

# INSPECTION REPORT

**SS PETER AND PAUL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Iford

LEA area: Redbridge

Unique reference number: 102848

Headteacher: Mrs B Laraway

Lead inspector: Mr P Mann

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> March 2004

Inspection number: 257542

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: 4 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 443

School address: Gordon Road  
Ilford  
Essex  
Postcode: IG1 1SA

Telephone number: 020 84780575  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Dr Gerard Murphy

Date of previous inspection: 21/09/1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

SS Peter and Paul's RC Primary School has 443 pupils on roll, aged 3 to 11 and the average class size is 28. The school serves an inner city community in Ilford, London. A high proportion of pupils come from disadvantaged home backgrounds. An average number of pupils are in receipt of a free school meal. The building is quite new and is surrounded by playgrounds and a playing field. At the time of the inspection, there were 55 children under five in the nursery and reception classes. The attainment of children at the start of school in the nursery is well below average. About 10 per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and this is well below the national average. About a third of these receive support from outside agencies. Currently there is only one pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Need. A very large proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language and this is well above the national average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9468	John Arscott	Lay inspector	
25925	Elizabeth Pacey	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology
22452	Mary Farman	Team inspector	Foundation Stage <sup>1</sup> English Music
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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>11</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>30</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** and effective school with many significant strengths. A very positive climate for learning has been established, and staff provide very good levels of care and support to all pupils within a caring Christian community. The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall and with the result that pupils achieve well in many subjects. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership and is fully committed to ensuring that planned learning activities for all pupils are of high quality. A dynamic team has been created and with the support of an effective governing body she has successfully implemented a number of significant changes to the structure and organisation of the school. Given the low starting point of many pupils, the standards being achieved and the level of resources available, the school provides **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The rate of achievement in English is very good and standards are well above average by the time pupils are 11 years. Standards are also above average in information and communication technology, music and investigational skills in science.
- The mathematical thinking of the most able junior pupils is not being effectively challenged.
- The pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and all are inspired to learn as a result of the very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Planning for whole school improvement is insufficiently precise to raise standards in some aspects of the school.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who speak English as an additional language is good and these pupils achieve well.
- The very good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is ensuring that the provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is good
- The leadership of the headteacher is inspirational and is a primary factor in moving the school forwards.

The level of improvement since the previous inspection has been **good**. Standards in information and communication technology, music and physical education have all been raised. There is now a better range of activities outside of lessons for the pupils and a stronger emphasis on investigative work in science. The school's capacity for further improvement is **good**.

### 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	B	B	D
Mathematics	B	C	B	E
Science	A	C	B	C

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.

The rate of pupil achievement is **good** overall. The majority of children enter the nursery with low levels of attainment. This is particularly noticeable in all areas of development except for their physical skills in movement where standards are generally in line with nationally expected levels in this area of learning. Inspection findings confirm that from this low starting point all pupils make good progress in their literacy skills. A rich and stimulating English curriculum enthuses pupils and enables them to achieve well above average standards by Year 6. Standards are average in mathematics for pupils of this age and most pupils achieve well in the development of their numeracy skills. However, the mathematical thinking of the most able pupils is not challenged enough and often work is repetitive. In contrast, the development of investigative skills in science is resulting in good achievement in this subject. Standards in information and communication

technology have improved considerably over the last few years to reach above average levels of competence by the end of the juniors.

The results in the 2003 national tests for 11-year-olds are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. When these results are compared with schools of similar circumstances and based on value added data they are below average in English, well below average in mathematics and average in science. The results of pupils in Year 2 taking the 2003 national tests are below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics when compared to schools nationally. When compared to schools with similar circumstances using free school meals data, standards are below average for reading, writing and mathematics.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **good** overall throughout the school.

Teaching and learning are **good** overall across the school. Over two thirds of it is good or better but some is only satisfactory. Teachers are collecting a good range of assessment data on the pupils' progress but this information is not always being used consistently well to ensure all pupils are fully challenged. This is particularly so in the planning of challenging activities in mathematics for the more able pupils in the juniors. Overall, the range of planned learning activities for pupils is satisfactory and there are good links made between subjects. The provision for personal, social and health education is good and is closely linked to the school's very positive ethos for learning and caring for each other. The recent changes made to the organisation of teaching areas in the juniors has had a significant impact on the quality of learning experiences available to these pupils. The quality of provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is a significant strength of the school. The needs of all these children are fully met by staff, providing them with a good foundation for future learning. Procedures for supporting pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are good. Teachers and support staff make a positive contribution to the development of these pupils and their rate of achievement is good.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The headteacher provides **very good** leadership and is passionate about providing a vision that ensures high quality learning experiences for all pupils. Backed by a supportive governing body, she has led by example to imbue her staff with the same high aspirations, sense of purpose and strong teamwork. **Good** management ensures the organisation of all the school systems operate smoothly. Some initiatives have moved on too fast, such as improvements to mathematics and current strategic planning has not fully taken into account the need for the consolidation of previous key areas of improvement. Future planning for school improvement is insufficiently precise and well thought through to ensure that any further changes and improvements are founded effectively on the school's future needs.

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

The majority of parents see the school as living up to its aims and ethos, and have very positive perceptions of how well the school looks after their children. Parents know that their children are very happy at the school because it has such a very caring and welcoming atmosphere. They also recognise how good attitudes and good behaviour contribute to the good progress their children make at the school. The school tries very hard to provide parents with good practical advice on how best they can help their children at home, but some parents would like more. Most parents approve of the change in leadership style to a more focused approach.

Pupils are very happy to be at school, to enjoy the learning experience, to be amongst friends, and to feel safe and secure. They have a genuine trust and confidence that the school will protect and care for them. They know that the school respects and values them and listens to their views. As a result they are confident about making their views known.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise the aspirations of staff in the teaching of able junior pupils in mathematics.

