

# INSPECTION REPORT

**EVESHAM ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Evesham

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116878

Headteacher: Mr. B.P. McSharry

Lead inspector: Mrs D. Brigstock

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> November 2003

Inspection number: 256085

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary Aided  
Age range of pupils: 5-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 175

School address: High Street  
Evesham  
Worcestershire  
Postcode: WR11 4EJ

Telephone number: 01386 446748  
Fax number: 01386 446748

Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr. J. Stanley

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Evesham St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is a small school with 175 pupils on roll and is the only primary school in the immediate locality. Surrounding schools belong to the first and middle school system. Pupils' mobility is quite high as several families transfer their children out into a local middle school at the end of Year 5 leaving a small Year 6 group behind who usually transfer to local Catholic secondary schools. The school has a wider catchment area than usual because of its religious status. The school is situated close to the town centre and admits children from a wide range of social backgrounds. Most children are white and have had some pre-school education and their attainment on entry is above average overall. A few children from Italian families are learning English as an additional language but no pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs, half of them being for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is a below average number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The school received an achievement award in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23067	Mrs. D. Brigstock	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, Mathematics, Information and Communication Technology, Art and Design, Music.
9883	Mr. B. Silvester	Lay inspector	
12172	Mrs. W. Knight	Team inspector	English, Design and Technology, Personal, Social and Health Education, Special Educational Needs.
3885	Mr. D. Langton	Team inspector	Science, Geography, History, Physical Education.

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA  
Herringston Barn  
Herringston  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT2 9PU

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's effectiveness is **satisfactory**. It provides satisfactory value for money. Pupils enter the school with above average attainment and standards for the pupils at the end of Year 6 are above average, due to some good teaching, an interesting curriculum and pupils' good attitudes to learning. Overall pupils' achievement is good in Years 3 to 6. However, the school has serious weaknesses in its leadership and management and in the achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Above average attainment and good achievement for pupils at the end of Year 6
- Good provision in the reception class leading to above average standards
- Good curriculum provision including curriculum enrichment
- Good, care, guidance and support for most pupils, particularly in their personal development
- Unsatisfactory leadership and management by the headteacher and poor strategic forward planning
- Not enough good teaching in Years 1 and 2, leading to underachievement
- Unsatisfactory use of assessment to raise standards

The school's improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. The key issues from the last inspection in improving the curriculum, provision for ICT, providing better resources for the under fives and providing effectively for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have been met. However, improvements were not maintained in raising standards for the highest attaining pupils, in improving teaching and the use of assessment or in the effectiveness of leadership and management.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	A	C
mathematics	B	A	A	B
science	A	A*	A*	A

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

**Achievement is satisfactory** overall. The above results show that last year standards were in the top five per cent of all schools in science. The pupils did better than those in similar schools, which indicates good achievement in Years 3 to 6. Current standards in Year 6, taking other subjects into account, are above average and achievement is also good. In the 2003 tests, in Year 2, standards were below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics compared to similar schools, and pupils' achievement was unsatisfactory. Current pupils in Years 1 and 2 are also underachieving. Last year, children in reception reached, and in some cases exceeded, the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the year. Their achievement was good. Current children in reception are on line to make similar gains in their learning.

**Pupils' personal qualities are good** overall. Their attitudes to learning are good. Their behaviour is satisfactory. Their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory** overall. It is satisfactory in spiritual and cultural education and good in social and moral education. Attendance is good.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education** provided by the school is **satisfactory** overall. **Teaching and learning** are **satisfactory** overall. In reception, the quality of teaching is good and here assessments are accurate and up-to-date. A higher proportion of good teaching was seen in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2 there was little teaching that was good or better, and this is unsatisfactory. The use of assessment information to raise standards and plan work which is tailored to pupils' individual needs is unsatisfactory and this is leading to a lack of challenge for the highest attaining pupils. The curriculum is good. It is enlivened by a good range of extra-curricular activities which promote further learning. Provision for pupils with special needs is satisfactory. Procedures for child protection and for health and safety are good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Leadership and management** are **unsatisfactory**. Despite his good intentions, the headteacher does not systematically review the work of the school or plan future developments with the focus on raising standards, particularly in Years 1 and 2. The work of the governing body is satisfactory. It acts on the information provided by the headteacher and external agencies but does not have a detailed enough overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It ensures that all statutory requirements are met. The school development plan is poor. It is not an effective tool for raising standards of teaching or learning and neither evaluates what has been achieved in previous years, nor plans for work beyond the current academic year.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are more positive than at the last inspection but inspectors agree that parents do not get enough information about what their children learn each term, nor about their children's future learning targets. They agree there has been a detrimental effect on other pupils' behaviour and learning in some classes, because the teachers do not have adequate support to manage a small minority of poorly behaved pupils. However, the inspection team did not find that vertically grouped classes were detrimental to pupils' learning. Overall, pupils were very positive about the school in the response to their questionnaires and had no significant complaints although some pupils were worried about the behaviour in their classes.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 in order to raise achievement.
- Use assessment information more effectively to tailor planned work to what pupils need to learn next, especially in English and mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school through better forward strategic planning, monitoring, evaluation and challenge.
- Provide more consistent and effective support to teachers who have pupils with behaviour problems in their classes.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards achieved are satisfactory overall. Pupils' achievement is good in reception and by the end of Year 6, but unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in reception.
- Standards are above average overall by Year 6.
- In Year 6 in mathematics and science pupils attain well above average standards.
- There is unsatisfactory achievement in Years 1 and 2 leading to below average standards at the end of Year 2.
- Year 2 results are well below average compared to similar schools.

#### Commentary

1. In reception most children enter with above average standards of attainment. Last year children from reception attained the standards expected in the Early Learning Goals, and in some cases exceeded them; their achievement was good. The current children in reception are on line to achieve similar standards because of the high expectations of the teacher and the range of interesting and worthwhile activities she plans which takes their learning forward at a good rate. The quality of assessment in reception (using the foundation profiles) is precise and useful for planning activities. It ensures children's good achievement because the teacher uses it to plan challenging activities that engage children and take their learning forward.
2. The trend in the school's results is broadly in line with the national trend and in the 2003 national tests, standards in Year 6 were well above average in English and mathematics and very high in science compared to schools nationally. Compared to similar schools, in a measure that takes prior attainment into account, they are average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. The situation is similar in the current Year 6, though English standards are above average, rather than well above, compared to the national picture. Achievement, a measure of whether pupils are doing as well as they should, is good overall in Years 3 to 6. It is satisfactory in English, good in mathematics and very good in science.

#### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.9 (29.9)	26.8 (27)
mathematics	29.3 (29.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	31.5 (31.3)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

*The tables shown in this commentary give average points scores for pupils. Each level in the national curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term, so if a school's scores are one point above the national, their pupils are, typically, a term ahead.*

3. The school's Year 6 group is small because several pupils transfer out of primary education into the local middle school system at the end of Year 5. The pupils who stay in Year 6 mainly transfer to local Catholic high schools. These pupils are well motivated in school and at home.

Small group sizes mean there can be a lot of variation between one year group and the next. There has been some fluctuation over the last three years but only in mathematics in 2001 did standards fall below average compared to similar schools.

