

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST GEORGE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND
AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Stockport

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 131306

Headteacher: Mrs C J Buckley

Lead inspector: Mr N Sherman

Dates of inspection: 5th – 8th July 2004

Inspection number: 257654

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:	319
School address:	Buxton Road Heaviley Stockport Cheshire
Postcode:	SK2 6NX
Telephone number:	0161 480 8657
Fax number:	0161 480 0729
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Hardy
Date of previous inspection:	15 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated close to the centre of Stockport in Cheshire. Pupils primarily come from the local area. The socio-economic circumstances of pupils are generally below average and the number of pupils claiming free school meals is above average. Few of the children have had pre-school nursery experience. The children's attainment when they start school is below average. There are currently 319 pupils on roll between the ages of 4-11. Most pupils are of white British ethnicity, and nine pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. There is a high degree of pupil mobility within the school, particularly in Years 3-6. The school has a small number of pupils whose parents are claiming asylum status. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average, although the number of pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Need is below average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16493	Mr N Sherman	Lead inspector	Mathematics, design and technology, music, physical education, special educational needs, English as an additional language.
9884	Mrs M Roscoe	Lay inspector	
31444	Mrs G Ellis	Team inspector	English, history, information and communication technology, personal, social and health education and citizenship.
17543	Mr R Coupe	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, science, art and design, geography.

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education Limited
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
GL33 7JX

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school with a number of strengths. Although pupils enter the school with below average levels of attainment, they work hard and achieve well by the time they leave reaching average standards in English and well above average standards in science. Teaching is good overall, and staff work hard to overcome the severe limitations in the design of the school. Leadership and management are good, and the headteacher provides a very clear steer to the school's work. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- By the time pupils leave the school they achieve well in English and mathematics and achievement in science is very good.
- The very clear educational direction given by the headteacher has secured much recent improvement,
- Good provision in the Foundation Stage enables the children to achieve well.
- Teaching is effective overall and has a good effect on pupils' achievement.
- Limitations in the school's accommodation constrain achievement in some subjects.
- Good provision is made for the pupils' personal development.
- The school plans the curriculum well and very strong links with the community further enhance pupils' learning.
- Pupils with particular needs, including those who join the school at different times of the year, are well cared for.
- The school has yet to develop ways in which pupils' achievement in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology is assessed.

The rate of progress since the previous inspection has been good. The key issues from the last report have been successfully tackled. Good progress has also been made against the targets for improvement set by the headteacher following her appointment. The school demonstrates good capacity to build on its recent successes and further improve the quality of education provided for pupils.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

Pupils achieve **well** overall.

The end of Key Stage 2 test results in 2003 show that pupils' attainment was average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Based on their prior attainment, the pupils' performance was well above average in English and science and average in mathematics. The inspection findings indicate that the attainment of the current Year 6 pupils is well above average in science and average in English and mathematics. Over the past twelve months, the school's focus to raise achievement in mathematics has brought good results. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils achieve very well in science and well in English and mathematics.

The end of Key Stage 1 test results in 2003 show that the pupils' attainment was well above the national average in reading and mathematics. In writing, standards were very high. However, the inspection findings paint a different picture. Standards in reading are average and in writing and mathematics they are below average. The difference between the inspection findings and the test results is due to the large number of pupils with special educational needs in the current group of pupils. Standards in science are above average. Achievement is satisfactory overall, and good in science.

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well from a low starting point on entry to the school. By the time they enter Year 1, about half will have achieved the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning, with many others working well towards their completion.

Those with specific needs achieve well as they move through the school. The school regularly admits children from overseas at different times of the year. Many of these children have a very limited understanding of English. However, they are very well included in all that the school offers and make good progress both socially and academically.

Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations and pupils make good progress. The school has taken effective action to raise standards in information and communication technology since the previous inspection when pupils' achievements in the subject were identified as an area for improvement. Achievement in all other subjects is satisfactory. However, limitations in the school's accommodation hold back how well pupils achieve in some subjects, particularly in physical education.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Pupils have positive attitudes and their behaviour in and around the school is good. Attendance rates are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching is **good** overall and this leads to good achievement by pupils in the core subjects of English, mathematics and very good achievement in science. Assessment procedures in these subjects are good, but the school has yet to develop effective ways to monitor pupils' progress in other subjects. The curriculum is well planned and enriched by very good opportunities for pupils to learn beyond the school day. Despite the severe limitations in the school building, pupils receive a satisfactory level of care from staff. Those new to the school are very well included in all that the school has to offer. Although the staff work incredibly hard and are successful in making the accommodation bright and attractive, the current state of the accommodation limits pupils' learning in some subjects. Links with parents are satisfactory and those with the local community are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Good leadership and management of the school have secured much improvement. The headteacher provides a very good educational lead and she benefits from the support of governors and staff. Key staff provide good leadership. Monitoring of teaching and learning is regular. Effective use is made of assessment information to plan whole school developments. Day-to-day management of the school is good and it is to the credit of the staff and pupils that movement around the school is smooth and unobtrusive and overcomes the complexity of the school's accommodation. There is satisfactory governance of the school. The governing body successfully undertakes its legal responsibilities and provides well-targeted support for the school's development.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents talk encouragingly about what the school provides for their children. The school has suitable arrangements in place to enable it to gather the views of the school and is looking to extend these so that all parents contribute their views about the school and its continued development. Pupils enjoy the school and value greatly what is made available for them. Those who join the school at different times are equally positive about what the school provides for them and they really appreciate the way that other children make them feel welcome and help them to settle in.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to see through the plans that have been formulated to improve the accommodation;
- Develop ways to assess pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Achievement is **good** overall. Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve satisfactorily. By the time pupils leave school at the age of 11, standards are average in English and mathematics and in science, standards are well above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- As they move through the school, pupils achieve well from a below average starting point, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- In English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6, pupils make confident progress in using their skills in literacy and numeracy to extend their learning.
- Children in the two reception classes achieve well.
- The school's careful monitoring and additional support for pupils through the provision of various 'booster' classes enable the children concerned to achieve well.
- Those who join the school at different points of the academic year achieve particularly well in their learning and use of English.
- The quality of the accommodation is a barrier to learning for pupils in physical education.

Commentary

The Foundation Stage

1. The children's attainment when they start school is below the expected level overall, especially in communication, language and literacy. Overall, children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and they benefit greatly from the good provision made. The quality is such that the children get a good start to their education. By the time they enter Year 1, around half of the children will have achieved the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning, with many others working well towards their completion. Teachers work hard to provide the children with a suitable range of outdoor physical activities in order to overcome the lack of easy access to adequate indoor facilities owing to the limitations in the school's accommodation.

