

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST JOHN FISHER RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Grand Drive, London

LEA area: Merton

Unique reference number: 102671

Headteacher: Mrs A Towner

Lead inspector: Pauline Lyseight-jones

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> December 2003

Inspection number: 257698

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	416
School address:	Grand Drive London
Postcode:	SW20 9NA
Telephone number:	(0208) 540 2637
Fax number:	(0208) 540 2988
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Gerard Ryan
Date of previous inspection:	22 <sup>nd</sup> June 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

St John Fisher is a mixed Roman Catholic primary school in the London Borough of Merton. It is a larger than average sized school with 416 pupils on roll, and broadly similar numbers of girls and boys. Most pupils are from White UK backgrounds. There are twenty-five pupils who speak languages other than English, twelve of whom are at the earliest stages of learning English. Just over a tenth of pupils are on the register of special educational needs and five pupils have statements of special educational need. The main special needs for which pupils require support are broad and include specific learning, behavioural, speech and communication difficulties. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Pupils' attainment when they start school is in line with national expectations.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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8991	Pamela Goldsack	Lay inspector	
16773	Raminder Arora	Team inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics Design and Technology Geography History
30266	Hilma Rask	Team inspector	Special educational needs Music Physical Education
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**St John Fisher is a good school which provides a good standard of education overall. Teaching is generally good and pupils learn well.** The governors, headteacher and senior staff of the school have successfully brought the school through a difficult reorganisation and are well-placed to continue to build on the strengths of the school. Parents and pupils like and support St John Fisher School. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils with special educational needs are provided with good support and they achieve well.
- Partnerships with parents are **good**.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science at both average and higher levels of achievement are **high**.
- Providing children with a **good** start in school due to the all-round good quality of education which they receive in the Nursery and the Reception classes.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality are **very good** and they enjoy school.
- Teaching and learning throughout the school are **good** and some teaching is better than this; however, the school needs to make sure that all staff are fully supported when working in unfamiliar year groups and subjects.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below those expected.
- Assessment is good in English, mathematics and science.
- School development planning is broadly satisfactory but there are unsatisfactory aspects in organisation and in ensuring timely subject planning.
- Support for older pupils at the first stage of learning English is unsatisfactory.

Since the last inspection the school has improved what it provides for pupils with special educational needs and this is now **good**. **Satisfactory** progress has been made in putting effective assessment practice into place. The very recent changes to what is provided for in information and communication technology are such that it is not possible for them to have had an impact on pupils' standards or progress. The school's relationships with parents are now **good**.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

This was the first year in which results were available for Year 6 pupils. Standards in English are **well above average** and in mathematics and science they are **good**. Whilst these results are in line with the achievement of similar schools, pupils perform **better** than expected when their results are compared to their Year 2 results. They make **good** progress throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Children join the school with **expected standards** in all areas of learning. They make good progress so that, by the time that they enter Year 1, many children have done **better** than expected for the Reception year, especially in their social development. In classwork, standards in mathematics, science, history and in English in Key Stage 1 are **good**. They are **unsatisfactory** in information and communication technology. Pupils with special educational needs **achieve well** in

relation to their previous attainment. Overall, pupils who speak English as an additional language **achieve satisfactorily**. No judgement on achievement is made for pupils who are particularly gifted or talented since the school is not yet formally identifying or specifically providing for these pupils.

**Pupils attend very regularly; they arrive on time, behave well and have good attitudes to school.** The development of their personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is **good**.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** across the school and there is **some very good or excellent teaching** in all Key Stages. Pupils cover a broad, balanced curriculum, although there are **weaknesses** in information and communication technology which are now being addressed. Pupils make **good** progress throughout the Nursery and Reception classes and are **well prepared** for the National Curriculum. The school's health and safety procedures are **good** and the guidance which is given to pupils is **satisfactory**. Links with other schools are **good** and the school has **good** links with the broader community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership of the headteacher and the senior team is **good**. Governors **work well** with the headteacher and her team to provide **good** management for the school. Formal development planning is **broadly satisfactory** but **needs further attention** to ensure that the school continues to improve.

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

**Parents and pupils like the school.** Parents play a significant part in the work of the school either through helping their children at home, through supporting school activities or through the established system of parent representatives for each class.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure that it puts into place sustained systems to help its new and experienced staff to deal with the curriculum and teaching demands which come about as a result of primary school amalgamation.
- Make sure that a clearer schedule for school improvement planning is put into place and that the overall plan and subject plans are set out in full, with suitable targets and thorough methods for checking success.
- Put into place regular and reliable systems for checking the quality of learning, assessment and, most importantly, of teaching across all subjects.
- Improve the school's support and guidance for older pupils at the early stages of learning English.
- Accelerate progress in teaching, learning and assessment to secure raised standards in information and communication technology.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

**Standards achieved throughout the school are good and pupils do better than expected in English, mathematics and science when compared to pupils across the country.** This is because they get a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes. This start is built upon as pupils go through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and attain well due to well-planned, skilled teaching and support. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve in line with their peers. However, older pupils who are at the early stages of learning English make slower progress due to their being given insufficient, targeted teaching and support.

This is the first year in which the school had pupils old enough to take part in the national tests at the end of Year 6, therefore comparisons are not able to be made with performance in previous years. However, pupils have fared well in the 2003 tests, particularly in English. This was helped by the programme of assessment, individual target setting and tutorials which the deputy headteacher put into place in January 2003. This led to pupils receiving focused, intense support, which helped them to achieve their best. No judgements are made about standards or learning in geography, art and design and in physical education in Key Stage 1 as too few lessons were seen.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Nursery and the Reception class do better than expected.
- In 2003 in national tests, Year 6 standards in English are very good and in mathematics and science they are good when compared to primary schools across the country.
- In 2003 in national tests, Year 2 standards in reading are above average, in mathematics they are average and in writing they are below average when compared to primary schools across the country.
- Year 6 pupils make good progress when compared with their test results at end of Year 2.
- The standards of English class work vary but overall they are satisfactory.
- Standards in information and communication technology are below expectations and information and communication technology is under-used in other subjects.