4. In the 2003 national tests, standards in Year 2 were below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics compared to similar schools, though they were average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing compared to schools nationally. Currently, pupils in Year 2 are not attaining the levels expected for their age in English or mathematics. Achievement is unsatisfactory because pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils, are not challenged enough. The trend for improvement is below the national trend. This is because not enough pupils attain the higher standards compared to similar schools. Assessment is not used well enough to target higher attaining groups of children throughout the school and to challenge them to do better.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory achievement overall. When they receive appropriate adult support during lessons to enable them to participate they do so satisfactorily, and this usually occurs in literacy and numeracy sessions. However, these pupils in Years 3 to 6 sometimes struggle with work in other subjects because they have no support and are expected to do the same work as their peers. More targeted support in Years 1 and 2 enables pupils with special educational needs to make better progress across the whole curriculum.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.3 (16.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.8 (14.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.3 (16.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

**Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils’ attitudes are good, and their behaviour is satisfactory overall. Their spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory and moral and social development is good, making these aspects of their personal development satisfactory overall. Both their attendance and punctuality are good.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy coming to school.
- The great majority of pupils show good attitudes towards their learning.
- Pupils show much interest in school life and the range of activities offered.
- Pupils relate well to each other, staff and visitors.
- A very small number of recently admitted pupils are disruptive in lessons.
- Pupils’ awareness of issues associated with multi-cultural Britain is underdeveloped.

**Commentary**

6. Pupils bring good attitudes to their lessons. They work well independently, in pairs and small groups. They are keen to learn. They become increasingly confident, mature, polite and articulate. Provision for the early development of personal skills in the reception class is good; most children meet the goals set for them, and some exceed these, by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils have an opportunity to express their views on school matters at the end-of-week assembly but given the level of maturity shown, too few opportunities are made available to develop their personal responsibilities and independence. Pupils do simple tasks of school

administration such as delivering registers and watering plants, but could do more. For example, there is no school council.

7. Inspection supports the view of 89 per cent of parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire, who feel that the behaviour of most pupils is good. This is a significant increase from the previous inspection. Parents and pupils alike are positive about behaviour and attitudes. The school has recently admitted a very small number of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural problems from other schools, resulting in a small group of parents expressing concerns about behaviour at the pre-inspection parents' meeting. These few pupils can be challenging, especially those in Years 2 and 3 and neither the teachers, nor these pupils, have enough support to manage their behaviour. There are no full time, qualified classroom assistants in these classes. This has a negative effect on the other pupils' learning and attitudes, resulting in behaviour overall being no more than satisfactory. There has been a number of temporary exclusions, but no permanent exclusions, recently.

**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	132	9	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

8. In the rest of the school, staff work well together to consistently reinforce good behaviour, using strategies such as the Zone Boards to be found in every class, and they do this effectively. Pupils are made aware of whole school rules and, with their class teachers, agree rules for themselves such as “Be kind and considerate to others”. Where there have been isolated incidents of bullying, pupils report that the school's handling of these is prompt and effective.
9. In lessons where attitudes and behaviour are only satisfactory this is sometimes because pupils are insufficiently challenged and they do not have to concentrate hard enough to learn something new. Readers from Year 1, with good attitudes and behaviour, were very determined, persevering in their attempts to work out new words correctly. Since the previous inspection the quality and quantity of play equipment has been improved for pupils in reception and in Years 1 and 2, helping to improve behaviour at playtimes, but not for Years 3 to 6. All the pupils interviewed put this at the top of their list of improvements they would like to see in the school. During the inspection, behaviour was good across the school during a wet lunch break, with appropriate games and activities made available to occupy the pupils.
10. All elements of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have improved since the previous inspection and this aspect of pupils' learning is now satisfactory. Moments for reflection are provided in assemblies and when saying grace before lunch, and displays focusing on spiritual awareness are to be found in every classroom. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. Staff are good role models, showing respect and concern for the individual needs of pupils. Pupils are provided with a curriculum which promotes good understanding of their local culture. Evesham is well used for lessons in local history and geography, and pupils spoken to showed good awareness of Simon de Montfort

and his place in history. Pupils write about life in other countries and have some awareness of other cultures. They write empathetically about life as a refugee, and study Kenya and other foreign countries, but not enough is done to prepare them to take their place as adults in today's multi-cultural society. They give good support to a variety of charities, national and overseas, such as the NSPCC and disability groups, and this makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

11. Attendance rates have improved recently and the latest national data indicates that levels of attendance are now average. Very few pupils do not attend school regularly. The school is aware of the families concerned and is in regular contact with them. Pupils themselves indicated, through responses to the pupils' questionnaire, that they like coming to school, and that the other children are friendly towards them. Punctuality is good. Pupils arrive in school and begin lessons on time.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.4	School data	0.4
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

Overall the quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but there are weaknesses in assessment. The quality of care given to pupils is good. The curriculum is good, as is the range of extra-curricular activities offered to pupils. Links with other schools and the local community are good.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in reception. In Years 1 and 2 there are not enough examples of good teaching, which is unsatisfactory. There are more examples of good teaching in Years 3 to 6 and the quality here is satisfactory overall. Assessment is unsatisfactory in Years 1 to 6.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In the best lessons, the level of challenge is high and pupils discover things for themselves, but in most lessons there is not enough challenge for the highest attaining pupils.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are good.
- Teachers use behaviour sanctions and rewards well and almost all pupils respond to this positively.
- In reception, the teacher and classroom assistant work together well to provide varied activities that motivate children to learn.
- Assessment is not used well enough to plan the next steps in learning or to help pupils to improve.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 because there is little good teaching to move pupils on quickly enough in their learning.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	1 (3.33)	9 (30%)	19 (63.3%)	1 (3.33%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

12. The quality of teaching is broadly similar to that found at the last inspection in that it is satisfactory overall. There is less unsatisfactory teaching and less very good teaching. In Years 3 to 6 a third of the lessons seen were good or better and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching was mostly satisfactory with little that was good or better. Senior members of staff monitor the work of less experienced teachers, resulting in satisfactory opportunities for these teachers to attend courses and improve their understanding of the curriculum, for example, in guided reading. The school has also harnessed the skills of leading teachers in mathematics to give support and demonstrations and this has resulted in newly trained staff raising their skills in planning lessons. However, the monitoring of other teachers' work has not been undertaken systematically throughout the school, apart from an annual visit for performance management. When teaching is monitored, the written feedback focuses more on identifying training courses than on improving the delivery, structure or expectations in the lessons seen. There is some 'informal' monitoring but these visits are not recorded.
13. In the best lessons, teachers had high expectations of what all groups of pupils in their class could achieve. For example, in the very good lesson seen for Year 6 pupils, the teacher successfully challenged pupils in mathematics to use what they knew about patterns in numbers to solve increasingly difficult problems. This activity challenged all pupils in the class including the highest attaining ones who had to apply their knowledge and, in doing so, discovered simple formulae for solving the problems. There are not enough examples of this nature.
14. Where teaching was satisfactory, the planning documents identified activities for different groups of pupils, although these did not always match pupils' learning needs because previous assessments were not taken into account well enough and the activities lacked enough challenge for the highest attaining pupils. This was particularly true of lessons in English and mathematics. Other satisfactory lessons started well but their pace slowed because the behaviour of individual pupils distracted other pupils and adults in the room. Where a class has teaching through the year that is satisfactory in the individual lessons, but seldom includes teaching of a more stimulating nature, learning over a period of time is too slow. This is the situation in Years 1 and 2 and is one reason that there is underachievement.
15. Good relationships between staff and pupils, based on mutual respect and good manners, are evident throughout the school. Teachers set a good example for pupils to follow. Teachers use behaviour sanctions and rewards consistently and well throughout the school, and almost all pupils respond to this positively. A very small group of pupils do not support these conventions of good behaviour. In these classes, there are no full time classroom assistants to support the teachers or pupils and as a consequence, the pace of lessons slows as the teacher deals with the interruption. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum is satisfactory. There are instances, such as in conducting guided reading sessions, where further training is required. The school has rightly identified this area as in need of development. The headteacher has led the development of a more interesting and enriched curriculum and this has been effective in raising teachers' knowledge and understanding of art and of citizenship and of improving the learning, in these subjects, of pupils throughout the school.

16. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are assessed satisfactorily and suitable individual education plans are drawn up for them. In the best lessons, these are taken into account in planning work, and the pupils concerned learn well, but in a proportion of lessons no specific provision is made and pupils rely on the support of peers, which results in their limited progress.
17. The quality of teaching and learning in reception is good. The teacher and classroom assistant work together effectively to provide a varied curriculum which excites children, and motivates them to learn. At times the teacher and classroom assistant exchange roles. This raises the profile of the classroom assistant and effectively gives the teacher time to observe children and make assessments in their learning. Assessment is good in reception. The teacher uses the Foundation profiles regularly to record children's progress against the 'stepping stones' in all areas of learning. These assessments help her to plan future work at different levels of difficulty for different groups of children.
18. The use of assessment throughout Years 1 to 6 is unsatisfactory. Information from Year 2 tests and tests taken in Years 4 and 5 have recently been put onto the office computer, and if the information is used for planning, it has the potential to be a useful tool to raise standards. However, it has not been used yet to target specific groups of pupils to raise standards. Teachers' marking is inconsistent. Some marking offers congratulations, some offers extra support. Rarely does marking refer to pupils' targets to improve. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 complete short book reviews after reading. These reviews are not marked and some of the work is not acknowledged. This does not motivate pupils to improve their writing or skills in analysing the work of different authors. Within the school there are some very high attaining pupils but there is no register of gifted and talented pupils and they are not identified in lesson planning documents, and so their achievement cannot be measured accurately.
19. There are three classroom assistants. Where they are used, in reception and in supporting pupils with special needs, they make a good contribution to pupils' learning and to easing the workload of the teachers. The school invites parents who are undertaking classroom assistant training to work in school but most teachers have no additional regular support.
20. In Years 1 and 2, there is not enough inspirational teaching. Lessons are planned with different learning activities for each group but these are not challenging enough for the highest attaining pupils, leading to unsatisfactory achievement. On occasion, as seen in a handwriting lesson, the pace of learning drops for these groups of pupils because they have to wait for others to 'catch up.' Not using previous assessment information to plan activities designed to take learning forward at a good rate for different groups of pupils is key to the current underachievement of this group of pupils.

## **The curriculum**

The breadth of the curriculum and opportunities for enrichment are good. The quality of the school's accommodation and resources is satisfactory overall.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is enriched through well-planned visits and out-of-school activities, but there are no after-school activities for pupils in Year 2 and below.
- There is a good level of innovation for the arts, and in citizenship.
- There is good involvement in local activities.
- There is no covered outdoor area or secure play area for reception children.
- There are too few classroom assistants.

## Commentary

21. There has been good improvement in the curriculum since the previous inspection. Information and communication technology is now timetabled and taught as a discrete subject, policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects, and other identified key issues have been addressed successfully. Teaching time is carefully considered and generally well used, covering a range of topics, and allocated appropriately to different subjects. Time for religious education is above average. Provision for swimming is generous and has contributed to above average levels of attainment. Mathematics is taught in separate year groups and this has helped to raise standards. All statutory requirements are met. The rolling programme of topics to provide for classes where there are two age groups has been well considered, minimising repetition and ensuring continuity.
22. Pupils' above average attainment by the end of Year 6, and their practice in completing homework on time, whether they leave at the end of Year 5 for a middle school, or Year 6 to attend the secondary Catholic school, prepares them well for the next stage in their education. The school seeks to enrich the curriculum through, for example, an art week with a special focus on Canaletto, arising from a visit to the National Gallery, and with support from a resident artist. There is a recent, strong focus on citizenship, incorporating visits to the Tower of London to look at the relationship between citizenship and the monarchy, and to both Houses of Parliament.
23. The school makes good provision for learning outside the school day, and this is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils support these activities well. Eighty four per cent of parents who completed questionnaires feel that the school encourages their children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons, roughly twice the number recorded at the time of the previous inspection. During the inspection two recorder groups and an engineering club were observed, the latter enabling pupils to learn about Thomas Morse and his Morse code before sending messages on simple transmitters they had made. Pupils regularly take part in local schools' soccer, netball, swimming and athletics tournaments at three different age levels, which contributes positively to their physical, personal and social development. Choirs are selected for specific events such as at Christmas and for dramatic productions. Local events such as the Evesham pilgrimage, Evesham Dance Festival and flower show "Evesham in bloom", where the school entry was highly commended, are also well supported. During the inspection pupils were observed fulfilling their responsibility to tend flower beds at the school entrance. Pupils regularly visit the theatre, and older pupils have an annual residential visit to the Isle of Wight with work on the environment, as well as evenings devoted to sailing and canoeing activities. Pupils take part in the Young World concert. Provision for younger pupils is less well considered, however, and this remains a weakness identified by parents and by the previous inspection.
24. Since the previous inspection the accommodation has been improved with the provision of an enlarged library and other administrative rooms. Staffing overall is satisfactory but there is a below average number of classroom assistants for a school of this size, resulting in a lack of support for pupils with special needs, particularly those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and this has a negative impact on other pupils' learning because the teachers have to spend too long managing their behaviour. There are three separate playground areas for different age groups, but no covered or secure area for the foundation stage. Older pupils spoken to unanimously expressed the wish for more play space and play equipment. Resources for the reception class have improved since the last inspection, with the purchase of large outdoor equipment, and resources for ICT have improved through the purchase of new computers; the library is well stocked.

## Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. The provision of support, advice and guidance, based on monitoring, is satisfactory. The involvement of pupils, through seeking, valuing and acting on their views, is satisfactory.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good.
- The support, advice and guidance given to the pupils for their personal development is good.
- The induction arrangements for pupils are good.
- Monitoring of pupils' academic achievements is unsatisfactory.

