

# INSPECTION REPORT

**St Anthony's Catholic Primary School**

Kingshurst, Birmingham

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104103

Headteacher: Mrs. E. Carey

Lead inspector: Mr. M. Johnstone

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> February 2004

Inspection number: 257581

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	222
School address:	Fordbridge Road Kingshurst Birmingham West Midlands
Postcode:	B37 6LW
Telephone number:	0121 7703168
Fax number:	0121 7880911
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Mr. Stuart Hill
Date of previous inspection:	27/04/1998

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## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This smaller than average voluntary aided Catholic Primary School is situated in North Solihull, Birmingham. At the time of the inspection there were 222 pupils on roll including almost equal numbers of boys and girls. There were 56 children in the Foundation Stage including 26 children who were attending part-time in the Nursery and 30 children attending full-time in the Reception class. There is an above average percentage (13%) of pupils from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds, although no pupils are at the early stages of English language acquisition. Two pupils are in public care. An above average percentage of pupils (25%) are eligible for free school meals. The school serves an area that is highly disadvantaged, being in the top ten per cent of the most deprived areas of the country. Most pupils have very low attainment on entry, particularly in relation to linguistic skills and social and behavioural problems. Twenty-six per cent of the pupils have special educational needs (above average). Most have moderate learning difficulties and speech and communication needs. No pupil has a statement of special need. The school was in the top 100 most improved schools in 2001 and gained achievement awards in 2000 and 2001.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21114	Malcolm Johnstone	Lead inspector	Mathematics History Geography Personal, social and health education English as an additional language
19335	Susan Dixon	Lay inspector	
21450	Daniel Kilborn	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Physical education
23566	John Iles	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Design and technology Music

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school** at the heart of its community. Standards are comparable with those of similar schools. Teaching is good and **most pupils achieve well**. The headteacher, supported effectively by all staff, leads the school well. There is a clear commitment to inclusion and care for each pupil as an individual. Parents are very pleased with what the school does for their children. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The headteacher and deputy work very well together to provide strong and effective leadership
- Teaching is mostly good across the school with all teachers and support staff working effectively as a team
- Not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels of the National Curriculum
- The school is outstanding at sports and the arts and has exceptional success in developing pupils' personal qualities
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and their behaviour and relationships are excellent
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are not yet high enough
- There is very good support for pupils with special educational needs and they achieve well
- Children get a very good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes
- Ongoing classroom assessments of pupils' progress are not used consistently to inform the planning of their future work
- Attendance rates are well below the national average

Since the school was inspected in 1998 the rate of **improvement has been good**. Leadership, management and governance have improved markedly. Despite lower results in the Year 6 test results for 2003, in recent years the overall trend has shown a steady improvement. Analysis of performance data and monitoring is used much more effectively to bring about improvements in the curriculum, teaching and standards. All statutory requirements are now met.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Free school meals
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	C	D	C
Mathematics	C	C	E	C
Science	E	D	D	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Children achieve well in the Nursery and Reception classes (the Foundation Stage) but the good teaching cannot fully compensate for the well below average attainment on entry and most children are unlikely to reach the goals expected in key areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. By the end of Year 2 standards are close to the national average in reading but are below in writing, mathematics and science. By the end of Year 6, overall standards in English are broadly average. In mathematics and science they remain below average but are now closer to the national average. Above average pupils do not achieve as well as they could and too few reach the higher levels of the National Curriculum. This depresses the overall results. In Year 2 and Year 6 standards have improved since the dip in the 2003 national tests. Since the last inspection the overall trend in

standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 has been in line with the national upward trend. Over their time in school there is no significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

At all stages pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and behaviour is generally excellent. Attendance is unsatisfactory and has a negative impact on the achievements of the more persistent absentees. **The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good.**

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are effective.** Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and often very good. In Years 1 to 6 teaching is good overall. The teaching of English is good. In mathematics teaching is satisfactory overall with some good lessons seen. At all stages there are high expectations of behaviour, resources are used well and learning support assistants provide valuable and effective additional support for all pupils. Specialist teaching support for pupils with special educational needs is very effective. Teachers make learning enjoyable and pupils work hard. More could be expected of the above average pupils in some lessons. The process of planning learning activities is not yet informed consistently by ongoing assessment information.

The breadth of curricular opportunities is good and there are very good opportunities for enrichment. There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy and very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs. There is very good provision for personal and social education and very good equality of access to all that the school offers. Links with parents, the community and other schools are very good. Accommodation and resources are mostly good, although outdoor provision for the Reception children is poor.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is strong and effective.** The headteacher has had a significant impact on school improvement. The school is well managed and governance is satisfactory. Teamwork is very effective and good use is made of performance data and monitoring to bring about improvements. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and support the school well. Since the previous inspection they have had a more effective role in the school's strategic development. Financial planning is good and administrative staff support the running of the school very well.

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

The parents hold the school in high regard. Pupils enjoy school and feel valued and supported by all adults who work in the school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

In order to continue to raise standards further the governors, headteacher and teachers should:

- Throughout the school, increase the number of pupils reaching the higher levels of the National Curriculum
- Make more consistent use of ongoing classroom assessment of individual pupils to inform the planning of lessons
- Raise standards in ICT by the end of Year 6
- Improve the attendance of a significant minority of the pupils

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Standards are broadly in line with the national average in English but below the national average in mathematics and science. In these three subjects, however, standards are at least comparable with those in similar schools. In relation to their prior attainment, the achievements of most pupils are at least satisfactory and often they are good.

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

- Despite the dip in 2003, standards in English, mathematics and science have shown steady improvement since the previous inspection
- Not enough of the above average pupils achieve the higher National Curriculum levels
- Children achieve well in the Nursery and Reception classes (Foundation Stage)
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) receive well-targeted support and achieve well