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.3 (16.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.5 (16.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.3 (16.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 51 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. On the basis of the 2003 end of Key Stage 1 national test results, pupils' attainment is well above the national average in reading and mathematics and standards were very high in writing. While standards have generally been higher in reading and writing than in mathematics, the overall pattern of attainment when compared with the national picture is one of above average standards generally.
3. Inspection findings paint a different picture of the standards currently being reached by the current group of Year 2 pupils. This reflects the high number of pupils in the group who have special educational needs, which for many relate to their literacy needs. In reading, standards are average and in writing they are below average. Fewer than average numbers of pupils reach the higher levels in writing. In mathematics, standards are below average. Given that the pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are below average, overall achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is satisfactory. In mathematics, however, a lot of the work that the pupils produce is in the form of completing worksheets and recording work in the books through the school's commercial scheme. As a result, the pupils do not get sufficient opportunities to develop their understanding of how to lay out work and work out things for themselves. Pupils achieve well in science reaching standards that are above national expectations.
4. Pupils' achievement in other subjects is satisfactory. Improvements in the overall provision for information and communication technology have raised the level of pupils' performance in this subject since the previous inspection and standards are in line with expectations at the end of both key stages.

Key Stage 2

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (26.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.8 (27.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.7 (28.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. The 2003 national test results show that pupils' attainment in English and science was average, and in mathematics pupils' attainment was below average. The pattern of attainment varies from year to year owing to the fluctuating numbers of pupils with special educational needs and the fact that in Years 3 to 6 the results are affected by the influx of pupils who join the school at different times. When the results are compared with similar schools based on prior attainment, standards are well above average in English and science and average in mathematics. When the school's results are recalculated after taking out the performance of those who have joined the school in Year 5 or Year 6, standards when compared with similar schools are above average in all core subjects. The overall improvement in raising pupils' performance in national tests has been in line with that seen in other schools nationally.

6. The inspection findings paint a different picture of the standards currently being reached by pupils. In English and mathematics, standards are average. Over the past twelve months, pupils who have been identified by the school as being on the border of reaching the national level for mathematics have been taught in booster classes. Evidence indicates that these pupils have reached the expected Level 4 in the 2004 national tests. Standards in science are well above the national average. Improvements in teaching coupled with a strong emphasis on ensuring pupils explore topics in considerable depth as well as ensuring that teaching provides pupils with good opportunities for investigations have led to noticeable improvements in standards. Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics and very well in science.
7. Pupils' achieve satisfactorily in all other subjects. Although art and design was not focused on during the inspection, it has high status in the school and evaluation of pupils' work on display indicates that it is of a high quality. Pupils' achievement in information and communication technology and physical education is satisfactory overall. However, the lack of space constricts teaching and limits pupils' achievement in some aspects of physical education.
8. Across the school, most groups of pupils achieve well. The school has soundly tackled the issue from the last report to ensure that higher-attaining pupils are challenged in the work they have to do. Setting arrangements in Years 3 to 6 help to achieve this. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well as a result of the additional support they are given. Those pupils who join the school during a school year are often at an early stage of learning English. The school's effective monitoring systems and the additional and sensitive support these pupils receive, enable them to achieve very well. In a short space of time, for example, not only do the pupils improve their skills in English, but they also make good progress in settling into the school and in developing relationships with others.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour to school are **good**, with some very good features. They respond well to the values promoted by the school and their personal development is **good**. The provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development is **good**. Attendance levels are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' enthusiasm for their school is reflected in the rising attendance rates.
- Effective personal development is the outcome of good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils behave well and appreciate the need to move around the buildings with care.
- Very good opportunities exist for pupils to applaud the personal qualities of their peers and learn about the challenges others face in their lives.
- The accommodation restricts the scope for pupils to take responsibility for others.

Commentary

9. Children in the Foundation Stage develop very good attitudes to learning and behave very well because staff create a welcoming atmosphere and do a particularly good job in establishing routines and expectations. They soon happily settle, respond well to adults, and work and play co-operatively. Pupils' attitudes in the rest of the school are

good because they enjoy working hard, willingly organise materials or furniture, and usually settle immediately to their independent tasks. Most pupils are attentive in lessons and keen to earn the rewards that come their way.

10. There is always a high demand for places in clubs because pupils say they are 'switched on to learning' in this friendly school. These positive attitudes are also reflected in the good attendance levels, which are above the national average.
11. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 behave well because provision for moral and social development is good. The school uses a variety of positive strategies to encourage good behaviour and to eliminate the possibility of bullying. Certificates and the ultimate prize of the St. George's Cup being the most popular. Pupils say that the very few instances of racial name-calling that occur are dealt with firmly and effectively by teaching staff, but this is not always so at lunchtime. The school excluded only one pupil for a short period this last academic year.
12. Pupils' relationships with their peers and with adults contribute well to the standards achieved. They show a real sense of belonging to the school community and take pride in welcoming people from other lands and backgrounds. This is due to good provision for spiritual and cultural development, which encourages a climate of respect for difference. Pupils are encouraged to listen to others' points of view. This is effectively demonstrated in personal, health and social education lessons, where pupils are taught to listen and empathise with the feelings of others. The school is well aware that site difficulties allow few opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership roles or direct more of their own learning.
13. The pattern of assemblies is a good tool for bringing pupils and parents together, celebrating achievement and uniting the split-site school in song. Children from a range of cultures are welcomed into the school family without fuss. A sense of the wider world is brought to pupils by a good range of visitors, and donations of gifts to local and overseas appeals allow them to learn of people less fortunate than themselves. This stimulating environment, in spite of the restrictive accommodation, is turning out rounded and independently-minded young people in Year 6.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.5	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.

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	287	1	0
White – any other White background	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	8	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	4	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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching is **good** overall and **effective** use is made of assessment information to plan whole school improvements. The school provides a **good** curriculum and this is complemented **very well** by an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. The quality of the accommodation is **poor**. The pupils are **sufficiently well** cared for. The school has **satisfactory** links with parents, **good** links with other schools and **very good** links with the local community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 2. Assessment is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in the reception classes enables the children to settle well into school and achieve well in their first year.
- Good teaching is evident in many other classes and the school's arrangements for teaching pupils in Years 3 to 6 works well.
- Those with particular learning needs receive good support in class and the organisation of booster classes raises the achievement of the pupils concerned.
- There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress in English, maths, science, information and communication technology and the Foundation Stage.
- Effective assessment procedures are not in place for most foundation subjects.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always give sufficient guidance to pupils on how they might improve the quality of their work.

