

INSPECTION REPORT

ST CUTHBERT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Englefield Green

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125209

Headteacher: Mrs R Wilder

Lead inspector: Mr G R Logan

Dates of inspection: 24–26 February 2004

Inspection number: 257628

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4–11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	194
School address:	Bagshot Road Englefield Green Surrey
Postcode:	TW20 0RY
Telephone number:	01784 434128
Fax number:	01784 477270
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	The Hon. David Elfer QC
Date of previous inspection:	18 April 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School serves two parishes in the Englefield Green area of Surrey. The school was founded by the Marist Sisters. The present building was opened in 1963. Although there is some diversity in the intake and a number of pupils live in social housing, the majority come from more advantaged backgrounds. There are 194 pupils at present and the school is of average size in relation to many primary schools. Almost all pupils are from White European backgrounds, with around five per cent of pupils of mixed-race or British-Indian heritage. No pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language. A below average proportion of pupils (eight per cent) have special educational needs, for mainly language difficulties. One of these has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. This is an extremely stable community – only around three per cent of pupils leave or join the school over the course of the year, other than at the end of Year 6. This is much lower than is often found in schools nationally. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals (one per cent) is well below the national average (19 per cent). The profile of pupils' attainment when they enter the school is above average in most years.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11810	Mr G R Logan	Lead inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education English as an additional language
9092	Mr R Elam	Lay inspector	
32177	Mr S Curran	Team inspector	Science Geography History Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage
32636	Mrs G Hepworth	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd.

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school. The ethos is excellent. Standards are high. Pupils achieve very well as a result of the very good teaching. The school successfully includes all its pupils and meets their needs very well. The headteacher and governors have a clear vision for the school and work effectively together to ensure that the school has a challenging agenda for further improvement. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are high and pupils achieve very well. Standards in music are a strength. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support.
- Foundation Stage provision has improved and is now good.
- The pupils are delightful. They have excellent attitudes to learning, behave very well and are enthusiastic. Their personal development is very good. The Catholic Christian ethos of the school is a significant strength.
- The curriculum is good. Extra-curricular provision is very good. The oldest pupils are very well-prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils are cared for well.
- The partnership between the school and its parents is very good.
- The leadership of the headteacher is good. The governing body is effective.
- Although assessment is good overall, there are inconsistencies in the approach to individual target-setting for pupils and some variations in the rigour and quality of marking.

The school has made good progress since the inspection in 2002. The provision for pupils with special educational needs, and its management, is now very good. There has been steady but significant improvement in the Foundation Stage. High standards in the core subjects have been sustained. Standards have risen in several of the foundation subjects. The progress made by all pupils is a significant strength.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Children now in Reception are on the way to achieving the goals set for them. Many will exceed the expected level by the end of the Foundation Stage. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards are well above average in music and above average in several of the foundation subjects.

Pupils achieve very well. Those with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good support they receive and the high expectations which staff have of all pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are excellent. These factors contribute significantly to their learning. Their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Relationships are excellent; behaviour is very good. Attendance is excellent; punctuality is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is very good.

Teaching is very good overall. Although teaching is best overall in Years 1 and 5, there is an underlying quality and consistency to teaching across the school which enables pupils to make very good, and sustained, progress. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. Expectations are high. Good assessment procedures are used effectively. Pupils learn to evaluate their work accurately. They have a mature approach and work well, both independently and with others. Planning to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs is very effective. Learning support staff are very well prepared and very effective. The curriculum is good and provides a broad range of experiences for pupils. Extra-curricular opportunities are very good. Pupils receive good care and support. Satisfactory induction procedures help the youngest children to settle quickly. Child protection procedures are good. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. The school has a very good partnership with parents. Links with other schools are satisfactory; links with the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good.

The headteacher has worked effectively to stabilise the school and to implement a range of improvements. In spite of some instability of staffing, several aspects of the school have significantly improved, in particular the Foundation Stage, the overall quality of teaching and the school's partnership with parents. The school evaluates its work thoroughly and makes good use of available data and expertise. Governors manage the school efficiently. Statutory requirements are met. School administration is very efficient.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are happy with the school. They are pleased that it is now functioning effectively, that their children are cared for well and that standards are high. The level of parental involvement in the life of the school is good. Pupils are very pleased with their school. They enjoy lessons. They feel very safe and that adults are readily available to help them if things go wrong.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The progress made since 2002 has been good. There are no significant key issues. However, the school should give attention to this developmental point:

- Work for greater consistency in the quality of marking of pupils' work and in the identification and monitoring of pupils' individual targets for improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is very good. Currently, standards are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Foundation Stage provision has improved and is now good.
- Standards are above those normally found in most of the foundation subjects. Standards in music are a significant strength.
- Pupils are making very good progress, as a result of very good teaching. High expectations enable all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to do well.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum, although satisfactory overall, varies between year groups.

Commentary

1. The 2002 inspection identified standards by the end of Year 6 as high in English, mathematics and science. Science, in particular, benefited from rigorous teaching in Year 6, significantly boosting the sound standards found in the rest of the school. Standards in most foundation subjects were similar to those seen in most schools, with strengths in music and some good work in art and design, geography and history. Children made sound progress in the Foundation Stage.
2. In spite of changes in staffing, the high standards evident in 2002 have been sustained well and have improved in some areas. Pupils' achievement is now very good. Over a three year period to 2003, national test performance at Year 6 has been well above average or very high in almost all subjects. In 2003, standards in English, mathematics and science were very high in relation to schools nationally and overall performance put St Cuthbert's in the top five per cent of schools across the country. A very high proportion of pupils achieved the challenging Level 5 in all three subjects. In relation to similar schools, standards in English were very high and were well above average in mathematics and science. Analysis of tracking data indicates that pupils make well above average progress between Years 2 and 6 – a significant achievement in this context, given the already high standards attained at the end of Year 2.
3. Standards in Year 2 in 2003 were the highest of the last three years. Performance in reading, writing and mathematics was very high in relation both to schools nationally and to similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the challenging Level 3 was also very high in all subjects.
4. Attainment on entry to the school is above average for most year groups. However, although some children are very able, there is wide variation within these relatively small year groups. A small number of pupils across the school have significant levels of special educational need. This is a particularly stable community, with a low level of mobility.
5. On balance, girls have, over time, tended to perform better than boys at Year 6 in English and mathematics, but not in science. However, there was no indication during the inspection that this was a significant issue at present. Both groups are making similar rates of progress. Achievement for pupils with special educational needs is, like the others, very good, because of the very good support they receive and work that is well-planned to meet their needs.
6. The school provides well for the needs of pupils identified as gifted or talented, offering a range of sporting and musical opportunities in addition to mainstream academic subjects. A small number of parents feel that the school unduly favours able pupils at the expense of

those in the average-attaining band. The inspection team does not support this view. While the school fulfils its obligations well and effectively meets the needs of the more able through high quality teaching, it is evident that all pupils benefit from the culture of high expectation. Available data indicates that pupils from all ability groups are achieving very well in this school and at a level above that normally found.

