiasm of pupils to explore an investigation;
- the visionary leadership.

Areas for development are:

- the over reliance on and the use of worksheets;
- the provision of appropriate work for pupils of differing ability levels in some lessons.

89. The school has concentrated, since the last inspection, on developing pupils' investigative skills. In Years 1 and 2, the teachers set up a variety of interesting resources which use pupils' natural curiosity to explore how things work and what they can do. Their exuberance is channelled very effectively by the use of clear questions and promoting their ideas about how to manage an investigation. Younger pupils recognise that testing involves care and consideration. They are guided carefully and supported well by learning support assistants who scribe their thoughts so that pupils can begin to make their own record of what they do and see during the investigation. There is good progress in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, pupils are very confident and use their previous knowledge about how to build an electrical circuit and make good predictions about why different materials conduct or inhibit the flow of electricity. Teachers pose challenges which are appropriate to the differing abilities of the pupils who make good use of scientific language in their responses. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when they are involved and well supported by a learning support assistant to discuss the scientific reasons for their conclusions.

90. As pupils progress through the school, investigations into all areas become more sophisticated and practical. For example, by Year 3 pupils are very aware of the principles of a fair test in order to measure and understand the conditions plants need to survive, how they absorb moisture and the variables within a test. This lesson captured the interest of the pupils but towards the end of some long sessions their concentration lapses.

91. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. Teachers plan their lessons very well and use a good range of teaching strategies to enthuse and stimulate an interest in the subject. The good use of challenges and suggestions enable the pupils to consider well and draw their own conclusions based on the evidence.

92. Pupils are encouraged to use their mathematical skills very well. For example, in Year 5 they plotted the results and then interpreted from a graph, the information about a range of pulse measurements collected in a previous physical education lesson. The very good questioning technique ensured that all pupils contributed to the discussion so that the majority of pupils including those with special educational needs made good progress. Pupils used a variety of skills to interpret information and results from their investigations to improve

their understanding of how the heart works and the need to exercise to keep the organ healthy. Their ICT, mathematical and literacy skills are used well to record and consolidate their learning in science. Year 6 pupils were challenged to complete an investigation prepared by the specialist science college. The very good use of a range of resources and support materials challenged their independent research skills very well. The materials were very good and supported the higher attaining pupils to think and reason very effectively. They worked hard because the teacher used time frames well, continually refocusing the lesson so that pupils recorded and interpreted their results efficiently. The lesson challenged all pupils to arrive at a conclusion and present their evidence about how heat affects the carbon-dioxide in a can of fizzy drink. They used scientific terms with confidence and recorded their results independently, carefully working through their information and results.

93. Throughout the school pupils show a keen interest in the subject. The curriculum is based on national guidance and is well planned with a particular focus on developing the pupils' investigative skills and the principles of fair testing a hypothesis. Lessons are well structured and conclude with discussion so that the pupils can measure how much they have achieved against a shared learning objective. Topics are revisited on a two-year cycle so that new learning builds on previous knowledge pupils have acquired earlier.

94. Teachers plan their lessons effectively; they consider the needs of all pupils and plan appropriate tasks. The use of recording frames thwarts pupils independent recording skills and for revision purposes there is an over reliance on worksheets. Their use reflects a poorer quality of work particularly in the pupils' presentation skills. In some classes marking is not as effective at promoting pupils' learning as it should be because pupils are not given sufficient guidance to develop their ideas or to correct inaccuracies. There is good use of some recording frames particularly for lower attaining pupils; they provide good support so that pupils learn how to record their results. Very good use is made of learning support assistants, especially a specialist science assistant who supports pupils and teachers very well. Teachers subject knowledge is good.

95. There is a well-established scheme of work and a range of good resources to support the teaching of the subject. The scheme is supported by the use of published materials appropriate for each unit of work which are used well. The pupils' work is assessed at the conclusion of each unit and levelled against national standards. The results of these and national tests are carefully analysed so that any gaps in learning can be addressed.