Commentary

14. Despite the high turnover of teaching staff, there has been good improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Teaching quality has improved in information and communication technology reflecting the good progress that has been made in the provision for this subject since the previous inspection. While there is some variation in the quality of teaching seen in different year groups, the overall quality is good. There is good teaching of science in both key stages. The strong emphasis placed on extending pupils' learning through investigations makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning and enjoyment in science.
15. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. Teachers in both reception classes have a good understanding of the needs of young children. They plan the children's work well, and successfully overcome the barriers to learning that the accommodation presents in some aspects of the children's learning. Despite these limitations, children are provided with some opportunities to learn through imaginative play and this approach allows the children to develop their speaking and listening skills as well as learning to play co-operatively with one another. Good use is made of the support assistant who is well deployed to assist those with particular learning needs.
16. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall, although there are strengths in the teaching of pupils in Year 1. Lessons in Year 1 have very brisk pace and activities are often imaginatively linked to the work that pupils cover in different subjects. This work is suitably geared and pitched at the pupils' interest and they respond by working hard and achieving to the best of their ability. In Year 2, teaching is satisfactory with some good features. Despite the high number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group, the pupils are managed well. As in Year 1, pupils' work is often creatively linked with different subjects helping to maintain pupils' interest and curiosity about their learning. However, some lessons lack pace and pupils' interest wanes as a result. In mathematics, much of the pupils' learning is too tightly linked to the use of the school's commercial scheme or in completing worksheets and higher-attaining pupils are capable of working at a higher level.
17. In Years 3 to 6, teachers' high expectations of their pupils, regardless of ability, typify the good teaching. Pupils are managed well and good opportunities are provided in many lessons for them to work in small groups or pairs in order to solve the problems they are set. The teaching of English and mathematics in ability sets in each year group is effective and creative use is made of the learning support assistants who actually undertake some of the teaching for both lower and higher-attaining pupils for English and mathematics. The pupils are assessed on a half-termly basis in each of these subjects to ensure they are achieving sufficiently. Where necessary additional support

is provided for those who may need it or, where it is felt that a pupil may benefit from being moved to a higher set, they are moved accordingly.

18. A key feature of the good teaching is the well-targeted support that those with special educational needs, those who are learning to speak English as an additional language and those new to the school receive. Intervention programmes are well organised and the pupils benefit greatly from the quality of the support in these lessons. As a result, the children achieve well in relation to the targets that have been identified for them.
19. Where assessment arrangements are in place they are good, but the school has not yet implemented suitable procedures across all subjects of the curriculum. In the Foundation Stage, they are informative and well used to identify what teachers have to do to help children to their next stage of learning. Procedures are equally good in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and science. In these subjects, annual and other regular tests provide valuable information to teachers about pupils in Years 1 to 6. Assessment information is very effectively used to identify and correct curricular weaknesses. Furthermore, it is very helpful in identifying groups of pupils that benefit through working in particular sets and focussed learning groups. Teachers also use the information well to see if individuals are making the progress they should and to plan where and how they can help pupils improve. Teachers share learning targets with pupils. However, there is a need to review the way this is done because pupils have difficulty in recalling what it is they have to learn and what they need to do to improve. The marking of pupils' work needs to be made sharper in this respect.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	7 (18%)	18 (47%)	12 (32%)	1 (3%)		

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.

The curriculum

The overall provision for the curriculum is **good** and is very effectively enriched by a **very good** range of additional learning opportunities. While resources are satisfactory overall, the quality of the accommodation is **poor** and impedes some aspects of pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good improvements have been to the curriculum for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- The development of literacy and numeracy across the other subjects of the curriculum is good.
- There is very good curricular enrichment through additional activities.
- There is very good provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language and good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

- Poor accommodation restricts learning in some aspects of physical education.

Commentary

20. The school provides a good curriculum from which all pupils benefit and in which all the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Pupils in the Foundation Stage also benefit from a well-planned curriculum that takes into account their needs and interests. Teachers creatively overcome the lack of easy access to outside play for the children by ensuring that the school playground is set up at different points of the day to enable the children to have access to outside play and work.
21. The last inspection identified the need to produce planning materials throughout the school to help teachers plan pupils' learning. The school has made good progress in addressing this key issue. Subject policies and programmes of study are now firmly embedded for all subjects except music, which is currently being developed. The school has subsequently channelled its energies successfully into developing the curriculum in the core subjects and information and communication technology. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed well through other subjects. The good improvements to the development of the curriculum generally have contributed well to the overall pattern of achievement. The other subjects of the curriculum have also been developed, but understandably not at the same pace.
22. The school is committed to providing a curriculum that is of benefit to all. It is successful in ensuring that pupils are fully included in all that the school has to offer. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs, and very good provision for those pupils who speak English as an additional language or who join the school at different times of the school year. Curricular enrichment is also very good. The school works hard to provide opportunities for pupils to learn through educational visits and by a wide array of visitors to the school. After school clubs and activities are plentiful and pupils freely and gratefully avail themselves of the opportunities provided.
23. Across the school, adequate resources meet pupils' needs and the school has been effective in improving the range and quality of learning resources for information and communication technology since the previous inspection.
24. Staff make the best use of poor accommodation, which falls short of what is needed and of the headteacher's vision for the school. Replacement of the buildings is in the planning stage and present inconveniences and hazards are a source of challenge and concern for the school. Classroom refurbishments are ongoing and the outside play space is as cheerful as it can be, given the budget-draining effect of the more urgent repairs and redecoration. All classrooms are bright and tidy. Some classrooms are very cramped and awkwardly shaped and at times adversely affect learning. Staff have drawn on a combination of high morale with exceedingly hard work to minimise some unattractive areas. They provide stimulating classroom displays which inform learning and celebrate pupils' achievement. Site layout serves to restrict usual everyday interaction between infant and junior pupils and is unsuitable for wheelchair users. The lack of appropriate space for games affects pupils' progress and skill development.

Care, guidance and support

Satisfactory procedures are in place to ensure pupils' care, health and safety. **Good** support, advice and guidance help pupils to succeed. Pupils are provided with **satisfactory** opportunities to have a say in the day-to-day life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school enthusiastically celebrates pupils' academic achievements but guidance systems do not pinpoint how pupils can improve their work up to the next level.
- Pastoral support is good because pupils' emotional wellbeing is of importance and reflected in good relationships found throughout the school.
- Procedures relating to pupils' health and safety are not as comprehensive as they need to be in light of the size and condition of the buildings.

Commentary

25. Staff review pupils' progress regularly to check they are learning at the right level. All achievements, great or small, are recognised, praised and celebrated. Consequently, pupils develop self-esteem and confidence in their own abilities. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, know how well they are doing. Pupils are strongly encouraged to aim higher but are not always made aware precisely how, or what skills they will need to learn.
26. Staff treat pupils with kindness and respect, engage pupils in friendly conversations and care for them well. This makes it easy for pupils to turn to adults for help or support. Many parents praise the quality of settling-in arrangements that allow them and their children to be familiar with teachers' expectations. Some parents would like more information about care and welfare routines so they can play a more active part in introducing their children to school life.
27. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory. Staff are aware of child protection matters through training updates. Governors ensure premises are checked and potential hazards are identified but there are some weaknesses in current arrangements for assessment of risk. These need to be expanded because of the poor levels of maintenance in the three buildings. Procedures need to be extended to encompass all the activities pupils undertake outside and to inform pupils about the hazards present in some classrooms.
28. The effective behaviour management and reward system guides pupils towards self-discipline and acceptance of others. This results in co-operative playtimes and positive relationships. The limited play space is used well by various groups of pupils at staggered times to maximise play and social opportunities. Supervising staff are vigilant and the school council organised an increase in play equipment at recreation times to keep everyone busy. In spite of these actions taken to promote exercise and wellbeing, a number of parents and some pupils expressed reservations about the quality of care at this time. There is no evidence to confirm these anxieties because girls and boys mix well. Midday staff are involved in recording incidents.
29. Pupils can have their say about class rules and the recently established school council has experienced success in organising 'healthy tuck'. These are foundations on which to build.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **satisfactory**. The school has developed **very good** links with the community. Its links with other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Community links make a consistent and exceptional contribution to pupils' achievement, their happiness and personal development.
- There are good mutually beneficial links between the school, St George's playgroup and the main receiving secondary school.