#### **Commentary**

1. Children enter school with attainment that is well below the national average. Despite good teaching and progress in the Foundation Stage (FS) most pupils are unlikely to reach the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In their personal, social and emotional development and in their creative and physical development most pupils are on course to reach the goals.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.3 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.1 (14.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.1 (16.8)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. In National Curriculum tests, the trend in the school's results has shown a steady rise over the past four years in line with the national trend. In the Year 2 tests variations in the abilities of the various groups of pupils (cohorts) moving through the school have led to fluctuations in the trend. These have ranged from well below the national average to in line. Current standards by the end of Year 2 are below average but better than in 2003 when they were well below the national average. As well as cohort variations, this is also due to good teaching in Year 2. In relation to their prior attainment, pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. Progress is more rapid in Year 2, where it is good.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in [year]***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.6 (27.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.5 (26.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.9 (27.9)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. A very similar picture of standards and achievement emerges higher up the school. The trend in Year 6 results rose quite steeply from 2000 and standards were in line with national averages in 2001 and 2002. Standards dipped to well below average in 2003 due to a larger number of SEN pupils, a few who came into school in the final term of Year 6. Inspection evidence indicates that current standards are again climbing but remain below average in mathematics and science. Standards in English are now broadly similar to the national average with writing being the weaker element. However, too few pupils are reaching the higher National Curriculum levels. By the end Years 2 and 6 overall standards are at least comparable with those achieved in similar schools.
4. School tracking data, value added information and inspection evidence indicates that most pupils achieve at least satisfactorily and often well in Years 3 to 6. Throughout the school, pupils who have special needs achieve well and for most other pupils achievement is at least satisfactory. The more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could since the work set for them lacks sufficient challenge.
5. Standards in information and communications technology (ICT) are improving well and by the end of Year 2 standards are broadly average. These good developments have not yet fed through to standards at the end of Year 6 where they are below average. In relation to their prior attainment in the subject, pupils are achieving well. Some work of high quality was seen in art and design, design and technology and physical education. Singing is good throughout the school.
6. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve good standards in relation to the targets set for them. They receive good quality additional support from their teachers and learning support assistants. Pupils' individual educational plans are of good quality. They identify simple, achievable steps in learning which enable pupils to succeed. Because work is well matched to their needs pupils progress well and make valuable contributions to lessons.

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

Pupils' personal qualities are excellent overall and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' very good attitudes and excellent behaviour and relationships have a very positive effect upon their learning
- Pupils are very hard working and their response in lessons is excellent
- The spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils is very good: pupils have a very good understanding of fairness and justice
- Levels of attendance are much too low, although the school works hard to improve them

## Commentary

7. Pupils make maximum use of their time in school and work very hard throughout the day. They listen very well to their teachers and work alone or in groups productively. They show a keen interest in their work and approach opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning enthusiastically. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to play a part in the whole school community, for example, through the school council or acting as a playground buddy. Children in the FS make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.
8. Pupils with SEN respond very well in lessons. Great care is taken to ensure that their self-esteem is raised by building on successes and rewarding their efforts with praise. Teachers ensure that pupils are included in all class events. All staff are vigilant to identify areas where SEN pupils have strengths, for example, in sport and the creative arts or in demonstrating strong personal qualities. Good quality strategies are available on the rare occasions when pupils need calming.
9. The excellent behaviour in school compliments the very good attitudes well and creates a friendly and mutually supportive environment. Teachers make their high expectations clear and have an effective and consistent system of rewards and sanctions to support this. As a result, pupils' self-discipline is very good and there is a clear understanding of right and wrong.
10. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. In lessons and at lunchtimes pupils present themselves as friendly and caring. They offer each other genuine encouragement, appreciation and praise in ways that are often well beyond their years; for example, in a Reception class lesson about maps one child approached another without prompting to tell him how good his work was and how well he had done.
11. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. They learn to value and respect themselves and others. A sense of delight and worth is present in the school environment and in many lessons. Pupils learn to enjoy the company of others in many ways; for example, through extra-curricular clubs, activities with other schools and by taking part in local events and competitions. Pupils learn about the world around them and have a good understanding of their place in society. Cultural development is good and pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of their own culture and the richness and diversity of other cultures.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2003*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.9	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

12. The majority of pupils arrive on time but levels of attendance are poor. They are well below the national average. Good attendance is encouraged and many pupils respond positively to this. There is an indication that the attendance of some pupils is improving as a result. However, too many pupils are away from school too often and too many families take holidays in term time. This has a significant and detrimental effect upon the learning of these pupils.

## Exclusions

### *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	157		
White – Irish	2		
White – any other White background	4		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	4	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	6		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	6		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1		
No ethnic group recorded	2		

*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. Teaching is good overall and there is a rich and stimulating curriculum. The care, guidance and support for pupils are very good and the school has developed a very good partnership with parents and the community.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- All teachers are committed to improvement and keen to develop their teaching
- There is some very good teaching in the FS, Years 2, 3, 5 and 6
- Assessment in lessons is not used consistently to inform subsequent learning
- Additional teaching support for pupils with SEN is very good
- Literacy is well taught across the curriculum, particularly in Years 3 to 6

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2 %)	14 (34 %)	17 (40%)	9 (22%)	1 (2%)	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.*

- Teaching is consistently good and often very good in the lessons observed in the FS. It provides children with a very good start to school and helps them progress well in all aspects of their learning. The teaching meets the needs of the children well and fosters very good attitudes to learning.

14. In the lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was good in Years 2, 3, 5 and 6 and mostly satisfactory in Years 1 and 4. All teachers are clearly committed to the pupils and care for them as individuals. They have a strong desire to look at how their own teaching can be improved, for example, in their willingness to attend further training and in their positive reaction to the monitoring of lessons.
15. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is well structured and based securely on national recommendations. Overall, literacy is well taught across the school and the teaching of numeracy is satisfactory. Reading is well taught and is reflected in pupils' good achievements. The recent emphasis on writing is proving successful and teachers provide good opportunities for the teaching of literacy across other subjects. Despite recent improvements in the teaching of numeracy, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use and apply their mathematics to problem solving activities.
16. Across all subjects relationships are excellent and there are high expectations of behaviour in almost all lessons. Expectations of what pupils might achieve are generally high although, in some of the lessons observed and in the scrutiny of pupils' past work, more could still be expected of the above average pupils in most subjects. At all stages resources are used effectively to support learning, for example in English computers provided very good support for pupils' writing in a Year 6 lesson. Classroom support assistants provide valuable and effective support in lessons and are well briefed by the teachers. Very good curricular enrichment through the use of visits and visitors provides a further dimension to teaching and learning in subjects such as art and design, history and geography. In all lessons, the learning objectives are shared with the pupils so that they understand what they are expected to learn. In the most effective teaching these are reviewed at the end of the lesson so that pupils are able to gauge how successful they were in achieving these.
17. Assessment procedures are well developed. The use of performance data has improved significantly since the previous inspection and has highlighted key areas for development, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Group targets for literacy and numeracy have been developed but these have not yet been extended to individual ones, particularly to help the above average pupils aim higher. The day-to-day outcomes of pupil assessments, however, are not built systematically into subsequent lesson planning. The impact of assessment data on the progress of individual pupils would be stronger if this were to happen more consistently. Examples of good marking of pupils' work were seen with many supportive comments that help raise self-esteem and confidence. However, there are not enough comments that show pupils how their work might be improved.
18. The teaching of pupils who have SEN is good. An effective range of strategies has been devised to ensure that pupils receive support to meet their specific needs. Good Individual teaching plans are used as guidelines for effective teaching and learning and there is a good degree of challenge in the work set. Some pupils receive very good one-to-one teaching each morning that is focused on a specific aspect of learning. At the end of these sessions pupils measure their improvement and success and this has a very positive impact on their self-esteem. For example, a pupil whose target was to discriminate between similar letters in the alphabet enjoyed challenges designed to meet his needs. The pleasure gained from consistent improvement increased his motivation successfully. The excellent relationships in the school provide a secure foundation for effective teaching and learning. The special needs co-ordinator liaises very closely with members of staff to ensure that teaching reflects the needs identified in pupils' individual education plans.

