

INSPECTION REPORT

ST AUGUSTINE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Weymouth

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113837

Headteacher: Mrs P A Blyth

Lead inspector: Dr Michael Best

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th March 2004

Inspection number: 257584

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 208

School address: Hardy Avenue
Weymouth
Dorset
Postcode: DT4 0RH

Telephone number: 01305 782600
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Fr. Philip Dyson

Date of previous inspection: 23rd March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School serves a mixture of owner-occupier and rented homes in the parishes in Weymouth and on Portland. The majority of parents and carers work in the local area. When children enter the reception class in the September after their fourth birthdays, the school considers their skills and experiences to be similar to those expected for children of this age.

There are 208 pupils on roll aged between four and eleven years, all attending full-time. The school is similar in size to other primary schools in England. Pupil mobility is low. Less than 2 per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic groups. All pupils speak English as their first language. About 5 per cent of pupils have free school meals but the school believes the entitlement to be at higher.

Just under 15 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is about average. Five pupils have statements, which is much higher than average. Pupils' special educational needs vary but the majority has moderate learning difficulties. The local authority looks after no children at present.

The school's provision for religious education is reported separately under a Section 23 inspection arranged through the Diocese.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10413	Michael Best	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
10965	Patricia Edwards	Lay inspector	
3751	Trudy Cotton	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs English as an additional language
32126	Christine Weaving	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Personal, social and health education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St. Augustine's is a caring Catholic school with a strong, inclusive ethos. Standards by the end of Year 6 are good but there are shortcomings in the Foundation Stage. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school's effectiveness is satisfactory and it provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school has strong links with other schools and the community.
- Achievement by the end of Year 6 is good in English, mathematics, science, ICT and art and design.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage (the reception class) is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and their relationships with each other are very good.
- Shortcomings in accommodation adversely affect teaching and learning.
- Pupils' skills and knowledge are not systematically developed across the school.
- There is not a sharp enough match of work to pupils' needs, particularly for those of average attainment.
- The headteacher's vision for the development of the school is well focussed on raising standards and has the full support of staff and governors.

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The school has been through some considerable changes in the last five years. In nearly all respects, it has maintained the good features and addressed the issues identified in the previous report. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 6 have been maintained and there has been a significant improvement in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) both as a subject and across the curriculum. Achievement has improved in design and technology. However, in the Foundation Stage, the school has not moved on sufficiently and children are not achieving consistently high enough standards.

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	B	B
Mathematics	B	B	B	A
Science	A	A	A	A

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2

Achievement is satisfactory in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 but unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage¹. The school believes that children enter the reception class with average skills and experiences. Inspectors judge that the proportion of more able children is higher in some year groups than that found in many schools, but they acknowledge that the proportion of children with special educational needs varies significantly from year to year. Achievement in the Foundation Stage across the areas of learning² is unsatisfactory overall. Although most children are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals³ by the time they start in Year 1, they do not achieve sufficiently in important aspects of their mathematical and physical development.

¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. Key Stage 1 refers to Years 1 and 2, and Key Stage 2 to Years 3 to 6.

² The areas of learning are: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

³ The Early Learning Goals are the goals children are expected to reaching by the end of reception.

Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average in speaking, listening and reading. In Year 2, they are average in writing, mathematics and science. In Year 6, standards are above average in writing, mathematics and science. Achievement is satisfactory in these areas of the curriculum in both key stages, with pupils making good progress in the run up to the statutory tests at the end of Year 6. However, not enough pupils consistently reach the higher levels at the end of Year 2 in writing and mathematics.

Standards in ICT are above those expected nationally in Years 2 and 6, and pupils achieve well. Pupils in both key stages also achieve well in their personal, social and health education. In art and design and in music, standards are satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and good at the end of Year 6. In design and technology, geography, history and physical education, standards are in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6, and pupils achieve satisfactorily.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils' attitudes and values are good. Behaviour in and around the school is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is in line with the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is good, and sometimes very good, teaching in both key stages, particularly in areas where staff have subject expertise. The quality of teaching by support staff is good and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning, particularly in ICT. Although some good support teaching was observed in the Foundation Stage, teaching in this age group is unsatisfactory overall.

Assessment procedures are satisfactory but, at present, teachers do not make sufficient use of the information they gather to match work closely enough to pupils' learning needs. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not sharp enough and the development of pupils' skills and knowledge is not yet systematic across the school. Pupils' application and productivity are good but teachers do not provide them with enough opportunities to work independently.

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for its pupils. Opportunities for them to participate in activities outside the school day are good. Staffing and learning resources are good but the accommodation is unsatisfactory and is adversely affecting teaching and learning. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are good and positively encourage the calm working atmosphere in the school. The school's partnerships with parents, other schools and the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are satisfactory.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the development of the school and a good sense of purpose. A number of staff responsibilities have recently changed and much work is underway to develop the curriculum, assessment, teaching and learning. There are good arrangements in place for supporting the professional development of the staff. The school's commitment to inclusion and the needs of individuals is good. The effectiveness of the management of the school is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The majority of parents are well satisfied with what the school offers. They appreciate the easy access they have to staff and the school's homework arrangements. A number of parents

expressed concern about the behaviour of a small proportion of pupils. Inspectors' observations during the inspection indicate that the school's action to address these issues is effective and that other pupils' learning is not adversely affected. Pupils are happy with what the school provides. They value the very good relationships they have with each other and want to do well. They recognise the help and support they receive from staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the provision in the Foundation Stage;
- raise teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve as they move through the school;
- ensure a sharper match of work to pupils' needs, particularly for the average attainers;
- ensure the systematic development and monitoring of pupils' skills and knowledge;
- address shortcomings in the accommodation.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well at the end of Year 6. Overall, standards in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average in the 2003 National Curriculum tests.
- Children in the Foundation Stage do not achieve well enough.
- Pupils of average ability could achieve more.
- Pupils with statements of special educational need receive good support and achieve well.