#### Commentary

1. The school has worked hard to maintain its high standards and to ensure that its success at the end of Key Stage 1 is developed into its new, full Key Stage 2. The initial results are promising, with pupils making good progress overall.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (n/a)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.9 (n/a)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.9 (n/a)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*



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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.3 (16.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.3 (14.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.5 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- The school's reading, writing and mathematics results vary from year to year. The overall trend for English and mathematics is above the national improvement figure. When compared to similar schools, mathematics is as expected, reading is good and writing is below expectations. The reasons for the variations in achievement were said by the school to be specific. All teaching in Years 1 and 2 is now skilled and effective and this is expected to lead to a more consistent achievement pattern. In science in Year 2, the teacher assessments of pupils' standards are high, exceed the national results and have been sustained over the years.

**Targets and outcomes – Key Stage 2 – 2003 - 2004**

	Target 2003	Outcome 2003	Target 2004
English % L4+	80	92	85
English % L5+	22	30	31
Mathematics % L4+	85	79	85
Mathematics % L5+	27	35	37
Science % L4+		97	
Science %L5+		49	

- The targets which the school set for its achievement in English were comfortably exceeded, at both typical level and at the higher level. This is likely to be due to some caution when the targets were set and the drive by the school to ensure that pupils did their best, especially in the final terms of Year 6. In mathematics, the shortfall in the mathematics target is not significant and the school has exceeded its higher-level target well. The school sets no specific targets for science but it is clear from the results that the expectation is that all pupils will achieve at least the expected levels. In fact, in 2003, nearly half of Year 6 achieved the higher level, which is highly creditable. In all three subjects, Year 6 higher-level results were good when compared to national figures. This high performance is partly due to teachers' expertise in and experience of teaching older pupils, which has now been brought to the school as a result of the school's amalgamation.
- Standards overall are satisfactory in other subjects. The exceptions are in physical education and information and communication technology. In physical education, standards are better than expected in Years 3 to 6 due to the good use of the outdoor facilities and the additional training which pupils receive through good quality out-of-school sporting clubs. Information and communication technology standards are below expectations because the school has only recently put into place the changes which were cited at the last inspection. This means that pupils were unable to build on their knowledge and skills sufficiently well to make progress at a reasonable rate.
- Children begin school with standards which are broadly in line with most pupils of the same age. They make good progress and by the time that they begin Year 1, they are doing better than expected, especially in their social development. This is due to the effective teamwork and good quality teaching of a broad and interesting curriculum from all staff working with Nursery and Reception classes.

6. There is no significant difference between the achievement of girls and boys. Most pupils who speak English as an additional language reach satisfactory standards. There are weaknesses in the initial achievement of older pupils who are in the early stages of learning English, due to the lack of comprehensive programmes to meet their English language learning needs and to ease them into to life of the school. Younger pupils and those who join the school speaking some English make better progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the suitable targets set in their individual education plans. This is because learning support assistants regularly monitor their progress and are able to make quick changes to the teaching and support which pupils receive.
7. The school has done well to maintain its standards in English, mathematics and science during a time of considerable upheaval. It has already put into place successive activities to improve the comparative weakness in writing in Key Stage 1. Currently the aim is to improve writing through improving pupils' spoken English and use of English. It is too soon to judge whether this is having the impact intended. The differences between classwork in English and test results is due to the focused work which happens in Year 6. The lessons learned from the successful interventions are to be used in future. In addition, there is some lack of expertise in teaching English in line with the national strategies in key stage 2. This means that there are pockets where, whilst pupils receive a decent all-round programme, they are not yet getting consistent quality teaching that helps them to make good progress. However, the skills, drive and experience of teachers in the Key Stage mean that there is every reason to have confidence in swift improvements happening in this area and there are good role models for very effective teaching within the Key Stage.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Their attendance is **very good**. Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils like school, have good attitudes towards learning and work hard in lessons and other activities.
- Pupils understand and support the school rules and are generally well behaved.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted well.
- Behaviour among some boys is too boisterous during outdoor breaks in the morning.

### **Commentary**

8. Pupils' attendance is steadily improving and it is now well above the national average. The school's very good arrangements to monitor and support attendance are successfully complemented by parents' commitment to get their children to school regularly and on time.
9. Pupils are highly motivated and keen to do their best. Most pupils consistently show good attitudes towards learning in lessons, listening carefully to their teachers and each other and concentrating well on their work. After-school clubs and sporting activities are well supported by pupils. Surveys of parents and their children confirm that pupils like school. Pupils' good attitudes contribute effectively to their attainment, particularly in English, science and mathematics.
10. Parents and pupils agree that pupils' behaviour is good but that there is some infrequent bullying. School systems for dealing with bullying mean that matters are sorted out quickly and properly, which is also the view of parents and pupils. Pupils' moral development is good and they understand and support the school rules. The school expects pupils to behave very well in lessons and around the school. Pupils work hard to earn team points for good behaviour and best effort and younger pupils are proud to show off their stickers. Behaviour in the dining

hall is good and pupils behave sociably indoors and outdoors under the watchful eye of experienced mid-day supervisors. This pattern of commendable behaviour is not as good during the morning breaks on the playground. A significant number of pupils, particularly boys in Years 3 and 4, become both boisterous and domineering: playground behaviour deteriorates and play sometimes becomes too rough and intimidating. The school must ensure that all members of staff are made fully aware that play fighting is not acceptable. Too few staff members are deployed in the morning to supervise all areas of the playground and ensure that behaviour outdoors is as good as it is indoors. There have been no exclusions for misbehaviour over the last reporting year.