## **The curriculum**

The breadth of curricular opportunities is good and opportunities for enrichment are very good. The accommodation and resources are good overall and support teaching and learning effectively. Improvement has been good since the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is well balanced and suitably broad
- Provision for personal, social and health education of the pupils is very good
- All pupils have equality of access to all that the school offers and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- There is very good curriculum development, including innovation
- The school's participation in sport and the arts is very good
- The outdoor accommodation for children in the Reception class is poor

### **Commentary**

19. Use of the literacy and numeracy strategies helps raise standards for average and below average pupils but more can be done to raise standards for the above average. The school is identifying very effective ways of developing literacy and numeracy within the broader curriculum. The new information and communication technology suite enables pupils to have frequent access to computers. The creative subjects, sport and the arts are highly valued and provide opportunities for pupils to achieve well. The school has successfully reached two national finals in sport as well as achieving the Active Mark Silver and Gold in the Sport England awards. The school is a keen supporter of the Arts and hosts an Arts Week to include a wide range of language, musical and dance activities. The school is highly regarded within the community because of the way it promotes very good attitudes to learning and care for others among its pupils. There are appropriate policies for drugs and health education, and race equality.
20. The curriculum in the FS prepares children very well for work in Year 1. At all stages, the curriculum provides an exciting range of interesting and challenging opportunities. It is inclusive and the needs of pupils with SEN are met effectively across all subjects. Great care is taken to ensure that learning support assistants are well deployed and their very good knowledge of pupils has a very good effect on the delivery of the curriculum.
21. The curriculum is enriched with many good quality clubs that take place at the end of the school day and at lunchtimes. For example, the 'Harry Potter club' supports the analysis of the writing of JK Rowling, and street dancing with Year 3 promotes pupils' creative and physical development. In addition, there is a wide range of sports and music clubs. Links with local schools are very good. A local Beacon school supports the development of boys' writing by providing word processing computers to improve pupils' skills. This project has successfully improved boys' attitudes to writing.
22. Resources to support learning are good but there are some weaknesses in the accommodation, for example, outdoor accommodation for the reception children is poor. Throughout the school, displays are bright and celebrate learning across all subjects, encouraging pupils to take interest, respond to the work of others and evaluate the outcomes of their lessons.
23. There is an appropriate number of well-qualified teachers and support staff to meet the needs of all ability groups within the school. Teachers and support staff work together as a team and their professional development needs are well met through structured training programmes. Pupils have great confidence in the adults who support them and this reflects the commitment of staff to ensure that pupils achieve their best.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The school offers its pupils a very caring and supportive environment where all are valued and respected. The school involves pupils very well in its development. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The arrangements for the health, safety and welfare of all pupils are very good
- The personal and academic support and guidance offered is good. Pupils understand the purpose of their lessons and what they need to do to improve
- Pupils build very confident and trusting relationships with adults
- Pupils new to the school benefit from good induction arrangements
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported

### **Commentary**

24. The school is a very happy and well ordered place. Pupils are treated with great respect and sensitivity. The health and safety arrangements are very good, as are those surrounding child protection procedures. Pupils learn to care for themselves well, for example, by taking part in the Healthy Schools Project. The excellent relationships that exist in the school community and the very good provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development create a very caring, safe and supportive environment. This has a very positive effect upon their learning.
25. The personal and academic support and guidance offered to pupils is good. They are very well motivated and success is recognised and rewarded. The involvement of pupils in their own learning is good. They learn to appreciate and evaluate their work and understand the purpose of their lessons. Pupils receive good academic guidance in general but teachers do not use the results of assessments consistently to plan what they do next. Each individual is very well known, cared for and nurtured and this is very evident in the enthusiastic and happy pupils seen in the school.
26. The school has very good arrangements for seeking pupils' views. All the staff in school listen carefully to the views and concerns of pupils. The school council offers very good opportunities for pupils to put forward their ideas and use their initiative; for example, by identifying areas of need and being actively involved in satisfying them. The school operates very much as one community and the views of all parties are valued. Pupils feel that there is always someone there to listen to them and help them when needed.
27. Adults in the school form effective teams to ensure that the needs of SEN pupils are met. These teams are extended to include specialist advice and support from a range of outside agencies, including the schools' psychological service and learning support agencies.
28. Pupils new to the school benefit from good induction procedures. These include meetings and information packs for parents and home visits if parents wish. There are good opportunities for children to visit the school and make a gradual and settled start to their education.

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

The partnership with parents, the community and other schools is very good. Parents support the school well and are appreciative of all that it offers. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The relationships with parents and the provision of information for them are very good
- The partnership with other schools and colleges is very good and supports pupils and staff alike
- The links with the community are very good and support learning well

## **Commentary**

29. The school has very effective links with parents. They are kept very well informed about the life of the school and have very good opportunities to be involved in all that it does. Parents are welcomed into school and their views are sought and acted upon well. Parents gain good insight into their children's learning through special events and by supporting the newly founded Inspire project. The arrangements for reporting on pupils' progress are good. Written reports are detailed and offer good guidance for improvement. In addition, consultation events provide very good opportunities for discussion about pupils' work and progress. Homework is supported well by many parents but the school is keen to involve parents more in supporting their children's learning at home and at school. A voluntary management committee organises and runs a 'Mighty Ants' child care group before and after school.
30. The school makes every effort to encourage parents of pupils with SEN to discuss the progress that pupils make. Most parents attend reviews and make valuable contributions to assessing pupils' progress and helping to identify new targets. Individual education plans include a 'Cool School Plan' section designed to enable pupils and parents to take part in planning the areas of learning they wish to improve.
31. The school's links with the community are very good. Pupils make visits to places of interest and visiting specialists broaden pupils' experiences. The school is involved in many local initiatives all of which have a very beneficial effect on pupils' lives and learning. The Church and business communities support the school very well by welcoming visits from pupils and supporting activities in school.
32. The partnership with other schools and agencies is very good and has a very positive effect upon the quality of the experiences and opportunities offered to pupils and their teachers; for example, links with secondary schools provide opportunities in sport and the arts. Links with other partner institutions help to motivate pupils and support their families.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the school are good. Governance is satisfactory. In all these aspects, improvement since the previous inspection has been very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors and the capacity for further improvement are very good
- The governors are developing their strategic role well
- The headteacher and senior managers are good role models for the pupils and staff
- Financial management has improved and is now good
- There is good monitoring of teaching and performance data to bring about improvements