- Most parents are happy with the school and many try hard to support it in meaningful ways.
- Very clear information firmly paves the way for effective parental involvement in their children's learning.

Commentary

30. A host of establishments are welcomed to support pupils' achievement and to increase their motivation. Of these, church links are strongest in promoting spiritual and social development during and outside school hours. A thriving wrap-around care facility is well established on school premises and supporting pupils' attendance and punctuality. Good use is made of the local area for educational visits. The school works well with other educational establishments including the local playgroup and the pupils' subsequent secondary schools. These links provide effective support at times of induction and smooth transfer into the next stage of learning.
31. Most parents hold the school in high regard and many expressed positive views about what it provides. They are very satisfied with teaching because it motivates their children to work hard and enjoy learning. Parents value the way children settle in and make good progress all through school. Some parents, however, are ill at ease regarding incidences of bullying and that the school does not take sufficiently into account the parents' views in respect of this issue. The inspection found that bullying is dealt with well when brought to teachers' attention. However, the school is less successful in informing parents of its intolerance to bullying, or inviting their participation in discussions before discipline policies are drawn up.
32. The headteacher ensures that parents have appropriate and relevant information about the curriculum. Regular and frequent invitations have enabled some parents to attend family-orientated open afternoons, regular shared reading sessions and achievement assemblies. These initiatives and the frequent chances to catch teachers after school are very successful in promoting home-school links. Many parents, owing to domestic arrangements or work-related demands, are not available during the day and are therefore heavily reliant on other sources of information to give them a flavour of the school ethos.
33. Newsletters reflect a unique and friendly style of openness. Opportunities are missed to provide essential details about day-to-day organisation or practical details of care, welfare or discipline arrangements.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The headteacher provides a very good lead to the school's work. The quality of the contribution by key staff is **good**. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision and high aspirations for the school coupled with a determination to see these to fruition.

- Leadership effectively ensures all pupils are valued, well cared for and develop well as individuals.
- The school's focus on developing school-based evaluation with the aim of raising all pupils' achievement is becoming more rigorous.
- Core subject leaders have been fully involved in monitoring and improving their subjects, although procedures for co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning in other subjects are less well-developed.
- Given the design and layout of the school building, the day-to-day management of the school is good.

Commentary

34. The headteacher has a very clear idea of what the school does well and where it needs to improve in comparison to national standards and similar schools. Since her appointment to the school, she has set a very clear educational agenda and there is a strong drive for continued improvement. In order to embed these improvements into the day-to-day work of the school, the headteacher and members of the senior management team have established effective procedures to monitor the school's work carefully. Observations of learning and teaching help to create targets for improvement. This work has been successfully completed against a backdrop of high turnover of staff over the past two years. The school's good procedures for assimilating new members of staff into the school team and for providing mentoring support for the newly qualified teacher have contributed well to the strong sense of teamwork evident. The school's management team actively seeks the views of staff. These opinions help to shape the school improvement plan. This is up-to-date, regularly assessed and reviewed, and gives a clear steer to the school's continuing development. Assessment information and pupils' work are checked rigorously to ensure pupils are making the progress of which they are capable.
35. The subject leaders for English, mathematics and science have made good contributions to developments in their subjects. Information and communication technology is also well led and provision for this has improved greatly since the last inspection. The specific focus of monitoring is evaluated and issues such as presentation and marking are now also being effectively tackled. Monitoring of teaching and learning across the full range of subjects taught, however, is less precise. Foundation subject leaders have too few opportunities to gauge for themselves the impact of teaching on learning. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in these subjects has yet to be developed in depth.
36. The headteacher and staff have created a positive school ethos where all are included and valued equally. There is a strong feel of community within the school and a sense of belonging. This is particularly evident in the way the school welcomes and includes those few pupils at the school whose families are claiming refugee status. Together with all the staff, the headteacher has created an environment where staff, both teaching and non-teaching, give loyally and willingly of their time. Inclusion of all is clearly of importance and the school is successful in meeting its aim of fostering an awareness and sensitivity towards others.
37. The management of provision for those with special educational needs and English as an additional language as well as for those who join the school at different times of the year is good. To overcome difficulties with the school building and to help the overseeing of provision there are two co-ordinators for special educational needs each of whom manages day-to-day provision in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The monitoring of the pupils' progress is thorough. The school's liaison with outside agencies is effective.

38. It is generally accepted by all who work and are associated with the school that the design of the building and general layout of the school does not make channels of communication easy. The school is currently in full discussion with the local education authority and the diocesan authorities to re-build the school to provide one building and offer much improved facilities. Despite the challenges and barriers to some aspects of pupils' learning that the school's accommodation poses, the school runs smoothly and is an orderly institution. All staff know their responsibilities and procedures to ensure smooth movement around the school are carefully followed. Support and administrative staff are efficient and effective and make a positive contribution to the school's day-to-day management.
39. The governors provide well-targeted support for the school and in the main fulfil their legal responsibilities satisfactorily. There are termly meetings of the various committees of the governors where information about the school's progress is given to them by the headteacher. This is discussed fully and together with individual governor visits to the school gives them a clear view of what the school provides for the pupils. The headteacher values the support and input by the governors and they too feel they are fully aware of the day-to-day events so that they make a valuable input into the school's continued progress. The governors are given clear and regular information about the day-to-day management of the budget, the management of which is good. A small fall in pupil numbers has been carefully managed with the slightly larger than average contingency being used to maintain the current staffing levels. Money is carefully directed towards areas identified in the school improvement plan and the effects of spending checked. Principles of best value are well understood and applied satisfactorily.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	743 010
Total expenditure	714 833
Expenditure per pupil	2 206

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	23 379
Balance carried forward to the next	51 556

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**.

40. When children arrive at school, their overall attainment is below average and a significant number are well below average. However, they quickly settle into a caring community and overall achievement is good. Despite the small classrooms and the limitations of the outdoor play area, the teaching is consistently good. This is due to the very good co-operation and teamwork shared between teachers and other adults and ensures that the quality of learning is high. Lessons are lively, challenging and full of interesting, well-planned activities. Consequently, children are enthusiastic learners. They respect their teachers and each other, and demonstrate good concentration in lessons. Classrooms are made bright and cheerful with good quality displays. However, there are not always enough opportunities taken to display and celebrate children's achievements in some of these. The leadership and management are good. Adults are clearly aware of what has to be done and are dedicated to their tasks. Assessment procedures are also good and have been developed well since the previous inspection. The comprehensive information teachers gain about children is carefully gathered and used well to plan for the next stage of each child's learning. Because of this all children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress through the identified areas of learning. By the time they enter Year 1, about half will have achieved the early learning goals in all six areas of learning, with many others working well towards their completion. The school has maintained the good provision identified at the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of the strong emphasis given to this aspect of the children's learning.
- Very good relationships between children and adults create an atmosphere of highly effective learning.