11. Pupils' sense of spirituality is developed well and they show empathy for those less fortunate than themselves. Opportunities to appreciate poetry and music are explored well in lessons. Pupils' social skills are good and they take on more school responsibilities as they get older. Pupils participate in competitive sports, show good sportsmanship and understand fair play. Parents are very pleased with the arrangements to help pupils become more mature and independent. The school values the views of pupils, for example, the School Council is helping to plan the further conservation work in the grounds. Personal development is particularly good for pupils in Year 6. During their last two terms, pupils participate in tutorials which help to prepare them for national tests and for secondary school. Pupils' cultural development is good and there is an interesting range of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. The diversity of pupils' backgrounds is highly valued and racial harmony is good. Multicultural awareness is developed soundly through activities such as Book Week, Black History Week and within music and art. However, pupils are not made fully aware of the rich multicultural diversity that exists in their immediate locality.

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

Authorised absence	
School data:	4.5
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.0
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	281	0	0
White – Irish	5	0	0
White – any other White background	61	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	15	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	5	0	0
Black or Black British – African	12	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	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 quality of education provided by the school is good.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Whilst all Key Stages are strong, with examples of satisfactory, good or better teaching in all year groups, there is some particularly good teaching in Year 1. The small number of unsatisfactory lessons are not judged by the inspection team to be credible indicators of overall teaching quality.

Planning is mainly good. Teachers' subject knowledge is particularly good in English, mathematics, science and, in Key Stage 2, in physical education. Teachers' knowledge about effective foundation stage teaching is also good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers know their pupils well, plan well to meet their needs and choose appropriate teaching methods.
- Staff encourage pupils to do well and pupils' achievement at the higher levels show that they receive a good deal of challenge and that teachers have high expectations.
- Lessons are orderly and pupils work hard, whether in a group or on their own.
- Assessment is good in English, mathematics and science but, whilst generally satisfactory in other subjects, there remains room for improvement.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 56 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (1.8%)	7 (12.5%)	26 (46.4%)	19 (33.9%)	3 (5.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. Teachers plan well, using the national schemes to help them to structure what they are to do. This results in teaching in English, mathematics and science, and also Key Stage 2 physical education, being particularly good. In addition, the school is fortunate to have many longstanding, experienced teachers who bring to their teaching the skills of frequent successful practice. These features both contribute markedly to the good teaching standards in the school but they also mean that aspects of assessment are not as structured as they need to be. Pupils respond well in lessons. They concentrate well, are co-operative and want to learn. This means that they tend to learn well. They ask sensible questions and take pride in what they do. They work effectively with each other, in small groups or as a whole class, listening respectfully to each other's contributions. Assessment in English, mathematics and science is good and is particularly well-used to target pupils' work in Year 6 in these subjects. In history and information and communication technology, pupils have insufficient understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. Homework is suitably used to add to what pupils already know. In the best lessons, teachers plan to meet the needs of pupils, their class management and use of resources are deft, they give sufficient time to develop the subject and use the final part of the lesson to draw together what is learned and to prepare for the next stage of learning. These features were present in abundance in the excellent English lesson seen in Year 1.

### **Example of outstanding practice – Year 1 English**

***In an excellent lesson, with very high quality teaching, the pupils had been very well prepared by the previous day's storytelling about 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'.***

*Pupils came into the classroom, straight after assembly to be met by three differently-sized chairs, labelled for each bear. The scene was set by the teacher asking them, seriously, whether they had seen any bears in assembly. No-one had – but, clearly they were around, the evidence was there. The teacher used key spellings as learning points: she read the story again, asking pupils to perform different actions wherever they heard one of the key words being read. This practical, fun task quickly linked initial sounds and word shapes, so pupils were soon anticipating what to do. However, the most dramatic part of the lesson was when the teacher said she was going to collect some work for them, turned around with a wolf mask on, deepened her voice and took the role, answering questions from the class such as, 'Why were you so angry with Goldilocks?' This hot-seating worked like magic, the pupils explored the story behind the story extremely well. The wolf said goodbye and the teacher re-appeared to much excited chatter about the visitor from the story.*

13. In the few instances in which lessons were unsatisfactory the main features were directly linked to teaching an unfamiliar subject to an unfamiliar class.
14. As a group, pupils who speak English as an additional language generally have suitable support in class. However, little specialist teaching and induction support is provided either in or out-of-class lessons. Teachers' planning and assessment do not at all times firmly address the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language. This means that some older pupils are not making progress as rapidly as they should. In lessons where teachers have prepared well for pupils, the teacher makes sure that pupils returning from out-of-class lessons are quickly brought up-to-date.
15. The quality of teaching and learning opportunities for pupils with special educational needs has improved well since the last inspection. Pupils' needs are identified early and suitable support is provided. Almost all additional teaching is provided within lessons, where well-trained learning support assistants work in good partnership with teachers. The few out-of-class teaching groups for pupils with special learning needs are well focused and closely link work which pupils do in their classrooms. Learning support assistants keep good records of what pupils learn and share these with teachers regularly, ensuring that pupils are given suitable support. In a very small number of lessons, teachers do not make full use of the expertise of learning support assistants during whole-class discussions. This leads to some pupils not understanding all of what they are to do or what others have shared about what they have learned.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It meets statutory requirements, including those for personal, social and health education, and sex education. Learning resources and accommodation are sufficient to enable the full curriculum to be taught efficiently.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Literacy and numeracy are planned effectively.
- Provision for the special educational needs is good.
- Provision for the Foundation Stage is good.
- Planning by teachers across year groups is good.
- Good support is given to teachers and pupils by well-trained learning support staff.
- There is insufficient use of information and communication technology to support and improve learning across different subjects.
- There is inconsistent and sometimes unsatisfactory support for older pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