## Commentary

25. The arrangements for introducing new pupils to the school are good. Children come into school prior to entry and parents are kept fully informed on their progress and how well they settle into the school day through effective day-to-day communications with the class teacher. Pupils are well prepared for a smooth transition from the foundation stage to Year 1, and for their next schools, whether they leave at the end of Year 5 for a middle school, or Year 6 to attend a Catholic high school. Good arrangements are in place for pupils' induction, through visits from and to the senior schools.
26. The school ensures that pupils' care, welfare and safety are properly catered for. There are effective procedures for the protection of pupils, in line with the locally agreed child protection arrangements. The child protection policy is being reviewed and the headteacher is responsible for its implementation. Regular inspections of the buildings and grounds are carried out and risk assessments are completed. All pupils are seen by the school nurse in their first year and, if necessary, they are seen by the school doctor. There are two fully qualified first-aiders.
27. The support, advice and guidance given to the pupils is good for their personal development. Monitoring of pupils' achievement meets the minimum requirements but assessment is not used well enough to ensure that pupils' progress is as good as it could be. For example, although there are several high attaining pupils throughout the school, there is no register for gifted and talented pupils, and they do not have sufficiently challenging work set for them. This results in them not achieving as well as they could.
28. Teachers and other staff in the school have a caring relationship with the pupils. Good use is made of the local education authority's external agencies. There are links with external agencies to support pupils with special educational needs, which are used to give appropriate advice and guidance to the school for pupils who have problems in learning. Advice for guiding pupils with behaviour problems has been acted upon but the lack of classroom assistants to support these pupils means that this advice cannot always be followed. The result is that some children are regularly removed from their classrooms by the headteacher. This is disruptive to other pupils and is a concern for some parents. It also takes away the time that the headteacher has to manage the school.
29. There is no school council but pupils can discuss concerns and ideas with the headteacher, every three weeks, in the Friday assembly. Two issues that resulted in action being taken were allowing girls to wear trousers in winter and the use of soft balls on the playground. In the pupils' questionnaire prior to the inspection, pupils were mainly complimentary about the school. However, a significant minority of pupils had concerns about the behaviour of some of the other children. Also, a minority did not think the lessons were interesting and fun and that they were not trusted to do things on their own.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is satisfactory. The links with the local community are good. The school's links with other schools and colleges are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Links with the church are particularly good.
- The school handles the transition to secondary and middle schools well.
- A significant minority of parents is not happy with the information provided.

### **Commentary**

30. There are close links with the Catholic church. Pupils, parents and the parish join together in acts of worship and pupils participate in the parish pilgrimage and support fund raising. Local clubs use the school's facilities and it is the venue for the National Model Railway Exhibition. Pupils take part in the Evesham Dance Festival. Parents are pleased with the school's work with their children on citizenship and personal development.
31. The school's links with other schools and colleges are good. The school belongs to the local first school cluster and Catholic pyramid of schools. The pupils' transition to their next stage of education is handled well, despite the difficulties that might be caused by pupils moving on at the end of both Year 5 and Year 6. Pupils spend time in their new school prior to entry, parents are well informed and there is an exchange of information about the pupils. The Evesham College organises the school's junior engineering club and some of the college's students do work practice in the school. There are also links with a college of higher education, whose students carry out teaching practice at the school.
32. On questionnaires, 20 per cent of parents were not happy with the information they are given. The inspection team found that the school does provide satisfactory information but could do more. Regular newsletters are sent out but the parents would like more notice of events. The pupils' annual reports tell parents what their child knows, understands and can do. Targets for improvement are given in English, mathematics and science but these are often too general to be helpful. There are two parental consultation evenings a year but some parents would like more. There are no parental workshops, for example on curriculum matters, except for ones on Holy Communion and Confirmation.
33. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in reviews and are provided with information on their child's progress regularly. The parent teacher and friends' association (PTFA) organises a wide range of fund raising events. The money raised is used to purchase equipment and resources to enhance the pupils' education.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory overall. There are significant weaknesses in the leadership and management of the headteacher. The leadership of other key staff is also unsatisfactory overall although it is good in the Foundation Stage. Governance is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher's commitment to the school is clear.
- The headteacher's vision is not focused firmly enough on raising standards.
- School development planning is poor.
- The monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and senior members of staff has not had a significant impact in improving its quality.
- Performance data, such as the results of national tests, is not analysed well enough to find out where improvements are needed, particularly by the end of Year 2.

- There is a limited understanding of best value principles.

## Commentary

34. The headteacher's commitment to achieving the school's aims is clear and unwavering in that a good, full curriculum is provided and pupils develop their understanding of the Catholic faith. There are no stated aims to improve standards of academic attainment or to provide improved quality in teaching and learning. There is a commitment to inclusion because of the school's Christian ethos, and this is clear from the school's willingness to admit pupils from faiths other than its own and from its inclusion of pupils with special needs.
35. The headteacher's focus on raising standards lacks drive. All members of the teaching staff participate in decision making in the school which means they are fully involved in all aspects of school life and work together as a supportive team, but this also results in a slow decision making process followed by a lack of decisiveness and action. Consequently, not enough action is taken to raise standards and this results in anxiety about external evaluations of the school's work. Thus the headteacher's commitment to the school and desire to see its success are not brought to fruition.
36. School development planning is poor. It focuses on provision of resources and meeting statutory requirements and the school significantly lags behind other primary schools in its self-evaluation procedures. Each year a school development plan is drawn up from co-ordinators' intentions, but it lacks challenge for staff and, as at the time of the last inspection, does not go beyond the current year. When developments have been discussed in the past, such as developing the use of information and communication technology, these discussions have not often led to agreement and consistent practice throughout the school. The school's systems for self-evaluation are in their infancy. A timetable has been drawn up to record training and targets for development but, by the time of the inspection, only one whole school focus, on guided reading, had been corporately agreed and this had been identified as a need in the previous term. The headteacher has initiated the citizenship programme now being developed. As a result some interesting work, such as art work on Canaletto, has improved opportunities for pupils. These developments make a positive contribution to pupils' learning although they do not appear on the school development plan.
37. The school has not faced up to the challenge of driving up standards through monitoring the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school by having a planned, and rigorous system of self-evaluation or pin-pointing weaknesses and finding ways to eliminate them effectively. This is particularly true in Years 1 and 2 where underachievement compared to similar schools has not been dealt with well enough. The monitoring process focuses on helping newly qualified teachers to meet the standards required in their first year and this has been effective in improving their subject knowledge and expertise. Although other teachers' lessons are occasionally monitored by senior staff there is no systematic programme for doing this, except the agreed procedures where they concern performance management. Outcomes from monitoring are not evaluated or used to improve practice throughout the school well enough. Some lesson observations are 'informal' and the outcomes are not recorded. Co-ordinators do not lead scrutinies of work with staff so teachers throughout the school do not have the opportunity to compare the levels of work being achieved in each year group. Co-ordinators do not have their responsibilities described in their job descriptions so do not understand the expectations of their leadership and management of areas of the school. Nevertheless, co-ordinators undertake their perceived roles conscientiously and have made some changes which have improved provision well, particularly in special needs and the foundation stage. Co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning documents and are actively encouraged to lead training days for other staff. Staff responsible for mentoring new teachers also conduct their responsibilities satisfactorily. An appropriate number of governors have links with subject co-ordinators, for example in special educational needs, and these governors have a satisfactory understanding of their work.

