

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST. AGATHA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Kingston Upon Thames

LEA area: Kingston

Unique reference number: 102597

Headteacher: Mr Patrick Monk

Lead inspector: Jo Cheadle

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> January 2004

Inspection number: 257544

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:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	396
School address:	St. Agatha's Drive Kingston Upon Thames Surrey
Postcode:	KT2 5TY
Telephone number:	020 8546 3879
Fax number:	020 8974 6978
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Michael Strong
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Agatha's is a large catholic primary school with 398 boys and girls between the ages of 3 and 11 years. The school has a nursery for 52 pupils who attend part-time for either morning or afternoon sessions. The school is growing in numbers after the decision was made to increase the intake for the reception classes. There are now two classes in each year group up to Year 4. While many of the pupils come from the local area, which is favourable in its socio-economic character, other pupils travel from further afield, choosing the school because of its denominational status. Most pupils at the school are from white British backgrounds, with the next largest group being white pupils with European heritage. There are small numbers of children from a variety of ethnic groups including Irish, black African, Caribbean and Asian. The school has a relatively large and increasing proportion of pupils whose first language is not English. A few pupils do not speak English when they start at the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs for a range of learning difficulties is in line with the national average. There are fewer pupils who are supported by a statement of need than the average. Children starting at the school come with varying skills and knowledge, but overall levels are better than would be expected for their age.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23233	Jo Cheadle	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Music Special educational needs
9577	Elaine Parrish	Lay inspector	
15023	Ali Haous	Team inspector	English English as an additional language History Geography
31344	Barbara Atcheson	Team inspector	Mathematics Personal, social and health education
34256	Denise Morris	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Foundation stage <sup>1</sup>

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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.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

St. Agatha's is a good and effective school where pupils achieve well. The headteacher's excellent leadership and very efficient management overall of the school have ensured that everyone is very clear of their roles and responsibilities and as a result, improvement since the last inspection has been very good in many aspects. Teaching is good overall and a high proportion of very good teaching was observed during the inspection. The governors provide good support and advice for the school. The school achieves good value for the money it receives.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has an excellent vision for the school's future development and is highly supportive of the pupils and staff.
- Standards in English and science are well above expected levels by the end of Year 6.
- Children's attitudes to their work are outstanding and they behave extremely well.
- There are very thorough procedures for tracking how well pupils are doing, which have a positive impact on their achievements.
- There is a very strong sense of team spirit that ensures pupils learn in an extremely positive ethos where outstanding levels of care and support are shown.
- Some pupils who are in the early stages of learning to speak English do not always make good enough progress.
- Some pupils do not learn as well as they could in mathematics.
- The gifts and talents of individual pupils are recognised, but not always fully extended.

#### How the effectiveness of the school has changed since the last inspection

The school was last inspected in 1998. In relation to the key issues raised at this time, the school has made very good progress:

- Standards in ICT are now better than expected levels.
- Ways of checking how well pupils are doing are now very good and this information is used well.
- Independent research is now a consistent aspect of pupils' learning and this has had a positive impact on standards in many subjects.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is now good.
- Leadership and management of the school are now very good overall and the governors are effective in their work.

#### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Children's skills and knowledge when they start at the school are varied, but generally above the levels expected for their age. The good quality of the Foundation Stage provision encourages rapid development of personal and social skills and good overall achievement so that the majority of pupils exceed the goals for the early learning and enter Year 1 with standards that are above expected levels. Throughout the school pupils continue to achieve well because the quality of teaching and learning is good and because the school's very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and personal development encourages and sustains pupils' extremely enthusiastic approach to learning and develops exceptionally high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are highly respectful,

thoughtful and behave tremendously well. Very well developed language and literacy skills result in standards in English being well above expected levels by the end of Year 6. Highly effective enquiry, research and investigation skills ensure that standards in science are also well above average by the end of Year 6. The school does well by the vast majority of its pupils. Inspections findings are that current standards in mathematics are above expected levels throughout the school, as are standards in information and communication technology, art and design and physical education. In the 2003 Year 6 national tests in mathematics, not as many pupils achieved the higher levels as in English and science.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **good education** for its pupils. **Teaching** is **good overall** and has many very positive features. Many lessons during the inspection were judged to be very good. The **curriculum** is very good. It is very interesting for pupils and very well enriched by a wide range of **extra activities** that extend their learning. Pupils who need support for their learning difficulties are included well. The school's **extremely high levels of care and welfare** ensure that pupils who speak English as an additional language feel happy and secure. However, the help given to pupils who are in the early stages of learning to speak English is not good enough in a few lessons. Pupils are **very well** guided in understanding how well they are doing and know how they need to improve. The school is well aware of the special gifts and talents of individual pupils, but there is limited provision made to extend their learning. **Excellent** attention is given to pupils' health and safety. The school has **very strong** links with many parents who make a **very effective** contribution to their children's learning. Links with the community are **good** and **very good** work with other schools has a positive impact on developments and standards.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The headteacher's leadership of the school is **excellent**. His **extremely** clear vision and aspirations for the school are shared with clarity and precision with the staff. Everyone knows what is required of them and works effectively as a team to maintain and improve upon the good quality of the school's work. The roles of all key staff are carried out **very effectively**. They recognise the contribution they must make to whole school developments and positively influence standards. Governors are knowledgeable, highly supportive and play an increasingly useful role in planning the school's future. Overall governance of the school is **good** and has many strengths. Long-term developments and day-to-day business are highly efficient. Administrative staff provide a very friendly welcome and very efficient service to all staff and parents. The school has improved in its effectiveness since the last inspection, because the overall quality of leadership and management is now **very good**.

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

Parents are very happy with the opportunities provided for their children and are highly supportive of the school's work. The provision for extra-curricular activities at the school is judged to be very good, however, one or two parents felt that instrument tuition and foreign language activities were not as plentiful as they could be. Inspectors judge that the school makes suitable use of peripatetic music tutors, as parents request them. The French club is over subscribed. Children are **extremely** proud of their school and show **enormous** enjoyment in the work they do.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The school has already very effectively identified where it needs to improve its work and the strategies planned to bring about these improvements are well developed. Inspectors judge that the areas these plans cover are highly appropriate for the school and agree that the following aspects should be improved:

- Strategies to support pupils in the early stages of learning English.
- The use of assessment information to plan effectively for learning in mathematics in Years 1 and 2.
- The achievements of particularly gifted or talented pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Pupils achieve well and standards are above expected levels overall. Pupils achieve very well in English and science. Pupils have highly developed personal and social skills, which have a very positive impact on how well they achieve in all subjects.