Foundation Stage

- All children in Reception have had some pre-school experience and most are well prepared for entry to school. They benefit from secure induction procedures and settle well into school routines. Good teaching and very good planning and assessment procedures ensure that children make good progress and achieve well. Most children in the current group are on the way to exceed the Early Learning Goals in all areas. Provision in personal and social education is particularly good and almost all children are likely to achieve well above the expected level in that area. Weaknesses in Foundation Stage provision identified at earlier inspections have been largely resolved, though the limitations of the accommodation remain a constraint.

Years 1 and 2

- Inspection evidence suggests that standards by the end of Year 2 in 2004 are likely to be well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This is slightly lower than the standards achieved in 2003, but reflects the overall profile of the current group, which has a lower percentage of very able pupils. Standards were judged to be above average in all of the foundation subjects where evidence was available. Underlying literacy and numeracy skills are strong and these are used well in subjects across the curriculum. Pupils' speaking skills are developed very effectively. The provision for personal, social and health education is very good, enabling pupils to think carefully about relationships, rights and obligations.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	19.3 (17.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	17.9 (15.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	19.3 (16.9)	16.3 (16.5)

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

Years 3 – 6

- Currently, attainment in Year 6 is well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Again, this suggests a slight decline on performance in 2003, but accurately reflects the profile of this cohort. A significant proportion of the group is considered to have the potential for higher attainment. Standards are well above average in art and design and in music (a strength of the school), and above average overall in all other foundation subjects. Pupils achieve very well overall across the curriculum. High expectations and very good progress are evident in all year groups in the juniors, but are particularly evident in Year 5 where the teaching is especially rigorous and challenging, and progress reflects this.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	31.0 (27.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	30.3 (28.7)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	31.7 (30.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

10. Pupils' very good literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well across the curriculum. In science, practical and investigative activities are well established and this boosts standards significantly. Pupils' skills in ICT have improved and are now good. Staff are competent users of ICT and this has underpinned the rapid progress. There is some cross-curricular use of ICT, but this remains patchy between year groups.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Overall, pupils' attitudes to school are excellent and their behaviour is very good. Their attendance is also excellent. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils really enjoy school, have very positive attitudes to work and are self-disciplined. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
- The level of attendance is very high compared with that of similar schools around the country.
- The school's very good provision for social and moral development leads to excellent relationships and very good social awareness.

Commentary

11. The level of attendance has improved since the last inspection and, as shown in the table below, is now one of the highest in primary schools around the country. The school has ensured that parents fully understand the benefits of good attendance. The support of parents and the very effective procedures in the morning result in pupils settling quickly, so ensuring a prompt start to the day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.3	School data:	0.3
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. Pupils' social development is excellent as a result of very good provision. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to interact with classmates in group work and paired discussions or to undertake monitor tasks within each class. Pupils in Year 6 have a range of responsibilities around the school. The School Council and the 'buddy' system enable pupils of different ages to work together. Their awareness of the wider world is enhanced through the choir singing in the community, inviting local people to see school productions, inter-school sports matches and collections for charity. Pupils' very positive relationships with their peers and with adults contribute to the quality of work in lessons and to the progress made, especially by giving them the confidence to ask and to answer questions.

13. Pupils' personal development is very good. Opportunities for pupils to gain insight into values and beliefs in order to develop spiritual awareness are very good. As well as providing a time for reflection, school assemblies help pupils to develop a sense of belonging to a whole school community. Class discussions help pupils to begin to appreciate their own worth and to raise their self-esteem. In the classroom they discuss many topics and accept that others may have a different view or belief from their own. Pupils willingly demonstrate they can act responsibly, taking care when moving round the school and when carrying out tasks in the classroom.
14. Provision for cultural development is also very good. Many subjects provide pupils with a fuller understanding of the world around them with, for example, art and music contributing to a developing aesthetic awareness. Pupils are starting to appreciate the western cultural background. There are many opportunities for pupils to learn about the lives of people around the world.
15. Pupils enjoy their work and want to do well. They listen attentively, follow instructions well and settle quickly to tasks given. They maintain interest even when not directly supported by adults. They have confidence in their own abilities and are eager to contribute ideas. These positive attitudes reflect the high quality of teaching and the variety of interesting activities in lessons.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No. of pupils on roll	No. of fixed period exclusions	No. of permanent exclusions
White – British	156	1	0

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

16. Pupils' moral development is very good. They behave very well in class, at play and during lunch times. They have a very good understanding of right and wrong. They are aware of how their behaviour affects others and most have developed self-discipline. They are open, well mannered, polite to adults and to each other and welcoming and courteous to visitors. The school uses a range of positive strategies to encourage good behaviour. These are used consistently by all staff. Instances of bullying or aggressive behaviour are non-existent. Pupils know that such behaviour would be dealt with promptly and effectively. Last year there was one short-term exclusion, as shown above.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good. Teaching and learning are very good. The curriculum is good, with very good extra-curricular provision. Pupils are cared for well. The partnership with parents is very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is very good overall. Expectations are very high, pupils are challenged well and learning proceeds at a very brisk pace. Teachers make effective use of assessment information to plan future work, particularly in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching enables pupils to make consistent progress and achieve very well.
- Pupils' excellent attitudes, their interest and their perseverance contribute strongly to the very good learning seen.
- Teachers' use of assessment information to plan future work is good overall, but very good in the Foundation Stage. Lessons are planned effectively to meet pupils' needs.
- Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs well.
- Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and to become independent learners.

Commentary

17. At the 2002 inspection, teaching was good overall, with a significant amount of good or better teaching observed. Since that time, the school has experienced some mobility in staffing. However, this is now settling down and the current team is purposeful and highly committed. Even taking into account the advantageous working conditions in this school, with very co-operative and compliant pupils, the quality of teaching and overall provision have continued to improve. The quality of teaching is now very good overall.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (12%)	12 (34%)	18 (51%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