## Commentary

16. All subjects of the National Curriculum and personal, social and health education are suitably provided for. Each subject has enough teaching time and there is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are fully in place and contribute to the good or better standards which pupils' achieve. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use the full range of their literacy and numeracy skills in other lessons. Information and communication technology across the curriculum, and as an individual subject, is not satisfactorily developed.
17. Curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is good, linked to national early education guidance and results in pupils getting a good start to their early education.
18. Teachers are suitably qualified but the school and the inspection team conclude that further attention has to be given to ensure that all teachers are confident and skilled in teaching the full age and subject range in this new primary school. Teachers plan well together in each year so that pupils in parallel classes receive similar lessons. Teachers are good at identifying what pupils are to learn and to build on what they have learned before, especially in literacy and numeracy. This means that pupils can make good links in their learning in individual subjects. Learning support assistants and other trained adults working alongside pupils give good quality help to pupils who may be struggling. This means that these pupils are able to take part in lessons, to understand ideas and to complete activities. The pupils who achieve nationally expected standards easily are sufficiently challenged in most lessons. However, gifted and talented pupils are not identified formally or provided with specific enrichment and extension programmes.
19. Overall, the provision for information and communication technology is satisfactory but the provision in the new information and communication technology suite is good. It is too soon to see any impact on standards or the quality or breadth of pupils' learning. The school has lagged behind in what is provided to support pupils' learning in information and communication technology and has only recently fully addressed the specific issues cited in the previous inspection. Information and communication technology is used on occasion to support work in other subjects but the range of programmes for cross-curricular work is insufficient. Planning which includes information and communication technology is not always done and is inconsistent in quality where it is present. This is particularly so in mathematics and science. For example, pupils mainly draw graphs by hand, when the use of information and communication technology would improve and reinforce learning of data representation in a variety of ways.
20. The school is committed to inclusion and integration of all pupils. It successfully provides an inclusive curriculum that meets a wide range of needs for different groups of pupils. However, the school agrees with inspectors that support for the few older pupils who are at the early stages of learning English needs swift improvement to enable such pupils to learn well and to have full access to the curriculum. Teachers' planning does not always take account of those new arrivals with little or no English and specialist resources are irregularly used. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The curriculum is adapted sufficiently by teachers to enable pupils to make suitable progress. At times, pupils' access to the curriculum is affected when they miss parts of literacy and numeracy sessions to take part in out-of-class small group or individual work. This is due to inconsistency in the practice of different teachers when pupils join the class partway through a lesson.
21. Opportunities for out-of-school activities are satisfactory and include well-attended club activities, which are mainly for older pupils. The school works regularly with the local police, the fire brigade and other visitors. It makes good use of the wider community to support teaching and learning. Educational visits for all pupils, particularly in history and science work, are well linked to the planned topics and make a useful contribution to extending pupils'

academic knowledge, as well as providing valuable social benefits. Several parents also make valuable contributions, visiting classes to talk about their experiences.

22. The recently expanded classroom accommodation provides sufficient space for the curriculum to be offered. The premises are appropriately maintained and provide a safe environment in which pupils and staff may work. However, the mobile buildings are showing signs of years of wear and tear, are difficult to present as attractive teaching and learning areas and are hard to keep at a comfortable temperature.

### Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on the monitoring of pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety arrangements are good and are followed consistently.
- Pupils are well known to staff and there are good relationships between staff and pupils.
- The school encourages pupils to contribute ideas and takes these ideas seriously.
- Supervision in the playground during morning breaks is not effective enough.

### Commentary

23. The procedures to ensure the wellbeing of pupils are good and have improved since the last inspection. The governors' premises committee ensures that good health and safety routines are in place. All members of staff are regularly updated about procedures in child protection. There are close working links with outside agencies. However, there is no staff handbook and therefore staff do not have a single reference volume containing relevant health and safety policies and procedures.
24. Pupils who need first aid or prescribed medication are treated sympathetically by members of staff trained in first aid. All incidents requiring even minor first aid are recorded in the accident books. Whilst some younger pupils take comfort in having a plaster applied along with some kind words there are too many bumps and falls in the playground and many tend to be associated with play fights amongst boys in Years 3 and 4. The school scheme to establish 'Playground Friends' has lapsed and the school admits that this programme of organised games "needs to be refreshed".
25. Pupils receive appropriate support and guidance regarding their progress in English and mathematics. Guidance is better in science as all pupils have individual targets. Group targets are on display in classrooms and improvement targets are shared with parents each term. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding about how they are getting on, largely due to the individual tutorials which they have during their last two terms. The good relationships between pupils and staff mean that all pupils have at least one adult that they can talk to if they have concerns. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and guidance from staff and this helps them to make good progress towards the suitable targets set in individual education plans.
26. The School Council is an effective forum which meets regularly. Class representatives are proud of their elected positions. Pupils put forward their ideas about improving the school and discussions are well guided by the deputy headteacher. Pupils also have good opportunities to give their views during circle-time and in class discussions.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and the community are **good**. Links with others schools are also **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school values its parents and its partnership with them is good.
- The school's links with the community are good and improve pupils' learning opportunities.
- Parents get good information about school life and how well their children are doing.
- The transfer arrangements for Year 6 pupils moving on to two local secondary schools are very good.