Commentary

1. National Curriculum test results for pupils at the end of Year 6⁴ in 2003 show standards were above the national averages in English and mathematics, and well above the national average in science. These standards have been maintained during the past three years. Compared with similar schools⁵, these pupils' results were average in English, mathematics and science. Taking into account results over the past four years, pupils made good progress in English and very good progress in mathematics and in science by the end of Year 6 when compared with schools that achieved similar scores at the end of Year 2.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (28.2)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.1 (28.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.1 (30.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2⁶, test results in reading were similar to national averages in reading and writing, and below average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools⁷, results in reading were below average and well below average in mathematics. The proportions of pupils reaching Level 3 were below average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. Year-on-year results vary but the emerging pattern indicates that not enough pupils are reaching the higher Level 2 and Level 3 positions. In the teacher assessments in science, standards were similar to the national average. However, there were significant differences in the assessment of different aspects of the subject. In two areas of study, pupils were assessed as being in the top 5 per cent in the country, whilst their investigative and experimental skills were judged to be well below the national average.
3. Scrutiny of the school's test and assessment information over the past four years indicates that teacher assessments are not consistently close enough to test results. Inspection evidence indicates that teachers' expectations of what pupils know and can do are not sharp enough. They do not identify exactly what pupils need to learn in order to achieve the next level in their work. This applies particularly to pupils of average ability. In conjunction with the local education

⁴ The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils are expected to reach Level 4 by the end of Year 6 (the end of Key Stage 2). If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

⁵ On the basis of free school meal entitlement.

⁶ Pupils are expected to reach Level 2 by the end of Year 2 (the end of Key Stage 1). If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

⁷ On the basis of free school meal entitlement.

authority, the school set targets for Year 6 pupils to reach in the 2003 tests in English and mathematics.⁸ Although more pupils reached Level 5 in mathematics, the other targets were missed. Inspection evidence indicates that the targets set by the school for 2004 are challenging but achievable.

4. Analysis of test results at both key stages over time shows some small differences in the attainment of boys and girls in both English and mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that such differences are not particularly significant. Numbers of boys and girls in each year group are not equal and, with around 30 pupils in each year, overall numbers are statistically small.
5. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve satisfactory standards overall in their personal, social and emotional development, their communication, language and literacy development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative development. In their mathematical and physical development, they underachieve because they are not sufficiently challenged by the activities provided for them. Although most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the start of Year 1, unsatisfactory teaching is preventing many from doing better.
6. In Years 1 and 2 (Key Stage 1), inspection evidence indicates that the achievement of most higher and lower ability pupils is satisfactory but that pupils, and particularly those of average ability, could achieve more if there was a closer match of work to their needs. In Years 3 to 6 (Key Stage 2), inspectors agree with the local education authority's observations that pupils make the best progress in the run up to the statutory tests at the end of Year 6. There have been some staff changes this school year. Inspectors judge that the rate of progress is improving in the key stage. The achievement of pupils of different abilities is at least satisfactory. Inspection evidence indicates that the relatively small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as others.
7. Where pupils, particularly the more able, are challenged by the work they are asked to do, they achieve well. Discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 6 confirm their willingness to apply their knowledge and skills in different contexts and subjects. They readily demonstrate clear thinking and the capacity to pursue specific topics independently. When they have the opportunity, pupils demonstrate their capacity to make choices and take initiative, for example in trying different ways to solve a problem and in using thinking and research skills to investigate a given topic. By Year 6, many have the confidence to pursue their interests independently. However, the development of these skills is not consistent across the school and this sometimes creates a false ceiling on achievement. The school is beginning to identify gifted and talented pupils and to record and monitor their achievement over time.
8. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Those with statements of special educational need achieve well because of regular, targeted support in lessons. They have full access to the whole curriculum and there are no barriers to their learning. Pupils who have difficulties with reading, writing and mathematics are set targets for their learning, but these are not always specific enough for their individual needs. Pupils with social and emotional difficulties achieve well because of the school's positive approach to their needs. Staff have clear procedures for managing behaviour: they know pupils well and are quick to celebrate success.

⁸ These statutory targets were set in 2001 and could not be amended. The targets for 2005 and subsequent years can be amended to reflect changes in the year group.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are **good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good overall**. Attendance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and taking part in the activities provided.
- Relationships between all members of the school community are good and the school is a harmonious community.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons, around school and in the playground because of the school's high expectations for behaviour.
- There are not enough times when pupils can take responsibility and use their initiative to improve their learning.

Commentary

9. Pupils have positive attitudes to school. They want to learn and try their best. Most enjoy school, although some older pupils commented that they would like more opportunities to choose and take greater responsibility for their own learning. Pupils respond well in lessons. They listen attentively to their teachers, concentrate well and get on with their work purposefully.
10. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. The headteacher and staff have high expectations of good behaviour and consistently apply the school's behaviour policy. Little time is wasted in lessons in managing pupils' behaviour. Only a small number of pupils misbehave and only one pupil was excluded temporarily last year. The parents' questionnaires indicated some concern about pupils' behaviour at lunchtime. However, behaviour at lunchtime during the inspection was good. Pupils behave particularly well in the dining hall and older pupils help the younger ones. The dinner supervisors have had recent training in behaviour management and report that this was very useful.
11. In discussions with pupils, none expressed any concerns about bullying or harassment. Pupils feel that any concerns they have are quickly dealt with because the school has appropriate procedures to deal with any incidents that may occur. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. They show respect for people and property. Teaching and non-teaching staff set good examples and establish clear boundaries.
12. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is also good. In collective worship pupils are encouraged to reflect on what they see and hear. When they have the opportunity in lessons, pupils demonstrate a good capacity to understand and draw their own conclusions from what they learn. This was particularly evident in Year 5's research on the War Graves Commission's web site. Pupils have a good knowledge of their own cultural background through visits and visitors. Their appreciation of the wider world comes through discussion of topical issues and the study of different countries.
13. Provision for social development is good. The school is a harmonious community where pupils have very good relationships with each other. In lessons, pupils successfully work together and share ideas and equipment sensibly. Year 6 pupils gain responsibility through duties as house captains and lunchtime monitors. The school council offers pupils the opportunity to contribute to the development of the school. However, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning or to show initiative.
14. The following table shows that the school excluded one pupil for a fixed period in the last academic year. The incidence of exclusions in the school is low.