- Ensure that planning for whole school improvement is sufficiently detailed and precise.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

The overall rate of pupil achievement is **good** across the school. Standards are **very good** in English and information and communication technology (ICT) by the time pupils are 11 years. They are also **good** in music for pupils of this age.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are well above average for 11 year olds and average for seven year olds.
- Standards in maths are average overall for 11 year olds but the mathematical thinking of the most able junior pupils is not being effectively challenged.
- Standards in science are average overall but above average for 11 year olds in investigational work.
- Progress in ICT skills is good and standards are above average by the time pupils are 11 years.
- The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their previous learning.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in their literacy skills and achieve well.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.3 (14.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.0 (13.7)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.2 (14.6)	16.3 (16.3)

*There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8(27.8)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.6 (26.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.8(28.2)	28.6 (28.5)

*There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. The results in the 2003 national tests for 11-year-olds are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. When these results are compared with schools of similar circumstances and based on value added data they are below average in English, well below average in mathematics and average in science. The results of pupils in Year 2 taking the 2003 national tests are below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics when compared to schools nationally. When compared to schools with similar circumstances using free school meals data, standards are below average for reading, writing and mathematics.
2. Inspection findings confirm that from a low starting point all pupils are making good progress in their literacy skills. A rich and stimulating English curriculum enthuses pupils and enables them to achieve well above average standards by Year 6. These oldest pupils achieve very good standards in their reading and writing skills because the quality of teaching is consistently good in this subject. The overall rate of pupil achievement in mathematics is satisfactory and standards are average overall for 11 year olds. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in mathematics. Good levels of support ensure that pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress in their numeracy skills. Booster classes are successful in raising the standards of average attaining pupils. However, more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged to develop high enough levels of mathematical reasoning and thinking skills, and they do not make sufficient progress in line with their abilities. Standards in science are average overall but pupils make good progress throughout the school because teachers are careful to develop the investigation skills to an above average level. This leads to good achievement, and is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
3. Pupil standards were judged to be unsatisfactory at the previous inspection in ICT. Much has been done to raise the profile of the subject and the quality of provision overall. Standards for 11 year olds are now above average and a profile of steady achievement is now in evidence across the school. A strong feature is the development of specific skills and as a result all pupils are becoming proficient with several applications and keyboard skills.
4. Children achieve well in the nursery and reception classes. The majority of children enter the nursery with low levels of attainment overall. This is particularly noticeable in all areas of development except for their physical skills in movement where standards are in line with nationally expected levels in this area of learning. There is good provision and support for the increasing number of children who speak English as an additional language. This enables them to learn quickly and work alongside their classmates.
5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their previous learning. The level of attainment of pupils who have special educational needs is often well below the national averages. All these pupils make good progress overall. At times, when supported by classroom assistants some of the pupils who have special educational needs make very good progress. The school is committed to helping children succeed at an early age in the nursery, where these children regularly make very good progress.
6. An increasing number of pupils who speak English as an additional language are being admitted into the school. The needs of these pupils are identified effectively and carefully targeted support enables them to make good progress in their use of the English and literacy skills. The rates of achievement in other subjects are equally as good.

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

Attendance at this school is consistently **very good**. On the whole, pupils have **very good** attitudes. The vast majority of pupils exhibit **good** behaviour. The ethos and atmosphere at this school make a significant contribution to the **very good** spiritual, moral, and social development of pupils. Cultural development is also **good**. The school meets the statutory requirements with respect to the daily act of collective worship.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The way the school promotes good attendance.
- The way parents respond responsibly by ensuring good attendance by their children.
- The very good relationships between pupils and with adults.
- The way the school tries to stimulate the desire to learn.
- The very good race relations.

## **Commentary**

7. The levels of both authorised and unauthorised absences are considerably better than the national average. The credit for the very good attendance figures must be shared between the school and the way it persistently promotes and monitors good attendance, and the parents themselves for the responsible way they respond. Teachers manage daily registration well. Lateness to school is monitored well and punctuality is judged to be good. The school is extremely well supported by the education welfare officer. There have been no exclusions in the last reported year.
8. Most pupils display a keen enthusiasm for school and lessons, and many take part in the wide range of activities provided by the school. The majority of the pupils willingly take part in class discussions, and many are both confident and articulate. Pupils are well motivated, and the overall response to teachers is very good. They enjoy both shared learning with partners, as well as working by themselves. The teaching staff try very hard to stimulate the desire to learn in pupils and as a result pupils achieve well.
9. The behaviour of infant and junior pupils is generally good, and very good in the Foundation Stage. The school has high expectations and works hard to promote good behaviour and self-discipline. In the Foundation Stage this has a very positive impact on the children's learning. The school has a growing number of pupils with behavioural disabilities and this was an area of concern expressed by both parents and pupils, but in practice the pupil management skills exercised by staff are sufficiently well developed to successfully support these pupils. Most pupils respond well to the school's code of conduct. The school promotes racial harmony and good relationships very well. Instances of bullying, aggressive, sexist and racist behaviour are infrequent, and are dealt with effectively.
10. Pupils who have special educational needs are developing confidence and positive self-esteem as they follow the good role model of their classmates. They relate well to the teachers and support assistants, developing an enthusiasm for their work and an increasing ability to concentrate. The pupils with the most severe difficulties appreciate what is done for them, and they try hard to live up to the high expectations of the staff. The staff involved with the pupils who have special needs encourage them to grow in independence and self-awareness. The lessons always have a strong component of social training, how to share and how to work in pairs or groups. The staff give the pupils opportunities to develop maturity, such as in reading prayers publicly in assemblies. Parents are particularly pleased with this aspect of the school's work.
11. The ethos and atmosphere throughout the school promotes spiritual and moral awareness very well. All pupils respond very well to morning assemblies fully taking part in the daily act of collective worship. Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. The values of honesty, fairness and justice are well promoted, and pupils understand the importance of being truthful. Adults at the school provide good role models for pupils, and together with the very strong ethos, this provides pupils with a very good framework for their social development. School and classroom rules are developed with the co-operation of pupils. Pupils' social development is further enhanced in Key Stage 2 by a well-structured residential

visit. The achievement of the early learning goals<sup>2</sup> in personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

12. Cultural development is good. The school has a very high proportion of pupils from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. Most pupils are very aware of the importance of their own cultural traditions and they appreciate the cultural diversity of British society. The school works very hard to provide pupils with opportunities to appreciate art, literature and music and this has a positive impact on their understanding of British culture.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	4.2
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background

**Exclusions in the last school year**

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
98		
22		
16		
18		
1		
7		
8		
7		
4		
3		
30		
61		
40		
9		

<sup>2</sup> These are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

Chinese	3		
No ethnic group recorded	15		

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good** overall throughout the school. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good** and a significant strength of the school. A **good** curriculum is well planned and taught effectively. All pupils are **very well** cared for and **good** links have been established with parents.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **good** overall with just over two thirds of lessons being good or better.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good.
- Good levels of subject knowledge ensure that planning is effective overall.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is effective and support is carefully targeted.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and a very positive ethos for learning has been established.
- Procedures for assessment of pupil progress are good and overall, satisfactory use is made of this information to plan future work.
- Teachers and support staff use a wide range of resources well to support pupils' learning.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	10 (25%)	17 (43%)	13 (32%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	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.*

13. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is a significant strength of the school. It has many very good features, such as good assessment and very effective teamwork. Teaching is particularly strong in the nursery. This good quality teaching ensures that children make good progress in their learning. They respond very well to the interesting, varied and stimulating activities. All adults use assessment very effectively to build on children's previous learning and ensure that individual needs are met. They keep careful notes of individual achievement and use these to plan children's work. The teachers, nursery nurses and support assistants work very well together. This partnership ensures that each child is supported according to his or her identified needs. There are very good arrangements for children entering the nursery and reception classes. The arrangements for their transfer to Year 1 are smooth. These steps enable children to settle quickly into school routines.
14. The quality of teaching and learning in the infants and juniors is good overall. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. Teachers demonstrate particularly good levels of subject knowledge in English, ICT, history and geography. This helps to ensure that planning for these subjects is especially effective. The good planning in lessons in these subjects ensures that work is carefully matched to the needs of all pupils, activities are well structured and the pace of teaching is brisk and pupils achieve well. Although teachers demonstrate satisfactory levels of

expertise in other subjects the quality of teaching is generally not as good but never less than satisfactory. The achievement of pupils in these lessons is not as good. For instance, teachers are not effectively using good assessment information to plan tasks in mathematics that effectively challenges the thinking skills of the most able pupils.

15. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good. All teachers are good at ensuring that these pupils experience success in front of their peers. Class teaching is good when teachers try to draw in the weaker pupils by including them in questioning, and provide them with challenging tasks that also develop the specific skills and attitudes written in their individual plans. In some lessons tasks do not match the pupils' needs closely enough and the teaching is only satisfactory. The impact of the support given by classroom assistants is often very good, enabling the pupils to keep in touch with the work the rest of the class are doing.
16. The teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. Support for these pupils is well organised and teachers provide activities that are carefully matched to the needs of these pupils. Teaching assistants are effectively used to work closely with these pupils both in whole class discussions and individual activities. As a result of this good support these pupils achieve well and make rapid progress especially in literacy skills.
17. All teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve both in work and in behaviour. The relationships between staff and pupils are very good and a very positive ethos for learning has been established. This is reflected in the very positive attitudes that pupils display in lessons.
18. Procedures for assessment of pupil progress are good and satisfactory use is made of this information to plan future work. The assessment coordinator has worked hard to develop good procedures for recording the progress pupils make in English, mathematics and science. The data gained through this process is now being used to track pupil achievement and plan work more effectively to the individual needs of pupils. The quality of teachers' marking in the pupils English books is particularly good and an example of very good practice. This is not fully reflected in the pupils' mathematics books where often there are few comments that can help pupils to move on in their learning.
19. Teachers and support staff use a wide range of resources well to support pupils' learning. For instance, several teachers make very good use of multimedia projectors in lessons to share with pupils a wide range of material via laptops. Support staff often use visual aids and practical activities to reinforce key teaching points when they are working with individuals or groups of pupils.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum provided by the school is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good accommodation enables effective teaching of the curriculum.
- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Support staff are good throughout the school, and very effective for children under five.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.

### **Commentary**

20. The curriculum includes good provision for personal, social and health education, including sex education and education about drugs misuse. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good and makes a significant contribution to all areas of their development. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, and for those pupils who have English as an additional language. The school strives to be fully inclusive and takes care to

ensure that pupils have equal opportunities when withdrawn for activities such as music. Boys and girls have the same opportunities.

21. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. Many subjects such as information and communication technology cover all the requirements in imaginative and thorough ways that contribute very positively to pupils' learning and achievement. Topics are carefully planned on a two-year cycle, to avoid repetition. The school has a culture of reviewing the curriculum at least once a year in order to check that it is relevant and does not need any alteration. Each subject is well planned to ensure that pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding as they progress through the school. In addition, each year group plans topics to make sure that classes with pupils of the same age receive the same lessons and they are delivered in an appropriate and relevant manner for the current pupils. Wherever possible advantage is taken of topics that span more than one subject to develop cross-curricular work. For example, spreadsheets in information and communication technology are used to support work on graphs in mathematics and science.
22. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The curriculum for these pupils is effectively adapted by individual education plans. The targets in these plans have become more precise since the previous inspection. However, there is still some inconsistency in their construction. In the best examples they help pupils to make good progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and in improving behaviour. Not all the targets are easily measurable. The criteria for judging successful achievement are usually clear, but the date set for reviewing progress is the same for all the targets, and is at times too far distant for some.
23. Good opportunities are provided for extra curricular activities outside of lessons. These include clubs for information and communication technology, choir, embroidery and sporting activities including football, netball and badminton. Booster classes for mathematics, literacy and science take place during the school day and a holiday booster class has proved very effective. A sound range of visits and visitors enrich the curriculum for all year groups. For example, music workshops, a visit from a dance troupe and visits to museums and farms. Very strong links with the Church include visits to the Church and the regular involvement of the Parish Priest. Good use is made of visits to France for older pupils to learn about other countries. Year 6 go on a residential visit to an activity centre, which makes a good contribution to their personal and social development. The neighbouring secondary school students visit to perform for pupils, and good opportunities are taken to use specialist teachers and facilities when pupils attend science classes. This also provides a valuable preparation for the pupils' next stage of learning.
24. There is a sufficient number of well-qualified and experienced teaching staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Many of the teachers have considerable expertise in their subject areas, for example, information and communication technology, and this has a considerable impact on the quality of the curriculum in these areas. There are a sufficient number of well-qualified and experienced teaching assistants. They are an asset to the school and are instrumental in raising the standard of groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language. The accommodation for all pupils, including those in the nursery and reception classes is very good, and very well maintained. The building provides ample space for teaching and includes a good teaching area for information and communication technology as well as areas for smaller groups. Recent changes to the junior classes have been very beneficial in creating a good working atmosphere for pupils and teachers. The school is fortunate to have grounds which include very secure play areas for younger children, hard sports areas as well as grassed football pitch and play areas. Resources for all pupils and all subjects are good. They contribute well to the development of young children under five and to the teaching in all subject areas. The school library has undergone some reorganisation and the school is aware that this is an area for further development and improvement in the quality of the book stock.

## **Care, guidance and support**

Health and safety provision and practice in the school are both **very good**. The school has **good** monitoring procedures that provide the basis of **good** support, advice and guidance. The school is **good** at listening to the concerns and aspirations expressed by its pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers know and understand the needs of pupils in their care very well.
- The overall procedures for pastoral care, safety and welfare of pupils are good.
- Very good links have been established with other support agencies.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are very good.
- The school places very high value on pupils' views.