38. The governing body meets its statutory requirements and tackles its work conscientiously. Governors successfully promote improvements in the accommodation and resources of the school and the school's status in the local community. They use the guidance of external advisors satisfactorily to set the performance management objectives for the headteacher. They have attended relevant training and are intent in helping the school to move forwards. They regularly receive reports and information from the headteacher about the standards being attained in school but these tend to focus on the high attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 compared to schools nationally, as published in league performance tables. Although governors know from statistical data that Year 2 pupils are underachieving, they do not fully understand the causes of this because, as non-educational professionals, they cannot unpick the explanations, or the finer points of statistical data. They know there has been weak teaching in the past and believe, from the information provided, that this is the only reason for pupils' underachievement. They approve the school development plan and policy development without being given enough information on the most important issues that need to be addressed.
39. Although there are efficient systems for monitoring finance, using the services of the local education authority, and the governors regularly review the budget statements, the long term financial planning in association with a strategic development plan still has shortcomings as it did at the time of the last inspection. The carry forward this year was not anticipated, and there is a larger projected carry forward for the year 2003 to 2004. The headteacher has now earmarked some of this for increases in staff costs but this does not fully explain how the money will be used to improve the quality of education in the school, such as in the employment of more classroom assistants. The headteacher and governors seek value for money in terms of purchasing goods and services but they do not evaluate their decisions in terms of whether a particular action has provided best value in terms of the effects on standards. There has been no regular comparison of the expenditure on certain items with neighbouring schools, although the governing body is now seeking closer liaison with other schools with a view to sharing resources.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	393,780
Total expenditure	372,488
Expenditure per pupil	2,116

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	14,574
Balance carried forward to the next	21,314

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

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

Provision is **good** overall. Children enter reception with attainment that is above average overall and a number of children have extremely well developed language skills. Their achievement is good. This reflects the findings from the last inspection. Most children meet the early learning goals for each curriculum area and some exceed them. The teacher in charge of the reception class provides good leadership and management.

The quality of teaching is good in all areas of the curriculum. The teacher plans and provides a good range of learning activities in partnership with her classroom assistant which interest and engage children, and, as a result, their achievement is good.

Detailed records which identify the level of attainment for each child, and the rate at which they progress through the stepping stones towards each of the early learning goals, are formally recorded, monitored and evaluated sufficiently to track the progress the children are making over time. The classroom assistant is well briefed and provides very good support. She and the teacher successfully interchange roles during lessons. Adults manage the children very well, ensuring that the needs of all are well met.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

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

- Children's behaviour is good.
- Relationships between children and between children and adults are good.
- Children are interested and motivated to learn. They are confident to try new activities and speak in a group.

#### **Commentary**

40. The teacher and classroom assistant ensure that the environment provided and the ethos of the class help children to adapt quickly to school life and learn the correct way to behave. Adults expect children to be responsible, taking every opportunity to encourage this, and to provide good role models for children to follow. Children work unsupervised for extended periods, behaving sensibly and sharing equipment. For example, when making 'caterpillars' with play dough, a group of children followed instructions conscientiously and independently, and compared each other's 'caterpillars' constructively. Children can work in pairs, in small groups or alone. They are trusted to wash their hands after painting activities and they do so well, leaving the hand basins reasonably clean. All children enjoy registration when they also agree the weather, date and season of the year in a well-established routine.
41. Adults encourage the development of social skills successfully in a variety of ways. In the outside area, children have the opportunity to play with one friend or join a group. In one instance a large group of children worked together to make a 'train' out of large equipment and played on it very collaboratively for their age, taking turns to be passengers and the train driver with remarkably little adult intervention. Children with special educational needs are well integrated into the class and receive good support. Most children use the normal conventions of politeness such as, "sorry", "excuse me", and "thank you", without prompting. They understand and follow the playground rules well. When a large plastic tunnel was blown onto the grass, children stood with their toes on a red line explaining that they were not allowed past the line so the tunnel would have to stay where it was.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most children's standards are above what is expected for their age and their achievement is good.
- Children's knowledge of books and letter sounds is above average.
- Most children speak clearly and audibly.
- The highest attaining children are not challenged enough.
- Some lessons are too long.

### **Commentary**

42. Most children are on course to attain this Early Learning Goal by the end of the reception year. Almost all children speak confidently and in sentences and a few are extraordinarily articulate for their age. Children develop their speaking and listening skills through role-play, for example, when playing in the bear cave. Although a few just talk to themselves alongside others, most are confident to initiate conversations with each other and with adults. The many opportunities given by adults to share their news, for example, on arriving at school, encourage children to sustain attentive listening and respond with relevant comments.
43. The good teaching is characterised by a very good understanding of the needs of young children and the well-organised activities that motivate them. The teacher uses stories very well to promote learning. The highest attaining children could tell the story of a well-known book, almost word for word, knowing what the text said through glancing at the pictures. They have a very good knowledge of letter sounds for their age and are beginning to build up unknown words. The middle attaining children are equally interested in the stories they read, can answer questions about a story and also know some initial sounds of letters. The lowest attaining children recognise the difference between text and pictures. They know how to handle a book and turn the pages but do not have the confidence to re-tell a story in their own words. From looking at books from last year, the highest attaining children leave reception able to write in simple sentences and all children learn simple handwriting patterns. At this early stage in the year some children are already writing letter sounds they know to represent words and can tell adults what they have written. Modelling by adults showing how to speak in sentences helps to accelerate this learning well.
44. On occasion, the work planned is not challenging enough for the highest attaining children. For example, when playing letter and sound games in a group, individual children knew all the answers before the game was over. They need more challenging but not more formal work. Currently all language activities take place at the same time. It is too soon in the year for the lowest attaining children, who have shorter concentration spans, to work on one aspect of learning for 45 minutes.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most children's standards are above what is expected and achievement is good.
- Lessons are well planned with a good variety of practical activities.

## Commentary

45. Children follow a well-established routine every morning at registration, which gives them practice in counting, knowing the date, season and month of the year. Using practical apparatus children are beginning to count in their heads and explain how they knew that two bears in one hoop and another two bears then make four. The highest attaining children can count beyond 20 and can work out which digit comes first when they write a two-digit number although middle attaining children needed more information, in the form of a longer number line, to work this out. Most children know the names of simple shapes such as rectangles, squares, circles and triangles and are beginning to use mathematical language such as '1 more'. They are learning number bonds up to 5 and know, for example, that  $4+1$  will give the same answer as  $1+4$ .
46. Lessons are well planned using a good variety of resources that motivate children to learn. In the counting game the teacher extended the addition of two numbers to three, as she assessed children's knowledge and rightly moved them on to more challenging work, maintaining their interest and extending their learning. There are good links to other areas of learning. When children were discovering bears hidden in the wet sand and counting them, they made up a game, moulding the sand into 'slides' to slide the bears down and have races with them whilst counting. They worked collaboratively and extended their language skills well. Some of the highest attaining children were set the task of playing 'Snakes and Ladders' which they did with very good concentration, ignoring the other activities surrounding them, following the rules of the game and completing it. The good planning and use of resources and interesting activities is extending children's learning well.

## Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- High expectations of the teacher for children's learning lead to good achievement.
- Well-planned activities link to other areas of learning.