## Commentary

33. The leadership, management and governance of the school were judged to be unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection. The current headteacher had just taken up her post at that time. She provides effective strategic leadership and has the strong support of the deputy headteacher and key subject managers. This has enabled the headteacher to turn things around. The extent to which leaders inspire, motivate and influence the staff and pupils is very good. There is a clear vision for the development of the school and high aspirations for the pupils. The headteacher's strong sense of direction and purpose is evident in the much improved school improvement plan, which is an effective blueprint for school development. Standards have risen steadily and are at least comparable with those found in similar schools. There is a very effective learning environment characterised by excellent personal development, a high degree of inclusion and a broad, interesting and enriched curriculum. The school mission statement that is centred on living, loving and learning together is well reflected in all that the school does. The leadership of SEN, the FS, English, mathematics and science is good and is helping improve pupils' achievements further.
34. The development and use of performance data to track trends in pupils' performance in both national and school based tests has improved markedly since the previous inspection. Most recently the tracking procedures have highlighted weaknesses in pupils' writing and the use and application of mathematics. These issues are receiving good attention and these aspects of pupils' learning are improving. The good programme to monitor the quality of teaching and learning has highlighted, for example, weaknesses in the closing review sessions in literacy and numeracy lessons and the opening session to develop speedy recall of number facts in mathematics lessons. These issues are now being tackled. Monitoring has been less successful in pinpointing the reasons why too few pupils reach the higher levels of the National Curriculum.
35. Performance management is strong and effective and there are highly relevant targets for improving teaching and learning at the school and individual teacher level. There is good induction of staff new to the school and very good continuing professional development of all staff. The school makes a good contribution to initial teacher training and is highly regarded by the local college.
36. Governance has improved well since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and are developing their strategic role well from what was a very low base. The governing body is well led by a hardworking and committed chairperson. Governors have much greater understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school through involvement in the school improvement plan, better information from the school and from their own visits into lessons and other school activities. Individual governors have responsibility for specific subjects and aspects in school and meet with the co-ordinators to formulate and review action planning. The governors' role in shaping the direction of the school and in challenging the senior managers by holding them accountable for the standards achieved is still at an early stage of development.
37. Financial management is much improved and is now good. There is good understanding of best value principles and good monitoring of income and expenditure patterns enables the school to meet its educational priorities on a firm footing. A large budget surplus had been allowed to grow during the period before the previous inspection. This has gradually been reduced and, while the current budget surplus carried forward is a little higher than that recommended, it is being used prudently for the benefit of all pupils.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	550,203
Total expenditure	559,370
Expenditure per pupil	2,638

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	51,918
Balance carried forward to the next	42,751

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

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

38. Children are admitted to the Nursery on a part-time basis at the beginning of the school year following their third birthday. They transfer to the Reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. Currently, the nursery operates on a morning only basis owing to the number of children. Approximately one-third of nursery children stay for school lunch and a voluntary management committee organises an afternoon 'Tiny Ants' session run by the members of the morning nursery staff.
39. While all ability groups are represented on entry to the nursery, assessments carried out soon after children start indicate that attainment for most children is well below average in all aspects of learning. All the children, including those with SEN, make good progress in all areas of their development but particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Most pupils will attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of their learning and in the physical and creative areas. Despite good and often very good teaching in the FS many are unlikely to attain the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
40. The FS teachers and learning support assistants are very knowledgeable about the children's stage of development, their individual needs and their styles of learning. Since January a senior learning support assistant who currently has an overseas teaching qualification has run the Nursery very successfully. She works very closely on joint planning with the Reception teacher who leads the Foundation Stage area of the school very well. Outstanding support is given to the two class teachers by experienced learning support assistants who contribute significantly to children's learning and good progress in all areas of their development. Regular planning meetings are held and these ensure ongoing assessment information is used well in the planning of activities to meet children's needs. There is a good balance of activities directed by the adults, those explored by the children and those that the children initiate for themselves.

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

Provision is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good and children achieve very well
- Most children are likely to reach the early learning goals

### **Commentary**

41. The positive welcoming atmosphere in the Nursery helps children settle quickly. Activities are very well organised in the FS and this gives children confidence as they participate enthusiastically in all activities. A caring positive approach pervades the FS and the teachers and learning support assistants have very high expectations of behaviour and care of equipment and resources. Children quickly learn class routines and listen and participate enthusiastically in all activities. When children play together adults interact with them, continually asking well-focused positive questions that promote learning well. As a result of very good teaching and

very good opportunities provided in this area of their work most are likely to achieve the early learning goals.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

There are good opportunities for pupils to develop a love of books  
Good emphasis is made on learning letter sounds in reading sessions  
Good opportunities are taken to develop language in play activities

### **Commentary**

42. Teaching is consistently good and the learning support assistant in the nursery continually demands children speak in sentences in whole group sessions. For example, when children recreate the story 'Baby Bear' using objects mentioned in the book they are expected to describe them accurately and initial letter sounds are stressed. All staff in the FS ask relevant and well focussed open ended questions requiring children to think and respond appropriately. In the Reception class, the teacher provides very good opportunities to develop language connected to space rockets and the moon. The teacher creates a sense of wonder and asks each child in turn to explain their choice of a wish. This actively encourages speaking and listening.
43. Children make good progress in their knowledge of initial letter sounds and greatly enjoy playing games using letter flash cards. In the Nursery they are expected to recognise their names. They draw the shapes of letters on cards and paper and write imaginary letters related to the 'Baby Bear' story. Many children in the Reception class are able to write their name but only a minority write small stories or captions unaided. Whole class literacy sessions focus well on different types of books and children are aware that books contain information. They follow stories read to them with great interest. Children take the good opportunities given to them to read in the reading area and they handle books appropriately and with care. The majority of children are unlikely to reach the early learning goals in this area of their work by the time they start Year 1.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