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	172	1	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

15. The level of attendance is satisfactory. It is similar to the national average but has been falling slightly for the last three years due to an increase in the number of parents taking their children on holiday during term-time. Punctuality is satisfactory. Teachers call registers at the beginning of every session and lessons start on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.1	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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. The school provides **good** care, support and guidance for its pupils. It has **good** partnerships with parents, the community and other educational institutions.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessment is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' subject knowledge is often good.
- Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- The accommodation constrains teaching and learning.
- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- Teachers' use of the assessment information available is not rigorous enough.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	3 (8%)	17 (46%)	15 (41%)	2 (5%)	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.

16. The quality of teaching, as shown in the table above, is similar to that reported at the time of the last inspection. In the interim period, there have been a number of staff changes. In addition, the school has made some significant changes to its approach to teaching and learning, with the development of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy and the improved provision for ICT. There are examples of good teaching to be found across the school, with very good teaching reflecting teachers' subject expertise coupled with the high quality input of support staff and voluntary helpers.
17. The quality of teaching by support staff is good and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning, particularly for those pupils with statements outlining their special educational needs, but also in specific subjects such as music. Teachers' command of what they teach is at least satisfactory, reflecting the positive impact of in-service training. This is particularly effective in information and communication technology where pupils' learning benefits considerably from the support and guidance of the school's ICT technician.
18. Teaching and learning in both key stages are satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, they are unsatisfactory. Although there is some good teaching from support staff, in other sessions teachers' expectations of what children can achieve, their use of teaching time and the management of behaviour have important shortcomings.
19. Staff have worked hard to develop a whole-school approach to planning. An effective, common format for yearly, termly and weekly planning is in place and is used by all staff. Teachers identify learning objectives for their lessons and mostly share these with pupils. Occasionally, these objectives refer more to content than to what pupils will learn. Objectives are regularly discussed in the closing section of lessons (the plenary), giving pupils the opportunity to review what they have achieved. Most teachers make effective use of teaching time but some lessons are too long. In some classes, there is too much reliance on worksheets.
20. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not sharp enough. In daily lessons, planned work is often too broad to meet the differing needs of pupils. Where teachers plan suitable activities for pupils of different abilities, teaching is more successful. For example, pupils with statements for their special educational needs achieve well because the expertise of support staff enables them to respond to individuals' diverse needs. However, individual education plans are not precise enough to guide learning and support future steps in planning, particularly for those pupils with difficulties with reading, writing and mathematics.
21. Teachers use a satisfactory range of teaching methods and make good efforts to include all pupils in class activities. However, in Key Stage 2, the classroom accommodation, particularly in Years 5 and 6, imposes constraints on teachers and pupils alike. Despite the lack of space and continual shifting around to get access to equipment and resources, pupils' application to work and productivity are good because of their positive attitudes and behaviour. Although the accommodation is a contributory factor, some teachers are hesitant about giving pupils enough opportunity to work independently and develop their thinking and research skills. When they do, pupils respond well.

22. Homework makes a positive contribution to the work done in school. A high proportion of parents say they are pleased with the amount of work given to their children to do at home. Nearly all pupils say they like to take work home. Many use the school's ICT suite during lunchtime or after school to help them with their work.
23. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers gather much information about pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science, including statutory and non-statutory test results. They regularly mark pupils' work and, in the best practice, provide helpful comments to aid improvement. In other subjects, they assess pupils' work at the end of a series of lessons. Their interpretation and use of this information, however, is not sharp enough.
24. Teachers identify learning objectives for their lessons but they do not have a strong enough handle on where these fit into pupils' ongoing development of skills and knowledge, and their understanding. There is not enough consistency in assessment to ensure that gaps in pupils' learning are effectively filled and that the more able pupils can be moved on at a faster rate. There is some good practice evident in the school in the constructive marking of pupils' work. Where this takes place, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum for its pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- New policies and schemes of work provide a good basis for developing the curriculum.
- There is good support for learning outside the school day.
- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- The accommodation restricts learning in some year groups.
- The match of support staff to the curriculum is good.
- Teachers are developing links between different subjects.

Commentary

25. The school provides a balanced curriculum, which includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The National Strategies for literacy and numeracy are in place and the school meets all statutory requirements, including the provision for collective worship. In personal, social and health education (PSHE) pupils discuss and reflect on important issues, both at a personal and wider level. There is a suitable programme for sex education and pupils are taught about drug and alcohol misuse. Good links with nursery settings and secondary schools ensure successful induction and transfer.
26. Since the last inspection, the school was awarded Beacon status for its work on developing pupils' writing through discussion. The provision in ICT is much improved. Regular lessons in the computer suite and use of interactive whiteboards are boosting pupils' interest and skills in lessons. Planned links between ICT, English and geography enable pupils to develop and use their knowledge and skills across the subjects.
27. The school has adopted an effective common format for its subject policies and schemes of work. Subject co-ordinators are currently working to incorporate assessment procedures into teachers' medium- and short-term plans. Teachers have yet to establish the smooth and systematic development of pupils' skills and knowledge. Although the school's curriculum in the Foundation Stage features the six areas of learning leading to the Early Learning Goals, it does not take enough account of children's prior attainment and needs. The provision for children's mathematical and physical development is unsatisfactory.