18. The Foundation Stage team is relatively new. Staff have a good understanding of the areas of learning and work well in partnership with parents to enable children to learn well. Lessons are well prepared and planning is very good, taking very good account of individual needs. Teaching and learning in the lessons observed were good, enabling children to make good progress. Staff have worked hard to develop child-initiated learning and this approach is now working well overall. Relationships are very good. Children's progress is carefully assessed and recorded. Assessment systems are very thorough and rigorous.
19. Very good teaching supports very good achievement overall for pupils in the main school. Although almost all teaching observed was good or better, the best teaching was in Years 1 and 5. Across the school, pupils are challenged very well – and respond very positively to this approach. The teaching is rigorous and thorough and motivates pupils particularly well. Several excellent lessons were observed – for example, in music, where the teacher's specialist skills are used to very good effect in motivating and enthusing pupils. Throughout the school, pupils show maturity and a very good capacity to work independently or collaboratively. The school encourages them to record work independently from an early stage. They are expected to be able to get on with tasks. This promotes independence well and encourages pupils to show initiative and to be self-sufficient in their learning. Teachers question pupils very well and in the best lessons encourage them to think strategically to devise ways of approaching a problem which can be applied, or creatively adapted, on other occasions. This approach was used well, for example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 6. Planning is very thorough and well-focused on individual needs.
20. Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught both in lessons and when they are withdrawn. Assessment structures are good and detailed Individual Education Plans are drawn up, outlining the intervention needed. Work is well matched to pupils' needs and basic skills are taught effectively. Classroom assistants give very good support throughout the school. They are well briefed and know the pupils really well. Their positive manner and sense of humour encourages pupils to persevere and this makes a significant contribution to their learning. The school has developed very good links with outside agencies for additional support and advice.
21. Teachers' methods are chosen well to assist pupils in gaining knowledge and developing understanding. There is, for example, a high level of first-hand learning in science, where pupils experience an investigative approach from an early stage. History and geography curricula are well-supported by visitors and the local environment. The school has developed good planning structures with plenty of guidance for staff to draw on. Curriculum links are clearly identified and well established, so that teachers can work efficiently. Clear objectives are set for learning. These are recorded by pupils and frequently referred to in lessons. Good use overall is made of assessment to support the planning of work, which is appropriately

matched to pupils' needs and capabilities. Pupils are given helpful comments when their work is marked, to help them improve their future work, although the quality of comments and rigour of the marking is variable across the school. Pupils are trained very well to evaluate their own work and that of others. This was evident in many lessons observed, where pupils tested out ideas with their partners. Typically, they listen intently. All these devices are very motivating to pupils.

22. Teachers make good use of data to track pupils' progress and identify areas of weakness. Progress is effectively tracked in writing and numeracy every half term, and this helps with target-setting. Individual targets are set in English, mathematics and ICT and pupils appear to have a good knowledge of these. However, the recording and monitoring of these targets does not appear to be consistent from class to class and this is an area for improvement. Outline assessment procedures are in place for most foundation subjects, with further work to do in physical education. The use of homework to support pupils' achievement is very good. Homework is set consistently, carefully marked and makes a worthwhile contribution to pupils' learning.

The curriculum

The school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum, enhanced by a very good range of activities beyond the expected lessons. There are sufficient teachers and support staff. Resources are satisfactory. Accommodation is satisfactory, with some weaknesses in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of planning and teaching of English and mathematics promotes very high standards.
- Good links are developed between subjects.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in a range of clubs and sports.
- The accommodation imposes some restrictions upon curricular provision.

Commentary

23. The curriculum is planned thoroughly, with a view to motivating pupils to learn. Although there is a predictable focus upon literacy and numeracy skills through the school, the curriculum as a whole is well balanced and pupils are achieving good standards in the great majority of the foundation subjects. Pupils acquire skills of research and develop good attitudes to independent learning. Effective links are being developed between subjects so that pupils see the purpose of their learning. Long-term planning is thorough and is based on a yearly cycle, with history and geography and art and design and design and technology rotating each half term. The school has a register for gifted or talented pupils, although, in practice, their needs are well catered for as a matter of routine. The curriculum is reviewed regularly and updated to take account of new developments and to improve its relevance to the pupils. However, given the underlying high standards in literacy and numeracy right through the school, opportunities exist for an imaginative review of the balance of time allocated to particular subjects and the cross-curricular integration of subjects, particularly in the upper school.
24. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils with special educational needs. This represents an improvement from the last inspection. The special educational needs co-ordinator is developing her role with support from a Beacon School. She works closely with staff and parents to support the effective learning and progress of these pupils. Individual Education Plans are detailed with appropriate targets identified and strategies suggested to achieve these. This helps pupils to take a full part in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs have very good support in class and also when withdrawn in small groups. Reviews are completed effectively and parents are regularly informed. Work in lessons is carefully planned to match the needs of all pupils.

25. There is a very good range of well-supported activities outside the school day. These include choir, French, German, and a wide range of sporting activities including netball, judo, football and cross-country running. A high proportion of pupils attend, mainly from Years 3 to 6. Planned activities and educational visits, including the annual residential visit for Year 6 pupils, make a good contribution to pupils' social and physical development and pupils value these opportunities.
26. The ethos of the school is excellent. It is characterised by a very good commitment to the equality of opportunity for all pupils. Very good attention is given to personal, social and health education and pupils talk and act with maturity. Pupils are very well prepared for their moves to and between the different stages of education.
27. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Classroom assistants make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning and achievements. Resources are satisfactory. The school accommodation is adequate. However, the building suffers from a number of maintenance and refurbishment problems that require expensive solutions. Limitations in the Foundation Stage accommodation, for example, impose some restrictions upon the curriculum. However, the school makes best use of its accommodation, with good use of display to enhance the building. The premises are looked after with care.

Care, guidance and support

The arrangements for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are good overall and support pupils' learning appropriately. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is good. The involvement of pupils in the school's work, encouraged by staff seeking, valuing and acting on their views is also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils trust teachers and other staff and know there is always someone to whom they can turn.
- Adults in the school are very caring and know the pupils well.
- The school provides a variety of opportunities for pupils to express their opinions.
- The school effectively promotes pupils' academic progress.

Commentary

28. Governors are actively involved in touring the school to identify potential hazards. The caretaker has a good awareness of health and safety matters and is quick to spot and deal with problems. Various risk assessments are in place for many of the subject areas and for visits out. Nevertheless, these are not always properly formalised and the school is aware that they need to be properly recorded. Teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science and design and technology. The school follows the local procedures for child protection and staff have received guidance on how to deal with any concerns that may arise. The arrangements for first aid are good, with several trained staff, records kept of treatment and letters for parents after minor accidents.
29. As at the previous inspection, staff show good concern for the needs of the pupils and provide good role models to encourage development. Parents are pleased with the level of support in the school, seeing it as a caring community where staff are approachable if there are any problems. In particular, parents agreed that their children were well supported when they first came into the school, either into Reception or if they arrive in other years. Nevertheless, the school is planning to enable Reception class staff to visit other early years providers to enhance links with the school. The new arrivals in other years are supported well by 'buddies'. Pupils consider that the staff support them very well and know whom they would go to if they needed help. They also have good opportunities to influence what happens in the school both during discussions in the classroom and, in a more structured way, through the School Council.