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

- Standards by the end of the Foundation Stage exceed the goals for early learning<sup>2</sup>.
- Standards in English and Science are well above expected levels by end of Year 6 and pupils achieve very well.
- Standards of work in mathematics, information and communication technology, art and physical education are better than expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Not all pupils do as well in mathematics as they could do.
- Some pupils' who are learning to speak English, and some who are particularly gifted or talented do not always achieve as well as all others.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning have a very positive impact on the standards they achieve.
- Pupils do well in national tests.

#### **Commentary**

1. When they begin in the nursery class, children's skills and knowledge vary, but overall levels are better than would be expected for their age. The very good provision for young children's social and personal skills ensures that they quickly learn how to play and learn together and have confidence to tackle the demands of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Effective teaching and learning encourages good achievement and the vast majority of children exceed the goals for early learning by the end of the reception year. Children who need special support are very quickly identified, so that they make equal rates of progress in their learning. The good Foundation Stage provision enables all children to make an effective start to their learning.
2. In English and science, the impact of good teaching, effective development of personal and social skills and very good overall provision enables pupils to achieve standards by the end of Year 6 that are well above the nationally expected levels. The development of pupils' speaking and listening skills is particularly effective and this encourages good achievement in many aspects of pupils' work. Good teaching of basic grammar, spelling and punctuation ensure that written work is accurate. The link between good opportunities to extend ideas through discussion and interesting written work is clearly understood by teachers and ample time is allowed to be creative in thought before committing ideas to paper. Discussions are stimulating and encourage even those pupils who struggle to write accurately, particularly those with specific learning difficulties, to be enthusiastic about their work. Enquiry and investigation are a fundamental aspect of work in science. Pupils are very confident to think for themselves and predict possible outcomes. Using well-taught skills for designing and carrying out experiments, they are serious and methodical in their approach to testing their ideas and drawing conclusions from their results. In both English and science, pupils are very aware of how much they have learned, how well they are doing and what they must do to improve. This good understanding of their own learning is indicative of the school's effective attention to developing a sense of responsibility in pupils and helping them to understand that their efforts are key to their achievements.

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<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.



3. As a result of effective subject co-ordination and good teaching, high standards are achieved in mathematics, ICT, art and physical education by the end of both Years 2 and 6. Good quality resources and specialist teaching in art have ensured that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Effective development planning, quality resources and specialist teaching in ICT have encouraged good improvement in pupils' achievements. A combination of effective planning for physical educational lessons, good attention to involvement in competitive sports and the use of specialist coaches for a range of clubs, results in standards in physical education that exceed the nationally expected levels. In response to careful analysis of pupils' past performance, setting arrangements and booster classes are having a marked impact on standards in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. For younger pupils, work is not always planned at a level that effectively builds on what they have already learned, know and can do, and this means that in some lessons they do not make as much progress as they should. Teachers' set appropriate targets in mathematics for pupils to achieve by the end of Year 1 and 2. Assessment procedures are thorough and ensure that pupils' progress is carefully tracked. However, work planned for the highest attaining pupils in Year 1 in particular does not always challenge them to improve on what they have already learned.
  
4. There are now an increasing number of pupils at the school who are in the early stages of learning to speak English. The school's supportive ethos and caring relationships encourage these pupils to settle quickly and feel secure and happy. As yet, however, there has been limited monitoring of how well and how quickly they are acquiring the basics of the English language, so that they can make good progress in all aspects of learning. There is currently limited specific support and planning for this group of pupils and this means that they do not always make the best progress possible in lessons. The school is very aware of the gifts and talents of individual pupils and is taking steps to encourage learning at a suitable level in current development planning.
  
5. One very important reason for why the vast majority of pupils do so well and maintain and improve on good standards is the consistent approach to developing personal and social skills. The school places very high regard on the development of good attitudes to learning, a keen approach to work and high standards of behaviour. These expectations are exceptionally clear throughout the school and pupils respond very well. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged by each step in their progress and gain in confidence and self-esteem as a result. Pupils learn to behave extremely well in a variety of situations, so that lessons run smoothly and social times are enjoyable. They achieve high levels of understanding about respect, courteousness, thoughtfulness and responsibility. This is evident in their relationships with each other, teachers and visitors and also in the quality of their work. Work in English and science in particular shows painstaking efforts to be neat and present work attractively. The development of such attitudes enables pupils to tackle everyday issues with confidence and the ability to make good decisions. Pupils' good performance in national tests is indicative of their ability to take things in their stride and do their best in extraordinary situations. This is a very valuable achievement in preparation for future learning and life in general.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.4 (16.2)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.9 (14.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.6 (15.6)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 45 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	30.1 (28.4)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.4 (27.9)	27.0 (26.7)
Science	30.3 (28.8)	28.8 (28.3)

*There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent and have a very positive impact on their achievements.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well planned and implemented.
- Pupils have outstandingly positive attitudes to work and learning.
- Pupils behave extremely well.
- Relationships are exemplary.

### **Commentary**

6. The school's very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is consistently and effectively incorporated in all learning. The impact of this is that pupils' attitudes and the way they behave are excellent, which ultimately ensures that high standards and good achievement are maintained. Pupils' enthusiasm for learning is extremely evident in the way that they talk about their work. In lessons, they are keen to do well, highly interested in the tasks that are set for them and make very good links between their learning in all subjects. They show their initiative frequently, feeling confident to suggest new ways of tackling problems and being inventive in ways to reach a solution. Pupils are trusted and therefore learn to be trustworthy. They treat each other and the environment with great respect and are well aware that this is what is expected of them. Their understanding of what is right and wrong is extremely well developed. Pupils who need special support to behave well are equally aware of what constitutes good behaviour and respond positively to the support they are given to achieve these goals. There have been no exclusions at the school for the past three years. Pupils achieve well because the school is highly successful in promoting the best possible attitudes to learning and exemplary behaviour.