### Commentary

27. The school enjoys the confidence of its parents and values their support in helping children to learn at school and at home. Many parents come forward as volunteers and help with reading, cooking, crafts and gardening. The Parent-Teacher Association is an active and very helpful support group and raises significant funds each year. At present, they are helping to fund necessary improvements for the playground. Parents joined staff and helped to plant half a ton of bulbs as part of a community-based project. Children entering the Foundation Stage and their parents benefit from the school's close involvement in an effective early learning project.
28. The school's good links with the local community and the parish are productive and provide a further range of worthwhile activities for pupils. The parish priest, guest speakers, musicians from the parish and some parents help with assemblies. Pupils' understanding of local government was extended by a visit to the Mayor's chambers by representatives of the School Council. Pupils benefit from arrangements for them to take part in professional football coaching, inter-school sports and dance events, as well as literacy and numeracy support provided by a major tennis club.
29. Information provided for parents fully meets requirements and the good quality of information ensures that working parents are as well informed as parents able to collect their children from school. The Parents' Forum provides a good opportunity for staff to have discussions about school matters and has developed from the effective and longstanding system of parent representatives for each class. Formal meetings with parents are organised each term and individual targets for pupils' improvement are made clear. Although the written information to parents is extensive it is not presented in an interesting way. The prospectus, governors' annual report and newsletters are business-like and their appearance does not convey the vitality of the school.
30. A well-established partnership between the school and two local secondary schools enables Year 6 pupils to take part in sporting and science activities. Staff from the schools meet regularly to ensure that pupils leaving the primary school are well supported when they go to secondary school. The school also maintains its links with other secondary schools to help to meet the needs of transferring pupils.
31. Parents of children with special educational needs are pleased with the additional support provided for their children within the school. Parents regularly attend review meetings where progress towards targets in individual education plans is discussed with staff and the children themselves. The school seeks out parents of pupils for whom English is an additional language and builds satisfactory working links. However, the school is not exploiting enough the potential for parents from ethnic minority backgrounds to be more actively involved with the school.



## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Leadership and management by the governors, headteacher and the senior management team are good. The quality of governance is good. The school is effectively managed.** The governors, headteacher and senior management team have successfully taken the school through its first phase as an all-through primary school and have succeeded in ensuring that the upheaval from this change and from the building works have not impaired the quality of education that pupils receive. Development planning has improved but still needs attention to ensure that all of the school's systems are drawn together, generally known and work as effectively as possible. The school's administrative team are skilled and are very well led by the office manager.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is well led and managed with very good office management and finance management.
- There is good leadership in mathematics, in the Foundation Stage and in special educational needs, but there remains a need to improve subject leadership overall to get more, consistent good practice.
- Good training opportunities are provided for learning support assistants.
- The school is not fully prepared to meet the next phase of demands linked to developing a consistently improving primary school, as its systems for inducting staff into its work are unsatisfactory in some respects.

### Commentary

32. The headteacher provides constant and clear leadership which has contributed significantly to the school's successful growth into a full-age primary school. She has a clear vision of education which is firmly linked to the principles and ethos which are central to the school's religious status.
33. The senior management team, led by the headteacher, has made a good start to their work together and offer staff effective leadership. The team represents key areas of the school's work, and an indication of their skills is that the areas in which they lead, performed well in the inspection. Staff have joined the school from a previous sister school, which had six classes in each year group and where the teachers taught specific subjects or were managers with a partial teaching load. The headteacher and senior team recognise that the time needed to really get to know a school, its ways of teaching and its pupils, is considerable, and they agree with the inspection team that further induction systems and supports need to be put into place.
34. The school improvement plan is a working document which has served the school well in the past. Its construction, detail and the consultative arrangements surrounding it have improved recently. Governors have attended specific training to help this to happen. However, more work needs to be done to build into the school improvement plan and its outcomes, with a sharper focus on the next steps that the school needs to take.
35. Governors are satisfactorily involved in setting targets for the school and in checking progress towards them. The deputy headteacher is rigorous in checking the progress of pupils in Year 6 and working with colleagues to meet the demanding expectations that the school has for its pupils.
36. Performance management procedures are satisfactorily in place. However, whilst staff have good opportunities to take up professional development opportunities in line with their individual needs, there is insufficient, systematic checking of teaching so that specific training or support might also be offered.
37. The school has developed successfully thus far without having considerable written evidence of its systems, procedures and practices. The lack of formal, easily accessible information is

likely to present a hindrance to the school's further development and impedes the effective induction of staff who are new to the school.

38. The school is yet to apply a rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluating the impact of its provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Management of what is provided for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school meets the requirements of the new code of practice for pupils with special educational needs and the governor linked with this aspect is well informed. The school's policy for racial equality is in draft and is awaiting ratification by the governors. The school complies with disability awareness requirements.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	938,921.51	Balance from previous year	115,630
Total expenditure	964,329.75	Balance carried forward to the next	101,267
Expenditure per pupil	2,372.27		

39. Finances are tight for the school. However, it is dealing with this situation by going into its reserves. The governors have a very clear view about the management of the school's finances and they work hard to secure best value for money. Improvements to the systems in the school's administrative office have led to the school finance manager sending regular reports on spending to the governing body and in her attending finance committee meetings. This aspect of school is well managed.