There is good emphasis on basic numeracy skills  
Games and number cards are used well to interest the children in mathematics  
Classrooms have environments and displays which promote mathematics well  
Opportunities are taken to develop mathematics in all areas of learning

### **Commentary**

44. Good teaching in this area ensures that children make good progress. Children in both classes are keen to join in whole group and class counting sessions. In the Nursery they count down from 10 successfully. Sand and water play provides good opportunities for counting activities and children are taught counting songs and rhymes that support their learning well. Most children in the Reception class recognise numbers up to ten and count up to 20. Only the few above average pupils understand the concept of 'more than' and 'less than' and add and take away simple amounts up to five.
45. The FS staff use a good range of practical apparatus and games to interest the children and these are linked well to the weekly topic. Children in the Reception class work with the teacher rolling a large dice and this promotes their mathematical learning well. Classroom displays and the very good relationships between staff and children, coupled with high expectations of behaviour, ensure children's achievements in this area of learning are good even though most are unlikely to reach the goals expected by Year 1.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

Provision is **good**.

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

- Resources are used well to develop understanding
- Adults intervene effectively when children engage in free choice activities
- Good use is made of children's own experiences to provide stimulation for further learning
- Children achieve well because the teaching is good

#### **Commentary**

46. Teaching and learning are good. A variety of well planned activities promote children's knowledge and understanding well. In both adult and children initiated activities staff take good opportunities to ask open ended questions to develop learning. Children make good gains in their knowledge of space, stars and the moon. In the Reception class children gain a good understanding of the local environment by visiting the church, the local park area and look at the school buildings. They work with simple plans and are beginning to understand the purpose of maps. They link a journey in their literacy book with journeys they make to school and when going on holiday. They are beginning to gain an awareness of the past when thinking about when different local buildings like the church were built. Despite the good teaching, the majority of children are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they start Year 1.

### **Creative Development**

Provision is **good**.

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

- The quality of teaching is good
- Good links are made with the other areas of learning

#### **Commentary**

47. Good opportunities are provided in this area of learning that enable children to make good progress. A good range of construction equipment encourages exploration in the making of towers, houses and rockets linked to the current topic. Children have opportunities to mix colours when chalking action pictures of rockets and stars in space. They hold a variety of pencils and crayons appropriately and cut and stick simple two-dimensional shapes to form collages of numbers and objects. The teachers give children good opportunities to explore music and they beat simple instruments in time. They learn a number of counting rhymes and songs which they sing from memory. Most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area of their work by the time they start Year 1.

### **Physical development**

Provision is **satisfactory**.

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

- Teaching is good and children make good progress
- Outside play facilities for the Reception children are poor

### **Commentary**

48. Overall, children make good progress in their physical development. The limited available space is well organised and well resourced; however, opportunities for outside physical play are restricted by the size of the adjacent designated outside area. The Reception teacher plans all activities for the Foundation Stage and so takes every opportunity to utilise the better outside play facilities located at the nursery. The distance between the two classes, however, makes this difficult. Most children have good hand-eye co-ordination by the time they enter the Reception class and they hop, skip and travel with appropriate control in physical education sessions in the hall. Most children undress and dress themselves for physical education lessons. Most are likely to reach the goals expected by the time they enter Year 1.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision is **good overall**.

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

- Pupils achieve well in listening and reading by the end of Year 6
- Action taken to address the underachievement of boys is bringing success
- Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 with very good teaching seen in Years 3, 5 and 6
- Standards in writing could be better for the above average pupils
- The subject co-ordinator provides very good leadership
- The links between literacy and other subjects are good

## Commentary

49. Pupils make a good start in developing their communication, language and literacy skills in the FS. They make satisfactory progress in Year 1 and this increases in Year 2. By the end of Year 2 standards in reading and listening are average but in speaking and writing they are below average. These findings broadly reflect the results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests and assessments. Compared with the well below average attainment on entry to the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily overall in Years 1 and 2 but more can be done to improve the quality of handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work.
50. Inspection evidence indicates that overall standards for pupils at the end of Year 6 are now broadly average. The 2003 national tests showed standards to be below the national average but comparable with those of similar schools. Performance over a three-year period shows a steady upward trend. The dip in 2003 was due to variations in the abilities of the cohorts. The school's tracking data and inspection evidence shows that most pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6, although more could still be expected of the above average pupils in aspects of their work. Improvements seen in the standards in Year 6 show that the school has successfully raised the quality of boys' writing and accelerated progress in Years 5 and 6 through high quality teaching.
51. When pupils enter the school there are significant weaknesses in their speaking and listening skills. Many pupils have a poor range of vocabulary and lack confidence to engage in discussion. They often respond to questions using single words and need encouragement to build up sentences. Good opportunities are identified in teachers' planning to give pupils experience of language throughout the school; for example, drama is used well to help pupils understand the power of language and to respond in different ways. Pupils develop good listening skills and this helps them to learn from their teachers' modelling of language. Across the school, care is taken to make the classroom environment exciting to stimulate discussion and enquiry. Teachers of older pupils successfully encourage them to answer questions using sentences. This skill has a positive impact on writing as pupils understand the essential role of grammar in language. This is supporting the raising of standards. The school prioritises the exploration of a range of strategies to further improve pupils' speaking skills.
52. Standards in reading are higher than those in writing. Pupils enjoy reading and above average pupils talk knowledgeably about the work of a range of authors. A Year 6 pupil had read the complete trilogy of *The Lord of the Rings* and enthusiastically talked about the excitement of fantasy. Good emphasis is placed on a structured approach to teaching reading skills. All pupils are taught effective word attack skills through an understanding of how letter sounds combine to make words. They readily split words, look for parts they recognise and put them together. Teachers have taught pupils good library skills to ensure they know how to access information from reference books. Reading record books provide a useful commentary on individual pupils' reading activities.
53. Pupils with SEN are supported very well in their reading development. Their needs are identified at a very early stage and their individual education plans specify the nature of effective support. Teachers and learning support assistants are focused in their strategies to improve reading skills. The special needs co-ordinator is available to provide additional advice and the progress of these pupils is carefully monitored. The approach to learning is through informed diagnosis that develops pupils' confidence effectively.