28. The curriculum is inclusive of all school groups. There is good provision for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need through targeted work in lessons and the expertise of support staff. Provision for other pupils needing support with their learning is satisfactory, but work is not planned consistently enough to meet the different levels of ability in each class in everyday lessons.
29. The school provides good support for learning outside of the school day, including residential visits and a wide range of art, sport and computer clubs, which enrich learning. As this is the only Catholic school in the area, many pupils travel to and from school by coach. The school does its best to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to take part in activities, often by providing these at lunchtimes.
30. There are sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers. There is a good match of learning support staff to the curriculum and they provide good support for pupils in lessons. In the last two years, the school has undertaken a rigorous appraisal of its learning resources and discarded those no longer required. The quality of the new resources is good and teachers make effective use of what is available.
31. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. Although the amount of floor space is adequate for the number of pupils, the size of some classrooms is adversely affecting teaching and learning in some areas of the curriculum. In Years 5 and 6, cramped conditions make it difficult for pupils to undertake work in practical activities, such as art and design, design and technology and science. In other classrooms, specialist equipment for pupils with special educational needs has to be continually moved and stored away. The furniture in the Year 6 classroom is too small for pupils and there is little room for manoeuvre around the classroom.
32. When it is necessary for pupils with special needs to follow specific programs, such teaching often has to take place in corridors or cloakroom areas. The main hall is a thoroughfare from one part of the school to another. This puts constraints on the use of apparatus during physical education lessons. The computer suite and library are based in the same room and this limits access for pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The care and support provided for pupils is good and contributes effectively to the calm working atmosphere.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a caring, Christian environment where teachers know their pupils well.
- Parents are happy with the school's induction programme.
- Where established, *Circle Time*⁹ is well used.
- The school council contributes well to the work of the school.
- The school takes its responsibilities regarding health and safety very seriously.

Commentary

33. The school continues to provide a caring, Christian environment with good support for its pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and value them as individuals. Pupils have good and trusting relationships with adults working in the school. The personal development of pupils is closely monitored and staff make every effort to improve pupils' self esteem by acknowledging their achievement.

⁹ During *Circle Time* pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption.

34. *Circle Time* is well used in some classes to encourage discussion and the value of individual contribution. The school council provides a useful forum for pupils to express their views and opinions about a wide range of issues. It meets fortnightly, draws up its own agenda and keeps detailed minutes.
35. Child protection procedures are well understood by staff and training for staff with responsibility for child protection issues is up to date. Arrangements for first aid and informing parents of any accidents and the treatment given are effective. The school takes health and safety seriously and the governors carry out regular risk assessments. All safety checks are up to date.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents, the community and local secondary schools is **good** and adds to pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are happy with the information they receive from the school.
- Parent teacher consultations are held monthly.
- Pupils' annual progress reports contain limited information on what pupils need to do to improve.
- The school has good links with the parishes it serves.
- The partnership between the school and the local secondary schools effectively contributes to pupils' learning.

Commentary

36. The school continues to have a good partnership with its parents and the community. The majority of parents are happy with the information they receive in newsletters and at monthly parent teacher consultation meetings. The school prospectus provides much useful information and the annual report to parents from the governing body is detailed. The majority of parents feel comfortable about approaching staff with any questions or concerns they may have.
37. Pupils' annual progress reports contain detailed information on work covered, some information on what pupils know and can do, but limited information on what needs to be done to improve and ways in which parents might help them at home. The majority of parents and pupils are happy with the amount of homework given and the home school agreement successfully supports the school's homework policy. Staff appreciate the regular help given by parents and volunteers in class and with clubs, such as art and athletics. The Parents' Association assists with fund raising and raising considerable funds through, for example, Christmas and summer fairs and bingo.
38. The school has forged good links with parents of children with special educational needs. They share targets set for learning, follow the progress their children make and are supportive of work undertaken.
39. Parents are consulted on a range of issues, for example, visits made by pupils to add to their learning, eating healthy snacks and after-school provision. In reply to the questionnaire, parents say they are happy with the school's induction programme. This allows children to settle quickly and feel secure in their new surroundings. Parents are invited to an induction meeting with all the reception class staff, senior teachers and the headteacher. However, the school has limited links with pre-school settings because of the wide area from which it draws its pupils.
40. The school's partnership with the local community contributes well to pupils' learning through visits to the parish churches and places of interest, such as Corfe Castle and the museums in Dorchester. Local businesses help sponsor the school calendar and various fundraising events. The partnership with the local secondary school effectively enriches learning by specialist teaching and curriculum links in physical education, science, modern foreign languages, mathematics and a transition project undertaken by pupils in Year 6.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are all satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's purposeful leadership is successfully leading the school through a period of change.
- The school's commitment to include pupils from all different groups in all that it offers is good.
- Governors work closely with the headteacher and each other to realise the school's aspirations.
- The school systematically identifies its shortcomings and its aspirations and sets achievable goals to address these.
- Performance management is successfully established in the school and arrangements for the professional development of staff are good.
- The day-to-day administration of the school is good.