**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	258	0	0
White – Irish	8	0	0
White – any other White background	76	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	5	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	15	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	7	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Africa	4	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	14	0	0

7. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Attendance figures remain similar to those found in the last inspection report, and this is now considered to be satisfactory. The school is very sensitive to the needs of individual families and absence is authorised judiciously. Good procedures are in place to monitor and improve both attendance and punctuality and there is good liaison with the Education Welfare Officer. A few pupils arrive late, but this does not disrupt the smooth start to lessons.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.0	School data:	0.2
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**

The school provides a good quality education. The curriculum is very well planned and interesting for pupils and there is a wide range extra activities that enrich their learning. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The quality of teaching is good overall and has many very good aspects. As a result pupils enjoy learning and achieve well.

**Teaching and learning****Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a consistent approach to the use and development of pupils' speaking and listening skills.

- Specialist teachers for information and communication technology and art have a very good impact on learning.
- There are effective arrangements to promote good learning in mathematics in most year groups.
- Teachers effectively promote pupils' independent learning skills and develop pupils' knowledge of how well they are doing.
- Assessment information is not always used effectively enough to plan for the learning of all pupils.

## Commentary

8. All teachers capitalise on pupils' good speaking and listening skills and use them as a tool to promote effective learning in all subjects. They recognise that pupils' ability to talk about what they learn, pose questions and practice their ideas in discussion encourages good learning in many subjects. To this end, lessons are planned where talking is a key element and the high quality discussions give clear evidence of pupils' growing knowledge and understanding and allow teachers to make on the spot assessments of how well pupils are learning. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are encouraged to contribute and, because of the very supportive relationships between teachers and pupils and the very pleasant atmosphere in lessons, they do so without fear of making mistakes and feeling foolish. Pupils who need support for their learning needs are also fully included. Teachers are very aware of the good speaking skills of some pupils who find written work more taxing and build on this to develop confidence and self-esteem. Teachers have high regard for all their pupils and levels of care and sensitivity are high in all classes. For this reason pupils are respectful, want to do well and please teachers and therefore make good progress.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	20 (42%)	21 (44%)	6 (12%)	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.*

9. Pupils learn well in art and information and communication technology. They learn particularly well when taught by specialist teachers. Where their specialisms are used directly in lessons, pupils make rapid progress in gaining skills and understanding. Because specialist knowledge is used to plan and develop the overall subject provision, all teachers are well guided and supported and feel confident to teach effectively. The result is that learning is consistently good and high standards are maintained throughout the school. The use of professional coaches and specialist teachers in after school clubs and activities also has a positive impact on pupils' learning in physical education.
10. Pupils are learning well in mathematics in most year groups because the school has adopted effective arrangements to ensure that they are working at an appropriate level of challenge in relation to their starting levels in the subject. Setting arrangements in Years 3 and 4 and special group work for pupils in Years 5 and 6 has a positive impact on the pace of learning and overall achievement. The school is very open to changing the way that pupils are taught to ensure that they learn as effectively as possible. Teachers regularly review their own classroom practice in relation to the needs of pupils and this means that all groups are well included and the majority make equal rates of progress. Teachers have identified that in a few lessons, the specific needs of pupils who speak very little English are not always met. They make every effort to include and encourage this group of pupils, but need further support to provide the best strategies to support their learning effectively.

11. All teachers ensure that pupils' positive attitudes to learning are consistently maintained in order to ensure good achievement. They make lessons interesting and good fun and use resources effectively to stimulate pupils' powers of concentration and attention to work. Pupils are delighted to learn about the skeletal structure by looking at real x-rays in the role of the doctor. They are captivated by the use of information and communication technology to present information in art. The teachers' personal contribution to discussion encourages open and frank debate of sensitive issues in personal and social education lessons. In these ways, teachers harness pupils' desire to learn and this adds greatly to their achievements.
12. The school has very good procedures for assessing pupil's work and tracking how well they are doing. In the planning of a few lessons, teachers do not always make the best use of the information gained from careful assessments of how well pupils have previously performed. This is currently particularly evident in mathematics for the younger pupils in Key Stage 1, with the result that learning for the highest attaining pupils is not always as good as for all others. In discussion with this group of pupils it is clear that they know numbers and can carry out mathematical calculations at a level that is higher than would be expected for their age. However, the work that is planned for them is at a level that they have already achieved and lessons therefore consolidate past learning rather than extend new understanding. Occasionally, a few teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy too rigidly to plan work that is appropriate to the age of the pupils, without amending what they teach to reflect the levels of the actual pupils in their class.

### **The curriculum**

The very good-quality curriculum has been very well planned to meet pupils' needs in a highly effective way. Curriculum enrichment is very good. Accommodation and resources are both good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a very rich and varied curriculum for all pupils.
- There is very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school provides a full range of additional activities that enhance the curriculum and motivates pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning.
- The school environment is well maintained and provides a stimulating learning environment.

### **Commentary**

13. The curriculum is broad, balanced and carefully and imaginatively planned to promote pupils' high achievement. All subjects meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and a very effective programme for the development of personal skills and social responsibility is planned and delivered through all subjects. The responsibilities of citizenship are not only explicitly taught, but also promoted through the excellent ethos of the school. The school's curriculum is very relevant curriculum to the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of the vast majority of pupils. The curriculum gives effective emphasis to the use and development of pupils' good speaking skills as a tool to learning in other subjects. This has improved the use of research, questioning and enquiry since the last inspection.
14. Pupils with special educational needs are catered for well. The schools' needs analysis and subsequent target setting ensures very good equality of access and opportunity for this group of pupils and their particular learning and behavioural needs are effectively supported. Activities are successfully tailored to meet their needs and additional help is provided where necessary. They have full access to all the activities on offer including extra-curricular experiences.
15. Since the previous inspection the school has worked successfully to add greater creativity to the curriculum. A creative arts week, an Egyptian day and a multicultural evening involving many pupils and parents are examples of activities that have added to the excitement of

learning. In line with the schools' philosophy to link learning with the outside world, many visits are to give pupils first hand experience. Opportunities for enrichment activities are very good. Years 5 and 6 benefit from residential visits that focus on many aspects of academic and personal and social development. A wide variety of out-of-school clubs enhance the curriculum and motivate pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning well. These range from canoeing and sailing for Year 6 to creative arts, French and Spanish clubs. A few parents were concerned that provision for extra curricular music and foreign language was not good enough. Inspection findings do not support these concerns, but the school recognises its responsibilities to make the situation clearer for parents with regard to the current level of provision.