## Commentary

47. This term the children are learning about light. The teachers gave a good recap on the lesson from the day before and all children were very enthusiastic about using the range of safe light sources provided. The teacher had high expectations of what the children could learn, taking them outside to investigate shadows and, when there was insufficient sunshine, leading them to conclude that you had to have a light to make a shadow.
48. The planned activities make effective links in children's learning. For example, the children made shadows of bears using a projector on a whiteboard. They used different torches in the 'bear cave,' discussing which torchlight would be the best to light up dark corners. They went on a food hunt for berries for the bears to eat and chose stories to read or tell to the youngest bears. Other children used their observational skills well to peer into a dark box to see if they could identify the objects within. Children learn to investigate, be curious, to ask questions and solve simple problems and use a good range of language that describes what they see and think because it is modelled well by the adults in the room.
49. The highest attaining children use classroom computers confidently to practise their skills of 'clicking' and 'dragging' objects on the screen to fill baskets with food and count them and to make pictures using characters from the 'Three Bears' story. Evidence from photographs shows children learning about the same topic, making honey sandwiches and having a teddy bears' picnic outside.

## Physical development

50. No lessons were seen in so is not possible to make a judgement on provision for physical development or the quality of teaching in this area of learning. Observations showed that most children could hold pencils, crayons and paintbrushes with a good grip and use them to make the marks they wanted. They could pick up and place objects they were counting precisely and in a controlled way and all children made attempts to dress and undress themselves, only needing help with shoes and tight buttons. Outside, children displayed a good sense of balance when walking along secure 'planks' to get from one spot to another. They could jump onto and off large equipment safely. There is no secure play area outside, as was the case during the last inspection. Though children know and understand the playground rules well, this may not always be the case, and a more secure area is necessary. The provision of large play resources since the last inspection has improved to satisfactory.

## Creative development

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are linked well to other areas of learning.
- Children are allowed time to experiment with different media.
- There is a lack of variety in singing lessons.

## Commentary

51. The children experience a good range of activities where they explore shape, colour and texture. They happily use a range of dark and light colours to represent a picture of themselves or their family. They cut shapes out of papers and material to make teddy bears quite skilfully for their age. They use play dough to mould and shape creatures such as caterpillars. In the wet sand and the water, children work together to share the resources and to make up stories about what they are doing, for example, rescuing plastic teddy bears from the sea and bringing them home by boat. They can act out the action of the story of the 'Bear Hunt' using their hands and good expression when repeating the way the bears swam, or pushed through the tall grass.
52. The children's creativity is well stimulated in the role-play area, which, this half term is a 'bear cave.' This area is used well to stimulate children's curiosity and for 'pretend' activities such as finding food for hungry bears to eat. The teacher plans their time well to include sessions in the cave where, for example, the classroom assistant interacted well with the children and posed appropriate questions and challenges to inspire creative play. These activities contribute well to the children's social, emotional, creative and language development as they learn to play together, to share the equipment, and to co-operate with each other and with adults.
53. Children are taught by a part time teacher for singing. During the inspection, children sang and learned the words of Christmas carols for over half an hour. This was too long for children to sit for one activity without any variation, such as using some percussion instruments, or using movement. Children sing enthusiastically if not tunefully.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils at the end of Year 6 attained well above average results in 2003 compared to schools nationally.
- Teachers have good questioning skills and use the National Literacy Strategy well to introduce pupils to a wide range of texts.
- The use of assessment to raise standards is unsatisfactory.
- Attainment by the end of Year 2 is below the national average, and well below average compared to similar schools, largely because of weaknesses in writing; pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other areas of the curriculum.

#### Commentary

54. Results from the 2003 Year 6 national tests were well above average. Pupils' achievement was satisfactory; their standards were typical of those reached by similar schools. Achievement for the current Year 6 is also satisfactory. Standards in the current Year 2 are below average and their achievement is unsatisfactory.
55. Many pupils start school with good speaking and listening skills and these develop satisfactorily as they mature. Most pupils throughout the school listen carefully and speak readily. They make relevant contributions to class discussions. Teachers' questions are pertinent and help pupils understand their work well. Questions are often targeted usefully at pupils who are reluctant to contribute voluntarily so that the confidence of these pupils increases.
56. Basic reading and spelling skills are taught well in Years 1 and 2 and pupils acquire these and consolidate them regularly as a result. The emphasis on reading to understand the text is also taught satisfactorily, and becomes a part of many pupils' everyday strategy when reading. By the end of Year 2, most pupils read at the levels expected for their age. Pupils acquire appropriate strategies to work out unknown words such as using letter sounds or referring to the illustrations for clues. Higher attaining pupils predict what might happen in a story although they are less confident about recalling detail. Although pupils have a 'guided reading' session on a regular basis, in practice too many of these sessions fail to teach anything new and are just taken as an opportunity for teachers to listen to individual pupils reading aloud. This aspect of teaching has been rightly prioritized as needing further development and training. Reading records are not always kept up to date, and some pupils continue to read books at a certain level even though they are capable of more challenging material.
57. By the end of Year 6 pupils read satisfactorily. Higher attaining pupils scan ahead to ensure they take account of punctuation. Higher and average attaining pupils locate information using index and contents in a dictionary, thesaurus or other reference books such as an encyclopedia and most pupils have a variety of skills to help them tackle unknown words. Many pupils do read for pleasure and have favourite books, but only higher attaining pupils can name some of their favourite authors or poets. Insufficient guidance is given on which books to read and so some pupils, although interested in their reading books, read texts that are easy for them.
58. The National Literacy Strategy is used well to teach the different styles of writing, and to introduce a wide range of genres and texts so pupils know about these. However, In Years 1 and 2, most pupils do not write well enough for their age and many do not use full stops and capital letters consistently. The higher attaining pupils usually spell common words correctly,

but some average attainers still misspell simple words such as, 'put' and 'saw'. Progress throughout these two years is too variable. While some pupils use punctuation more consistently and others improve spelling, the overall improvement is not always clear. By Year 6, higher and average attaining pupils write at the levels expected for their age for an appropriate range of purposes but lower attainers show limited awareness of audience or purpose. The punctuation in the books of higher attaining pupils is accurate and consistent but this is not true for the average attaining pupils. Some lower attaining pupils still do not use full stops and capital letters consistently. Handwriting in practice books is well formed and neat but this standard is not consistently reflected in pupils' day-to-day work.

59. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the better lessons, work is matched to the varied needs of the pupils, ensuring at least satisfactory achievement. In some lessons there is a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils who, as a result, are not required to make much effort and the quality of their work does not improve enough. Too much work is completed on worksheets in Years 1 and 2, which results in pupils not having enough opportunities to practise and produce their own well-structured and organised pieces of writing. As a result, these pupils underachieve and standards of work are below average.
60. The use of assessment to raise standards is unsatisfactory. Marking and feedback are not sufficiently effective in ensuring pupils know how to improve their work, and not followed up thoroughly enough to see comments are used by pupils to overcome a particular weakness. For example, although handwriting is taught regularly throughout the school and pupils are able to write neatly, day-to-day presentation of work in exercise books is too often untidy and less than satisfactory.
61. At the time of the inspection, management of English was being shared by two senior staff pending the appointment of a new co-ordinator. The teachers responsible are overseeing provision, but not making active changes. This is a temporary situation and no judgement has been given on the leadership and management. However, owing to the underachievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2, the appointment of a co-ordinator to lead this subject is a pressing need.
62. There is unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Standards of achievement by Year 2 have not improved over this time, and in Year 6 they are not significantly different in terms of test results. Although a marking policy was suggested two years previously, nothing was actually drawn up and agreed, and as a result there is no consistent practice. There is less good teaching than at the last inspection.