Commentary

41. Since her appointment just over three years ago, the headteacher has successfully maintained and built upon the school's strong Catholic ethos. All members of the school community value the calm, friendly and supportive atmosphere in which they work. The headteacher has a good vision for the development of the school. She gives firm direction and motivates staff and pupils. The new management team is successfully developing its role and senior managers lead the school's strong commitment to including all pupils in every aspect of its work.
42. Many subject leaders have only recently assumed their responsibilities and are developing their new roles across the school. New subject policies and schemes of work are in place, reflecting the requirements of the National Curriculum 2000. Alongside this, the school is developing its collection and use of assessment information and working to improve the quality of teaching and learning. A start has been made on monitoring the implementation of these new arrangements. The school rightly celebrates the success of new subject leadership in developing its ICT provision.
43. Performance Management is used to help staff develop their expertise. The school makes good use of in-service training for staff development. There has been an above average amount of staff absence and turnover of staff in the last two years that has slowed the implementation of new initiatives. Although shortcomings in the Foundation Stage have been identified and supported, the school's provision has not moved on sufficiently since the last inspection. Classroom support staff are much valued. There are good arrangements in place for their ongoing professional development. The school offers placements for teachers in training and there is good support for staff new to the school. Day-to-day routines are well established and the school runs smoothly. Administrative staff undertake their duties effectively.
44. Most members of the governing body are parishioners and many have long-standing links with the school as parents or former staff. They are responding positively to their changing role since the appointment of the present headteacher. Governors have a working knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and a corporate understanding of the school's priorities. They work well with the headteacher and each other. The headteacher and other staff provide reports to the governors about the progress the school is making in relation to the priorities in its improvement plan. The school fulfils all its statutory duties. There is a clear commitment to achieving the principles of best value in all aspects of the school's work. Financial procedures are well established.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	514,343	Balance from previous year	71,820
Total expenditure	517,066	Balance carried forward to the next	69,097
Expenditure per pupil	2,2984		

45. The balances shown in the table are significantly above those recommended. However, these balances include monies accrued from various sources for the school's current building programme and funds connected with its work with other schools as part of its Beacon status. Overall, the school maintains its reserves within recommended limits. The school provides satisfactory value for money.
46. The school improvement plan covers a four-year period. It builds effectively on the school's evaluations of what it does well and highlights the most pressing areas for development. A central thread in the school's strategic planning is the development of the staff team, their individual roles and responsibilities and the school's approach to teaching and learning. The format of the plan includes suitable timescales, costings and arrangements for monitoring the progress of initiatives. In common with other schools in the area, St. Augustine's faces a fall in the number of pupils. It aims, however, to meet this challenge by developing closer links with parents through the development of pre-school (nursery) provision. Central to all its plans for the future is the completion of the current building programme, which is designed to provide the additional classroom space and facilities necessary to bring the school into the 21st century.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **unsatisfactory**.

Commentary

47. Children enter reception class in the September after their fourth birthday. After four preliminary visits, they attend for three whole days each week for the first term and then full-time from January. Children come from a wide variety of privately-run nursery settings. When they enter the reception class, many have above average skills and experiences.
48. Children do not achieve as well as they could and should, particularly in their mathematical and physical development. Although teaching in small group work is often good, enabling children to make gains in their understanding, it is unsatisfactory in other lessons.
49. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory. Planning is based on the six areas of learning and identifies a range of activities. Although these are often interesting and relevant to the wider age group, many children are not challenged sufficiently because planning does not take account of their particular needs and prior learning.
50. The reception class environment is large and bright. However, as reported at the time of the last inspection, there is no fenced outdoor area and children do not use large equipment enough.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and areas for improvement

- Children have positive attitudes to school.
- When activities are not well matched to individual children's needs, their behaviour deteriorates.

Commentary

51. Children settle into the reception class well because there are established routines and interesting things for them to do and to learn. Planned activities encourage them to play and co-operate together from the start. The children are friendly and learn to share equipment without making a fuss. Their achievement is satisfactory and children are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year.
52. Teaching is satisfactory overall but there are some shortcomings. Children are often directed to an activity and would benefit from more opportunities to choose for themselves. Sometimes the children are kept on the carpet for far too long and they become restless. A number of children still find it hard to put up their hands and want to call out. They do not respond readily when asked to tidy up.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills through role-play.
- Children enjoy handling books and can retell stories.

- Children make good progress in their early writing but many form letters incorrectly and some have a poor pencil grip.
- Adults do not always ask sufficiently open-ended questions to encourage pupils to explain what they know and think.

Commentary

53. Many children speak confidently but staff do not always challenge them sufficiently by asking them more open-ended questions. Children enjoy looking at books. There is a good emphasis on learning letter sounds and names. When required to sit and listen for a long time, many find it hard to maintain the focus of their concentration. Achievement is satisfactory and children are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the end of the school year.
54. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Staff prepare a good range of activities and children work well in the role-play area, such as when preparing for a picnic. They learn to negotiate, initiate ideas and sustain their concentration. The good quality of support for small groups of children helps them to focus on particular skills. Many children can write a simple sentence but the writing area has more activities for copying or tracing than for encouraging free writing. Not all children write their names correctly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and areas for improvement

- Children do not have enough opportunities to try out things for themselves.
- Work is not well matched to the needs of the children and, consequently, children are not challenged and do not make satisfactory progress.
- Children are often directed to activities, rather than developing independence by choosing from an appropriate range.

Commentary

55. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory because the children are not challenged sufficiently and work is not well matched to their abilities. A lesson that started with a session on counting to ten did not challenge the children, many of whom could already count beyond 20. Clear explanation by the teacher taught the children how to measure with bricks, but closed questioning did not encourage children to think for themselves. Children effectively shape play-dough to develop their understanding of *longer* and *shorter* but some are already confident with these concepts.
56. Support staff work very successfully with groups of children, for example, ordering pieces of string by length. Staff provide a suitable range of activities to promote mathematical understanding, but children are directed to one particular activity, rather than choosing from a selection. In such circumstances, children become bored because they are not challenged and lose interest in the lesson. Although most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning, they do not achieve as well as they should.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and areas for development

- Children use computers confidently.
- Children make the best progress when they take an active part in activities.
- Children are enthusiastic to learn about what is going on around them.
- Children have a good general knowledge and can talk with confidence about their experiences.