### **Commentary**

25. The school provides very good pastoral care for its pupils. Teachers know their pupils very well and this enables them to make informed judgements about the support and guidance that each child needs. For example, a child with a serious medical condition has a special programme of study designed around the limitations imposed by the condition. The school monitors its records well, in order to establish trends and identify where barriers to learning exist.
26. The procedures for recognising child protection issues, and monitoring pupils on the child protection register are very good. The school works closely with the police and fire service to teach children how to protect themselves and others. Day-to-day health and safety practice is good. A rigorous health and safety risk assessment is undertaken at regular intervals and involves senior staff and governors and the local education authority. The school monitors and reviews safe working procedures regularly and arrangements for dealing with accidents are clearly set out. The provision for first aid and supervision at mealtimes is good.
27. The caring, friendly atmosphere in the school encourages pupils to trust and respect the staff. In turn, the school makes it very clear that it cares about pupil's views and what they think, even though there are few formal avenues for pupils to voice their views. The principle of publicly celebrating achievement is well established and extends beyond the academic to all school activities, including attendance. The caring atmosphere also extends to the induction arrangements to the Foundation Stage, which are very good and have a very strong element of continuing parental involvement. The school has particularly good induction arrangements for pupils entering the school to meet the demands of the very high proportion of incoming children from different ethnic backgrounds and those with English as an additional language.
28. The school assesses the needs of pupils' with special educational needs accurately. The process begins as early as the nursery class. The staff monitor pupils' progress well to gauge if they have achieved sufficiently to come off the register. The school has developed very good links with specialist support agencies. These work to the benefit of the pupils and promote good progress and effective guidance on behaviour.

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

The school enjoys **good** links with parents; it also has **satisfactory** links with the community and other schools in the area.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are kept very well informed about standards and progress.
- The school tries very hard to guide parents on ways to help their children at home.
- Good transfer procedures to and from the school have been developed.



## Commentary

29. The school is constantly looking for ways to improve relationships with parents and to maintain its strong links with the local Catholic community. The school has successfully built up a good reputation and enjoys a good relationship with parents. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. For example, pupils' annual reports show that teachers have a very good knowledge of each child's learning, and include detailed targets for pupils' improvement. The school manages to produce a newsletter every two weeks. The overall perception by parents that this is a very happy school is fully justified. Most of the parents are comfortable about what they understand is being taught at school, although some would like more guidance about how best to help their children at home. In general, the school responds well to parents' suggestions and concerns. There is a thriving parents association, but very few parents volunteer to help inside the school, even though the school has a good record for helping volunteers to become better qualified. Some sporting trips have been adversely affected by lack of parental support.
30. The parents of pupils who have special educational needs value the commitment of the staff to care for their children. The school has sought to build up an increasingly close relationship with the parents, who are all invited to the important review meetings. The parents are fully involved in the procedures at every stage.
31. Links with the general community are satisfactory, but are much stronger within the Catholic community. The school also works hard to encourage visits from representatives of other cultures and religions, such as a visit from a local Rabbi. Pupils' personal development and sense of citizenship is improved as a result of these links with the community.
32. On the whole, the school has satisfactory links with other schools, such as the special educational needs and sports cluster groups, but again it has very close ties with the local Catholic secondary school. The school makes comprehensive arrangements to prepare pupils for a smooth transition to this secondary school, including a 'taster' day. The school has a very good football pitch, which it has offered to share with two other local schools that have no playing field.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good** and the school is effectively managed. Other key staff provide **good** leadership. The governance of the school is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good leadership of the headteacher has created strong teamwork and a clear sense of purpose.
- The governors' close involvement with the school is helping to shape the vision for the school's future.
- The very good management of Foundation Stage provision.
- Effective management of the school based on good self-evaluation procedures.
- The planning for school improvement is not linked closely enough to initiatives.
- Not all of the elements of the development plan are thought through in terms of long-term value for money.

## Commentary

33. Under the very good leadership of the headteacher, the school buildings have been revitalised thereby boosting staff morale and giving pupils a sense of pride. The headteacher is passionate about her vision of providing high quality learning experiences for all pupils.

Inclusion and care for all pupils are embedded in the heart of the school's work. She leads by example and has imbued her staff with the same high aspirations creating a strong sense of purpose and teamwork. For instance, the very good provision in the Foundation Stage is based on the same principles of hard work and concern for the children's welfare. Under the very capable leadership of the coordinator, the Foundation Stage staff form a very effective team, building up the children's standards and social skills well. All the school's leaders are good role models for staff and pupils.

34. All the staff and governors share the vision for the school. The governing body is a strong support for the headteacher and staff. The governors are developing into the role of critical friend of the senior managers, asking sensible questions to guide the work of the school. Governors make regular visits. They get to know the school by receiving verbal reports from senior managers. Consequently they know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They keep a good oversight of the well-run financial systems, and ensure that the budget effectively supports the school improvement plan. The budget surplus is higher than the recommended 5 per cent. Together with the headteacher, they have prudently allocated most of the surplus to appropriate key priorities such as refurbishment of the infant classrooms and playground development. This will ensure a reduction of the budget to the customary level by the end of the year.
35. The school's self-evaluation systems are clear and enable the staff to build appropriate targets into the overall development plan, which drives a sound cycle of continuous improvement. The training system for staff to be successful is very good. However, some of the necessary initiatives to move the school on have out paced the development plan. For example, the school has moved on from its 2002 target to improve standards in mathematics, without checking closely enough to see if the impact had been effective. As a result, the consolidation stage has been omitted and standards are lower than they could be in this subject at the end of Key Stage 2. The current planning has not been finalised and yet the school is well into its next development cycle. Some of the new initiatives in the new cycle have not been thought through sufficiently clearly to ensure that best value for money is achieved in the long term. For instance the decision on the future of the computer suite is still open to debate.
36. The management of special educational needs is good. The coordinator has established a complex but effective timetable of support in and out of the classroom. The coordinator initiates and manages the training of the support staff very well. Their expertise is growing steadily. The communication between coordinator, special needs assistants and teachers is very good, and a vigorous ethos of teamwork has been built up. Working closely with the special needs governor, the coordinator prepares reports for the governing body to enable them to make informed judgements about value for money. Special needs provision, in keeping with the overall provision in the school, gives good value for money.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1016,312.00
Total expenditure	1,025,601.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,215.12

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	123,827.00
Balance carried forward to the next	114,538.00

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

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well because of the very strong teamwork, very positive relationships and very effective systems that check their progress.
- The consistently high quality support from adults gives an immediate sense of security in which children flourish.
- The new co-ordinator of the Foundation Stage gives very good leadership and has already created a strong working partnership between the nursery and reception classes.
- The physical separation of the nursery from the reception classes does not enable easy access to the whole unit for children and adults.