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

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

40. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and is a strength of the school. No overall judgement about provision was made in the last inspection so no comparison is made. Children are well prepared for transfer to Year 1. Children enter the Nursery on a part-time basis when they are three and transfer to one of the two Reception classes a year later. Children's attainment when they enter the Nursery is in line with expected levels for this age group in all areas of learning.
41. Children, parents and carers are suitably introduced to the Nursery; children are well prepared for their transfer to the Reception classes, with frequent visits beforehand. The foundation staff have forged good links with parents, who feel welcome in school and consider that they receive good information. Parents and staff work in partnership to improve childrens' learning. This was evident when all parents attended a meeting to inform them of the new Foundation Stage assessment system.
42. By the time they reach Year 1, all children make good progress and achieve well. This is due to consistently good teaching. The teachers have a very good understanding of how young children learn and all staff work together as an effective team. The curriculum is carefully based on the recommended areas of learning and children are provided with a wide range of challenging and interesting activities. The children are on course to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum with better than expected standards.

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

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

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

- There are very good relationships both with adults and children.
- The quality of teaching and learning are very good.
- Childrens' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- Children are given very good opportunities to use their initiative and develop their independence.

#### **Commentary**

43. Children start school with a wide range of social skills which are in line with those that might be expected for children of this age. Clear boundaries and the very good role models set by the adults, linked with very good quality teaching and learning, mean that children achieve very well. Most are on course to do better than expected by the end of the Reception year. Adults form very positive relationships with these young children and interact well with them. They encourage them with praise and this very successfully develops their confidence. Children value the rewards they receive for good work and behaviour and their self-esteem is raised. For example, one boy beamed with pride when given a gold star for trying hard and succeeding in his work. Children happily leave their parents when they enter the Nursery and begin to select their own names for self-registration at the start of the day. They feel safe, start to relate to each other and are proud of their achievements. They are involved in deciding the class rules and understand well how they are expected to behave. Teaching assistants are used particularly well alongside teachers, to establish high standards of behaviour and social skills. A good range of activities is planned to ensure that the children's curiosity is stimulated. They are given every opportunity to develop their initiative and manage tasks. Children in the Reception class select activities and work on them for a good lengths of time. Children talk

confidently to adults and include other children in their play. Pupils cope well with dressing and undressing for physical education lessons. Children are helped to make very good progress.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The classrooms are rich learning environments, with good learning resources, where children have plenty of opportunity to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
- Children achieve well in relation to their prior attainment because of the good teaching of basic skills.
- Children have good attitudes to learning.
- Teachers talk to children with respect, encouraging them to express themselves.
- Assessment procedures are not always used well to plan activities to meet individual needs.

### **Commentary**

44. On admission to the Nursery, most children have skills which are in line with what is usually found. All children make good gains in learning because they are taught well and have access to very good resources. The well-planned curriculum provides interest, stimulation and challenge. Warm encouragement to do well at every step of learning ensures that some children are already achieving some of the early learning goals and many will have exceeded them by the end of their Reception year.
45. All children pay close attention to their teacher, listening with interest and concentration to stories, poems and instructions. Speaking skills are well developed. Children's responses are valued and they are encouraged to choose their words carefully and speak in well-constructed sentences. Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress because questions are well tailored to their individual needs and they are sensitively encouraged to express themselves clearly. Class discussions and well-focused play activities provide good opportunities for children to try out their ideas in words. This sensitive approach ensures time for thinking so that the children gain in maturity and achieve well. As a result, the majority of children in the Reception year readily discuss, answer questions and offer opinions. Most express themselves confidently and articulately.
46. Teachers read thoughtfully and with expression, asking questions about what they are reading so that children become appreciative readers with steadily developing reading skills. Children in the Nursery classes enjoy books and handle them with care. Most children understand that print carries meaning. In the Reception classes, most children understand the sounds of some letters and are beginning to recognise simple words. Children have many opportunities to share books with each other and with adults. They enjoy taking books home to share with their parents.
47. The basic skills of writing are taught systematically and children make good progress overall because they are given individual support. Children are given good opportunities to practice their writing skills independently. In the Nursery classes children enjoy making marks, using felt tips and crayons at the writing table to write letters to Santa: most children in the Reception classes try to write their own name and a few can write simple words. Teachers make continuous assessments of childrens' progress and have a very good understanding of individual strengths and weaknesses. However, some activities are not challenging enough, which limits progress, particularly for more able children.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers provide good opportunities for children to use mathematics in a range of contexts.
- Children learn well because they are provided with stimulating tasks and good resources.
- Children have good attitudes to learning.
- Children have developed a good mathematical vocabulary.

### **Commentary**

48. Children start the Nursery year with standards in mathematical development that are as expected for this age group. Children are taught well, achieve well and are on course to exceed the expected levels by the start of Year 1. Teachers plan well and use a good range of resources. They make learning interesting, linking skills they wish the children to learn to fun topics and themes. For instance, children in the Reception year practise estimation by judging how many items are in Santa's parcel. In both classes, children are encouraged to apply what they know to practical problems, as when a Reception class counts the number of children at registration and more able children work out how many are not there. Resources are used well and this helps children to develop their mathematical understanding and vocabulary. For example, in the Nursery, two children who were playing in the sand, volunteered the information, 'this box is big and this one is little, but the spoons are the same size'. Most children in the Reception class correctly identify and put into order numbers up to 20, can identify numbers that are more than or less than other numbers and have begun simple addition. All children enjoy singing the number-action rhymes; these reinforce number work well.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are keen and eager to find out about the world about them.
- Good teaching ensures that children achieve well, often very well and have good attitudes to learning.
- Resources are used well to broaden childrens' knowledge and understanding.
- Very good use is made of the outdoor space to improve childrens' learning.