54. Improving writing skills, particularly those of boys, is a priority of the school. The school uses a range of innovative strategies and the progress being made is encouraging. Laptop word processors have been introduced for older pupils and these motivate the pupils well when responding to written challenges made by their teacher. Teachers are making good use of story plans to give a structure to pupils' writing and this is bringing improvement.
55. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, although some good teaching was seen in Year 2. Some work is not targeted precisely enough to extend pupils' understanding and the pace of learning slows. In an unsatisfactory lesson in Year 1, for example, tasks were not well matched to pupils' needs and they lost interest in their work. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 with some examples of very good and excellent teaching. In most of the lessons observed, work was well matched to meet the needs of all pupils and this represents an improvement on earlier work seen in some pupils' workbooks. Teachers plan well and use learning support assistants very effectively to support individual and groups of pupils. Lessons are delivered in an interesting way, using a range of teaching styles, including drama. Teachers build on pupils' strengths well. The quality of marking, however, is variable. While pupils receive abundant praise for their efforts, some comments made by teachers are extravagant and do not indicate how work can be improved.
56. The subject is managed well. The co-ordinator understands the requirements needed to raise standards. She provides a very good role model for staff in the way she speaks to pupils and in her imaginative and effective teaching styles. There is good monitoring of teaching and planning that helps to bring about improvement in learning.

### **Literacy across the curriculum**

57. The team saw good examples of pupils using their writing skills across the curriculum. In history pupils wrote good quality notes as they researched the gods of the Ancient Greeks. In science, pupils provided very good directional information to promote healthy diets and life styles. In geography, an account of the water cycle was carefully written. Some good examples of the use of computers to extend literacy skills were also seen. In addition, teachers create effective links through speaking and listening activities across a range of subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are improving and are comparable with those in similar schools
- The knowledgeable co-ordinator leads by example in her own teaching
- Pupils' use and application of mathematics is a weaker area of learning
- The more able pupils do not achieve as well as other pupils
- Some good teaching was seen in Years 2, 5 and 6
- Assessment in lessons is not used consistently to plan subsequent work

### **Commentary**

58. The trend in the school's National Curriculum test results has shown a steady rise since the previous inspection. Variations in the abilities of the various groups of pupils (cohorts) moving through the school have led to fluctuations in the trend. These have ranged from well below the national average to in line. Current standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average but better than in 2003 when they were well below the national average. As well as cohort variations, this improvement is also due to good teaching in Years 2, 5 and 6. Standards are comparable to those in similar schools but are not as high as they could be since too few pupils reach the higher levels of the National Curriculum.
59. Most pupils start school with well below average attainment in mathematical understanding. School tracking data, value added information and inspection evidence indicates that most pupils achieve at least satisfactorily. Pupils who have special needs achieve well, although more should be expected of the above average pupils. Inspection evidence indicates that there is no significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls, although there are more boys identified as having SEN.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In the lessons observed, teaching was never less than satisfactory and was good in half of the lessons observed. Teaching is strongest in Years 2, 5 and 6. All teachers are secure with the National Numeracy Strategy and apply it effectively. Classroom management and organisation are effective and lead to very good attitudes, work ethic and behaviour. Relationships are very good and pupils enjoy their mathematics, particularly when they are challenged to use and apply their mathematics. This was exemplified in a good lesson for pupils in Year 6. The nature of the task challenged the pupils to work as a group to solve a problem. They needed to collaborate by sharing pieces of information related to the problem in order to reach a solution. The activity was also successful in developing pupils' social skills. The range of inspection evidence indicates that pupils' use and application of mathematics is not so well developed generally and is a weaker aspect of pupils' learning.
61. Computational skills are generally taught effectively, and in this aspect of the subject most pupils achieve well. Good opening mental and oral sessions are successful in sharpening the quick recall of addition and subtraction facts. This was exemplified in a successful activity for pupils in Year 2 who were using number cards to quickly show the number that is ten more or ten less than a given number. Most pupils are reasonably adept at solving appropriate addition, subtraction and multiplication problems and have a secure understanding of place value. Understanding of division is not so secure. Whilst there is some evidence of all aspects of mathematics being taught, there is little evidence of data handling in the work scrutiny. Although there is an improving picture, more use should be made of computers to support learning in the subject.
62. In less effective teaching, the pace of learning was not as rapid as in other lessons. In the scrutiny of pupils' work and in these less successful lessons, classroom assessment of pupils' learning is not used effectively enough to plan their work. This sometimes leads to a mismatch in the work given to the pupils and means that the more able pupils, for example, are not challenged sufficiently.
63. The subject leader has a clear understanding of how the subject needs to develop. Good analysis of performance data and monitoring of teaching and pupils' work has highlighted priorities for development. The subject leader is a good role model in her own teaching. She has developed good whole school assessment systems to help teachers to track pupils' progress

against National Curriculum targets. Good in-service training has been organised for the staff and the subject leader is a leading teacher of mathematics for the local education authority.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

64. Overall, pupils use their mathematical skills satisfactorily across the curriculum. There are good examples in some subjects. In design and technology, pupils use their knowledge of shape to design two-dimensional nets for making three-dimensional models. Measuring skills are used effectively in science, for example, to record temperatures in investigations. Data handling skills support work in geography and science when recording evidence in tables, charts and graphs.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision is **satisfactory**.

#### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in Years 3 to 6 have steadily improved since 1999
- Too few pupils reach the higher levels 3 and 5 by the end of Year 2 and Year 6
- Leadership and management are effective and the capacity for improvement is good
- Teaching was mainly good in the lessons seen during the inspection
- Assessment systems are satisfactory but day-to-day assessments are not used consistently to plan the next stages of learning
- A greater emphasis on the teaching of investigative work is improving standards

#### **Commentary**

65. In the 2003 National Curriculum assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2, teachers judged standards to be below average for pupils reaching the expected level 2. Whilst the percentage of pupils reaching level 2 was average compared to similar schools, the number reaching the higher level 3 was well below. Standards in the current Year 2 are improving and inspection evidence from lessons and a scrutiny of work indicates that standards, whilst still below the national average, are now much closer to the national average. Most pupils, including those with SEN, are achieving at least satisfactorily.
66. In the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2003 the proportion reaching the expected level 4 was below average and the proportion reaching the higher level 5 was well below average. The proportions were in line with those of similar schools. Over the past four years, results have improved steadily as a result of improved planning and resources with more emphasis on investigative work. Standards for the pupils currently in the Year 6 class remain below average but are closer to the national average than last year with a few more pupils likely to reach the high level 5. In relation to pupils' prior attainment, the achievement of all groups of pupils is satisfactory.
67. Across all year groups, good planning ensures that all pupils gain experience of all the required areas of scientific knowledge. By the end of Year 2, for example, pupils have a good knowledge of the difference between living and non-living things, the need for healthy foods and are able to compare stages of human growth effectively. They clearly understand the dangers and uses of electricity and create simple switches and circuits. Pupils in Year 3 have good opportunities to test different papers for absorption qualities and have a good

understanding of fair testing principles. They cooperate very well in group tasks and consider different methods for recording their own results. Pupils in Year 6 have reasonable understanding of reversible and irreversible changes, create more complex electrical circuits and use symbols appropriately when designing these. They use appropriate scientific vocabulary when writing up their own experiments.