16. The accommodation is good and allows all subjects of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage to be taught effectively. The school building is very clean and well maintained. There is a very clear emphasis on creating an environment where pupils and adults are happy to work. Eye-catching displays and photographs describe the life of the school very well and are supported by a very wide range of pictures, prints and three-dimensional objects and artefacts. Resources throughout the school are generally of good quality. In art and information and communication technology they are very good. In some subjects, such as mathematics and physical education, resources are good but insufficient for the numbers of pupils.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school provides excellent care and welfare for pupils. Child protection and health and safety procedures are extremely rigorous. Procedures for guiding and supporting pupils in their learning are very effective.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school gives the highest regard to pupil's safety and well-being.
- There are excellent, trusting relationships throughout the school, which mean that pupils are always confident about seeking help.
- The school has very good links with outside agencies and there are very good induction procedures to welcome all new pupils.
- Teachers track pupils' progress very well and use this information very effectively to provide the support that pupils need.
- Pupils understand clearly how they can improve their work because they are actively involved in setting their own personal targets.
- Pupils' views are regularly sought and taken into account, although there is no school council.

### **Commentary**

17. Pupils are at the very heart of this warm and caring school community and all staff work together very well to provide an outstandingly happy and secure environment for them. This is a major strength of the school and of vital importance in maintaining pupils' good achievements. All members of staff are unfailingly kind and pupils trust them completely. Each child knows that every adult in the school can be relied upon in any situation to provide wholehearted support and guidance. There are sensitive and effective induction procedures for children starting in the nursery and a supportive induction programme for the increasing number of pupils who start in other year groups at various other times during the school year. There are excellent procedures in place to ensure pupils' safety and well-being at all times. Child protection procedures are very effective, reviewed regularly and understood by all teaching and support staff. All decisions about health and safety are based on well-established risk assessments that ensure that pupils and adults work in a safe and hazard-free environment. The very good picture found in the last inspection report has been even further improved.

18. There are many excellent systems of support, many of which go that extra mile. Parents told inspectors how well staff knew their children and the efforts they make to guide and support them, whether that is to help them with their work or to soothe a bumped knee. At lunchtimes the youngest children receive the very kindest help to manage their lunch boxes. No child is rushed and, if they have not finished before the older pupils come in, staff gently move them to another part of the hall so that they can finish eating at their own pace. Older pupils learn from the excellent adult role models within school and are frequently seen helping and caring for younger children. All this enables pupils to settle down remarkably quickly and to participate fully in all school activities. This very effective and caring support leads ultimately to pupils in Year 6 leaving school as well-rounded young people who have motivation and compassion in equal measure.
19. Very good assessment procedures are in place that track pupils' progress and personal development very closely. This ensures that the majority of pupils receive the help they need. Each pupil has targets to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy, which are discussed and agreed with parents and pupils together at consultation meetings each term. Pupils understand clearly how they can improve their work because they are actively involved in setting their own personal targets. The school takes great care to acknowledge pupils' achievements, particularly when they have made efforts and tried hard. Pupils with special educational needs are cared for and supported effectively and this promotes their self-esteem and helps them to achieve well. There is a good system of stickers and headteacher awards which are greatly prized by pupils and which encourage them to work well and do their best. Teachers readily seek pupils' views and this good practice is consistent throughout the school. There are plans in progress to set up a school council.

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

The school works very effectively with parents to support their children's learning. Parents are confident that their children receive high standards of education. There are very good links with neighbouring secondary schools and the school makes good use of the local community to support pupils' learning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school takes its partnership with parents very seriously and positively helps parents to support their children's learning at home.
- Teachers are very accessible and provide very good information about progress.
- Parents are very satisfied with what the school provides.
- The school makes good use of the community to support pupils' learning and there are very good links with neighbouring secondary schools

### **Commentary**

20. The school continues to work very effectively with parents to support their children's learning. Parents have positive views of the school and are very pleased with the quality of education it provides. Teachers and support staff go out of their way to ensure that all parents feel a strong sense of partnership in the school. At the parents' meeting and in discussions during the inspection, parents were quick to praise the warmth of their welcome in school, the standards achieved, and the lengths that staff will go to deal with their queries. Teachers are very accessible, extremely approachable and always prepared to discuss any concerns a parent may have, however small. This ensures that parents feel very comfortable about coming into school. School events are always very popular. At a Year 6 assembly during the inspection there was standing room only for many of the parents and carers who attended.
21. Parents feel confident that the school keeps them in touch with what it does and how well their children are getting on via regular newsletters, very good annual reports and well-attended consultation evenings. Families with children with special educational needs feel actively

involved in reviewing the support their children receive and the progress they make. Parents particularly like the high profile of the headteacher, who is always available to talk to them in the playground. Parents are consulted extensively and their views are taken into account to bring about improvement. Parents are also asked about their personal skills so that they can support teachers in the classroom. Many parents make a regular commitment to help with reading and changing library books, to help with information and communication technology and to give talks in assemblies. The contribution they make is greatly valued. Through the very active Parents and Staff Association, many parents help to raise valuable funds for school projects, including the very successful adventure playgrounds. New parents, particularly those with children in the Foundation Stage, are given a very good introduction to the ways their children learn.