Commentary

41. By the time children leave the reception classes, they achieve well and many achieve the early learning goals. Teaching and learning are good and teaching is typified by teachers and support staff working hard to build up children's self-confidence. The children's learning in this area of experience is good. They grow quickly in self-belief and effectively learn what it means to become members within the school community. They respond well to instructions, settle to tasks and sit quietly when required. Well-planned activities by teachers are successfully designed to encourage children's co-operation and interaction. Through these they quickly make friends and learn how to share and take turns. Teachers are kind to children and are good role models. They encourage good behaviour and self-control, which is reinforced through children's understanding of class rules and codes of behaviour. They reward children with praise and 'smiley face' stickers, and through this build up their self-esteem. Children develop

independence as they dress themselves, care for their own hygiene, and become willing helpers for teachers as they prepare and put away equipment required in lessons. Arrangements for them to interact with older pupils from Year 6 are very effective in helping them to appreciate and participate in school life. Consequently, they become comfortable in school and feel involved at whole school assemblies.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan interesting activities that successfully boost the children's confidence in using language.
- Good use is made of fiction to stimulate learning.

Commentary

42. Over half the children achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1 and achievement is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. A particularly strong feature of teaching is the very good approach to the development of speaking and listening skills across all areas of learning. Teachers consistently encourage children to respond through well-crafted questions and through other opportunities demanding speech. This enables children to develop a growing confidence in communication and conversation. Through their ever-increasing vocabulary, they enjoy listening to poetry and recall rhyming words. Stories such as the *Little Red Hen* are appreciated and teachers encourage the children to act them out in their own words or by using as much as of the text as they remember. Teachers provide a good number of books for children to enjoy. One or two read them independently, although most look at the pictures of their favourite stories and try to tell the story to themselves and their friends. Good teaching ensures many children know the majority of initial letter sounds and can find them in the printed word. Most children can write their names. Higher-attaining children write sequenced sentences and often produce scripts with correctly spelt words. Almost all lower-attaining children produce some recognisable letter shapes when making marks as they record the sick pet's name in writing activities in the 'Vet's Surgery.'

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in their mathematical development.
- Teachers identify effective links with other areas to stimulate learning.

Commentary

43. Children demonstrate their good progress towards the development of their knowledge and understanding of number. By the time they leave reception, the good progress all children have made means that over half have achieved the early learning goals and achievement is good. Whilst most count and match numbers to 10, several children go beyond this and are confident with numbers to 20 and above. They match and sort

objects to numbers and understand the concept of one more and one less. Teaching and learning are good and teachers devise good activities in lessons so that pupils of different attainment complete activities that are well matched to the level of their understanding. In addition, teachers plan carefully to promote children's learning of numeracy through other activities. For example, in outdoor play, games are arranged which encourage the children to recognise numbers by gathering together at displayed number points. Other class activities encourage children to weigh, measure and explore capacity through well-planned sand and water activities. Children are encouraged to use correct terminology by using words such as bigger, longer, tallest and heaviest. Pupils recognise the value of coins and handle them appropriately. They know how to record data in order to produce block graphs about their favourite pets, fruits and vegetables on the computer.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in their understanding of the world around them.
- Good use is made of information and communication technology to stimulate learning.

Commentary

44. The good teaching children receive helps them to achieve well and the pace of children's learning in this aspect of their learning is good. Consequently, most children attain the early goals by the time they are five. They are encouraged to investigate and look closely at a range of objects and living creatures before talking, drawing and writing about them. Visits to a local farm provide first-hand experience of farm animals and of their importance to humans. In an associated task in class, the children are involved in making boiled egg sandwiches and experience how food changes through cooking. A large collection of construction materials is available for use. With them, children make imaginative models of transporters, windmills and similar objects that they are familiar with, or have learned about in lessons. Children have a satisfactory understanding of how things change with the passage of time and compare things of the past with today. They also learn about different places and cultures when listening to their friends talking about the places they have visited on holiday with 'Barnaby Bear'. Children have acquired satisfactory computer skills and demonstrate good mouse control when moving the cursor across the screen. Teachers effectively ensure that the children have opportunities to develop an early understanding of the faiths and customs that people in different parts of the world practice and requirements for religious education are met.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers work hard to overcome some of the limitations in the school building in providing children with outside play opportunities.

Commentary

45. Although the outdoor play area is in need of resurfacing and there is no provision for access to grass, the teachers' hard work and imaginative planning ensure that children make good progress and achieve well. Teaching and learning are good. By the time children leave reception, most children reach the early learning goals. Although the physical layout of the classrooms does not provide immediate access to outside play, teachers work creatively around these limitations. This is achieved by providing the children with regular play experiences on the playground. During these sessions, children control their three-wheeled toys around tracks and across its surface with good control. They run, jump, and skip, showing good balance and change of direction. In the hall, children's ability to express themselves aesthetically through dance is explored as they strive to move gracefully in time to the music. Teachers help children to become aware of the need to keep their bodies healthy through exercise and lead them to understand the effects of vigorous exercise. In class, children are provided with a large variety of tools to select from which help to develop their fine control skills. For example, they choose the appropriate tools when cutting, sticking, rolling and fastening and use them effectively.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy their learning.
- Teachers successfully plan activities that fire the children's imaginations.

Commentary

46. The achievement children make in their creative development is good. Most children reach the standards expected of them in this area of their learning. Achievement is good and successfully promoted by the good quality teaching and learning. Many children thoroughly enjoy this aspect of their work, particularly when using paints, pastels and other media to produce a whole range of work. Sometimes they mix these together, or with other materials, such as sand, or glue, to create effective textured pictures of flowers or symmetrical butterflies. Sometimes they are provided with the opportunity to weave patterns and create vibrant collages for which they select their own materials. Three-dimensional art is also encouraged as children made clay animals and birds for firing in the kiln. Children's response to music is very good. They particularly enjoy their favourite songs to which they can clap and make movements. They are aware that musical instruments are capable of producing different types of sound. They enjoy performing and listening to the performances of others.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in English.
- Effective teaching ensures pupils make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and work hard in lessons.
- Enthusiastic leadership has brought about recent improvements that have led to rising standards.
- Good use is made of information and communication technology to promote pupils' literacy development through other subjects.
- Too few pupils reach higher levels in their writing in Year 2.
- Marking does not always give pupils sufficient guidance on how they may improve.