### **Commentary**

37. Work was inspected in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development.
38. Children achieve well in the nursery and reception classes. The majority of children enter the nursery with low levels of attainment overall. This is particularly noticeable in all areas of development except for their physical skills in movement. There is good provision and support for the increasing number of children who speak English as an additional language. This enables them to learn and work alongside their classmates. Very positive relationships ensure that all the children quickly become secure and confident with each other and adults. Children with special educational needs are included in all Foundation Stage activities. This increases their confidence and self-esteem effectively. There is particularly effective support for children with specific learning difficulties. The patient, calm and sensitive teaching ensures these children develop well in all areas of their learning. All members of the Foundation Stage staff take every opportunity to encourage parents and carers to take a full part in their children's development. This increases the sense of partnership between staff and parents.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve very well throughout the Foundation Stage and meet the expected level in the reception year.
- Adults in the nursery and reception classes place a suitably strong emphasis on this area of children's learning.
- Careful and sensitive teaching ensures children learn to work well together with each other and adults.

### **Commentary**

39. All members of the Foundation Stage team give children a very strong foundation for their future development in this area of learning. There are timetabled sessions that effectively increase children's self-awareness, listening skills and patience in taking turns to respond. All members of staff take great pains to ensure that children are able to join in all activities. For example, the very effective deployment of the special needs support staff ensures that all

children join in whole class sessions. This helps these children to gain confidence and self-esteem. Children tackle their work with much enthusiasm in the nursery and are keen to have a go at new experiences. They continue with these very positive attitudes in the reception classes because of the encouragement that the whole team provides. Adults organise group work carefully throughout the Foundation Stage to ensure that children learn to work and co-operate with each other and adults. This makes a positive contribution to the harmonious relationships amongst all groups of children in the nursery and reception classes. Children in the nursery settle quickly to the expected routines and become confident and secure. The reception classes build on this very good start and ensure that all children feel valued. Improvement since the previous inspection is good and most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well because the teaching in the reception classes builds carefully on the firm foundations in the nursery class.
- The Foundation Stage team develop children's thinking skills very effectively through regular planning sessions with small groups of children.
- The systematic teaching of letter sounds and shapes increases children's reading and writing skills.
- Many children's attainment is limited because of their lack of skill in speaking and understanding English.

### **Commentary**

40. The nursery team work very well together to encourage children to listen carefully. They use stories very effectively to give children a love of books and help them understand that print has meaning. Children achieve well in developing their speaking skills but many still have difficulty in speaking clearly in sentences. The very good level of support from in the nursery helps the children who have English as an additional language to begin to understand basic English. This enables them to join in with their classmates. Close work with parents increases their understanding of their children's needs. The nursery and reception classes use role-play effectively to increase children's ability to speak clearly. This makes a positive contribution to developing children's emerging skills in speaking to an audience. All adults ensure that children in the nursery enjoy making marks on paper and whiteboards. This increases their understanding that writing has meaning. The reception team build effectively on these early experiences and the more able children are beginning to write simple sentences. This is a result of the careful teaching and children's high levels of interest and enthusiasm. However, many children are unlikely to achieve the expectations of the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. This is because of the level of achievement from a lower base and the consistently good quality of teaching.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The nursery team provide an effective link between informal and formal mathematical learning that increases children's knowledge and understanding of numbers.
- The reception classes build carefully on children's early skills to extend mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- Children achieve well because of the consistently good quality teaching.

- The lack of understanding of mathematical language restricts attainment for some children.

### **Commentary**

41. Adults organise a very carefully planned range of mathematical opportunities in the nursery and reception classes. These interest children and help to increase their confidence in recognising and using numbers. There is very effective use of number rhymes and songs throughout the Foundation Stage to help children develop their skills in counting. For instance, children in the nursery learn to count up to five and ten. Many, however, have a limited understanding of what the numbers mean and have difficulty in writing them. Children who speak English as an additional language have very effective support that increases their knowledge and understanding. The nursery teacher ensures that the support for children with special educational needs gives them chance to work alongside their classmates. They join in counting sessions with increased confidence and self-esteem. The reception class teachers build effectively on this strong foundation and work hard to increase children's ability to use suitable mathematical language. This ensures that, although standards are below those expected, children make good progress. For instance, the more able children understand the process of adding on and count accurately to 20. Children increase their confidence in dealing with numbers as they work on computers. Good quality adult support ensures that children extend their mathematical understanding as well as their computer skills. All pupils achieve well because adults use assessment very effectively to give children work that meets their identified needs. Improvement since the previous inspection is good because of the improved teaching and use of information and communication technology to support learning.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Adults in the nursery and reception classes plan carefully to increase children's curiosity about the world around them.
- Many children have limited horizons and understanding of English and this restricts their understanding of the wider world.

### **Commentary**

42. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in this aspect of the children's development. All members of staff in the nursery and reception classes work hard to give children many opportunities to explore natural and manufactured objects. This makes a positive contribution to increasing the children's limited awareness of the world around them. For instance, some nursery children looked closely at a daffodil bulb and recalled that the roots go down. The teacher's very skilful intervention helped the children to learn, understand and remember the term 'roots'. All adults give very clear explanations of what they want the children to do and encourage them to ask questions and make suggestions. Later, a child saw and marvelled at the first daffodil bud. The teacher immediately grasped this opportunity to let the children investigate the petals and see how the bud was opening. This gave children a valuable lesson on how flowers develop. Work in the reception classes promotes children's learning well as they manipulate materials and use tools to shape play dough. Throughout the Foundation Stage children make regular observations of the weather, which increases their awareness of change around them. They develop a keen interest in computers and use the mouse and keyboard effectively to control movement on the screen. For instance, children create pictures and know how to click and drag to change paint colours. All adults make effective use of the different cultures and religions in the Foundation Stage to help children develop understanding and respect for each other. Effective support for children, who have English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs, enables everyone to take full part in the lessons. However, many children have limited understanding of English and limited

experiences of the world outside home and school. In spite of the improved teaching and provision since the previous inspection their standards are below those expected.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the Foundation Stage teachers make effective use of the school hall and outdoor areas to increase children's awareness of space and control skills.
- The clear focus for all sessions builds carefully on children's previous abilities and skills.
- The reception outdoor learning area is in need of development and a sharper focus to learning activities