22. There are good links with the community. There are very good links with St Agatha's Church with regular and welcome visits from the local priest. There are very productive links with a local teacher training college. The school makes good use of the local area to support pupils' learning with many trips and visitors. The school is rightfully proud of its successful links with two local retailers who sponsor their walking bus. The community police make regular visits and there are popular trips to the local fire station. Pupils' learning in the arts has been enhanced by effective links with Kingston Art College, a local theatre group, professional artists and a children's author. There are very successful links with local secondary schools which provide invaluable help in information and communication technology training for both teachers and pupils, as well as mathematics and science master classes for higher and lower attaining pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and senior managers support him very well. Management throughout the school is very effective. The governing body undertakes its work efficiently and positively influences the work of the school. Overall governance is good and there are many very good aspects of the governors' work. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership provided by the headteacher is excellent.
- The governing body makes a good contribution to the school and takes a full and active part in all aspects of the work.
- Senior staff work together very well and are very effective in their role.
- The very good school improvement plan is being effectively implemented.
- School finances are well managed and are effectively targeted at school priorities.
- Some subject leaders are fairly new to their roles and are only just beginning to monitor standards in their subjects.

### **Commentary**

23. The excellent leadership provided by the headteacher ensures that high standards and achievements are evident in all aspects of the school's work. The headteacher communicates this vision very effectively, empowering senior managers and enabling them to work towards the same goals. The team strives to secure a high quality education for pupils of all abilities and foster the personal skills necessary to achieve well at school and in life. Under the headteachers' skilled leadership, a high quality development plan has been implemented that targets ambitious goals for improvement. Staff, as well as pupils are well cared for and supported so that they can fulfil the high expectations set in these plans. Very efficient and effective management procedures, including the judicious use of school finance for targeted developments, ensure that the school works effectively in all aspects of its work.



24. Senior managers are creative and they work together very well to develop new school initiatives and to support curriculum leaders and teachers. The curriculum is constantly reviewed and developed by the senior management team to ensure that it meets the needs and interests of the pupils. The head and deputy head efficiently monitor teachers' planning to ensure that it is relevant to the needs of the pupils. Subject leaders lead and manage their subjects to good effect and necessary training and support is given to new subject leaders to develop their skills. The school is effective at identifying its own strengths and weaknesses and good strategies are planned to continually improve the overall provision.
25. The governing body works well, is very supportive of the headteacher and staff, promotes productive relationships with parents and the community and is fully informed about the work of the school. Governors have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are becoming increasingly more influential in leading and challenging developments. Links between educational developments and planned expenditure have improved. Monitoring of the effectiveness of financial decisions is good and governors are aware of the impact of their spending. For example, recent expenditure on information and communication technology is having a very positive impact on standards and achievement. Governors are aware of how well standards have improved since the new resources have been in place. Performance management procedures are effective and carefully linked to both school and personal aspirations. Day-by-day administration is very good and the school is a very welcoming place.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	902717	Balance from previous year	21777
Total expenditure	871150	Balance carried forward to the next	31567
Expenditure per pupil	2558		

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

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

The Foundation Stage consists of a 52-place nursery where children attend morning or afternoon sessions and two reception classes. The quality of provision for children is good, and has many very good features. Children achieve well in all aspects of their early learning. In their knowledge and understanding of the world and in personal, social and emotional development they achieve well because of the high quality resources and range of activities provided. The quality of teaching is always good, and is often very good, with some excellent teaching observed during the inspection. Because of the good teaching, children quickly learn about school life and expectations and make good overall gains on the levels they start with. By the time they enter Year 1, the vast majority of children exceed the goals for early learning. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is bright, lively and welcoming to the children and adults alike.

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

Provision in personal and social education is **very good**.

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

- Children achieve very well and by the end of reception year they are well above average.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Children behave very well.

#### **Commentary**

26. Children throughout the Foundation Stage grow in confidence and self-esteem. They achieve very well because of high quality teaching and learning, and because the environment is very well organised to allow independence and investigation. Role models by staff and the sensitive way in which children are supported encourage them to adapt quickly to new surroundings. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. Children listen well to adults and join in with activities with enthusiasm. They enjoy school life and are caring and helpful to others.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

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

- Good focus on communication skills leads to good achievement.
- The use of literacy in all areas of learning enhances children's reading and writing skills.

#### **Commentary**

27. A high focus is placed on the development of children's communication, language and literacy skills. Children are given many opportunities to talk to adults and to each other. Staff are effective in developing children's vocabulary and their ideas are sought on every occasion possible. Learning to read and write is made fun by the good range of activities, such as a post office or a shop. Staff effectively demonstrate and explain, ensuring that children in the nursery quickly learn how to make realistic marks on paper, and to develop their writing and reading in the reception classes.

### **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is good overall, with some excellent teaching observed.
- Resources in both the nursery and reception classes are very good and enhance children's awareness of numbers.

### **Commentary**

28. Children benefit from good, very good and, on occasions, excellent teaching in mathematical development as they explore colour, shapes, measures and numbers. By the time they reach the reception classes, almost all children can count beyond 20 and a few higher attaining children can count in 10's to 100. All but a few know their colours and basic shapes and can name the days of the week. The teachers' very secure knowledge ensures that children make good progress as they move through the Foundation Stage. The provision and use of resources is a major strength, keeping children well focused and interested so that they achieve well.

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

Provision for the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision for this area of learning and use of resources are major strengths.

### **Commentary**

29. Both in the nursery and in the reception classes children are given many varied and exciting activities to enable them to explore and investigate real resources. In the reception class children were observed dressing up in clothes from Egypt, playing with Russian dolls and playing with African drums. The nursery children explored a range of textiles and used many different construction sets to build some interesting models. Children in all the Foundation Stage classes develop very good imagination skills and show high levels of interest in their activities

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's independence and confidence in physical activities are good.
- Resources, particularly the outside area in the nursery, are good.

### **Commentary**

30. Children enjoy all forms of physical activity. They behave and respond well in the hall during physical education lessons and show high levels of enthusiasm in their play in the outdoor area. Children in the nursery have fun with their wheeled toys and develop their physical skills through play and enjoyment. Reception class children share the nursery area and have another small area for outdoor activities. They show good skills as they control their movements during lessons in the school hall.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well and enjoy creative activities.