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

63. There are some opportunities to use language and literacy skills across the curriculum from Year 4 onwards but they are not an integral part of planning and in Years 1 to 3 opportunities are restricted because nearly all work consists of worksheets. Older pupils do recount Bible stories in religious education, list scientific facts as bullet points and produce occasional letters and newspaper articles in history. However, the limited amount of 'research' done by pupils often consists of passages copied verbatim from written sources such as work on animals across the world in Year 6. There are few examples of pupils using ICT in English.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6 and achievement is good.
- The quality of teaching is good in Year 6.
- Standards for the highest attaining Year 2 pupils are not high enough and achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Assessment information is not used well enough to target the needs of higher attaining pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2.
- Teachers' marking does not refer to pupils' targets to improve.
- There are few links to other areas of the curriculum.

## Commentary

64. The pupils who do not transfer to local middle schools attain well above average standards at the end of Year 6 and, compared to their results in Year 2, their achievement is good. A well above average percentage of pupils achieved the higher levels compared to similar schools. This is an improvement since the last inspection when few pupils attained the higher Level 5 in the tests. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on line to make similar gains in their learning.
65. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2, standards were average compared to schools nationally but well below average compared to similar schools. This is because too few pupils attained the higher Level 3 standard in the tests. Achievement for this group of pupils is unsatisfactory. This reflects the findings from the last inspection and the observations on standards during this inspection.
66. In mathematics, pupils are taught in single age groups. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It was good or better in three lessons and satisfactory in three lessons. Lessons are planned appropriately following the guidance of the national numeracy strategy. In good lessons, planning takes account of previous learning and there is sufficient challenge in the planned activities to take pupils' learning forward. Teachers use praise effectively to encourage pupils to work hard and to learn new facts. The pace of lessons is good and the level of challenge is appropriate for each group in the class, and, where there are classroom assistants, their support for pupils with special needs is effective in promoting pupils' learning. Teachers throughout the school are confident in the knowledge and understanding of the mathematical concepts to be taught, although too few have been involved in extended, updated training courses for delivering the national numeracy strategy.
67. A very good lesson was seen in Year 6, which was well planned to meet the needs of all pupils in the group, and was very challenging for the highest attaining pupils. These pupils met the additional challenge with a mock 'groan' but immediately began work, trying to sort out the complex patterns of numbers they needed to find to solve the problem. This group is already attaining above average standards for their age. Other examples of their improving problem solving skills are evident in their written work over the term.
68. However, from a scrutiny of work, and in the satisfactory lessons seen, teachers' planning does not consistently take into account previous learning well enough, and this results in pupils underachieving. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, pupils were adding two numbers and having to explain how they were doing it using their knowledge of doubling. Learning to use knowledge of doubling and halving is the right objective for this year group, but the numbers pupils were using did not extend beyond 10 and most of the higher and middle attaining pupils knew the answers to the problems in their heads, without having to work them out. Pupils in Year 1 were adding numbers to 20 at a similar level of difficulty with success and children in reception were also counting and using numbers which were greater than 20. This does not represent good use of assessment to raise standards from one year to the next. In addition, there is no consistent marking policy used in school and pupils' targets which tell them what they need to do to improve are not referred to in teachers' marking so neither pupils nor their parents fully understand how well pupils are achieving.

69. Until two weeks before the inspection, the co-ordinator was only responsible for mathematics in Years 1 and 2. Owing to a change in staffing, she has now taken over curriculum responsibility for the school. Curriculum leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors the work of a newly qualified teacher and teachers' planning documents and makes suggestions on how teachers can improve planning. However, there is no whole-school, planned timetable for monitoring standards of teaching, learning or assessments throughout the school. The use of assessment information to guide planning is unsatisfactory.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

70. There are a few ICT programs which can be used to support learning in mathematics but some of the software does not work with the new computers. The co-ordinator has plans to make links with other areas of the curriculum with data handling but these are not yet in place. This was a weakness at the last inspection and has not been addressed effectively. Currently, links with other areas of the curriculum are too few.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average.
- Pupils' achievement is very good in Years 3 to 6.
- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection.
- Teaching is good overall in Years 3 to 6.
- The subject is well led.
- Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' presentation of their written work is sometimes unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

71. In the 2003 national tests, at the end of Year 2 standards were average overall, which represents unsatisfactory achievement, as pupils enter the school with above average standards. In comparison with similar schools the number of pupils in Year 2 reaching the nationally expected Level 2 was well below average, though the proportion of higher attainers was above average. Standards similar to these were seen during the inspection.
72. By the end of Year 6 standards attained in the 2003 national tests were well above average, with every pupil reaching the expected Level 4, and 75 per cent attaining the higher Level 5, representing very good achievement since the end of Year 2, and good achievement from the time pupils first joined the school. In comparison with similar schools the proportion of pupils at the end of Year 6 reaching the expected Level 4 was very high and the proportion achieving the higher Level 5 was well above average. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Trends in science for the last four years show a steady improvement, above that found nationally. Across the school pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers.
73. Since the previous inspection a new policy and scheme of work, supported by the purchase of an additional commercial scheme, have contributed positively to the raising of standards. Standards in experimental and investigative science, particularly, previously identified as a weakness, have improved, though pupils' knowledge of physical processes is less well developed. For example, in Year 2, pupils design and construct their own land yachts, from scrap materials, before testing how far they can travel on just one good blow. This experimental work makes a good contribution to pupils' independent learning.

74. Although the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall, and all aspects of the curriculum are taught, there is sometimes insufficient challenge and expectations are too low, especially for higher attaining pupils. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is good, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. It is generally challenging, imaginative and teachers use varied and often innovative methods to engage pupils' attention, for example using pupils with flash cards to sequence correctly *continent, planet, galaxy, universe*, preparing ramps and a wide variety of materials to test friction, using pupils as personified planets of the solar system on the playground to measure their approximate distances apart with a trundle wheel, watching a video and using vivid illustrations from a CD-ROM. Teachers generally plan well. They capture pupils' imagination and interest, though the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment are not always sufficiently well considered in planning, and higher attaining pupils in particular are sometimes insufficiently challenged. Marking is insufficiently helpful in suggesting ways for pupils to make improvement, and teachers are too easily prepared to accept written work which is poorly presented. A few rely too much on worksheets. Most pupils are enthusiastic and keen to learn, but in some classes learning is impeded through the poor behaviour of a very small minority of pupils.
75. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is experienced and has written a new policy and scheme of work since the previous inspection. Earlier weaknesses have been identified and provision has improved through training of teachers. Work is well supported through the purchase of a further commercial scheme. Assessment, in common with other subjects, is weak, however, and although teachers' planning is monitored, there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning. Resources are satisfactory and well managed and well used. ICT is being increasingly used to support the subject and the subject contributes positively to using and developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