### Commentary

43. All children have regular sessions outside and in the school hall. This increases their skills to move safely and develop their ability to use apparatus. The nursery and reception classes have immediate access to outdoor learning areas. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. However, the reception outdoor area is still in the process of being developed and does not give children enough space to use large equipment safely. The very effective co-ordinator has plans to link the nursery area with the reception classes to provide more space. Teachers ensure that all children take part in dance and physical education sessions in the school hall. This good quality teaching increases children's ability to use space effectively and helps children move safely amongst each other. Children in the reception classes achieve satisfactory skills of movement control. All adults keep careful records of children's progress and achievement. This enables them to plan work that builds on children's previous skills. Systematic use of the stepping-stones<sup>3</sup> towards the early learning goals gives a sharp focus to all tasks in the nursery. The focus in the reception classes is not as sharp and the learning is not always clear. All children have ample chances to increase their skills in shaping materials and using tools such as pencils, scissors and brushes. Although most are not likely to meet the requirements of the early learning goals they are working and achieving well. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

44. It was only possible to see one short session of direct teaching of art in the nursery in this area of children's development during the course of the inspection. There is, therefore, not enough evidence in the lesson observed to make a secure judgement on provision, teaching or standards. The quality of this teaching, however, was very good and helped the children look closely at daffodils growing from a bulb. They identified the shapes and colours and painted with confidence, care and accuracy. The work around the walls in the nursery and reception classes indicates that children develop their skills of using media and materials well. They practise their singing skills in a range of nursery rhymes and jingles in lessons and have specific music sessions. The Foundation Stage team ensure that children develop their imagination effectively through role-play indoors and in the outside learning area. This area of creative development is promoted well but children's skills are below those expected for most children of this age.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

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<sup>3</sup> These show teachers what they need to know about children's learning in each area of the Foundation Stage. They are the steps that children will take as they make progress towards reaching the Early Learning Goals for children under five. They show stage by stage the knowledge, skills attitudes and understanding children need to achieve goals.

- The rich and stimulating curriculum enthuses pupils and enables them to achieve well above average standards by Year 6.
- Pupils throughout the school have very positive attitudes to learning and behave very well in lessons.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good with many strengths and leads to high levels of interest.
- The systems for checking pupils' progress and achievements are very good and ensure all abilities have very good learning opportunities.
- The books in the main library need checking and replacing.

## Commentary

45. In the 2003 national tests standards for Year 2 pupils were below the national average in reading and writing. By Year 6, standards were above the national average for English. Standards, however, were below average in comparison with the value added in similar schools. This does not reflect the achievement of pupils, many of whom entered the school with English as an additional language.
46. In the current Year 6 pupils achieve well above average standards in their reading and writing skills because of the stimulating teaching. Pupils enjoy talking about their favourite books and authors and give clear reasons for their likes and dislikes. They read fluently with much expression and are confident when reading to an audience. Teachers encourage these skills throughout the junior part of the school. For example, pupils in Year 5 read from the Bible accurately, clearly and with a considerable amount of confidence. The older pupils' written work is imaginative and well structured. They analyse poetry and plays, write interesting and lively stories and produce clear notes when writing about events. Pupils in the lower juniors use similes effectively in their writing. For instance, a pupil in Year 4 writes ...*"My Gran is as funny as a clown ... But the best thing about my gran is ... That she always plays with me"*. By Year 6 pupils give written accounts of debates and show well developed skills in presenting opposing points of view. For example, one pupil discusses the merits of wearing school uniform ...*"Most of all you feel you belong ... On the other hand ... the colour of the uniform might not suit everyone"*. All teachers ensure that pupils have carefully structured handwriting sessions. This results in very good quality handwriting, which is used well across all subjects. Standards in speaking and listening are above average at Year 6 and most pupils listen carefully and speak confidently. The consistently high quality of teaching ensures pupils develop very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy their work in English.
47. Pupils in Year 2 achieve satisfactory standards in all aspects of English. This represents a good rate of achievement from a below average base. It is a direct result of the careful and systematic teaching, which is based on very thorough analysis of pupils' earlier attainment. Skilful teaching enables pupils to reflect on stories and use suitable language when they respond to questions. For example, pupils in Year 2 drew accurate comparisons between the story of Yeh Shen and Cinderella. Pupils enjoy their work in English because teachers make it interesting and stimulating. Most pupils read accurately, although some are hesitant when they are unsure about the pronunciation of unfamiliar words. Their handwriting develops well across the infant part of the school. This is because of the consistent teaching style of handwriting where all use clear, cursive and consistently well-formed script. By the time they leave Year 2, the vast majority of pupils use joined script. The analysis of work shows clear improvement from the reception classes. Teachers ensure that pupils use basic punctuation correctly and have opportunities to explore different forms of writing.
48. The quality of teaching is consistently good in the infant and junior classes. This has a positive effect on pupils' standards and achievements. Teachers ensure that pupils have a good understanding of what they are expected to learn during lessons. There is some very good teaching in the junior part of the school. The hallmarks of this teaching are the high expectations teachers share with the pupils, the care taken to meet the needs of all abilities and the use of the end of lessons to check pupils' learning. Very good relationships permeate



all lessons and make a positive contribution to pupils' enthusiasm, interest and very good behaviour in lessons. Occasionally teachers do not give enough time at the end of lessons for pupils to share their learning. This reduces opportunities for pupils to increase their awareness of what they have learned. Throughout the school, teachers use displays of pupils' work very effectively to celebrate achievement. These displays reflect the value that adults place on pupils' contributions. All adults support pupils with special educational needs very sensitively. This ensures that these pupils achieve well and make good progress. The level of challenge for more able pupils is very effective in enabling them to achieve high standards.

49. The curriculum is effectively enriched through drama and links with other subjects. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to develop grammar and writing skills. There is an effective match of work to differing abilities and the teaching assistants provide valuable support in a wide range of group activities. This ensures that there is no noticeable difference in achievement between boys, girls and different ethnic groups. It makes a positive contribution to the good level of equality of opportunity for all pupils.
50. The high standards attained by Year 6 are also a result of the good quality leadership and management. The new co-ordinator has a clear view of priorities and knows her subject well. For example, she has addressed the previously identified weakness in writing very effectively and has plans to meet the deficiencies in the main library. She provides very good guidance for colleagues and uses data effectively to identify future priorities. Good quality management uses a suitably wide range of monitoring procedures to track progress and standards. This has led to the maintenance of careful and thorough individual records of achievement and the provision of new resources.
51. Improvement since the previous inspection is good because standards of attainment by Year 6 are higher, the curriculum includes drama, and pupils have improved their skills in using the library.