96. The co-ordinator manages her subject very effectively. She has put in place a very clear direction to raise the standards in science throughout the school. She provides good support for her colleagues and ensures that training for all staff is relevant and useful. Science has benefited from extra funding since the last inspection and shares in the provision from the specialist science college in the area. The support is good both in terms of resources and in the training opportunities for all staff.

ART AND DESIGN

97. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the course of the inspection. However, the portfolio of work provided by the school together with the work within classrooms and displayed around school confirm that the standard of pupils work is above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress. The work seen suggests that standards have improved well since the time of the last inspection

Strengths in the subject are:

- the very good use of pupils' sketch books;

- the quality of pupils' work;
- the high expectations and aspirations for the subject.

Areas for development are:

- the display of pupils' work throughout the school;
- to develop collaborative working between pupils;
- to develop a procedure for assessing pupils' work.

98. Teaching throughout the school is good with evidence of some very good teaching in Year 1. Lessons are well planned and organised; the pupils understand the process and focus of the lesson. At the conclusion of the lesson teachers promote discussions and share the results well with the pupils who confidently suggest ways of improving their efforts and offer sensitive and interesting comments on their work. Throughout the school the variety of work and the range of media that pupils use are diverse and interesting. The pupils enjoy their art and design and show very positive attitudes towards their work. Teachers encourage the pupils to use their observation skills well and to record what they see in sketchbooks, before developing their designs. The pupils use their sketchbooks very well as a basis for their work. In a Year 3 lesson pupils used a range of different skills very well to prepare their printing blocks and used printing techniques carefully to build up their design. The continuation and development of using a variety of techniques is good. The pupils in Year 1 were very proud of their sculptures that used a range of natural objects to reflect the work of Andy Goldsworthy. They worked carefully together and with great enthusiasm, gradually compiling their sculpture. The teacher enabled the pupils to reflect and discuss the features of their work very well. The pupils took great pride in giving their work a title on prepared labels ready for display in the classroom gallery.

99. The use of art and design to support other subjects is good. Key skills are used well when pupils use clay to make Celtic brooches. The use of resist techniques to illustrate Greek myths is good; pupils evaluate their work well commenting "It was a tricky process." They have a good knowledge and understanding of the work of Picasso and Seurat. They use painting tools well to reflect the styles of various artists and an awareness of different techniques and the use of colour required to paint in various styles.

100. The lack of display space throughout the school does not facilitate the sharing of or the enhancement of pupils' work. Work is above the pupils' eye level so they cannot comment or reflect on other pupils' work. The lack of opportunity to produce large collaborative pieces of work is hampered by the space available in classrooms and the lack of facilities to produce combined pieces of work.

101. The well-informed recently appointed co-ordinator is very supportive of her colleagues and has provided good opportunities for teachers within the group of schools to develop skills and techniques in the subject. She is eager to build on the good standards already in place by developing and extending the range of techniques and use of media. The use of visits to galleries and the sharing of pupils' work is a key feature in the action plan to develop the subject in the new school building. The good use of ICT to support the teaching of art and design is a developing area.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. The pupils make satisfactory progress overall. This is not as good as at the last inspection when standards were judged to be above national expectations.

Strengths in the subject are:

- standards at the end of Year 2;
- the modification of a national scheme of work to suit the school's needs;
- the pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm for the subject;
- the leadership of the co-ordinator.

Areas for development are:

- the use of assessment to inform future planning;
- the quality of resources especially in the area of food technology and hand tools;
- the use of ICT to support the design element of the subject.

103. The pupils very much enjoy design and technology. They are enthusiastic and work hard in lessons. The pupils evaluate how familiar products have been made and use this knowledge to design their own products. For example, in Year 2, the pupils made "Tooth Fairy" bags. They examined a variety of different bags noting their size, shape and purpose and the materials from which they are made. They tried out different ways of joining pieces of fabric, including stitching, stapling and gluing, and evaluated the effectiveness of each one. One pupil said that stitching was less effective as he kept pricking his fingers and another that stapling made a strong join. They made realistic plans for their own bags, labelling the different parts and the materials they were to use. They paid attention to the finish of their bags. As a result of these processes, their completed products were of a good quality.