30. The school has good arrangements to help pupils to improve their work. The school's assessment procedures in English and mathematics enable it to track their progress and to set targets. These are related both to the level that they should be able to achieve by the end of the school year and to half termly targets focused on skills and understanding. The arrangements for the other subjects are less precise and guidance for pupils relies mainly on comments from teachers when they mark pupils' work. The recording of pupils' personal development is informal and is not always well used to develop the personal qualities and social skills of all the pupils. Nevertheless, staff use a variety of strategies to raise pupils' self-esteem, such as praise, entries in the Golden Book and ensuring that all pupils have a part to play in class assemblies or productions.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very good. Links with the local community are good and with other schools are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents hold the school in high regard.
- Parents' support at home and in school makes a very good contribution to pupils' achievement.
- The school provides a good range of information about what happens in school.
- The involvement of a range of organisations and people in the community extends pupils' personal, social and academic development.

Commentary

31. In their high response to the inspection questionnaire and at the meeting prior to the inspection, parents showed that most are pleased with what the school provides. Their children like school, the staff expect their children to work hard and they make good progress.
32. The school sends home weekly newsletters, letters about general matters and, each term, information outlining what is to be taught in each class. Teachers in the infant classes are readily available. They come to the classroom doors at the end of the day and from the relaxed, informal conversations seen to take place during the inspection, it is apparent that parents are comfortable talking to the staff. But not all the junior class teachers come outside to be able easily to meet any parents who may want a brief word with them. The annual reports on pupils' progress provide a good summary of what the children know and can do in each subject. The National Curriculum levels are shown for the junior pupils but the targets do not provide a sufficiently clear indication of what the pupil needs to do to improve.
33. Many parents help regularly in the classroom with others assisting on trips out and around the school, including improving the building and the outside areas. At home parents ensure that homework is done on time and, where appropriate, provide help. They also value education, minimising absence and ensuring their children arrive on time. Almost all parents come to the consultation evenings with the teachers or meet them shortly afterwards. Parents are also keen to support their children in school with good attendance at assemblies and masses and to find out about the curriculum, such as at a writing workshop. The parent association works hard and successfully to organise both fund-raising and social events. The school has involved parents in helping to formulate school policies, though questionnaires are sent out only every couple of years and the headteacher does not yet discuss life in the school with a representative parents' group.
34. The school's good links with the community help to extend pupils' personal, social and academic development. The extensive links with the two parishes, visits to the churches and visits by the parish priests enhance pupils' understanding of society. Older people in the area come to talk about their recollections and retired engineers have led projects in science and technology. Pupils take part in local events. Inter-school sports activities and the support of

the nearby university enhance pupils' sporting opportunities. Staff from secondary schools provide support with the teaching of science and other subjects. The headteachers and governors of the deanery schools meet but there are no structured links with, for example, local authority primary schools. This limits opportunities for curriculum co-ordinators and other staff to meet to discuss good practice or to develop their teaching skills.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff in partnership with the governing body are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governance of the school is good. Governors are closely involved with the school and are highly supportive.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are good.
- Very good procedures are in place for performance management.
- The school is very effective in its commitment to inclusion, the promotion of equal opportunity and concern for the needs of individuals.
- The school does not have a permanent deputy headteacher.
- Some subject managers have had little opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching.

Commentary

35. The governance of the school is good. The Chair of Governors has established an effective team with a wide range of specialised skills to help shape a vision for the school. Governors have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have a very good relationship with the staff. They are well informed and carry out statutory duties effectively. Evaluation of the governing body and its work is a high priority for the governors. This has taken place on an annual basis, but reflection by the chair has shown that termly assessment would be more beneficial to ensure a clear corporate vision for the future. A particular example of this would be the more effective promotion of the school in the wider community so that the significant strengths of the school are more widely known. The governors are developing a five year plan, in addition to the Asset Management Scheme, to improve the buildings and environment. Governors are well informed and able to challenge and support management decisions. They visit the school on a regular basis and a programme of class visits is established.
36. The headteacher's strong Catholic values and firm belief in the principles of a very good quality education for all children have enabled the school to move forward from the uncertainty of past years. The key issues from the last inspection have been successfully tackled. The Foundation Stage has in place the structures and professional development targets to ensure steady improvement from the present good position.
37. The leadership of the headteacher is good. She has a clear vision for how the school should improve and has created an environment in which staff and pupils feel valued and respected. The school's plans are focused firmly on raising standards, whilst recognising the importance of work-life balance and the need to reduce stress on staff. Owing to the nature and size of the school, many staff have had to fulfil extra roles of responsibility. The school is reflective and constantly aiming to improve. It is now actively involved in the Primary Leadership Strategy programme.
38. The school is managed well and it operates very smoothly and efficiently. There is a clear commitment to the professional development of the staff. All are involved in the Performance Management system. It is very effective and supports the aims of the School Improvement Plan. The staff have a strong working relationship with each other, a clear commitment to school improvement and the will to succeed. The school is in the process of attaining "Investors in People" status. In common with other schools in the area, the school faces

problems in recruitment and retention of teaching staff. This has been particularly evident in the attempts to appoint a deputy head. Governors have been steadfast in their resolve to ensure that the right appointment is made.

39. Clear monitoring and evaluation procedures of teaching are in place. They are being used well by those co-ordinators who have non-contact time for their subject. This has increased their effectiveness and resulted in improvement in teaching, the sharing of good practice and adjustments to curriculum planning. However, some subject managers have had little opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching – largely because several are very recently in post.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	490,188	Balance from previous year	33,203
Total expenditure	491,227	Balance carried forward to the next	32,164
Expenditure per pupil	2,532		

40. The governing body manages school funds well. The governors are increasingly rigorous in evaluating the effectiveness of spending decisions. Principles of best value are well understood and applied, and efficient systems are in place to ensure that the school gains value for money. Financial and general administration in the school is currently very efficient. Recent audit recommendations have been implemented fully. The school meets the needs of its pupils very well and currently provides very good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good. Children achieve well as a result.
- Children's personal and social skills are very well developed.
- Induction arrangements are good and children settle quickly.
- Assessment is very good.
- Communication with parents is good.
- The outdoor facilities are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

41. Children join Reception in September on either a full or part-time basis. All children are in full-time attendance by the spring term. Attainment of children upon entry to Reception is above average. They achieve well because teaching is good overall and the curriculum is well planned to provide a wide variety of stimulating activities that are well matched to the particular needs of the group. All adults work very well together as a team and provide very good role models for children. Parents helping in the classroom are well briefed. The Reception classroom is bright, stimulating and well organized, but the outside play area is unsatisfactory. There is no covered accommodation or soft play area. Very good systems for ongoing assessment are in place. Staff compile regular detailed notes from their observations of children's achievements. This helps them to ensure that the children make good progress and activities meet their needs. The strength of the school's use of assessment lies in the way the staff observe and record what children do in order to identify next steps in their learning. The weaknesses in curriculum planning and opportunities for pupil initiated play identified at the last inspection are significantly improved. A new format of planning clearly identifies opportunities for pupil initiated play. A weekly newsletter outlines the week's activities and how parents can help. Links with parents are good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships are quickly formed; good routines help children feel secure.
- Staff provide good opportunities for children to work independently and to co-operate with each other; they set children a very good example.