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

52. All teachers ensure that pupils make effective use of literacy skills across the curriculum. This is particularly noticeable in the use of extended writing in history and technical writing in science and design and technology. There are very good links between literature and drama where teachers use drama very effectively to extend skills in reading, speaking and listening. The very good skills in reading of most pupils increase their imagination and help them develop the ability to use books for research purposes. Pupils have very good opportunities in assemblies to develop confidence in presenting ideas visually and orally to the whole school community and other adults.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

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

- Provision in mathematics for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Higher ability pupils are not challenged sufficiently.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good.
- Pupils and teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support the teaching.
- Leadership and management of the subject is good overall.

#### **Commentary**

53. Inspection findings judge that standards in mathematics are average overall for pupils aged seven and 11 years. Overall, pupil achievement is satisfactory. The results obtained in the

2003 national tests were above average for 11 year olds and below average for those aged seven when compared with schools nationally. When these results for 11 year olds are compared with schools of similar attainment at aged seven, they are below average. Standards at the time of the previous inspection were judged to be above average. This decline is reflected by trends in test results for both key stages, which have varied with different groups of pupils over recent years.

54. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, they make good progress and attain good standards in line with their abilities. Where necessary, pupils with English as a second language are also supported well and make good progress. Booster classes are successful in raising the standards of average attaining pupils. However, more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged to develop high enough levels of mathematical reasoning and thinking skills, and they do not make sufficient progress in line with their abilities. Often extension activities for these more able pupils are more of the same rather than activities that stretch and challenge their thinking and investigative skills. All pupils, however, are fully included in lessons and there is no difference in the attainment of boys and girls
55. The curriculum is monitored well to ensure that all areas of mathematics are taught. However, there is less emphasis on pupils investigating problems and explaining their thinking. Teachers know their pupils well and they continuously record achievements so that they can accurately group pupils according to ability. A range of good data is collected to track pupils' progress in mathematics. This is used well for the majority of pupils. However, teachers do not always have high enough aspirations or set tasks that are demanding enough for more able pupils.
56. Teaching in mathematics is satisfactory overall with some being good and very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Good use is made of information and communication technology by teachers to demonstrate and involve pupils in lessons. This makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' information and communication technology skills as well as their mathematical understanding. Teachers tell pupils clearly what they are going to learn in lessons. This helps pupils to focus clearly on their tasks and make satisfactory progress during lessons. Work in mathematics books is marked, but the agreed marking system to let pupils know how well they have achieved lesson objectives is not consistently used. Teachers do not yet share longer-term targets with pupils. As a result, pupils do not always know what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils' attitudes towards mathematics are good. Teachers successfully create an atmosphere in which pupils are well motivated to learn, they take a pride in their work and are keen to succeed. Behaviour in lessons is good, pupils work together very well, sharing ideas and equipment and giving one another help when appropriate.
57. Leadership and management of the subject are good overall. The mathematics co-ordinator has carried out an extensive revision of the subject recently and successfully led the staff in new school initiatives. However, some initiatives, like the marking are not yet being implemented consistently. She is keen to continue the process to improve the subject further.

### **Mathematics and numeracy across the curriculum**

58. Teachers take every opportunity to develop mathematics as it occurs in every subject. They reinforce mathematical vocabulary whenever possible, for example, in information and communication technology, science, and design and technology.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

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

- Pupils achieve well, particularly in reasoning from evidence to conclusions.
- Standards in investigation skills are good, and numeracy skills are well used.

- Assessment data in the tracking system is not precise enough to target pupils to reach the higher levels.
- Subject management is not monitoring standards closely enough.

### **Commentary**

59. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected for the pupils' age. Standards at the end of Year 6 are in line with the national average. Pupils make good progress throughout the school because teachers are careful to develop the investigation skills to an above average level. This leads to good achievement, and is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
60. Only two lessons were observed. Evidence from displays and pupils' books, as well as discussions with pupils indicates that teaching is at least satisfactory. Teachers' medium term planning is based well on national guidelines. It develops pupils' knowledge and skills in a smooth progression throughout the school. The school's teaching and learning policy, introduced by the headteacher two years ago, has promoted a style of teaching based on much more active learning. Teachers present interesting topics and create sound learning conditions for pupils to investigate for themselves. Teachers expect pupils to do a lot of the thinking for themselves. They guide pupils well in the more difficult area of reasoning how evidence observed leads to valid conclusions at the end of an experiment. They ensure that pupils understand what fair testing means. They are good at helping pupils to make relevant and accurate measurements. They provide good opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills to convert their data into mathematical forms of recording.
61. Teachers set high expectations for work and behaviour. In a Year 6 lesson, for instance, the teacher presented a good investigation of how to test the quality of water. The pupils enjoyed thinking up different ways to carry out the experiment. The classroom assistant supported the pupils who had special educational needs very well. They kept in touch with the events and felt they had a worthwhile contribution to make. All pupils had a positive attitude to the work and behaved well. This in turn made a positive contribution to their good achievement.
62. Teachers have a sound assessment tracking system to enable them to identify groups by attainment. However, the system is not precise enough to give the higher attaining pupils the 'fast-tracking' activities in lessons, from the earliest years, to ensure consistently good results at the end of Year 6. Consequently the coordinator does not have sufficiently precise information to monitor standards closely. The coordinator has acquired and organised a wealth of resources to help teachers. These contribute well to the excitement and rigour in pupils' learning. Computers are now being used effectively to support pupils' learning and raise standards.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject is very well led and managed.
- All teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject.
- Pupils are confident, achieve well and standards are above average at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils have very good attitudes towards their work.
- Information and communication technology is used well to support learning in other subjects.
- The computer suite is used to good effect.

### **Commentary**

63. Many pupils enter school with below average skills in information and communication technology. They make good progress in gaining skills and understanding which enables them to achieve above average standards in the junior classes. This represents a good improvement in standards since the previous inspection report when standards were below average. The use of the computer suite, training for staff and the very good support and guidance provided by the co-ordinator have had a very positive impact on the learning and achievement of the pupils. All areas of the information and communication technology curriculum have been developed imaginatively. As a result it is relevant to pupils and stimulates a high level of interest and enthusiasm. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language make equally good progress as all of the other boys and girls.
64. The quality of teaching in information and communication technology is good. Following the very good example set by the subject co-ordinator, teachers convey their good knowledge and understanding of the subject effectively to their pupils. Teachers' use of equipment such as interactive whiteboards in a range of lessons has a positive impact on pupils' skills as they learn by the good examples set. Lessons move at a lively pace as teachers and pupils work together to achieve their objectives. Teachers are given very good guidance about how pupils' skills should develop step by step as they progress through the school. Because of this, pupils make good progress in acquiring and using information and communication technology skills. Even the youngest pupils log on, download and settle to work independently and confidently as part of their everyday routine in lessons such as mathematics. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. The subject makes a very positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development as they settle to tasks rapidly, sharing, co-operating and helping one another very well.
65. The co-ordinator has been very successful in raising the profile of information and communication technology within the school since the previous inspection report. This has had a direct impact on the high quality of the learning experiences provided for the pupils, and their good achievement. Pupils' work in portfolios is very well annotated and assessed by teachers but pupils are not consistently involved in self-assessment.