Commentary

57. Staff use information and communication technology well to enhance learning in the reception class. Children's keyboard skills indicate that they are confident for their age in using computers. In a lesson in the computer suite, they logged on, knew how to use the tab key and back space and successfully found their name from a list of files. Their attainment in this work is good and reflects the good teaching from support staff.
58. In other aspects of this area of learning, teaching is satisfactory and children achieve satisfactory standards. A lesson on routes in the playground really engaged a small group of children who could talk through the route and explain their diagram. Literacy work on *A Train Ride* developed through role-play, with children making tickets and preparing for a picnic. They know America is a place but thought they could get there by train. By the end of the year, most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and areas for development

- Children have very limited access to the outside area.
- Children handle tools and equipment safely.
- Many children's fine motor skills are uncoordinated and they hold pencils incorrectly.

Commentary

59. Teaching and learning in this area are unsatisfactory. There are too few planned opportunities for children to engage in outside play. The use of tricycles and scooters inside the building is inappropriate. Although children have good opportunities to squeeze, roll, break and stretch play-dough, a number do not hold pencils correctly. Many children form letters incorrectly and this is not always corrected. Children do not make enough progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

60. It was not possible to see sufficient activities in this area of learning to make a judgement about provision. Inspectors sampled teachers' planning and work on display and spoke with children about their work in this area of learning. They play a range of tuned and untuned musical instruments and know a range of songs. They successfully name colours, mix paint and use collage materials. They enjoy listening to, and retelling, stories. The available evidence indicates that children achieve satisfactorily in this area of learning and they are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good.
- Standards in reading are above the national average.
- Standards of handwriting and presentation are not high enough.
- Work is not planned consistently enough for different ability groups.
- There are some good examples of literacy and writing skills being used in other subjects but such practice is not consistent.

Commentary

61. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in speaking, listening and reading are likely to reach levels above those found nationally. Attainment in writing is average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6. Since the previous inspection, standards in reading have improved by Year 2, but standards of handwriting and presentation have dipped across the school. Skills are not taught in a consistent and systematic way as pupils move through the school.
62. All pupils are included and encouraged to contribute in lessons. However, scrutiny of pupils' written work shows teachers are less effective in planning work for different levels of ability. Higher attaining pupils achieve well because of their good independent writing skills and challenging work in lessons. However, work for pupils attaining broadly average levels is of a similar level of challenge to that provided for other pupils and is not well matched to their needs.
63. Pupils with statemented provision for their special educational needs make good progress towards the specific targets set for their learning. The difference in attainment between boys and girls is not marked; they co-operate well and work together in similarly matched ability groups. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make similar progress to other members of the class.
64. In speaking and listening, pupils develop confidence and competence as speakers because teachers value and extend pupils' speaking skills through a wide range of purposeful experiences. These include discussions about the use of persuasive language in advertisements and the use of role-play about a *Bear Hunt* to encourage pupils to express their feelings. Effective use of feedback (plenary) sessions enables pupils to share their work, make suggestions for improvement and listen to the ideas of others.
65. By Year 2, pupils read accurately, fluently and with understanding. They help others find out the meaning of unknown words by *splitting them up* but few use the whole sentence structure to make good guesses. The majority enjoy reading and, with the exception of some average attaining pupils who are capable of reading harder books, read at an appropriate level of challenge. However, a good number are confused about the difference between fiction and non-fiction books.
66. By Year 6, pupils are keen readers who read in a mature and expressive way. They read between the lines to enjoy a deeper level of understanding and meaning. There is depth and range in their choice of books, with poetry a particular favourite. Pupils enjoy exploring stories and characters in friendship groups, rather than in group reading lessons. Authors such as J. K. Rowling and poets such as Ben Zephariah have whetted their appetites and pupils would like to read sets of their books in school. In all year groups, well-targeted help from support staff enables pupils who have difficulties with their reading in literacy lessons to achieve their best.

67. By Year 2, higher attaining pupils join their ideas together, structure stories and non-fictional writing successfully and many are likely to reach the higher levels in the forthcoming National Curriculum tests. Average attaining and less able pupils have underdeveloped handwriting and spelling skills and this slows down the pace and quality of their independent work. By Year 6, writing is purposeful for all ability groups and teachers provide a wide range of writing experiences. Pupils' work benefits from studying models of good writing by famous authors and poets and from the good subject knowledge of their teachers. However, there is less evidence of organising, reading through and improving longer pieces of original writing in pupils' books. Handwriting and presentation remain untidy.
68. Teaching and learning are good. A strength of the good teaching is the way in which teachers value and encourage pupils' contributions in lessons and this in turn ensures a positive and confident attitude towards learning. A success has been the use of *conferencing* to assess and guide learning in writing. However, teachers do not make sufficient use of the information they gain from assessment to help plan different levels of work in lessons. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, who respond well to their high expectations of behaviour. Work is marked consistently and is starting to guide improvement.
69. The new subject leaders have inherited a clear plan of action aimed at achieving greater consistency in teaching and learning. At present, the library and computer suite are accommodated in the same room and this reduces the opportunities for pupils to undertake independent research and study.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

70. The school is developing some good links between English and other subjects, which enable pupils to practise and develop their literacy skills across the curriculum. On display in school is a range of purposeful writing in history. This relates to the study of World War II and reflects the good learning undertaken in literacy and history lessons. In lessons, younger pupils use their ICT skills and geographical knowledge to help them write about the travels of *Barnaby Bear*, whilst older pupils create a magazine related to the journey of river. However, such practice is not consistent and pupils' written work sometimes fails to reflect the quality of their subject knowledge and understanding.
71. Good speaking and reading skills support research in history and geography lessons and enable pupils to work out and understand technical vocabulary in science.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in recalling number facts.
- Year 6 pupils achieve well in their preparations for national tests.
- Mental mathematics is not always challenging enough for the more able pupils.
- Pupils find it difficult to adopt different strategies in their calculations, including 'shortcuts'.