Commentary

42. Children join the Reception class with a range of social skills. All children have attended playgroups or nursery school, are sociable and interact well with other children. Due to the high expectations of the staff they quickly learn to maintain attention and concentration and sit quietly when required. The interesting and exciting activities motivate them to learn, with staff taking every opportunity to praise and reinforce personal relationships. Children learn to share and co-operate well in groups; for example, one child was questioned on why they had two oranges for break time. She replied, "One is for me, and one to share with my friends." Children are encouraged to be confident and try out new activities, and are also given opportunities to choose for themselves. Nearly all develop the confidence to speak up in a group. The teacher intervenes well when groups of children are playing, talking to them and

asking questions which encourage them to think and consider. Children join the other pupils for assemblies in the hall and quickly adjust to being part of a much larger group. They become confident to work outside their own classroom with other adults and welcome the involvement of older pupils in escorting them around the school. The provision for the social and emotional development of these children at lunchtime is excellent.

43. Staff treat each other with respect and provide very good role models for these young children. Adults work well as a team and provide a calm, well-ordered and secure learning environment. As a result of their encouragement and very good teaching, it is likely that the current group of children will achieve standards well above those expected by the end of the year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher and support staff help children to develop confident speaking skills, to listen attentively to others and take account of their views.
- The teaching of early reading and writing skills is good and, as a result, children learn quickly and achieve well.

Commentary

44. All children joining the class can use simple sentences to communicate their needs and interests, and listen to others. A significant number have well advanced communication skills. The teacher has a good understanding of the needs and interests of the group and provides activities which motivate the children to widen their vocabulary and express their ideas, while remaining sensitive to their social needs. For example, when working on the story of "The Three Little Pigs", time was taken after a long assembly to allow the children to have a short physical activity combined with words and actions before starting the lesson.
45. Children are confident to share their ideas with the class and listen with interest to each other. They develop their speaking and listening skills well through role-play. They are given many opportunities to talk and share their ideas with an adult. Children enjoy the brisk pace of sessions and make good progress, applying the skills taught to their work.
46. The more able group of children are successfully writing sentences unaided. Letter formation is good and joined handwriting is in the early stages. Children share their stories with the rest of the class. The others comment on how they could be improved. Most children have strategies for using sounds to spell words and are confident to try. They also find words displayed around the room and copy them. The majority of children are able to use a pencil and hold it correctly to form recognisable letters and write their name.
47. Children read to an adult every day and take books home to share with their parents. Children have favourite books and stories and can speak confidently about them. There is good communication between the teacher and parents through the reading diary. Achievement is good and most will exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and engages children's curiosity about numbers.
- Most children can count accurately to 20 and recognise the numbers.

- Nearly all the children recognise and can name shapes such as squares and triangles, and many know how many sides these shapes have.
- There is limited use of ICT and Listening Centre.

Commentary

48. Most of the children who joined Reception in September have mathematical skills that are appropriate for their age. All children can now count objects accurately up to ten and many to 20. Using a number line, most can find one more or one less than a given number up to ten. Teaching staff make good use of mathematical apparatus. All the children are familiar with Number Fans. In a lesson observed, pupils were counting groups of frogs up to 20 and recording the results on the fans for the teacher. Opportunities were given to use ICT and the tape corner, but no child took advantage. This was a reoccurring observation during the inspection, where children preferred personal contact to that of computers or tape recorders! Teaching staff also ensured that regular assessment of needs took place, with a rotation of groups working directly with the teacher.
49. Staff take every opportunity to develop children's mathematical skills and language. The use of number rhymes with both singing and actions, is a regular feature of the daily routine. Children know the names of several two-dimensional shapes and can combine them to make repeating patterns of alternate shapes and colours. The teacher's very good questioning skills and individual knowledge of children's learning through good assessment enable everyone to achieve well. Standards are above average and the majority of children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff plan an interesting range of activities which help children learn about the world.
- There is good use of ongoing assessment by staff.
- Children's use of ICT is below expectations.

Commentary

50. Teaching is good. Adults use good questioning to encourage the children to think about what they see. An example of this was a discussion with a group of children and the teaching assistant about the Three Little Pigs' house. Children identified the chimney as a main feature, and a group went outside to look at the surrounding houses to see if they had chimneys, and to decide whether the wolf could get down!
51. A lesson on "Push and pull" was well introduced by the class teacher by recalling the rhyme "Wind the Bobbin". Good use was made of a "Thought Shower" to record the activities that children saw as pushing or pulling. Concise use of language and actions ensured most children fully understood the meaning of the words. Venn groupings were used to sort different objects. Ongoing assessment by the teacher resulted in a recap of the actions to ensure that all children fully understood. A wide range of small group tasks took place to reinforce the objective. One child, playing in the Dinosaur Park, correctly named and identified a Tyrannosaurus Rex from a large group of model dinosaurs.
52. The children have access to a range of interesting resources so that they can investigate and explore. These are used effectively to initiate their own learning. The attractive displays and photographs show evidence of recent activities. Children are on course to exceed the goals expected for their age largely because of their above-average attainment on entry to school.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

53. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards in this area of learning but the limited work seen was of a good standard and the teaching observed was good.
54. Children are well co-ordinated and reach the standards expected for their age in terms of large and small movements. Teaching is good and children achieve well. During the inspection, children were seen skilfully manoeuvring large wheeled toys in the outdoor area, showing good awareness of each other. In the classroom, they are very respectful of each other when moving from one activity to another in a fairly confined space. Children develop good manipulative skills through construction work, using glue sticks, paintbrushes and cutters. Children are able to use scissors safely and accurately. Regular handwriting activities focus on correct pencil grip and many children already demonstrate this. Most children are showing improved control when colouring.
55. The outdoor lesson using the large parachute demonstrated the secure relationships within the group. Excitement, enjoyment and enthusiasm were very high, yet clear instructions from the class teacher enabled all tasks to be achieved very successfully.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children are likely to exceed the standards expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year.
- Music is an important feature of the curriculum.
- Good links are made with other areas of learning.

Commentary

56. Children have access to a range of activities such as paint and construction equipment. They are taught basic skills and techniques in their creative work well. Many activities are linked successfully to other areas of learning. The *Three Little Pigs* story led to a group of children acting out the story in the puppet theatre. Many opportunities are taken to use music as a starting point. The teaching assistant led the children well in singing "Jesus Loves Us". Staff provide good opportunities to introduce music, song and rhyme into the curriculum, including a music lesson taken by a specialist teacher.
57. Bubble painting was an ongoing activity throughout the week. High expectations of staff and clear routines enabled pupils to achieve very good results. Outside provision included building the Three Little Pigs houses, balloon painting and sand play. Most children are likely to exceed the standards expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year.
58. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is undertaken by the the headteacher and another member of staff. Previous staff mobility has caused some issues in this phase. Structures and support have been put in place that should provide the stable conditions for further improvement. The co-ordinators provide good guidance and mentoring to staff in the Foundation Stage. This is apparent in the recent change of planning structures. They are aware of the deficiencies in the provision of an outdoor play area, and several grant aided projects have been applied for. So far these have not been successful, but it is still a high priority for both school and governors. Leadership and management are good.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing are high.
- Opportunities for speaking and listening are well promoted.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and are enthusiastic about their work.
- There is some inconsistency in the use of assessment strategies.