68. In the lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was good overall. Teachers place an increasing emphasis on scientific enquiry as pupils move through the school and this is having a positive impact on pupils' interest in the subject and their overall achievements. In a very good lesson in Year 5, focused on healthy exercise, pupils were encouraged to think of their own methods of recording data. They were encouraged to suggest ways to test heart rate, with the teacher using pupils' ideas well to underline the principles of fair testing. The pupils cooperated very well in pairs and groups to record their findings and the dynamic style of the teacher and the very good pace and balance of the lesson captured their interest. As a result, they achieved well in the lesson. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge and this enables them to introduce and consolidate the correct technical vocabulary and ask well focused questions of the pupils. Mathematical skills are used satisfactorily in science work and pupils measure water accurately into cylinders, produce charts of heart rates after different levels of exercise. Pupils develop their literacy skills when writing up experiments and pupils in Year 6 use good scientific vocabulary when writing up work on micro-organisms and healthy living. Assessment systems are used appropriately to evaluate the longer term progress of pupils but are not used consistently in all classes to plan the next stages of learning. Whilst computers are being used increasingly, overall, they are not used enough to support work in science.
69. The subject leader is hard working, enthusiastic and committed to improving provision. He has a clear vision for the development of the subject and the action plan is rightly focussed on continuing to develop investigative work further to help increase the numbers of pupils reaching the higher levels of the National Curriculum.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

Provision is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The last couple of years have seen a number of significant improvements
- Regular use of the computer suite is improving pupils' skills
- The subject is well led and managed by a committed and knowledgeable coordinator
- The expertise and confidence of teachers has improved through in-service training
- Elements of control and modelling are underdeveloped

### **Commentary**

70. Standards meet National Curriculum requirements by the end of Year 2 but are below by the end of Year 6. As a result of the improved facilities of the ICT suite, there has been good systematic development of pupils' computer skills over the past two years. Although standards in Year 6 are not yet high enough in all the required areas, in those aspects covered recently they are at least at the level required nationally, for example, in the creation and use of a spreadsheet related to planning the budget for party food. In Year 2 pupils confidently log on to

computers in the suite, select a variety of different tools for purpose and have appropriate mouse and control skills. They retrieve their own work from individual files, save this for later development using the classroom computer and print work when requested. There is clear evidence of recent good achievement of pupils in all years and school displays in art, poetry and story writing indicate consistently good achievement in word processing skills.

71. Pupils behave very well in the computer suite and are keen to learn. They follow instructions carefully and co-operate very well when sharing computers to complete tasks. Pupils' good attitudes contribute well to their learning and good achievement in lessons.
72. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was good. Teachers have improved their subject expertise to meet the demanding requirements of the most recent national guidelines. They have invested significant personal time in training, which has improved confidence and provided a wider range of opportunities for pupils. For example, teachers are becoming familiar with the potential of new overhead white boards, which are beginning to enable teachers to teach skills more easily to larger groups of pupils. Lessons are well planned and teachers build effectively on pupils' previous knowledge by accessing pupils' personal computer files and individual log books. While some appropriate examples of the use of stand alone computers in classrooms were seen during the inspection, these are not yet used regularly to improve skills and knowledge outside the computer suite.
73. Elements of the control and modelling aspect of ICT are now developing appropriately. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils created a series of control instructions for switching on and off and delaying traffic lights. Overall, however, pupils' ability to control events in a pre-determined manner and to sense physical data is underdeveloped as experiences have not been consistently provided in the past.
74. Leadership and management are good and are raising standards. Some technical problems, however, slowed progress in the past but the regular timetabling of the computer suite and better teacher expertise is ensuring time is used more effectively. The development plan for the subject is well organised and provides clear vision and potential for the future. For example, the co-ordinator has rightly identified aspects of control and modelling, the use of e-mail and greater use of classroom computers as areas for future development.

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

75. There are examples of computers supporting work across the curriculum. In art and design in Year 2, pupils use computers to create designs in the style of Mondrian. In Year 4, pupils produce firework warning posters. In Year 5 computers support work in history when pupils research information on the Ancient Greeks. In geography pupils research information on the River Severn. Pupils in Year 4 create and interrogate branching databases in mathematics. PowerPoint presentations on a variety of topics are produced by Year 6 pupils who write instructions using the Internet and use processors and CD-ROMs well to support their literacy work. In general, ICT is used satisfactorily to support work across the curriculum and this is a focus for continuing future development as staff expertise and confidence improves.

## **HUMANITIES**

One lesson in history was seen in Year 5 and one lesson in geography in Year 4. It is not, therefore, possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of the provision in these two subjects. Comments are based on these two lessons, scrutiny of pupils' past and present work and discussion with teachers and pupils. In both subjects, the work seen is similar to that expected for pupils' ages and the achievements of most pupils are satisfactory. Weaknesses in pupils' ability to write at length are reflected in the limited amount of extended writing in both subjects. Leadership and management of the two subjects are sound and assessment systems are used satisfactorily to track pupils' progress against National Curriculum targets. In both subjects, resources have improved since the previous inspection and the standards noted at that time have been maintained.

In **history** by the end of Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of famous people and events in history. Pupils in Year 1, for example, study the life of Florence Nightingale and by studying photographs of the hospital in Scutari before and after she came to work there, they are able to talk about the good effect she had on the conditions for the wounded soldiers. Pupils in Year 2 have looked at the importance of Remembrance Day and tied this in successfully with issues about personal thoughts and feelings. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to use a variety of historical sources to gain information. In Year 6, for example, pupils have used the Internet to research Tudor monarchs and have used artefacts from the 1960's to help in project work on the life of John Lennon. In a good lesson in Year 5 the teacher used interesting resources about slavery in Ancient Greece to initiate good debate about the moral and social issues involved and how they have changed since that time. The lesson made a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development.