104. By the end of Year 6, the pupils further develop their designing, measuring, manipulating and cutting skills. In a topic on "Shelters" for example, Year 6 pupils used and recognised the use of tubes as a material from which to make a framework, and reinforced and strengthened this framework using triangulation. They investigated different ways of joining various materials to inform their choices when constructing a shelter.

105. In the two lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory or better. The teachers plan effectively, explain and demonstrate tasks clearly, are secure in their subject knowledge and model specialist vocabulary well. Teaching is less effective when the pupils do not have enough time to evaluate one part of the design process before moving onto the next task.

106. The co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that statutory requirements are met and that there is an appropriate range of resources to teach all the study units. Plans are in place for improving procedures for assessing and recording how well pupils are learning. Insufficient attention is given to the use of ICT in gathering information, in designing, and in adding a quality finish to products.

GEOGRAPHY

107. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. The quality of teaching is good.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the pupils have a good understanding of a range of mapping skills;
- the very good use of geographical vocabulary;
- the pupils have a good awareness of the local area and the geographical issues within it.

Areas for development are:

- the use of assessment so that teachers know what pupils need to learn next;
- to develop pupils' independent learning skills;

- to vary the way pupils record their knowledge without the use of frames and other support mechanisms.

108. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrate keen interest in geography. The teachers use the school environment well to introduce mapping skills to the younger pupils. They are eager to record on their own plans the layout of the classroom and then progress to simple maps showing their route to school. The teacher uses homework tasks well to research information from home, both about the area surrounding school and to enable pupils to identify countries within the U.K., America and Australia. The tasks are targeted at different levels of ability so that pupils can share information and make good progress in recognising geographical terms. These features are continued in Year 2 as the pupils take 'Taffy the dog' on his travels. The pupils use their literacy skills well to compile the journal of his adventures, in addition to identifying the location on a variety of maps. The teacher uses the information well, so extending pupils' geographical vocabulary. The good use of the character, Katie Morag who lives on the mythical Isle of Struay located off Northern Scotland, gives pupils the enthusiasm to make very good comparisons with their own area. The pupils' imaginations are extended into recording Katie's adventures, at the same time providing pupils with the evidence of a different locality. The project is used very effectively to enhance a variety of literacy and numeracy skills.

109. By the time pupils are in Year 6, their mapping and survey skills are good. They use six figure co-ordinates with confidence and can locate places by using an index and grid references in an atlas. The curriculum is good, giving pupils throughout school many opportunities to understand and respond to conservation and environmental issues. The imaginative use of good resources enables pupils to pursue the topics well. The overuse of similar worksheets in some classes denies the pupils, especially higher attaining pupils, the opportunity to develop independence in recording their geographical knowledge and skills.

110. The mountain theme, linked to a residential visit to the Black mountains, develops pupils' understanding about a range of geographical skills. This knowledge is further developed by the good use of collaborative working groups. Pupils use a variety of resources well, including the Internet and word processing programs to prepare presentations to the class about mountain ranges throughout the world.

111. Teaching is good overall, lessons are well planned and pupils are very aware of what they are expected to achieve during lessons. The enthusiasm of the co-ordinator promotes the use by teachers of a good range of resources, including those in the local area, and these are used well throughout the school. Good links are made with other subjects, and are used to support both knowledge and skills in literacy, mathematics, science and ICT. There is no assessment procedure in place to measure the overall progress pupils are making.

HISTORY

112. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average and the pupils make satisfactory progress. This is not as good a picture as when the school was previously inspected. The quality of teaching is satisfactory.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the range of visitors and visits to places of interest which support learning;
- the pupils' attitudes towards their learning;
- links between history and other subjects;
- the leadership of the co-ordinator.

Areas for development are:

- the use of assessment to inform what the pupils need to do next to improve their learning;
- the development of the pupils' enquiry skills.