### **Commentary**

31. Children enjoy creative activities and benefit from some high quality experiences. In the nursery, for example, they learn to mix paint. One child explained pink and blue makes purple. In the reception class, they were observed singing with real joy, experimenting with clay and exploring textures. Children benefited from good adult support as they developed their paintings and improved their drawings. Opportunities for role-play are very good and children are always eager for their turn.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Overall provision for English is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and often very good and as a result pupils achieve well.
- The provision for speaking and listening and reading is a distinctive strength of the school.
- There are very good arrangements for assessing pupils' work and effective use is made of information gained to plan for new learning.
- Information and communication technology is effectively harnessed to enhance learning.

### **Commentary**

32. Overall standards in English are well above expected levels. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve very well by the time they leave school. Effective intervention strategies, such as additional literacy support and booster classes in Year 6 are being well used to raise pupils' achievement. The support given to some pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English is not always good enough. Overall however, standards are high because teaching is of a consistently high quality and has many strengths. There is very thorough monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress to ensure that they are doing as well as they can and the quality of leadership and management of the subject are very good.

33. Pupils speak very confidently and express themselves extremely clearly. They listen attentively, both to their teachers and to each other. Opportunities to develop these skills are effectively used across many subjects and enable pupils to practice and hone their skills, for instance, when they discuss their ideas in pairs in literacy and history lessons. Pupils respond spontaneously and carry out these exchanges as a matter of routine. Opportunities are also effectively harnessed in science, for instance, when pupils explain the properties of different materials. Older pupils collaborate well when they discuss Haiku poems and respond well to each other's efforts. Pupils read very well. They read aloud very confidently and with good expression. This is because reading is effectively managed with many opportunities for silent and guided reading. Reading is well supported by many parent volunteers. Presentation of written work is of high quality especially as pupils get older. Pupils write imaginatively, using a

wide vocabulary. Standards in spelling and handwriting are high because of the consistent quality in teaching these skills and teachers' high expectations.

34. Teaching and learning are very good overall. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of English often reflected in the range of methods used. Planning of lessons is thorough and detailed with clear objectives that are used to focus learning and assess pupils' achievements at the end of lessons. A distinctive strength of teaching is the use of partners to enable pupils to brainstorm ideas and promote speaking and listening skills. In the best teaching, pupils are suitably challenged with interventions effectively used to ensure that they have fully grasped the purpose of the activity. In a Year 3 lesson, for instance, pupils were sensitively and successfully guided in using notes instead of full sentences when planning their writing, which was a challenge for many. Pupils' work is carefully and constructively marked with clear comments on strengths and guidance on how they could improve their work. Where teaching was occasionally less effective, this was mainly due to the lack of clarity in making the additional demands on higher attaining pupils clear and in addressing the needs of some pupils who speak English as an additional language, more explicitly.
35. The subject leader has a very good knowledge of the subject and uses her skills well, leading by example. She has a clear overview of the subject and has used the analysis of assessment and monitoring effectively to track pupils' progress and deploy support where it is needed to improve pupils' performance. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

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

36. Pupils' literacy skills are promoted well in all subjects. All teachers use other subjects well to focus on specific vocabulary, particularly in science and mathematics. Discussion and the use of talk is a common feature of many lessons. Opportunities for pupils to work in pairs or groups are well promoted and pupils respond to these in a very positive way. ICT is well integrated into literacy lessons and used well to promote reading, writing and research skills. The judicious selection of software and ICT equipment, particularly the interactive clips seen during the inspection week contributed to pupils' learning and enjoyment of lessons.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- Leadership and management in the subject are good.
- Effective intervention strategies support the learning needs of pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Some pupils do not always learn consistently well in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils achieve good standards in using and applying mathematics.
- Pupils take responsibility for and have a good knowledge of their own learning.
- Pupils are accomplished at articulating their thinking.

#### **Commentary**

37. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in mathematics are above expected levels. The majority of pupils maintain good standards throughout the school because the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Mathematics test results for Year 6 pupils in 2003 were not as good as in other subjects. The school makes effective use of their analysis of these results to ensure that suitable provision is made for pupils with special education needs in numeracy and that higher attaining pupils do as well in mathematics as they do in English and science. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers, teaching assistants and specially designed programmes, so that they are able to make the same progress as all others. Years 3 and 4 have been set for mathematics and additional teachers

are used to facilitate three teaching groups. These arrangements provide effectively for the range of pupils' abilities and ensure that achievement is good. A mixed booster class has successfully supported the learning of targeted pupils in Years 5 and 6. The school has also focussed on raising girls' attainment because in the past they have not done as well as boys. Teachers concentrate on encouraging girls to be more confident with calculations and their application of mathematical skills. Overall, the school does well for its pupils and the vast majority achieve well.

38. Teaching and learning in mathematics is good overall and some very good teaching was seen during the inspection. In the best lessons, pupils really enjoyed their learning because teachers planned exciting lessons that were based on interesting everyday problems and situations. Good attention is paid to the development of pupils' thinking skills in mathematics and ample opportunities are afforded to pupils to use and apply their knowledge, skills and understanding to solve a problem. Very good use is made of pupils' advanced speaking skills to exemplify how well they understand new learning in mathematics. Teachers encourage pupils to talk about possible solutions and then have a go with their ideas. As pupils think and talk together they learn from each other and gain in confidence in applying mathematical strategies. In Years 1 and 2, many pupils count very confidently and carry out addition and subtraction calculations accurately. Higher attaining pupils show very good competency with numbers in discussions. However, in some lessons, they do not do as well as they should because the tasks provided for them are too easy. Work is planned at an appropriate age level for the pupils, but does not always take into account the actual levels that pupils have already reached. Pupils' books exemplify this clearly, as sometimes the highest attaining pupils complete and record the same work as other pupils. Teacher assessments also indicate that those pupils highlighted as the highest achievers are already attaining the levels predicated for them well in advance of the planned time scale, but class work is not always well enough adapted to take account of this.
39. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has a strong sense of direction and a real drive for improvement. Careful analysis of previous Year 6 test results has led to the issues being carefully addressed and suitable strategies used to raise pupils' achievements. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Targets are reset at the beginning of each term as a result of thorough assessment. An area for development is ensuring that assessment information is consistently and effectively used to plan suitable new learning for all pupils. Each pupil is aware of their goals and strives hard towards them.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

40. Teachers make good use of mathematics across the curriculum and link work well with ICT. Pupils are given the opportunity to develop their mathematical skills as they create line graphs in science and geography and measure accurately in design and technology.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

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

- Pupils' investigative skills are very well developed.
- Pupils have a broad knowledge of scientific facts.
- Pupils' demonstrate their excellent attitudes to work through exemplary presentation in their books.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Science teaching is very good.