Commentary

47. The 2003 national test results show that by the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment in reading was well above national average and in writing standards were exceedingly high. In the national tests for 11-year-olds, standards in English were average, and when compared with similar schools, in terms of prior attainment, standards were well above average. At the end of Year 6 inspection findings confirm that standards are average. However, the results of the inspection indicate that at the end of Year 2 pupils reach standards that are average in reading and below average in writing. The difference is explained by the far higher number of Year 2 pupils in the cohort with special educational needs. Early indications are that the pupils' results in writing in the 2004 tests are lower than in previous years with no pupil reaching the higher Level 3. From a low starting point, girls and boys of different ages and prior attainments, including those with special educational needs achieve well as they move through the school. Those who join the school at different points of the school year and who are learning to speak English as an additional language achieve very well.
48. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. Good care and relationships across the school encourage the development of spoken English. Teachers set a good standard. They interact well with the pupils and actively promote positive attitudes by valuing pupils' efforts. They often provide opportunities for pupils to talk in pairs or small groups to support each other's learning and to develop the skills of negotiation and problem solving. Class discussion and the scope for pupils to discuss issues through the class councils help to develop pupils' understanding of speaking and listening carefully to others in a more formal setting.
49. Most pupils read fluently by the time they leave the school and standards are average by the end of both key stages. Pupils in all year groups read a good range of texts accurately in line with their age and ability and with sufficient understanding. Pupils achieve well because good systems and effective teaching consistently support the development of basic skills through the school. Lower-attaining pupils in Year 2 use a secure knowledge of the complex relationships between sounds and letters in order to understand what they read. By Year 6, higher-attaining pupils are fully independent readers. They talk enthusiastically about books they have read, favourite authors and different genre. The school makes good use of the school library and this helps to

promote the pupils' positive attitudes to reading. Each class, for example, has a weekly session in the library and this is successful in developing the pupils' understanding of how to locate and gather information.

50. Standards in writing are rising as a result of the school's drive for higher achievement. Year 2 pupils compose work that is accurate and make accurate use of punctuation to make the intention of the writing clear to the reader. The basic skills of handwriting, spelling, punctuation and sentence structure are taught systematically and rigorously. However, too few pupils reach the higher levels in their writing and few demonstrate the skill of using imaginative vocabulary to make it engage the full attention of those that may read their work. As a result of good teaching as the pupils move through Years 3 to 6, they understand increasingly how and why texts vary, and they learn to use a widening range of vocabulary to good effect. They successfully learn how to plan and draft their writing to strengthen its quality and effect. Higher-attaining pupils take pride in their writing and present their work attractively in a well-formed fluent hand.
51. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 with some good features in Year 1, and teaching is good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have secure understanding and knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and good teaching of basic skills takes place. The common strengths of teaching are the use of clearly introduced learning intentions to ensure that all pupils understand what they will learn and why. In Years 3-6, teachers' expectations are high. They manage pupils positively and thoughtfully, praising and recognising their achievements. Lessons are interesting, engaging pupils well and encouraging them to do their best. Across the school, the quality of marking and use of regular assessment information to inform planning is varied. Where marking is most effective, comments encourage, instruct and give effective points for improvement. This ensures that pupils build effectively on what they know and can do and know how to improve their work. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is good due to care taken by teachers in all classes to meet their specific needs and ensuring they understand their tasks. Care is taken to ensure that those new to the school and who have a limited understanding of English receive additional support in small groups. As a result of the good teaching they receive, they make very good progress in learning to use English.
52. The subject leader is enthusiastic, knowledgeable and effective and the overall quality of leadership and management is good. Her work has helped to raise standards in the subject particularly through ensuring the consistent use of the approaches identified in the National Literacy Strategy. She has a good grasp of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school and how to go about making necessary improvement. Careful purchasing has ensured that resources for the subject are good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Pupils use language consistently well across the curriculum and are given good opportunities to develop their skills through other subjects. In some lessons they use word-processing in relevant ways to improve the quality of their writing. The school is developing its commitment to extending the literacy strategy to other subjects, so that English and the rest of the curriculum support each other more productively.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in mathematics.
- Careful monitoring of the pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6 enables pupils, where necessary, to get additional support through 'booster classes.'
- In Years 3 to 6, teachers make good use of other subjects to promote pupils' understanding of mathematics.
- Throughout the school, pupils enjoy their learning and work hard in lessons.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use computers or calculators to help them with or to check their learning.
- Good leadership and management of the subject have secured effective recent improvements.
- In Year 2, teachers rely too heavily on worksheets and other commercially produced workbooks and this limits the chance pupils have to layout and calculate work for themselves.

Commentary

54. On the basis of the 2003 end of Key Stage 1 national test results, the pupils' attainment was above the national average, and well above average in comparison with similar schools based on the number of pupils who claim free school meals. The 2003 test results show that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was below the national average, and well below average based on their prior attainment. Standards have varied in recent years because of differences in the natural ability of the groups of pupils entered for the tests, and because of the differences in ability of pupils who join the school during Years 3 to 6.
55. The inspection findings paint a different picture to the 2003 test results, and indicate that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are below national expectations, and that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with national expectations. The difference is due to the differences between different groups of pupils. In addition, in Years 3 to 6, the school has focused on providing additional support in the form of booster classes for pupils identified as being on the cusp of achieving the national expectation in national tests. Inspection evidence indicates that this support has proved effective in raising standards. In Key Stage 2, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and those who speak English as an additional language and those who join the school at different times achieve very well.
56. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 pupils is satisfactory overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of number, shape, space and measure and in how to present mathematical data by means of tables and charts. However, the achievement of pupils is limited by frequent use of commercial textbooks or worksheets. As a result, the pupils get too few opportunities to develop their skills in laying out their work and finding solutions for themselves.
57. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make good progress in understanding how to apply the knowledge they gain in mathematics to a range of everyday contexts. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of fractions enable them to explain what a particular

fraction's decimal equivalent may be and then determine what the financial savings may be on some goods purchased if the original price was, for example, reduced by 20 per cent. Good opportunities in lessons for pupils to use information and communication technology and relevant software enable the pupils to achieve well in their ability to use 'LOGO to devise mathematical shapes or use spreadsheets to present and work out more complex problems involving a range of mathematical data.

58. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, there is some good teaching. This is characterised by teachers effectively ensuring that the pupils have good opportunities to use a range of practical equipment to reinforce their learning. However, the overall effect is lessened by the overuse of worksheets and commercial textbooks. This is particularly evident in Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, good teaching is typified by brisk and purposeful oral work at the start of lessons that is followed by the setting of challenging work that is well geared to the needs of the pupils. This challenges them to work hard and achieve their very best. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and successfully identify the ways in which learning in other subjects can be geared to extending the pupils' mathematical skills. In all year groups, careful grouping of the pupils according to their aptitude ensures that all pupils are given the chance to achieve at their own level.
59. The role of the co-ordinator has developed well and both he and the headteacher regularly monitor teaching and learning to ensure consistency in teaching from class-to-class. This information is used well to guide and secure future educational improvement in the subject.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. Pupils in all classes get good opportunities to practice and promote their mathematical skills in other subjects. Design and technology and art and design are used well in this respect and good examples were noted during the inspection of pupils being given good opportunities to write up the results of their science investigations and incorporate tables and charts into their work to clarify their thinking and explanations.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' overall achievement is very high, aided by the good quality of teaching pupils receive.
- The gathering and use of information about pupils in order to plan what they should learn next is good.
- The quality of leadership and management is good and the co-ordinator has a clear idea of the strengths in pupils' achievement.
- The way some pupils record their work is in need of improvement.