In **geography** by the end of Year 2 pupils have gained early experiences of mapping as a bird's eye view and have extended this experience to use actual maps in a topic on Mexico. This topic was also used to develop the skill of comparing and contrasting life in their locality with that in a distant locality. This skill was developed further in a lesson in Year 4 when pupils looked at more specific similarities and differences between their locality and a village in India. The teacher had invited into the lesson a member of the community who had lived in India quite close to the village being studied. Pupils were invited to ask her questions about her experiences. They did this enthusiastically and politely and gained much from the activity.

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

Only a small number of lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology and music. It is not, therefore, possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of provision in these subjects. In addition to the lessons seen, inspectors spoke with pupils, examined coordinators' action plans and looked at pupils' work since the beginning of the academic year. Evidence indicates that standards in art and design and design and technology have improved since the previous inspection whilst standards in music have been maintained at the above average level reported at that time.

Pupils' work in **art and design** is celebrated across the school. Displays indicate pupils' involvement in an exciting range of work. A highly successful annual Arts Week organised by the school provides an important contribution to the curriculum. Work includes two and three-dimensional art and silk-screen work. The work is of high quality, demonstrating imaginative use of colour. Pupils learn about the work of other artists and experiment working in their styles. Some unusual work produced by pupils in Year 4 reflects the intricate pattern work of Hundertwasser, while pupils in Year 6 explored the work of Yinka Shonibare to promote the identity of individuals. The work of more popular artists, for example, Chagall and Van Gogh is also represented. There is some very high quality painting by pupils in Year 3 in the style of Van Gogh's sunflowers. Pupils have sketchbooks and these provide opportunities for pupils to experiment drawing shapes and using shading to create dramatic effects. A strong feature of the work is the link with English as pupils describe their work

orally and in writing. In a very good lesson in Year 5 pupils were encouraged to look carefully at a range of pictures of St. George collected by their teacher. They were encouraged to look for unusual aspects of the pictures and in this way it became evident that careful observation is highly rewarding to gain knowledge of, for example, the social history of a period in history. The work stimulated good discussions about the patron saint of England. The school values the importance of art in supporting pupils to express themselves by encouraging artists to spend time at the school to support pupils' skill development.

In **design and technology** there are good examples of pupils' work such as the stories written and illustrated by Year 1 that involved them making moving pictures. These were then made into a very attractive book. The link with literacy gave pupils precise purpose to their work and extended their options to illustrate stories. This work was extended with pupils making a model to show the adventures of Incy Wincy spider. The models made by older pupils, for example in a project on shelters, have been exhibited at higher education conferences to show how design and technology skills are used to develop pupils' understanding of the world. The subject is well led by a teacher who is keen to promote investigations through designing and making as well as extending pupils' skills using a range of materials and tools. In the one lesson observed, pupils in Year 3 designed and made a moving monster. Good attention was given to the design process with pupils producing labelled diagrams to work from. Pupils were given a good choice of materials to choose from and had good adult support from the learning support assistant and volunteer parents. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the class achieved well.

In **music** pupils enjoy singing and achieve a good standard. They sing in tune and enjoy sharing their talents with their teachers and friends. The school does not have a specialist music teacher but class teachers provide a good programme to develop knowledge and skills in this important creative area of learning. Musical specialists from the local authority provide good support. Specialist tuition to play the guitar is available for pupils and this is a popular activity. Pupils enjoy practising their skills to perform to the school. There are good links with literacy as seen in a very good lesson where pupils wrote and sang their own lyrics to the music of John Lennon.

## **Physical education**

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Above average work was seen in games and dance
- The school has achieved the gold national standard for physical education
- Teaching is good and the subject is well led
- Extra-curricular sports clubs including competitions against other schools contribute well to the standards attained
- Pupils are enthusiastic and work hard to improve

## **Commentary**

76. In the lessons observed, standards were above those expected for pupils' ages. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when, on a limited number of observations, standards were judged to be average. Standards have improved as a result of a better scheme of work based securely on national requirements, very enthusiastic subject leadership and improved staff expertise and confidence. Good elements of lessons include high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work rate coupled with clear explanations as to what pupils are expected to

achieve in the lessons. Very good emphasis is laid on rigorous exercise, with well-directed warm-up sessions and very careful regard to health and safety.

77. Teachers have good subject knowledge, dress appropriately and give good personal demonstrations that help the pupils with their own performance. This was particularly marked in a very good Year 5 lesson to develop the skills required in hockey and in a Year 6 dance lesson.
78. Lessons are well planned and based on national requirements. Resources, including music, are used well to stimulate pupils. Pupils co-operate very well together as when creating their own movements in a Year 2 folk dance and a Year 6 movement sequence based on a rain forest theme. The school benefits from a large outside tarmac, grassed area and hall facilities. These are used very well to develop pupils' skills in the subject. There are very good opportunities for pupils to engage in a range of out of school activities run by teachers and outside providers. Older pupils in the school have good opportunities to engage in adventurous outdoor activities on residential visits. The school has been very successful in both local and national competitions and has been awarded the gold 'active' mark level. Pupils have the opportunity to swim and records show that the majority are able to swim the required distance by the end of Year 6.
79. The subject is well led by a dedicated and knowledgeable co-ordinator who has worked hard and successfully to raise standards and involve a good range of outside physical education specialists in the work of the school.

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

Provision is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' personal and social development is central to all that the school does
- Pupils are taught to feel positive about themselves and to respect the differences and similarities between people
- Pupils have good opportunities to participate in the school's decision making process
- The new co-ordinator is developing this aspect of the school's work very well

### **Commentary**

80. Pupils achieve very well in their personal and social development. This is the result of the consistent and highly effective provision in this aspect and is reflected in the attitudes, behaviour and enjoyment in learning. Over the past year, the school has begun to audit the provision and plan activities in a more systematic way. Software to help the teaching of issues such as self-esteem is now being used and the school is part of the national 'on track' initiative for schools in areas where there are high crime rates. This involves specialist support from adults working with the school. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 5 are currently benefiting from this support in dealing with issues of friendship and relationships. Classes also have their own regular PSHE activities where there are good opportunities for pupils to talk about their feelings and opinions across a range of issues. Teaching about the importance of a healthy diet in science and the importance of exercise in the development of a healthy body in physical education are strong features of the provision.

81. The school is good at listening to what the pupils have to say and provides very good opportunities for this to happen. Pupil questionnaires about bullying, for example, have been used recently. All pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 have their own class council who report their findings to their representatives on the main school council. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 have older pupils to represent their views. These councils are run as adult committees with agendas and terms of reference. This also gives these pupils a valuable insight into early ideas about the nature of citizenship.

## 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>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	6
Attitudes	2
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).*