#### **Commentary**

41. Since the last inspection the school has placed effective emphasis on the development of pupils' skills to carry out experiments and investigate scientific hypotheses. Making very good use of pupils' advanced speaking skills, ample opportunity is allowed for pupils to discuss their ideas, deliberate on methods and possible outcomes and challenge themselves to find out reasons and explanations. Pupils thoroughly enjoy this work and the development of scientific skills and techniques has enabled them to use experimentation in an effective way to aid their learning. The school has focussed on the development of girls' scientific skills in response to analysis of past performance that indicated that they were not doing as well as boys. In the current Year 6 class, the balance is very obviously redressed, as girls are doing particularly well in the subject and demonstrate very enthusiastic attitudes. The school has made very effective changes to the teaching and teachers consistently provide balanced opportunities for learning facts and skills and making use of both in investigations. This encourages pupils' good achievement and high standards.
42. Alongside good investigative skills, pupils' base of scientific facts and knowledge is very well developed. Because pupils are interested in their work, they go that extra mile to find out another fact that adds to their overall understanding. Independent research is a regular part of learning and homework is used effectively to build pupils' base of knowledge, allowing more lesson time for investigation and experimentation. Pupils' research is thorough and makes use of a range of sources, including the Internet, books and parents.
43. Pupils' very positive attitudes to science work are clearly demonstrated in the level of interest and perseverance they demonstrate in lessons. Overall therefore, pupils achieve very well in this subject and attain standards that are above expected levels by the end of Year 2 and well above expected levels by the end of Year 6. The exemplary standards of presentation in science books, especially in Year 6, are clear evidence of a sense of pride in work and a real love of the subject. Such attitudes and outcomes prepare pupils very well for the next stages in their education.
44. The subject continues to improve and high standards are maintained as a result of very good leadership and management. The subject leader has monitored samples of work in Years 2 and 6 to establish patterns of performance. The curriculum has been amended to place greater emphasis on the development of scientific skills and teaching has been observed to evaluate how well this is being done. Assessment procedures are thorough and the subject leader is aware of where support needs to be given to ensure that teachers make the best use of assessment information to plan effectively for groups of pupils and individuals. She is confident in the good quality of teaching, but knows clearly where best practice takes place and where individual teachers would benefit from sharing ideas and methods. With such leadership, there is good capacity for teaching and learning to improve further on current good standards.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good** and has improved significantly since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' competence in information and communication technology is good throughout the school, leading to high standards.
- Teaching is good overall and very good where specialist teaching takes place.
- Resources for information and communication technology are very good and are very well used.
- Very good use is made of information and communication technology in many subjects.

### **Commentary**

45. Leadership is very good and has a very positive impact on the provision. Because of very good leadership and very high quality resources, pupils achieve well in information and communication technology and this leads to standards that are above expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also achieve well.
46. The vast majority of pupils are confident users of ICT. They are eager to try out new ideas and benefit from very good, well-planned activities that guide them progressively through the curriculum. By the end of Year 2, pupils work independently with word processing tools. During the inspection they were observed correcting a piece of text using accurate punctuation, font and spaces. They saved their own work, planned and gave appropriate instructions and explained carefully what they were doing. In Year 6, pupils benefit particularly from the skilled teaching of a specialist teacher. In lessons, they used ICT to present information and data that they had gathered, paying careful attention to the intended audience. They showed good levels of independence as they made appropriate choices and followed a straightforward line of enquiry. They amended their presentations to create charts that were easy to follow and showed good understanding of the importance of ICT in the wider world, hence achieving high standards.
47. The quality of teaching in information and communication technology is good throughout the school, with some very good skills exhibited. Since the last inspection there has been commendable training for staff and a vast increase in resources. This has resulted in good command of the subject by staff as well as good acquisition of skills by pupils. Pupils make consistently good progress in all classes, achieving better than other pupils of their age, because of the good teaching that they receive.
48. The subject leader has a clear view for the future and a very extensive overview of provision. There is clear strategic thinking and planning for the future and a significant commitment to further improvements. Management of improvement plans is effectively carried out.

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

49. ICT is very well used across the curriculum. Good staff skills ensure that ICT is planned with other subjects very effectively. In English, for example, pupils use digital cameras regularly to support narrative and non-narrative work such as posters, labelling and making books.
50. During the inspection, pupils in Year 4 were observed using the Internet to research information linked to their history and art projects. Work on display around the school shows that ICT is also linked well with mathematics to collect and display data, and in geography and history to research information. The development of ICT skills across the curriculum is a major strength and has a very positive impact on standards and achievement.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **History**

The provision for history is **good**.

Due to previously agreed inspection foci and limited time, work in geography was not sampled.

### **Main strengths and weakness**

- Resources are well used.
- Visits and visitors add interest to the subject.
- The subject is well led and managed.



51. From evidence of work seen in lessons, samples of pupils' work and discussions with pupils, standards in history are broadly in line with expected levels by the end of Year 2 and better than expectations by the end of Year 6. In lessons seen in history, good emphasis is given to developing pupils' enquiry skills, with Year 2, for instance, preparing questions to ask a visitor impersonating Florence Nightingale. This approach is effective in bringing the subject alive and is reinforced by the use of historical artefacts brought by the visitor. Similarly in Year 3, good teaching enabled pupils to gain a clear grasp of different types of evidence because the teachers used an effective approach, demonstrating skills first and using concrete examples. Older pupils achieve well and show good skills when researching information on The Olympic Games using a range of resources, including the Internet. History is well used to promote literacy skills, for instance through dramatization, role-play and through the development of research skills. Learning is enhanced through a range of opportunities such as visits and the use of theatre groups to present workshops on a range of topics and theme days on the Romans and the Egyptians, for example.
52. The subject leader is enthusiastic and capable and works well with the subject leader for geography to make the best use of links between the two subjects. The curriculum is currently undergoing a review to add more creativity and enjoyment to pupils' learning experiences. More emphasis is being placed on themes that are common to history and other subjects so that pupils' learning can have more relevance. The subject leader is effectively managing these developments. Because history has not been a major school focus, as yet there has been no opportunity to observe teaching and learning in lessons, so a clear understanding of how well the curriculum is being delivered has not been established.