Commentary

61. The 2003 teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils show that standards in science were well above average. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 2, pupils' achieve well and their attainment is above the national average. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is well above the national average and achievement is very high. Standards are currently higher than those attained by pupils in the 2003 national tests. The latest results of the 2004 tests, although not yet confirmed, indicate that standards remain high. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and those pupils who have joined the school during the middle of a school year make good progress as they move through the school.
62. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils have built up a good foundation in scientific knowledge and understanding of various themes and scientific topics. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy the practical work they are asked to undertake and make good progress in their understanding of materials, living things and other scientific ideas, such as forces. By the end of Year 6, the pupils understand and can explain well the scientific principles involved in reflecting and refracting light and know that these concepts are dependent and relative to a light source. Pupils have a good understanding of gravity and explain well what is meant by a food chain and how the removal of one source of food from the chain can endanger the wellbeing of other creatures in the chain. Pupils achieve very well in their ability to set up and follow through their own lines of scientific enquiry.
63. Teaching is good and often very good in Years 3 to 6 and promotes good learning and a healthy curiosity by the pupils about the world in which they live. Lessons are well planned and the challenges set by teachers are often high. Children enjoy science lessons and, as a result, they concentrate well and work hard at the tasks provided and they achieve highly. Most lessons are of a practical nature. In these, pupils are expected to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills in well-planned investigational activities. A very good example of this was seen in Year 6, where pupils carried out an ongoing investigation into water pollution. The pupils enjoyed their task, took advantage of the opportunities to select resources and methodology, collaborated very well in high levels of discussion and came to interesting conclusions. In lessons like these learning is of a high quality. Other real-life tasks and challenges were observed elsewhere in the school. The way most pupils record their findings is at least satisfactory, but in some cases pupils' written conclusions are minimal. This is because they are sometimes too constrained by restrictive recording sheets. These limit the style and amount pupils can write and do not encourage pupils enough to further individual pursuit or to record any additional findings. Teachers effectively extend learning through other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils use information and communication technology for recording findings through graphs, numeracy through measuring and literacy through the written recording of experiments.
64. The very good leadership and management provided by the subject leader have significantly contributed to the improved standards. She has focused attention towards improving teaching and learning, through overseeing and supporting teachers with planning. Good assessment procedures have been established. The information gathered from these is used well to identify weaknesses to be addressed in the curriculum and to identify the progress pupils' make from year to year. There is a good range of resources, which are readily available and are effectively used to support teaching and learning in the classroom. The school has made very good improvement towards raising standards since the last inspection when they were then judged to be average.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen since the previous inspection.
- Teachers are competent and confident in using ICT equipment and this has a positive effect on the pupils' enthusiasm for learning about ICT.
- The school has good resources for the teaching of ICT, although the design and layout of the ICT room does not make teaching easy.
- Good leadership and management ensure clear educational direction and development.
- As the pupils move through the school their progress is tracked very well.

Commentary

65. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below the nationally expected level at the end of both key stages. Since then there has been a good improvement in the provision and, as a result, standards have improved and are now in line with national expectations at the end each key stage. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily. Those who join the school at different times and have very little understanding of how to use ICT achieve well.
66. In all classes, good planning ensures a clear structure for the way that pupils will gain skills and knowledge as they move through the school. By Year 2, the children are confident in logging on to the school's network and use a simple word-processor to write an account of a day trip they have undertaken. They know what a 'font' means and can change the size and appearance of their text using the features within the software they use to make their work more pleasing. Pupils store their work on the hard drive and are able to access all their files easily. By the age of eleven, pupils have a secure body of skills in all aspects of ICT. They use the Internet well to research information and their ability to use other software such as the mathematical language of 'Logo' and spreadsheets to list numerical data and then transfer that data into simple charts and graphs is developing well. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of how ICT can be used to store day-to-day information, for example, for recording who has borrowed books by using the software and equipment in the school library for scanning bar codes.
67. There is effective teaching and learning throughout the school. The best teaching maintains a good pace of learning with teachers demonstrating quickly and effectively to pupils who listen attentively and clarify their tasks confidently. Teacher subject knowledge on the whole is good showing confidence and the ability to respond to pupils' questions accurately and thoroughly. Teachers' enthusiasm for using computers helps to shape the pupils' own enthusiasm for using ICT, which is good. This enthusiasm for using ICT assists them to work hard and to use thinking skills developed in other contexts to gain and retain skills and knowledge in the subject. Pupils' ability to work collaboratively is particularly good, with pupils talking, advising and supporting each other well. This is to the pupils' credit as the design and layout of the

computers in the computer suite does not make teaching easy. The size of this room is small and its 'L' shape feature means that some pupils are out of the eyesight of the teacher when they are working with some other pupils.

68. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader gives a clear sense of direction for the development of the subject. The scheme of work and assessment procedures she has developed are supportive and effective and help to keep very good track of the progress that pupils make in the subject as they move through the school. However, procedures for ensuring regular monitoring of teaching have still to be established in order to identify the effect that teaching is having on how well pupils are achieving. The school has used available funds and expertise well in providing resources of good quality. Relevant resources support each area of the ICT curriculum and ongoing training means that teachers are able to use these to support their day-to-day teaching.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. All teachers use ICT well to promote learning in other subjects. Pupils of all ages use word-processing software extensively in many subjects. In addition, computers are used effectively to promote learning in art and design, design and technology, geography and history, as pupils search for information from CD-ROMs or from the Internet.

HUMANITIES

70. **Religious education** is to be inspected by an independent inspector appointed by the Diocese and is therefore not reported on in this report. Little work was seen in **history**, and it is therefore not possible to make a judgement about the overall provision in this subject. Since the previous inspection, the school has ensured that planning materials are in place to help teachers plan the subject. The subject is further supported by a very good range of additional learning opportunities, which draw well on the history of the people, places and buildings of the local area. Discussions with the pupils and scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' work and displays around the school indicate that history is well organised and that the subject is taught regularly in all classes. However, the school has yet to develop clear and effective ways to assess the pupils' progress in the subject to enable teachers to get a comprehensive idea of the progress that pupils are making in the subject.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Field trips and the use of the local environment help pupils learn through first-hand experiences.
- The curriculum content is not extensive enough.
- Procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' progress are not in place.

Commentary

71. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection. One was in Year 2, and the other in Year 3. However, in addition to this evidence, judgements are based on scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning, and through discussions with teachers and pupils. Pupils' attainment by the time they are seven is in line with national expectations. Standards are also in line with expectations when pupils reach the end of Year 6. Achievement for all pupils is satisfactory, although sometimes their achievement in lessons is good.
72. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory level of geographical knowledge. They are able to make sensible comparisons between their own town and with a seaside coastal town in Lancashire. They also understand how the environment and the weather conditions of other people affects the way they live. However, their understanding of people in other countries and the way they live and work is limited. By eleven, pupils have an appropriate knowledge of areas of work they have studied. For example, they can talk about rivers and describe a river journey from its source to estuary. They can recall some of the great mountain ranges of the world, and have a fair understanding of where to place the main world and European countries on a map. However, their overall knowledge is basic and very few of them show higher skills or understanding of geographical enquiry, patterns and processes.
73. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and there are some examples of good practice. This occurs when pupils are provided with first-hand experiences to learn through well-planned field trips. These include visits for a river study and to the seaside in order to understand the differences between localities. When this occurs, pupils' response is good and they produce work that reflects their good understanding and knowledge. In Year 3, for example, pupils compared old and recent photographs of their local area and this enabled them to consider how their town had developed over time and what people might do to earn their living.
74. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory, but the subject has suffered from not figuring on the schools' priority list for curriculum development. Whilst an appropriate range of topics is provided for pupils to study, the extent and depth of work produced by them is not as wide as it should be and the contents of work in their books is not enough. Older pupils, in particular, do not have enough opportunities to investigate independently. The school is aware of the need to introduce useful procedures to record the progress pupils make and to identify how it may use them to improve standards, both individually and collectively. The current standards are similar to those identified at the last inspection and improvement has been satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. The inspection focused on **physical education** in order to judge the effect of the accommodation on the level of pupils' achievement. **Art and design, design and**