113. By the end of Year 2, the pupils have a good understanding of the differences between features, such as seaside holidays, in their own lives and lives in the past. They draw timelines of significant events and begin to develop a sense of chronology. They recount the lives of notable men and women such as Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale. However, they are less aware of the reasons for change. For example, one pupil explained that, "Toys, houses and clothes have changed because it would be boring otherwise." By the end of Year 6, the pupils have a good knowledge of local history, of different periods of British history and how people lived in very ancient cultures. They learn about the past from a variety of sources including books, the Internet, living people and artefacts borrowed from home and the wider community.

114. An extensive programme of visits to places of interest and the number of visitors invited into school make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. Good links are made to other curriculum subjects. For example, in literacy, Year 2 pupils described events during the Fire of London as if they were there at the time and Year 6 pupils wrote newspaper reports about the battle of Marathon. In geography, they located place names on maps, and in art and design, Year 3 pupils made models of Egyptian mummies and paintings of the Pharaohs to support their learning about Ancient Egypt.

115. In the two lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was good. However, scrutiny of the pupils' work shows that overall, teaching is satisfactory. In many instances, the pupils acquire new knowledge and understanding under the direction of the teacher rather than using evidence sources to find out and interpret information themselves. Worksheets are frequently prepared for pupils to record their work. This restricts the opportunities they have to make decisions about layout and presentation of their work.

116. The pupils have good attitudes towards history. They are enthusiastic, work hard in lessons, are keen to answer questions and collaborate well with each other. When asked to do so, they enjoy finding out information at home about their history topics.

117. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and has put in place an appropriate scheme of work using national guidelines. Relevant priorities for the future have been identified which include improving assessment procedures and developing the pupils' skills in researching, representing and interpreting events.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. The pupils make good progress, due to the good teaching. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the support they receive from their classmates and the learning support assistants. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection, where ICT was identified as a weakness.

Strengths in the subjects are:

- standards at the end of Year 2;
- the curriculum for the subject;
- progress since the last inspection;
- subject leadership;
- the use of technology;
- the assessment of the pupils' attainment;

- the quality of teaching.

An area for development is:

- the use of ICT in other subjects.

119. Considerable progress has been made since the last inspection, where raising standards in ICT was a key issue. New equipment has been purchased and a very good curriculum has been put in place. Staff have been trained and they are very well supported by the co-ordinator, who is enthusiastic and very knowledgeable. For example, she has found on the Internet a model policy from New Zealand. She has also organised the purchase of a very good series of lesson plans for the teachers, which offer excellent support. Most of the progress has happened in the last three years and the pupils at the top of the school have only had two to three years of the improved opportunities. It says much for the leadership of the subject and the confidence of teachers that standards are now average at the end of Year 6. Standards at the end of Year 2 are better because they have had their full course and the pupils in Year 2 are taught by the co-ordinator.

120. The pupils in Year 2 are adept at using the computers. They use CD-ROMs for research on their history topic of 'The Great Fire of London', for example. They experience a wide range of uses of technology, even making a start at binary trees. One of the strengths of the subject is its use in some other subjects. The pupils in Year 2 have experienced ICT in history, art and design, mathematics, English and music. The pupils in Year 6 share these experiences and have made good use of a variety of technologies. Good use is made of this variety across the school. For example, as well as using the computers in their classrooms and the school laptop computers, they have used digital cameras, control boxes, microscopes linked to the computers, as well as a range of other equipment.

121. There are very good systems of assessment. A particular feature of this is the pupils' self-assessment procedures, which are starting to be used in Years 1 and 2. These put the responsibility for monitoring their learning firmly in the pupils' court, and give them a very good understanding of what they have learnt and need to learn. Although ICT is used well in other subjects, this is not the case in all subjects and this is an area for development.

MUSIC

122. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are not so good as described at the time of the last inspection. This should not be regarded as a retrograde step as there was far more specialist teaching then. The school has subsequently re-evaluated its expenditure and standards in music are still strong. The quality of teaching is very good and the pupils make good progress. The pupils with special educational needs are supported well, take a full part in all musical activities and make good progress.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the specialist teaching;
- standards being achieved;
- the range of resources available;
- the range of other opportunities that are available for the pupils.