Commentary

59. Standards in English are well above average throughout the school, as was the case at the last inspection. Pupils achieve very well, including those who are higher attainers and those with special educational needs.
60. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well above the standards expected and they achieve very well in this area. In Years 1 and 2, teachers make sure that pupils speak clearly when they share their ideas. In Years 3 to 6, pupils increase their knowledge, understanding and use of vocabulary. For example, pupils in Year 3 confidently read out their raps with the right expression. The school places a very strong emphasis on developing pupils' abilities to speak to an audience.
61. Reading skills are very good throughout the school. By Year 2, pupils read with enjoyment and expression, showing a good level of comprehension. They use a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words, including phonic sounds, pictures and contextual clues. They read regularly in class and are supported well by their parents at home. By Year 6, pupils read with great enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment. They talk knowledgeably about what they read, including the main idea of the plot and the characters. They identify their favourite authors and discuss books they have enjoyed. They are self-motivated, independent readers who read different types of literature with particular interest. They know how to use the non-fiction section of the library and use it for selecting books for research into topics. Most pupils read at home and regular reading opportunities are provided in school. For example, pupils in Year 6 have individual 'reading buddies' in Year 1. They read with them three times a week and these sessions are valued by all.
62. Standards in writing are well above average. Pupils join their handwriting in Year 1 and are able to write clearly and fluently. This is built upon very effectively in successive year groups and standards of handwriting are consistently high. The majority of pupils spell correctly and produce interesting pieces of writing. They have many opportunities for writing in the wider curriculum and express their ideas in thoughtful and interesting ways. The writing of higher attainers is lively and captures the reader's interest.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and has a significant and positive effect on pupils' achievement. Teachers use questions very carefully to check what pupils know and to move their learning forward. Pupils want to answer questions and are eager to join in learning activities. Teachers ensure a crisp pace during lessons. This maintains pupils' interest in their work and ensures that they achieve well. Pupils behave very well in lessons because teachers have high expectations of their behaviour and achievement. However, pupils are also very self-motivated and can sustain long periods of independent work. The school makes very effective use of teaching assistants and special educational needs staff to support pupils' learning. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and

achieve very well. The systems to measure progress are thorough and pupils know what their targets are and what they need to do to achieve them. There is, however, some inconsistency across the school over how individual progress is recorded at the front of books.

64. The leadership and the management of English are good. The subject leader has a very clear view of what needs improving although until now there has been insufficient time to monitor the subject fully.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. Literacy skills are used well across the curriculum. Because all teachers are confident in their understanding and use of the National Literacy Strategy, they are aware of the need to underpin the development of literacy skills through the teaching in other subjects. In history, pupils write well about famous people. In science, pupils record the results of their investigations. Word processing skills are well developed in ICT - for example, pupils produce a database based on Henry VIII's family.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average. Pupils achieve very well through the school.
- Teaching and learning are very good. Pupils are challenged well in most lessons.
- Pupils are highly motivated and keen to learn. Attitudes are excellent.
- Pupils' problem-solving skills are developed well.
- Pupils' independence is promoted well, from an early age.

Commentary

66. Standards in mathematics are well above average in Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve very well in mathematics and make sustained, very good progress. In 2003, with two particularly able year groups, a very high proportion of pupils achieved the challenging Level 3 in Year 2, while a very high proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in Year 6. Predictions for both the current Year 2 and Year 6 indicate a lower proportion of pupils performing at such high levels, and lower scores overall. However, in both instances, standards are likely to remain well above average in 2004. Pupils with special educational needs do very well, making good progress overall. Girls have tended, over time, to out-perform boys in Year 6, but no significant variations in attainment by gender were noted during the inspection, other than the presence of a large and particularly able cohort of boys in Year 5.
67. There is a strong focus on securing basic numeracy skills, particularly in Years 1 and 2, and there is evidence of very thorough work to reinforce basic understanding. There is a very good focus on independent recording from an early stage, with minimal use of worksheets and high expectations of presentation. This contributes well to the high standards seen later. Overall, the level of challenge is very good, supporting the very good achievement seen. In the later years, the pace of learning is effectively sustained. This is particularly good in most year groups in the juniors. Problem-solving is a key focus for the school and there was good evidence in a successful Year 6 lesson that this is being tackled creatively, with 'Thinking Skills' actively promoted. Curriculum coverage is good. Good use is made of investigative work to secure pupils' understanding of key mathematical concepts. A very good example was seen in Year 4 where pupils were working towards an understanding of the calculation of area, through looking at the effects of doubling side lengths.

68. Teaching is very good overall. Key strengths are the careful planning of lessons and the accurate match of work to pupils' needs. Overall, expectations are very high and pupils are challenged to succeed. Such high expectations underpin the very good progress made not only by the higher-attainers, but also by the remaining pupils, including those with special educational needs. Lessons proceed at a vigorous pace. Very good knowledge and understanding of the subject support the rigorous approach of many staff. They challenge pupils to think and to develop strategies to enable them to deal with mathematical problems. Staff use ICT well in their presentation of topics and this was seen in several lessons in the juniors. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from the well-prepared support staff. Teachers use language well and question pupils carefully to ensure that they understand. There is good use of computers to support learning in mathematics; for example, when pupils were using a program involving the measuring of angles independently in Year 5. Across the school, pupils' learning is very strongly underpinned by the very positive attitudes which they bring to their work and by their ability to work co-operatively and creatively, without wasting time.
69. Teachers use assessment well to guide their planning of future work. The school has identified targets for each year group. Individual target-setting, with short-term, achievable targets has been implemented across the school, although this seems to be monitored more closely in some classes than in others. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own understanding and this is a strong feature. Marking is thorough in most classes, with clear guidance as to how pupils can improve their performance. Homework arrangements are consistent and satisfactory.
70. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable, but is new to post and has had little opportunity for direct monitoring of teaching and learning. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and knows what still needs to be improved. Resources are good. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

71. Pupils regularly use mathematics well to support their work in other subjects and there is good evidence of this in science and in geography. They use graphs and tables to record data in science and practise their skills in measuring when they undertake practical tasks in design and technology. There are good links with ICT.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High standards are achieved in scientific knowledge and understanding.
- Skills in scientific enquiry are developing well.
- Teaching is good, with some very good lessons seen.
- Pupils concentrate well and work very hard.
- There are good cross-curricular links with ICT, mathematics and English.
- There are some inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work.