technology and **music** were not a main inspection focus, and not enough evidence was gathered to make a judgement about the provision in these subjects. However, the work on display in **art and design** is of a high standard, and indicates that the school provides the pupils with rich and interesting opportunities to create imaginative art and design work. These include being encouraged to experiment with different media. The local environment and a range of different artists are used well to further stimulate pupils' learning and interest in art. In addition, the school undertakes the teaching of the subject by using 'art days' where the pupils have opportunity to work and develop their skills in depth for a day. This ensures that the work that the pupils produce is of a high quality. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in enabling pupils to use new technology in creating art work. However, the school has yet to develop ways in which pupils' progress is monitored in the subject as they move through the school.

76. In **design and technology**, evidence from discussions with pupils and evaluation of their work indicate that as they move through the school they develop a satisfactory understanding of the principles that underpin the subject. In Year 1, for example, pupils are given good opportunities to develop their early understanding of winding mechanisms. The work they undertook in developing this knowledge helped their learning of axles and pulleys. Good scope is given for the pupils to think through their initial ideas and suggest what may be the most appropriate materials to use and how, once they have finished their work, it could have been improved. Year 6 pupils have a secure understanding of how design and technology can impact on their daily lives. They know, for example, that many everyday kitchen items such as kettles or microwave ovens perform the basic action of boiling water or heating food but are designed differently by manufactures in order for them to be eye-catching and aesthetically pleasing.
77. **Music** is currently under development within the school and a new scheme of work is about to be introduced across the school to ensure that pupils' learning is systematically built on as they move through the school. Discussions with pupils indicate that by the time they leave the school they have a satisfactory understanding of different musical styles and genres and they can say why they prefer one style of music to another. Children have good opportunities to listen to music in lessons and in assemblies, including listening to those who are gifted in playing musical instruments.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Limitations in the school's accommodation constrain pupils' achievements.
- Teachers work hard to overcome the challenges posed by the inadequate facilities for physical education.
- Pupils enjoy good opportunities to participate in competitive sport and scope for extra-curricular activities in the subject are equally good.
- The school has yet to develop ways to monitor and track the pupils' progress.

Commentary

78. Pupils in all classes, including those with special educational needs, those who are learning to speak English as an additional language and those who join the school at different times of the academic year, achieve satisfactorily in physical education. Standards are in line with national expectations which was the same picture found at the time of the last inspection. However, at the time of the last inspection the school was found to be providing a limited number of opportunities for the pupils to participate in competitive sport. The situation in this respect is much improved and the school's football team, for example, regularly competes against other schools and enjoys some success. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to participate in swimming and standards are in line with expectations by the time they leave the school.
79. Inspection findings indicate that the school's accommodation does limit what the pupils are able to achieve in certain areas of the physical education curriculum. It is to the teachers' credit that what they provide for the pupils enables the pupils to respond to their lessons in an eager and energetic manner.
80. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how playing small games necessitates playing co-operatively with one another. They can pass and control a ball with suitable skill and are developing an understanding of the importance of using space creatively. In dance, they put together simple pieces of movement by listening to a piece of music and work co-operatively with one another when they do so. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate that they can play team games in a fair and an equitable manner and their ability to control and pass a ball to their friends is developing well.
81. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some examples of good teaching seen during the inspection. In a Year 1 dance lesson, for example, the teacher provided the pupils with clear and effective instructions for creating simple sequences of movement. Teachers work terribly hard to overcome the limitations of having to undertake some teaching on the school playground due to restrictions in space in both of the school halls. The noise from the traffic that passes adjacent to the school playground makes it difficult for the pupils to listen effectively both to the teacher and to each other when, for example, they critically evaluate the work of their classmates with a view to improving the level of their performance. Despite these difficulties, the pupils are managed well when learning takes place on the school playground and the pupils themselves respond with high levels of interest and commitment to what they are asked to do.
82. There is satisfactory leadership and management of the subject and good progress has been made since the previous inspection in providing the pupils with occasion to play team games against other schools. The school's active participation in the national 'Sports Co-ordinator Scheme' has provided the co-ordinator with non-teaching time to undertake some monitoring of teaching through evaluating teachers' planning documents.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides well for personal and social development through lessons and other day-to-day activities.
- The school has a strong and supportive ethos which helps pupils to feel secure and confident when expressing their feelings.
- There is an effective school council through which pupils are actively encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility for themselves and others.
- Good links are made through other subjects to promote healthy eating.
- Assemblies frequently celebrate pupils' success and, together with rewards systems, encourage both achievement and effort.

Commentary

83. A good range of experiences is provided for pupils throughout the school emphasising the importance of pupils' personal and social development and their understanding of a healthy life style. The pupils achieve well in their understanding in this area of their learning.
84. Lessons and activities are planned to deal with areas such as feelings and emotions, health and personal safety, sex and relationships education and drugs awareness. Whole school assemblies promote and celebrate pupils' successes and encourage individual and group contributions. On a day-to-day, basis opportunities for promoting pupils' personal development are taken and there is a consistent approach by staff to developing pupils' awareness of areas such as knowing the difference between right and wrong and the impact of their actions on others. The school organises residential visits for older pupils building independence and initiative. They visit 'Crucial Crew' which helps to develop their awareness of keeping safe and not putting others at risk. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities, for example playing sports and musical instruments and drama and computer clubs, which give pupils choice to develop their own interests and motivation.
85. Pupils' involvement in the consultation process revolves around the work of the school council which develops their understanding of the importance of listening to others and that at times a vote is taken in order to achieve consensus on a particular course of action. Time is used in lessons to consult other pupils on their views and these are then shared with the rest of the school council. Through these activities, pupils are developing an awareness of becoming citizens and taking part in a democratic society. 'Circle time' is used frequently and pupils appear to be comfortable in making contributions within these sessions, knowing that their views and opinions are valued by their classmates.
86. Pupils show an understanding of their school as a community and the part they play in maintaining it. They are developing as considerate, caring individuals who have well formed views on taking responsibility for themselves and others.
87. Teaching is good overall. Lessons have a clear focus and involve active participation by pupils. Pupils also benefit from visits from professionals such as the nurse and members of the emergency services. These provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to discuss and listen to the ideas and thoughts of others and in appropriate depth. Some sessions would benefit from being longer to allow the exploration of feelings and emotions more thoroughly. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils. Most enjoy taking part in discussions and show empathy for others.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
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	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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