Commentary

72. At the end of Year 6, standards are above the national average. and similar to the national average at the end of Year 2. These reflect the findings of the previous inspection. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests, results were below average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, rising to good at the end of Year 6.
73. The standard of pupils' work seen at the time of inspection is similar to the results of the national tests, except that pupils in the current Year 2 are on course to achieve a higher level than last year's pupils. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of number, shape and measures

but they are not confident enough in trying out different ways of using this information for solving problems. Growing teacher confidence in using the National Numeracy Strategy in this key stage has led to more focussed practical work and less reliance on commercial workbooks. Staff are starting to challenge pupils to think more for themselves.

74. By Year 6 most pupils have a good understanding of computation, shape and measures. Test results are carefully analysed and key weaknesses identified. These form the basis for the *booster* classes and enable teachers to help pupils to raise their standards. Pupils benefit from small group teaching in *booster classes*, which particularly helps them to develop the application of what they know to different situations.
75. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and, overall, good in Years 3 to 6. Throughout the school, teachers demonstrate working methods to the whole class clearly, asking questions to ensure pupils' understanding and help them recall their previous learning. Support staff are well deployed to meet the needs of the less able and those with special educational needs. They often provide additional resources and individually prepared materials to help pupils. Pupils show good levels of concentration and are keen to achieve the right answer. The good working atmosphere and pupils' attention to class rules helps them to think clearly and consult adults when they need help.
76. Although pupils work competently with straightforward number calculations, many find it difficult to apply their knowledge flexibly. They do not always notice patterns in numbers that might help them to complete their calculations more quickly. In Year 4, pupils' skills in this area are improving because of good teaching of these skills. Pupils are becoming increasingly confident in looking for and considering alternatives. Pupils' use of correct mathematical notation improves as they move through the school, but written calculations are sometimes untidy and this affects their accuracy. Teachers are not consistent in the challenge they provide for pupils in the mental mathematics sessions. There is not enough attention paid to helping pupils systematically develop different ways of solving problems.
77. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The arrangements for the leadership of the subject have recently changed. Staff have identified areas for development and are in the process of drawing up plans for action.

Mathematics across the curriculum

78. There is satisfactory use of pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects. Pupils' work shows that they frequently use number and measuring skills in science and in design and technology. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are not flexible enough in applying their number skills to different situations. In Years 3 to 6, their confidence increases and there are more opportunities for pupils to use their skills in, for example, science.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and areas for improvement

- Achievement by the end of Year 6 is good.
- Pupils make good use of scientific vocabulary and terms.
- Pupils' skills in investigative and experimental work are not consistently developed as they move through the school.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not independently plan or record their work often enough.

Commentary

79. Standards are above the national average at the end of Year 6 and similar to the national average at the end of Year 2. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection and the results of the 2003 National Curriculum test and assessments. Pupils' achievement is good at

the end of Year 6 but only satisfactory by Year 2. This is because there is not enough emphasis in Years 1 and 2 on developing pupils' investigative and experimental skills. The teacher assessments in last year's National Curriculum assessments bears this out. Pupils reached high standards in the areas of life processes and living things, and materials and their properties, but well below national standards in their investigative and experimental work.

80. Teaching and learning are good in Key Stage 2. The most effective lessons are very well organised, have clear learning objectives and set challenging work for all pupils. In these lessons, pupils collaborate well and rise to the challenge. Pupils in Year 4 use an investigation planning board to good effect and understand how to make a fair test. In Year 6, *booster classes* are effective in raising further pupils' attainment by concentrating on specific topics in ability groups.
81. Year 6 pupils successfully designed experiments to discover how well different materials muffled sound. The pupils enjoyed this practical lesson. They achieved well because they were thoroughly engaged and motivated. Pupils' work indicates that teachers make helpful, evaluative comments and pose questions for the pupils to consider. They undertake a good range of experiments, make sensible predictions and write logical conclusions. This practice is not, however, consistent throughout the key stage.
82. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Key Stage 1. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils successfully identified the different properties of a range of materials. They used a wide range of vocabulary to sort them into categories such as reflective, transparent and flexible. However, pupils rarely plan or record their work independently. As a rule, they complete worksheets and often all write the same sentences.
83. The leadership and management of science are satisfactory. The new subject leader has identified areas to develop, including a review of the scheme of work. She is not yet involved in the observation of lessons and the giving of feedback to teachers.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and direction.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved since the last inspection.
- Pupils' application of ICT across the curriculum is good.
- Pupils of all capabilities achieve well in acquiring basic skills in ICT.

Commentary

84. Standards in ICT are above those expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. At both key stages, pupils are knowledgeable about the different applications of ICT in everyday life and enthusiastic about using equipment.
85. Pupils achieve well. Pupils independently log on to the school's network and open programs. They use the mouse and keyboard confidently. They develop word-processing skills and successfully incorporate text and graphics to make a presentation. Pupils make good use of the Internet to access information and effectively use databases to process and present information. Across the school, pupils develop enthusiastic attitudes and enjoy their work. They collaborate well.
86. Teaching and learning are good, especially in the ICT suite, where the focus of the work is primarily learning basic skills in the subject. Learning is well supported by a very effective technician and pupils seldom have to wait for assistance. Pupils are managed very well and lessons progress at a good pace. Lesson objectives are made clear. Pupils with special

educational needs are fully involved in lessons. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and pupils acquire skills quickly because staff are confident in what they teach. They help pupils to see the purpose of work in ICT.