Commentary

72. Standards in science are above average. This is an improvement on the last inspection where they were judged as satisfactory. Achievement is very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. By the ages of seven and 11, many pupils' subject knowledge is very impressive, and many exceed the standards expected nationally, including those with special educational needs. It is likely, however, that test results in 2004 for Year 6 will be below the

exceptional results of 2003, yet they will still be of a high standard and in line with the school's targets. Pupils in Year 2 are meeting their targets.

73. Teaching in science is very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. There was some very good teaching. This is characterised by:
- effective links made with pupils' previous learning;
 - a strong focus on the accurate use of scientific vocabulary;
 - thorough preparation, setting clear learning objectives which are shared with the pupils and sustaining a brisk pace to lessons;
 - high expectations of, and challenge for, all pupils;
 - good questioning by teachers, secure subject knowledge and the acknowledgement that we all can and do make mistakes in our investigations.
74. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent across the school and is not always informative as to how children can improve their work.
75. There was a good emphasis in all lessons seen on the correct use of specific vocabulary, which ensures that pupils fully understand scientific terms. A very good lesson on sound was observed in Year 1. Here clear scientific language and questioning were used to investigate sounds around the school. "Sound sources" were clearly identified, and links to other learning areas fully exploited. The very good outcome of the lesson was a clearly produced map of the school, plotting where and the types of sounds the children had experienced. Children enjoy their science lessons and work extremely hard and productively. Work is invariably of very high quality. Skills learnt in other lessons are reinforced and further developed in science. Good use is made of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills to support learning in science.
76. Pupils in Year 6 can clearly explain the meaning of a fair test, and how only one variable is allowed to change. Their reflection on past experiments was quite exceptional. An experiment with a Cartesian Diver had been relatively successful, but pupils were under no illusion that it would have to be revisited to ensure a full understanding of the scientific concept. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to understand investigations on melting ice and have a good knowledge of electrical circuits, the properties of materials and forces.
77. Pupils experience a wide range of practical activities, with learning support assistants giving excellent support to pupils with special educational needs, so allowing them full participation in the lesson. The school provides a good range of enrichment activities. These include focus days with the Satro Engineers, the Royal Holloway Science Week and links with local secondary schools.
78. The leadership of science is held temporarily by the headteacher. An emphasis has been placed on the use of scientific investigations, pupil book reviews, and the monitoring of teaching and planning. As a result, science provision is improving. Leadership and management are good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good.
- The co-ordinator is giving good direction throughout the school.
- Cross-curricular use of ICT skills could be developed further.
- Assessment procedures need to be consolidated.

Commentary

79. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy using computers and, in the lessons observed, pupils made good progress. As a result, they are proficient at logging on, accessing files and saving and storing information by Year 2. Pupils in Year 6 are able to produce multi-media presentations. They can organise and adapt information to make it interesting and exciting. In discussion, pupils from Years 2, 4 and 6 can explain confidently how to apply the skills they have been taught.
80. The quality of teaching and learning was good in the lessons seen, enabling pupils to achieve well. The recently acquired laptops are efficiently used and provide excellent opportunities for pupils. Teachers begin their lessons by revising previous work. They explain which new skills the pupils will learn, thereby providing a clear focus and purpose for the lesson. There is good support for those experiencing difficulties. Classroom assistants are well deployed and greater support is given to the younger pupils, ensuring good achievement by all pupils. All pupils have opportunities to consolidate and extend their knowledge and skills. Faster learning pupils are set higher challenges. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy the visual approach to learning.
81. Effective training has contributed towards the confidence of teaching and non-teaching staff when teaching skills to pupils. The support from the co-ordinator and the part-time technician enables all staff to improve their knowledge and skills and this is enabling them to be increasingly effective.
82. Leadership of ICT is good. There is a clear action plan for the future development of the subject. Assessment procedures have been implemented and the co-ordinator monitors work across the school; however, this is an identified area for further development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

83. There is some evidence around the school of how ICT supports other curriculum areas, although ICT is not used consistently. In a Year 6 literacy lesson there was good use of the interactive whiteboard and, in Year 1, two pupils were writing questions with the use of the computer. Very good use of ICT was noted in Year 6 geography, where pupils had used PowerPoint to present an aspect of their work. However, evidence across the curriculum and year groups remains patchy.

HUMANITIES

84. One lesson was observed in **geography**. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision in geography. However, scrutiny of teachers' plans, analysis of pupils' work and displays, and discussions with the co-ordinator indicated that standards are likely to be above those normally expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement on the previous report's finding. The coverage of geography now meets the statutory requirements.
85. In the lesson seen pupils were investigating India. Good use was made of artefacts and relevant audio visual aids were used. Teaching was good. Whilst watching a short video, pupils wanted to record notes on their whiteboards, but the teacher insisted that they make 'mental notes' so as not to be distracted from the key information.
86. Pupils have very good general knowledge and this is well used by staff to extend their specific subject knowledge. Coverage of geography by the end of Year 2 is very good. By the end of Year 2, pupils have had experience of map work and are confidently making comparisons between man-made and natural landscapes. By the end of Year 6, pupils are using the skills learnt in literacy, numeracy and ICT to develop and enhance their work in geography. A study,

comparing Llandudno and Egham, included very good local links, including climatic readings from Heathrow Airport and the concerns of road transport (M25). Pupils have a clear understanding of environmental issues.

87. The subject co-ordinator has just taken over the role. She has started to monitor planning, with a particular focus on developing the use of literacy and numeracy skills. This emphasis is very evident in the work seen across the school with pupils using these skills to very good effect in geography. Reviews of children's books have taken place. As yet there has been no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching. Leadership and management are satisfactory, but the potential for further improvement is good.
88. No lessons were seen in **history**. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision. However, there is every indication from pupils' work that standards are likely to be above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is similar to the findings at the last inspection.
89. By the end of Year 2 pupils have had experience of time lines and the lives of notable figures such as Guy Fawkes. Links across subject areas are particularly evident by the end of Year 6. In Year 4, work on the Tudors was enhanced by mirror drawings of characters. Good use is made of artefacts in the study of Ancient Greece, and of the past experiences of pupils who have been on holiday to the country. The quality of displays in the classrooms is very high, with many being interactive and posing questions for the children to explore further. Good use is made of ICT in both investigation and presentation.
90. The subject co-ordinator has just taken over the role. She has started to monitor planning, with particular attention to links with subjects such as ICT and literacy. Reviews of pupils' books have taken place to ensure full coverage of the subject. As yet there has been no opportunity to monitor teaching. Further development of assessment is planned. Leadership and management are satisfactory, but the potential for further improvement is high.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

91. No lessons in **design and technology** were observed during the inspection. As a consequence, no judgements can be made about teaching and learning. However, there is evidence from the work on display that standards are likely to be in line with those normally found, with some individual work exceeding these expectations. For example, pupils in Year 1 have designed and made varied styles of houses from around the world. Pupils from Year 4 have a display of chairs of individual and imaginative designs. There is a display of lighthouses, land yachts and shoes, which represents work from all year groups – the outcome of a partnership project with a group of engineers. This is a good example of the school working in partnership with an outside agency to produce good quality work. The accompanying written work indicates pupils' ability to describe how they have designed and constructed their models, tested the structures and evaluated the processes.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall.
- Pupils experience a wide range of activities using a variety of materials.