### **Information and communication technology**

76. ICT has to be reported as a sample as not enough ICT teaching was taking place on the days of the inspection to make a secure judgement on teaching. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection, in Year 3/4 and Year 1. In both lessons the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. Other evidence suggests that the standards being attained in Years 3 to 6 are in line with those expected. There is insufficient information for assessing the standards of work in Years 1 and 2. The school does not assess what skills pupils already have from their use of home computers and so their progress in attaining new skills cannot be measured accurately.
77. The co-ordinator has conducted a good audit in this subject, which rightly identifies the need for assessment records as a priority for development plus increased provision for pupils with SEN. She has a good knowledge and understanding of her subject and has adapted national guidelines for the needs of the school. She has time to monitor the planning documents but has only monitored the quality of teaching and learning in one class. Improvement since the last inspection is good. A policy and scheme of work have been introduced, a full audit undertaken, an action plan written and staff have had additional training. There has been an improvement in the quality and quantity of resources. The school has recently purchased six laptops so that more pupils can access computers during lessons. At the time of the inspection only the oldest pupils used these. Other hardware such as sensors and a digital camera have been purchased, ensuring that the resources necessary for the delivery of the whole curriculum are available.

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

78. Evidence from a scrutiny of work and other observations indicates satisfactory links with other areas of the curriculum. For example in geography, pupils in Years 5 and 6 accessed information using a search engine to complete an investigation of some features of physical geography in Kenya. Links to design and technology include the use of control technology to make a model follow a series of commands and in Years 1 and 2 there is evidence of pupils

using ICT to practise data handling in mathematics. There is only limited evidence of links with English.

## HUMANITIES

*Religious education was not inspected because of the Voluntary Aided nature of the school. This will be inspected separately in a Section 23 inspection. No lessons were seen in history. Geography is reported in full below.*

79. In **history**, evidence from a scrutiny of work and conversations with pupils indicate that planning and coverage of the curriculum are satisfactory. Since the previous inspection new policies and schemes of work have been provided, with careful planning, and well considered time allocations to ensure that a balanced and comprehensive selection of topics is covered. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' literacy skills are developed satisfactorily through writing, for example, about what it felt like to be an evacuee in World War II.

### Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is enhanced by the good use of visits and visitors.
- Pupils know and use the local area of Evesham well.
- Worksheets are overused, and there is a lack of recorded work.
- The quality of written presentation is inconsistent.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.

#### Commentary

80. Standards in geography at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 meet expectations for these year groups and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Year 1 and 2 pupils trace their route to school, take a transport walk, conduct local traffic surveys, recording results in simple bar graphs, and study the island of Struay in connection with their literacy work in the story of Katie Morag. Year 2 pupils know their address and can locate Evesham on a map of the British Isles. They know that Evesham is in England, and can identify the surrounding countries of the British Isles. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good use of information and communication technology when locating and researching information on Kenya. A residential trip to the Isle of Wight supports learning for these pupils positively.
81. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with good use of resources, good planning and some imaginative teaching methods such as the use of an overhead projector to simulate the sun. Good use of the locality was seen in a Year 3 / 4 lesson where pupils used photographs to compare the use of land around the local railway station now and 25 years ago. Teachers were confident with the subject although they have had no recent training. However, they seldom plan sufficiently to meet the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment, and, as a result, higher attaining pupils are sometimes insufficiently challenged. Marking does not sufficiently suggest ways for pupils to improve their work, and some teachers accept poor standards of written work. Assessment of the subject is unsatisfactory. Pupils usually bring good attitudes to their lessons but the attitudes of a few pupils, especially in Year 3, detract from the quality of teaching and learning from time to time. Although staff implement agreed behavioural sanctions consistently, these are not always effective in managing behaviour for these pupils.
82. Leadership of the subject is currently satisfactory but management has been unsatisfactory. The very recently appointed co-ordinator has re-written the subject policy, and produced an

action plan, but there has been no monitoring of planning, teaching or learning. There is little evidence of the subject in displays round the school. Insufficient use is made of ICT generally to support the subject. Resources are sufficient, though there is need for more globes and large maps, and a need for general organisation, on a topic basis. There are links to mathematics through the recording of data and in pupils' cultural development and this is supported satisfactorily through studying other countries.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

*Art and design, music and physical education were sampled on this inspection. Inspectors saw one lesson in art and one in music. One good lesson was seen in physical education. No **design and technology** was on the timetables during the inspection.*

83. Teaching seen in the lesson on **art and design** was satisfactory. There have been some exciting curriculum developments in art. The whole school engaged in an 'Art Week' after the staff visited the National Gallery to have training on interpreting the works of Canaletto. This produced a lot of good quality work throughout the school. Pupils worked with a wide variety of artists from the region. Local artists worked with Years 4 and 5 in school, pupils from Years 3 and 4 visited Birmingham Art Gallery. Year 2 went to Cheltenham Art Gallery and pupils from reception and Years 1 and 2 worked on projects in the local play resources centre. All these activities culminated in a celebration of good two- and three-dimensional work using a good range of materials in the school hall which was open to parents and members of the local community. This venture raised the profile of art in school and made a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
84. A part-time teacher teaches **music** to each class every Monday, as was the case in the last inspection. During the inspection, the focus was on practising songs for a Christmas concert. The quality of singing in the lesson seen was satisfactory but the lesson lacked variety.
85. One lesson was seen in **physical education** in Year 2, where the quality of teaching, learning and achievement were good and standards were above average. From a scrutiny of planning, and from discussion with the subject co-ordinator and with pupils it is clear that standards are at least average, and curriculum provision is well supported and enriched by clubs for soccer, netball, cricket and athletics which are well attended by pupils. Pupils represent the school at different age levels in a number of sporting tournaments, and perform well in two swimming galas. This contributes positively to their social and personal development. Over 90 per cent of Year 6 pupils leave school able to swim at least the expected 25 metres. All elements of the subject are well planned, and arrangements for swimming, two sessions a year for Years 3 to 6, contribute positively to high standards.
86. Leadership and management of physical education is satisfactory. Parents give good support with school teams and with coaching. There is an appropriate policy and scheme of work for the subject and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The subject supports pupils' social and cultural development well, with pupils taking part in Indian dances and the local Evesham dance festival. Assessment procedures remain underdeveloped.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. This area was sampled, as no lessons were seen and so no overall judgement can be made on teaching or provision. The school is currently developing a citizenship programme for the pupils and has made a good start in providing a range of interesting activities to teach pupils the principles of being a good citizen. Year 6 have recently visited the Houses of Parliament to observe debates and meet their Member of Parliament while Year 5 experienced the historical perspective of British society through a visit to the Tower of London. During the inspection Year 5 and 6 pupils were able to draw on their experiences of parliament during a sound lesson on the passing of laws in which they learnt some of the ages at which they are permitted to do certain things, such as buying cigarettes and keeping pets. Personal, health education and

citizenship are well supported through circle time, and Golden Time. Provision for higher attaining pupils is inconsistent, and, given the level of maturity noted, pupils might be offered more opportunities to take responsibility, and work independently.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>5</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	5
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	5

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