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

### **Design and technology**

Provision in design and technology is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

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

- The quality of teaching is good.
- Leadership is good.
- There has been good improvement in the subject.
- Monitoring is limited as yet.

#### **Commentary**

53. Standards in design and technology are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils develop their skills systematically as they move through the school through a good range of practical activities. They improve their knowledge by designing, making and evaluating products and models, for example, pupils in Year 1 have used a wide range of resources to create moving pictures. They showed appropriate understanding of what worked well. Their plans show that, with some help, they can put their own ideas into practice. By Year 2 they use simple tools sensibly and carefully. During the inspection they were involved in a puppet-making task and showed high levels of enthusiasm and enjoyment as they explored and played with many different puppets.
54. Older pupils continue to develop their design and technology skills through focussed practical tasks. In Year 4, for example, pupils showed high levels of interest as they explored and evaluated fabrics for use in making a money container. They concluded many facts about the fabrics and were able to identify the best one for the job.
55. The quality of teaching in design and technology is good. It has improved significantly since the last inspection when teaching and standards were low. Because of good teaching, pupils are

beginning to catch up and consequently standards are rising. Lessons are well planned and a particular feature is the very good use of resources to promote interest and enjoyment.

56. Leadership of design and technology is good. Improvements have been initiated and a higher focus given to the subject. Management is satisfactory overall. There has been limited monitoring of planning and lessons, however, links are beginning to be established with other schools and resources have improved.

## **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above expected levels by end of Years 2 and 6.
  - The subject is very well led and managed.
  - Learning in art enriches pupils' cultural and spiritual development.
  - Specialist teaching encourages high standards.
57. The school environment is richly enhanced by displays of interesting and attractive artwork. Taking into consideration the good quality of work on display, work seen in lessons and evidence gained from carefully presented portfolios, standards in art are judged to be above the expected levels at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve well to develop a good range of artistic skills, an effective understanding of materials and their uses and a deep appreciation of artists, their works and their influences.
58. The subject has two subject leaders, both of whom are very enthusiastic and highly motivated to maintain the strengths of the provision and the standards that pupils achieve. They have collected useful evidence to show just how well pupils are doing and the great range of special events, visitors and visits that enrich pupils' learning. One subject leader teaches art to various classes in Years 3 to 6. Her teaching is of a very high standard and pupils learn very well in these lessons. During the inspection, one lesson demonstrated exceptionally well the effective development of pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness through the exploration of art and the opportunity to reflect on forms in the environment and create something with a function and a purpose. Pupils developed skills in the use of clay, creating shapes and forms based on nature objects and textures. They were inspired by a computerised slide show demonstrating the work of artists. The use of classical music to accompany the presentation created a reflective and emotional atmosphere. The lesson built on earlier learning when pupils had a look at the utensils and their uses. A museum visit had given them the opportunity to look at African clay pots and interesting forms and structures that had been created to hold water, food or some other contents. Pupils' learning is very well enhanced by homework activities where independent research is required. All homework tasks and additional gathering of evidence to support creative work is collated in sketchbooks that are of an exceptionally good quality.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards and achievement are high.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Provision for extra curricular sports is very good.

## **Commentary**

59. Pupils across the school achieve standards above those expected in physical education, and this has been maintained since the last inspection. As they move through the school pupils acquire confidence in movement and work hard to do their best. They acquire good skills through well-planned creative activities. During the inspection a dance module was being taught in all classes. Teachers planned some exciting music to promote pupils' imagination, and encourage the aesthetic guidelines of dance. For example, pupils in Year 2 improvised the feeling of rain on their bodies through expressive movements that showed good imagination and knowledge. They benefited from the good use of "rain" noises and were able to develop their movement skills to create a simple dance. Pupils in Year 4 also achieved well as they focused on the music of the "Pink Panther" to develop stealthy gestures. The pupils showed good understanding of how movement affected their bodies and took part in some good collaborative work. By Year 6 pupils are confident performers, showing precision, fluency and control in their dances.
60. The quality of teaching in physical education is always good and there are many very good features. Teachers plan lessons very well and make effective use of resources to enhance learning. The management of lessons and teachers' subject skills are also very good and ensure lessons are exciting and enjoyable. Provision for extra-curricular sports activities is very good. A wide range of opportunities is available to the pupils and the high quality specialist teachers, as well as other school staff, promote high standards in many sports clubs that are well attended and pupils work hard in their chosen sport.
61. Leadership of physical education is satisfactory overall. Since the last inspection it has been mainly an aspect of maintenance and few initiatives have taken place. The current subject leader is fairly new to the role and there has so far been limited monitoring of standards to improve achievement further. The subject is, however, well managed and arranged and the planned curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to pupils' achievement and needs and standards have been maintained overall. The subject is now to have sharper attention for further developments and as such, the subject leader is currently leading the school's participation in a national sports programme.

## **Music**

The overall provision for music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning is well balanced between composition and performance skills.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to the enrichment of the curriculum.
- Pupils are confident and enthusiastic performers.

### **Commentary**

62. The school's music provision is effectively co-ordinated by a specialist teacher who has good skills and knowledge of the subject and a clear understanding of what should be taught and learned. During the inspection, it was only possible to see two lessons, so an overall judgement about teaching and learning can not be made. However, school performances have been recorded on video and cassette tapes and these were available during the inspection. During the initial visit prior to the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were also heard rehearsing their Christmas performance. From these snapshots, it is easy to judge that standards are in line with expected levels in singing and composing and pupils do particularly well in developing performing skills. The very good range of concerts and performances enhance the curriculum very well and provide effective opportunities for developing links with parents and involving them in their children's learning.

## 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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>1</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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