There are no areas for development in this subject.

123. The major reason for standards being above average is the teaching by a specialist for one of their two music lessons each week. This teacher is enthusiastic, very knowledgeable, and ensures that the pupils learn very well in her lessons. As co-ordinator, she also provides the work for the class teachers to follow in the other lesson of the week. In the lessons seen, very good use was made of the wide range of instruments available. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, not only were two pupils who learn the clarinet and saxophone accompanying the piece being practised, but another was playing a drum kit and others were accompanying on untuned wind and percussion instruments. The end result of their performance of a tricky song was very competent and sung in two parts with a good hand jive developed by the pupils. The pupils in Year 2 quickly understood the concept of ascending and descending music and when led by the teacher, put good body movements to the music to illustrate this concept. When asked to develop their own movements in groups, some were less successful, taking the opportunity to 'do their own thing' rather than the set task.

124. There is a very wide range of extra-curricular opportunities for the pupils. Individual lessons are available in clarinet, saxophone, keyboard, strings and brass. The school has a good and well-supported orchestra, a very popular gospel choir and there are plenty of performance opportunities. For example, during the inspection two year groups were out of school at a singing festival. There are also regular productions in school, which involve a good number of pupils.

125. The subject is enthusiastically led. The co-ordinator has put in place a good curriculum and a system of assessment which measures the progress of pupils appropriately.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. At the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average and the pupils make satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching is good. Improvement since the school was last inspected is satisfactory.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the pupils' enthusiasm;
- the use of specialist staff to support learning;
- the wide range of activities organised to support learning;
- the very good opportunities for all pupils to take part in physical education activities.

Areas for development are:

- the use of assessment to inform what pupils need to do next to improve their learning;
- the quality of the facilities for delivering the physical education curriculum.

127. The pupils in Year 2 throw and catch a ball accurately, remember and repeat simple sequences and demonstrate simple tactics in attacking and defending. The pupils further refine their skills as they progress through the school. For example, the pupils in Year 6 know they need to consider power, balance and safety when throwing a ball, javelin or discus and they evaluate their own and others' throws in order to improve their performance. All pupils engage in "warm-ups" and "cool-downs" understanding why these are necessary. They change their clothes for physical education lessons and develop good awareness of hygiene, health and safety issues.

128. Only one lesson was observed in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection week and the quality of teaching in this lesson was judged to be good. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching is good overall. One lesson observed in Year 5 was very good. It was led by a specialist teacher who with great energy and expertise, organised a variety of exercises to tone up the

pupils' muscles and build stamina. The class teacher and learning support assistant joined in enthusiastically, and the pupils had plenty of opportunities to refine and practise their skills. As a result, the pupils made very good progress in their learning. Good links were made to science and maths in this lesson. For example, one pupil had his heart rate monitored after visiting each work station, and this information was later used to support a topic about healthy living.

129. In the lessons that are satisfactory, insufficient emphasis is given to help pupils to evaluate and refine their performance. Sometimes the pace of learning is slowed when the pupils do not listen to instructions and these have to be repeated.

130. The pupils very much enjoy their physical education lessons. They collaborate well in small groups, supporting and encouraging each other. Sporting clubs and after school activities are well attended, giving boys and girls equal opportunities to develop their games and sporting skills at events and competitions. The residential visit in Year 6 provides a good opportunity for pupils to engage in outdoor and adventurous pursuits.

131. The co-ordinator is new to the role but is enthusiastic and committed to raising standards further. There is a good scheme of work in place which ensures that teachers plan well for progression in all aspects of physical education. The school is aware of the need to develop its procedures for assessment. There are very good opportunities for all pupils to take a full part in all activities. The small hall, uneven playgrounds and lack of a playing field place considerable constraints on the delivery of the physical education curriculum but staff work very hard to overcome these limitations.