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

66. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support the rest of the curriculum. The computer suite and interactive whiteboards are used efficiently and well throughout the school day. Classroom computers were not so well used during the inspection, but where they were, it was evident that pupils were accustomed to use them for their day-to-day work.

### **HUMANITIES**

67. In humanities, work was sampled in history and geography. Only one lesson could be observed in geography and one in history. It is therefore not possible to judge the overall quality of provision in these subjects. Religious education was inspected as part of the Section 23 inspection undertaken by the diocese.

### **Geography and history**

68. It was only possible to observe one history lesson in Year 5 and a geography lesson in Year 6. Both of these lessons were taught very well and combined with the evidence gathered through the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, standards are in line with national expectations for 11 year olds. Both subjects make a very positive contribution to the pupils' understanding of their own cultural heritage and that of other people around the world. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement for seven year-olds.

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

69. Work in art and music was not inspected in depth. Only two lessons were observed in music and none in art. Therefore no judgment on overall provision can be made in these subjects. Evidence on standards has been gained through the review of teachers' planning, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils. Sufficient evidence could be gathered in design and technology and physical education and therefore judgements about provision and standards can be made in these subjects.

### **Art and design**

70. It was not possible to observe any lessons in this subject during the inspection. Evidence was gathered through the scrutiny of teachers' plans, analysis of pupils' work and discussions with the subject coordinator. This evidence suggests that standards are generally in line with that expected for seven and 11 year olds. The newly appointed subject coordinator is providing good leadership to her colleagues and several initiatives are being implemented to raise the profile of this subject within the school, for example, the planning of an arts' week in the summer term.

### **Design and technology**

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

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

- Good achievement by pupils.
- A good balance of the strands within the curriculum for technology.
- A good focus on teaching the skills linked to other subjects in the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

71. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages. Pupils make good progress throughout the school, and are achieving well. The curriculum for design and technology is based well on national guidelines, and teachers select topics that are relevant to work that the pupils are doing in other subjects. For instance, Year 4 classes have finished a project on making torches. This linked well with the science work about light and electricity and strengthened the pupils' understanding of both. The long term planning indicates that over a year the pupils experience the full range of design topics, including mechanisms, structures and food technology.
72. Lesson plans and evidence from pupils' work and photographs indicates that teaching is satisfactory. The one lesson observed exhibited the care with which teachers ensure that they cover all the required skills. The teacher encouraged the pupils to create their design of a money container systematically, to work from their designs and to modify them if things go wrong. At the start of the topic, pupils study commercial products, as a guide to their own work. At the end of the project pupils evaluate how effective their work is. In consequence the pupils have very positive attitudes and work hard to meet the challenge.
73. Teachers ensure that pupils have good opportunities to use and extend their numeracy skills in the careful measurement of items to be cut and fitted. In the design briefs and evaluations pupils learn new writing styles. There is not much evidence of pupils using the computer for design purposes. The subject is particularly valuable for lower achieving pupils. For instance, pupils who have special educational needs often achieve as well as their peers, or better, and they are very proud of their work.

### **Music**

74. In **music** it was only possible to see two lessons, hear pupils singing in assemblies and see examples of compositions. Planning shows that there is a considerable improvement to teachers' subject expertise since the previous inspection. The teaching seen was consistently good with many very good features. A significant strength is the use of a specialist music teacher to teach the older pupils to play the recorder. This, and the high quality instrumental teaching, ensures that pupils reach above average standards in performing skills by Year 6. These standards are a very significant improvement from the low standards at the previous inspection. The school makes effective use of a commercial scheme to move pupils' learning forward. Pupils sing sweetly, melodically and rhythmically, with enthusiasm and enjoyment. They make competent graphic scores and read music accurately. Work in music is considerably enhanced by out of school activities. For example, the choir and recorder groups participate in a range of music festivals and charitable events such as the Brentwood concert that supports pilgrims to Lourdes. Visiting composers make a positive contribution to developing pupils' knowledge, skills and enthusiasm. Pupils take their music into the community. For instance, they perform in the local church and sing to housebound people. This increases their awareness of the needs of others and of social responsibility.

### **Physical education**

Provision is **satisfactory** and standards are **average**.

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

- All pupils are achieving satisfactory standards overall.
- Dance and games skills are taught well in the infants.
- Some teaching lacks a clear focus on the development of the pupils' individual skills.
- The subject is being led and managed well.

#### **Commentary**

75. Pupils at the end of Year 6 and Year 2 are achieving satisfactory standards overall. All pupils including those with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in their physical development as they move through the school. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported well in lessons and perform as well as their classmates. Nearly all pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 5. This represents satisfactory improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when overall progress was judged to be unsatisfactory.
76. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with some lessons being good. A good feature of the lessons observed is the teaching of dance and games to pupils in the infants. In these lessons, activities are planned effectively to promote vigorous exercise. The subject knowledge of these teachers is good. This is exemplified by their effective demonstration of dance movements and games related skills. Overall lessons are well organised. Apparatus and resources are used satisfactorily to promote physical activity and good use of time. However, in some lessons, insufficient attention is given to the development of the pupils' individual skills through focused teaching. As a result some lessons lack a degree of pace and challenge for pupils.
77. The subject is led and managed well. The subject coordinator displays a clear vision for what needs to be done next to further develop opportunities for sport and physical education within the school. This is confirmed by her well-organised management file, which includes a good collection of photographs of pupil performance at different years within the school.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

Provision for personal, social and health education is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good relationships and behaviour fostered by the school.

## **Commentary**

78. The high level of emphasis given to how pupils behave and treat one another is evident throughout the school day. When pupils are asked to work together they co-operate, share ideas and equipment and help one another very well. They show concern for one another during play times and develop a good awareness of their responsibilities towards other people. Due to timetabling arrangements no lessons could be seen in personal, social or health education during the inspection. However, there are specific planned opportunities for these curriculum areas within science and religious education lessons, and 'circle time'<sup>4</sup> is used when appropriate. Opportunities are taken for Year 6 pupils to attend a Junior Citizenship morning with the police. There is no school council, but the school effectively encourages pupils to express their views and develop responsible attitudes. Pupils appreciate these opportunities and feel that their views are valued and taken into account. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement about the quality of teaching.

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<sup>4</sup> During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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