87. The school has a well-equipped ICT suite with 15 networked computers, good software, recording machines and a digital camera. Staff use these resources well to support pupils' learning. The school has two interactive white boards and teachers are being trained in their use. Classroom computers are also on the network but they are not always used to their full potential, sometimes because of the restrictions on space in classrooms.
88. The subject leader is knowledgeable and provides good direction for the subject. This has resulted in very good improvements since the last inspection, when ICT was a weakness. He has done much to improve curriculum plans and resources and has provided training and support for staff. The current action plan provides a very good basis for further improvement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

89. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is good. Pupils in Year 5 use the Internet in class to support their history work on World War II. In a Year 4 geography lesson, good use was made of the interactive whiteboard to develop knowledge and understanding of basic map skills. Good use is made of the digital camera across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

Inspectors sampled pupils' work in history and geography. It was not possible to see enough lessons to make judgements about provision in these subjects. Religious education is reported in a separate report by the Diocese.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy history lessons and are keen to find out more.
- By Year 6, pupils have a good depth of knowledge in history and geography.
- Written work does not always reflect the good learning in lessons.
- Skills assessment is underdeveloped in geography.

Commentary

90. Year 2 pupils reach the levels expected nationally in history and geography. By Year 6, pupils attain the nationally expected levels in geography, but attainment is above national expectations in history.
91. In **history**, the curriculum follows national guidelines and there is relevant coverage. In discussions, Year 2 pupils show a developing understanding of the passing of time. They recall in detail events such as the Great Fire of London and begin to understand the reasons for Remembrance Day. Their achievement is satisfactory. By Year 6, pupils successfully sift fact from fiction and study Victorian society and World War II in depth. They compare *then* and *now* when considering the plight of evacuees and of Victorian working children and make use of good resources to produce balanced arguments and draw conclusions. As a result, their achievement is good.
92. In **geography**, the curriculum is adequately covered, but knowledge and skills have not been assessed and built upon progressively over time. Achievement is satisfactory. Younger pupils enjoy the adventures of *Barnaby Bear*, learning about different places and means of travel as he visits different places in the United Kingdom and further a field. They make sound comparisons between their own home and environment and those of an Indian village. By Year 6, pupils have a good depth of knowledge about the British Isles. In discussion, pupils' good understanding of physical and human geography is evident in their knowledge of coastline and

mountain regions. However, written work is disappointing and does not reflect the quality of pupils' learning.

93. The quality of leadership in these subjects is satisfactory. Assessment in both subjects is at an early stage.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Inspectors sampled pupils' work in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education during the inspection. It was not possible to see enough lessons to make judgements about provision in these subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good eye for patterns in art and design.
- Pupils successfully evaluate their products in design and technology.
- Singing is good and pupils demonstrate a good sense of rhythm.
- Pupils successfully identify how they can improve their work in physical education.

Commentary

94. In **art and design**, standards are similar to those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils experiment with shape and colour and use pictures and photographs effectively to work in different styles and forms. Standards by Year 6 are above those expected nationally and achievement is good: pupils spend time at lunchtimes and after school to extend the quality and scope of their work. Year 3 pupils work with papier mache to create litter monsters. Year 4 pupils successfully use different techniques and materials to decorate Greek pottery. They have a good eye for repeated patterns and reproduce these accurately. In Years 5 and 6, pupils gain inspiration for still life work from their visit to a sculpture park and from viewing the work of well-known artists. Work on moving images and tonal painting reflects pupils' appreciation of pattern and their capacity to reflect meaningfully on what they see.
95. In **design and technology**, standards of work by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those expected nationally and achievement is satisfactory. From their observations of vehicles, younger pupils design and build moving vehicles using wheels and axles. Older pupils use control technology effectively to make a moving toy mechanism. They draw up helpful diagrams to show how it works but do not consistently use measurements on their plans. Their evaluations successfully identify the problems they encountered in their work and how they went about solving these. Control technology is effectively covered through pupils' work on fairgrounds.
96. In **music**, standards by Year 6 are above those expected nationally and achievement is good. Pupils sing well, follow an accompaniment accurately and maintain a good sense of rhythm. When composing, pupils co-operate well and have good regard for beginnings and endings and for mood. They handle instruments well and are developing a good sense of performance. Learning is well led by the school's music specialist. By the end of Year 2, pupils sing tunefully. It was not possible to observe any lessons in the key stage but standards look similar to those expected nationally and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
97. In **physical education**, standards are similar to those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement is satisfactory. When Year 4 pupils practise and develop their gymnastic skills, they work well together, identifying what they need to do to improve. In dance in Year 2, pupils co-operate well to produce some *strong* shapes. They effectively link different movements and respond well to advice about how to improve and develop their work.
98. The leadership and management of these subjects are satisfactory. Subject leaders are currently focusing on developing assessment practice.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Inspectors sampled pupils' work in personal, social and health education. Not enough lessons were seen to make a judgement about provision.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The consistent promotion of school rules by all staff.
- Pupils have a high respect for the views, opinions, contributions and successes of others.
- Pupils have a keen interest in a range of environmental issues.
- The school council provides a forum for pupils to have their voice heard and be involved in a range of issues.

Commentary

99. Pupils achieve well because personal and social education is part-and-parcel of their everyday learning in school. A well-planned programme of work throughout the school ensures that pupils effectively develop their knowledge and understanding. All staff value the suggestions and contributions of all pupils during class discussions. Provision is strengthened by the good relationships that adults have with pupils and the positive role models that they provide.
100. Pupils understand the need to look after the world in which they live and to care for themselves and for others. Year 6 pupils have prepared balanced arguments on *Windfarms for Portland Harbour* and a group of Year 5 pupils are preparing a presentation to the school council about the wildlife habitats around the school being destroyed if plans for house building are given approval. Younger pupils learn about citizenship through their geography work with *Barnaby Bear*. Pupils run a travel agency in their role-play area, issuing tickets and making passports.
101. A school council meets fortnightly and takes its own minutes. Pupils make decisions that affect the way the school is run, for example discussing the lack of equipment for use at lunchtimes, which has now been addressed. Through this forum, they have a growing understanding of decision-making in school. The school also has a system of prefects, house captains and monitors that help pupils to develop teamwork and personal skills.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

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

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

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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