Commentary

92. At the last inspection standards in art and design were satisfactory for pupils in Years 2 and 6. They are now good. It is clear from the attractive art displays around the school that pupils experience a good range of activities. These are often linked to other subjects, as in the good observational drawings of plants and flowers and the artwork developed from an Indian myth. Pupils are introduced to different media and techniques. For example, Year 5 pupils used different materials to produce good quality patterns to decorate their papier mâché bowls. Year 2 pupils used pencils, watercolours, gel pens and painting to develop drawing, cutting and composition skills.
93. Teaching is good and pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. Teachers plan lessons well. They explain and demonstrate new techniques very clearly, using technical vocabulary well and ensure that the pupils have a good understanding of what is to be learned. They maintain a good pace throughout the lesson. Additionally, the teachers have high expectations of their pupils and this helps improve the quality of the work.
94. Throughout the school displays are informative and inviting. They capture the attention and are used well to celebrate pupils' artistic achievements. They play a significant part in promoting and valuing the work of pupils.
95. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator manages a budget and has a clear plan for future developments. She monitors standards throughout the school by ensuring that the art portfolios are regularly updated with current pupils' work.

Music

Provision for music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- The specialist teacher uses stimulating methods to promote learning, building well upon pupils' very positive attitudes. The teaching is excellent.
- The profile of the subject is raised through enriching opportunities such as the choir, which gives pupils the chance to perform for the public.
- Music contributes significantly to the development of pupils' multicultural awareness.
- The use of ICT to support learning is an area for development.

Commentary

96. The strengths in music indicated in the 2002 inspection have been sustained and developed well. Standards by the end of Year 2 are better than normally found. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above those seen in most schools. Achievement is very good in all aspects of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as the others. All pupils achieve as they do because of the high quality of the teaching and their own very positive, enthusiastic and co-operative attitudes. Singing is joyful and enthusiastic in assembly, particularly when led by the specialist teacher. The inspired presentation and shared enjoyment lifts pupils' performance. Further opportunities for singing are provided in the well-attended choir session each week and pupils have good opportunities to take part in outside choral events. The wide-ranging songs and chants used routinely in lessons, from cultures across the world, effectively extend pupils' multicultural awareness.
97. Teaching is excellent and promotes a strong culture of collaborative working and positive attitudes to music. All class music lessons are taught by a specialist teacher, whose very good subject knowledge, particularly of music from a range of cultures, underpins the significant impact she makes upon the pupils. Class management is excellent. Pupils are absorbed

throughout. No time is wasted in lessons and an impressive pace is sustained throughout each session. This was seen, for example, in a Year 6 lesson. The lesson started (as all do) with vocal rhythm activities, conducted at considerable pace and demanding a high level of engagement by the pupils. Pupils were introduced to a dholak drum and other ethnic instruments, which later provided an impromptu accompaniment to an Indian song, 'Song of the Cart'. The beat from the dholak, played with spoons, was taken up by other percussion instruments and guitar and a vocal group. All pupils had the opportunity to participate in the final ensemble piece, performed to the Year 1 class at the end of the lesson. Many aspects of music were incorporated in this session, including singing, composition and performance. Pupils demonstrated a very good understanding of the elements of music and a very good capacity for improvisation.

98. The leadership of music is very good. Basic assessment procedures have been implemented successfully. The main area for development identified by the co-ordinator is the provision of more opportunities for pupils to use ICT in composition activities, a weaker feature at present.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good** for pupils in Years 3 to 6. No judgement is possible on provision in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching is good. Lessons have considerable pace. Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject.
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular sporting opportunities for the older pupils.
- Further work on assessment in physical education is needed.

Commentary

99. Not all elements of the curriculum were observed, although planning indicates that all elements are covered over time. Although there is insufficient evidence to support a judgement in Years 1 and 2, older pupils are on course to attain standards above those normally found by the end of Year 6 – particularly when the very good range of extra-curricular activities is taken into account. Residential visits provide access for the oldest pupils to challenging outdoor and adventurous pursuits.
100. Year 3 pupils were observed in a challenging dance lesson. Pupils sustained interest very well in this session, as their teacher introduced them to a series of African dance sequences. This was a new unit of work, which required a significant level of teacher input. Pupils applied themselves enthusiastically and showed considerable perseverance in trying to build each sequence. Although their prior experience of dance did not appear extensive, their interest and perseverance ensured that they achieved well during the lesson. Year 5 pupils demonstrated above average skills in a gymnastics lesson involving bridge building activities on apparatus. This was a very good session, largely because of the high quality of the teaching and the high expectations set. The pace was extremely brisk, with constant input of skills coaching, explanation and evaluation. The focus on developing pupils' evaluative skills and on health and safety issues are key strengths. There was evidence of very effective support for a pupil with special educational needs. The outcomes of the lesson were good and pupils achieved very well. As in all lessons observed, the very good attitudes which pupils bring to their learning are a key factor in their success.

101. Teaching is good overall. Planning is detailed and effective, providing well for the range of needs in each class. Teachers have good – and sometimes very good – subject knowledge and manage pupils very well. They have very good relationships with pupils and very high expectations of their behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. The pace of lesson is a key strength. Pupils are challenged throughout and respond to this very positively.
102. Swimming is provided in Year 4 or Year 5 and a good proportion of pupils achieve the expected standard in swimming (25 metres unaided) by the end of Year 6. There is a very good programme of additional events and clubs which enrich the curriculum and pupils participate in competitive sport. There are good sports development links with the local university college and local sports clubs.
103. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, who has been largely responsible for the many developments in extra-curricular provision. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school recognizes that there is further work to do on implementing better assessment systems for physical education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

104. Although no specific PSHE lessons were seen it was very evident that this area is regarded as a crucial part of pupils' development. Even though PSHE is taught as a discrete subject it is the impact of the subject as a whole, and its contribution to the excellent ethos of the school and the very positive attitudes of the pupils, that is so impressive. Pupils value their school and the local community and develop a respect for the environment and the wider world. Considerable efforts are made to help pupils develop as mature and responsible young people. Pupils say that they enjoy school and that they are listened to and feel the school involves them in decisions – for example, when discussing issues in the School Council. The very good relationships throughout the school underpin the strengths that help to produce mature and responsible pupils and an especially harmonious school community. During periods of prayer and reflection, pupils show respect and very good understanding of spiritual matters.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	1
Attendance	1
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
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	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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
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).