### **Commentary**

49. Children achieve well because both teaching and learning are good, with some very good features. The teachers have a very good understanding of this age group. They plan activities that stimulate the children and help them achieve well. During the inspection week a group of boys made very good progress as, in the outdoor play area, they constructed Santa, his reindeer and sleigh. They remained totally absorbed in their task until it was completed. The children worked very well together as they made decisions on which materials they should use and investigated different methods of construction. They had a good range of materials and tools to choose from. The guidance given by support staff was very good, as children were encouraged to work independently to put their own ideas into practice. The children evaluated the success of their ideas and adapted their work as they went along. There was lots of lively discussion about how to fasten the reindeers together so they could all be pulled along at once and the problem was successfully solved. Children make satisfactory progress overall in learning computer skills. In the Nursery, progress is good because there are a good number of

computers and children get a good level of individual support. Children in the Reception class are developing a satisfactory understanding of the difference between past and present as they compare toys used long ago with those used now.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good outdoor play facilities.
- Children are well co-ordinated and use the outdoor play area well.
- Teaching is good and contributes to children making progress and learning well.
- Children handle tools well and respond very positively to the good quality of teaching.

### **Commentary**

50. Children do better than expected at the end of the Foundation Stage and achieve well. Children have good opportunities to develop their skills in the outdoor play areas. Nursery children walk, run, hop, climb and use sit-and-ride toys in the confidence that staff will give them the help that they need. In a games lesson held in the playground, children in the Reception year demonstrated good control and co-ordination as they used bats and balls and balanced beanbags. Children enjoy physical education lessons and respond very positively to the praise and encouragement that they are given. Children are well taught, they receive the help they need and as a result, they make good gains in learning. Teachers ensure that good opportunities are provided for children to repeat an activity which they have learned and they help children to improve their techniques. The children love to act out stories and, when playing outside, they choose games which suit the space and the context. Children all have good attitudes and behave sensibly. All children make good progress in manipulating small objects and tools such as scissors.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children work in a well-ordered environment in which creativity and expressiveness are valued.
- Children are provided with good quality resources and make good gains in learning.
- Teaching is good, providing plenty of opportunities for children to develop their creative skills.
- Children have positive attitudes to learning because they feel confident in expressing themselves creatively.

### **Commentary**

51. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children have achieved, and many exceed, the early learning goals. They are well able to use a range of materials to produce attractive and interesting creative work. Reception class children deftly roll marbles in paint to investigate patterns and colour. Children particularly enjoy making puppets and use them in their role-play. All the children enjoy making music. Children in the Nursery class enthusiastically sing Nursery rhymes and Reception class children work with total involvement as they make musical instruments and investigate the best way to play them. Teachers plan their lessons well and have a clear understanding of the needs of the children. All three classes are interesting and stimulating learning settings. All adults have high expectations of behaviour and children behave well. Teaching and learning are good and all children achieve well.

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

## ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- In 2003, standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 were well above average and pupils have made good progress since they took national tests in Year 2.
- Standards in national tests in Year 2 in 2003 were well above average in reading and above average in writing.
- Writing test results in Year 2 in 2003 were below average when compared to results from schools which are similar, while reading was above average.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and pupils have good attitudes to learning.
- A full range of English activities is taught across the school.

### Commentary

52. The school has a strong tradition of providing pupils with a good grounding in reading and writing. Pupils start the school with expected levels of language and communication skills. They make good progress through the Nursery and the Reception classes and join Year 1 exceeding the expected learning goals. The provision for English in Years 1 and 2 maintains this favourable start.
53. In 2003, in national tests, the results for Year 2 compared very favourably with those of other schools. However, when results are compared with those of similar schools, the comparisons are less marked and, in writing, similar schools do better. The school has sought to improve its writing results over the years and has put into place a series of strategies which have not yet altered the position in relation to similar schools. The most recent strategy is to try to improve pupils' writing through improving their skills in speaking and in using speech effectively. It is too early to judge whether this has had an impact on writing results but it has certainly improved pupils' speaking and listening, which are good.
54. In 2003, the school did very well in its first year of Year 6 national tests. Pupils' English results were well above the national average and well above the standards reached by pupils who had similar scores when they were in Year 2. The school achieves these results by good, solid teaching to receptive, responsive and hardworking pupils.
55. Pupils have many opportunities to read, both alone and as part of group activities. They are keen readers and are happy to talk about what they read and to read out loud to others. Guided reading has recently been introduced and is developing satisfactorily. There are class libraries, which are both well-stocked and well-used, with a good range of mainly fiction books for the more accomplished reader. The school library is under-used. It is small, has a relatively small stock of books and it is unexciting, lacking a welcome for either readers or researchers. It is also used for small group lessons for pupils with special educational needs or those for whom English is an additional language. This cuts down further the opportunities that pupils could have to use the library for private study, research or basic book selection. However, the new computer suite adjoins the library, offering the possibility that the two resources will support each other as places to find and use information well.
56. Teaching and learning are good overall and teaching quality ranged from satisfactory to excellent. The excellent Year 1 lesson is described fully in the section on teaching and learning. In Year 5 a very well-taught lesson focused on 'The Angel of Nitshill'. Pupils were to investigate how the characters were presented through description, dialogue and action. The teacher used improvisation very effectively, promoting speaking, listening and empathy. There was a really impressive report back session where pupils, in character, spoke their own words simultaneously. It worked as feedback, as performance and as music. The teacher worked

well to draw out feelings from pupils. Pupils characterised the bully as 'strong', 'mean' or 'could do anything you want'. The victim was 'scared', 'strange' or 'trembling', whilst the saviour was 'tough', 'strong' or 'brave'. One pupil demonstrated the extent to which the pupils had got into role by saying that when he went into character he felt that he was 'not normal'. By the time pupils got to write their characterised diaries they were very well prepared to write from the heart and from well-simulated experience.

57. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in English lessons, especially by the skilled learning support assistants who ensure that pupils have access to what is being taught. The best teachers ensured that pupils who returned from out-of-class small group lessons were sensitively re-integrated into the lesson. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are generally satisfactorily taught due to the good standard of English language development skills which staff have. However, this is most successful with pupils who are younger or who are not in the first stages of learning English. Pupils are enabled by the day-to-day curriculum to be challenged and to achieve well. More able pupils have their needs met either through planning for group work for younger pupils or through the well-organised teaching sets for older pupils. Year 6 pupils were also challenged to achieve better standards in their tests by the tutorial and intensive support which they received prior to their 2003 tests. This required pupils to review how well they were doing, to set goals and then to work to meet them.
58. The subject leader has only recently taken up this post. It is not possible to assess her impact on standards in the subject or its overall development because of this. However, she is capable, enthusiastic and loves the subject, as well as being a linguist, which is a good beginning. She has set out a brief but apt development plan for the subject and recognises the need to work in partnership with other staff to ensure that the plan is well put into place. Resources are sufficient and suitable. There is a limited amount of work going on which uses information and communication technology as an integral aspect of English teaching.

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

59. The school promotes the use of appropriate language in all settings and pupils are expected to listen well in all lessons. There is some evidence of extended writing in history and report writing in science. Most lessons involve reading, usually of information or instruction texts. Language and literacy across the curriculum are satisfactory.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils reach good standards by Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils enjoy learning and achieve well.
- Teaching is mainly good; some teaching is even better than this.
- Teaching of mental mathematics is consistently good.
- Teachers usually plan very well for different levels of ability.
- Mathematics is well led and managed although systems for monitoring teaching and learning are not fully in place.
- Mathematics is used effectively across other subjects of the curriculum.
- Whilst some marking is good, overall marking quality is inconsistent.
- Information and communication technology skills are used inconsistently in mathematics.



## Commentary

60. At this early point in the school year, most pupils in Years 2 and 6 exceed the standards expected for their ages. This good picture reflects the latest statutory test results at seven and those gained by pupils at 11. Pupils have consistently attained good standards by age seven in the national tests. Year 6 pupils also attained standards above the national average in the 2003 national tests, which were the first for which the school was eligible since it became a primary school. Pupils make good progress and achieve well, including those with special educational needs. The school's inclusive climate for learning promotes good attitudes towards the subject in all pupils, which contributes well to overall learning and achievement.
61. All pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of halves and quarters when working on fractions. They quickly point out the correct fraction when answering a teacher's question. They do rapid mental mathematics in addition and subtraction, showing a good grasp of these number operations. In most good lessons, work to challenge higher attaining children is effectively planned. As a result of a very clear analysis of internal assessments and national test results, a focus on real-life word problems is proving very helpful. Most pupils develop their own strategies for solving problems and successfully use these to deal with practical situations.
62. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons is good overall and sometimes it is very good. Planning is based on national guidance. It is very clear and thorough and is put into place very effectively. Mental mathematics teaching is good in almost all lessons, and this quality is reflected in pupils' good knowledge of numbers. Pupils enjoy learning and are excited by the challenge in lessons. A good example was seen during the inspection in a Year 6 lesson where pupils confidently described and visualised properties of solid shapes. Very good teaching resulted in pupils thoroughly understanding the formula for calculating the area and the perimeter of compound shapes.
63. Lessons are brisk and learning intentions are shared well with pupils, which raises their interest and provides good motivation. The beginning of lessons consist of thorough explanations of mental strategies and good questions which require these strategies to be used. Pupils behave well and are very interested in what they are doing; these features help pupils to learn effectively. Homework is used satisfactorily. During the inspection, information and communication technology was insufficiently used to support pupils' learning.
64. Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs effectively, enabling pupils to achieve in line with their capabilities. Pupils who are advanced learners of English as an additional language progress in line with their peers, but those new to English are not provided with adequate specialist support in lessons to improve their rate of progress. Pupils achieve well in the best lessons, where teachers specifically plan to meet the needs of the targeted pupils, and use appropriate methods and resources to improve their learning. This was noted in a very good lesson in Year 2, where the teacher gave pupils enough practice with the new vocabulary, and used appropriate equipment for direct experience. A lesson in Year 4 was unsatisfactory due to weaknesses in the lesson organisation and in planning an appropriate task to support early learners of English.
65. Assessment of pupils' abilities and the use of this information is proving useful in determining sets and setting group targets for learning. Marking is regular and encouraging in most books, but is not always used effectively to set individual targets for pupils.
66. The subject leader is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and eager to find ways to raise standards. She supports staff by monitoring their planning. Her knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject is strengthened by her observing classroom teaching and learning practices although such monitoring is not consistently incorporated into her management role.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. Mathematics learning is improved because teachers ensure that children understand its relevance throughout the rest of the curriculum and school. Pupils use their knowledge of shape and their measuring skills in design and technology. In science, pupils use graphs and tables to record results of investigations.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above the national average.
- Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- There are good opportunities for practical work to support pupils' learning.
- Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support science.

### Commentary

68. Inspection findings indicate that standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well. Currently, almost all pupils in Years 2 and 6 are achieving expected levels and a significant number are working within the higher levels in some aspects of science. The very high levels of attainment arising from Year 2 teacher assessments have been maintained over the years. Overall, standards in Year 2 have improved since the previous inspection.
69. The school provides many opportunities for investigative work. This has a positive impact on standards and is one of the main reasons why pupils achieve well. For a significant minority of pupils, their lack of language skills limits progress towards the higher levels of attainment, because they are unable to express themselves using suitably scientific language.
70. Teaching is good, with some very good features. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject and lessons are well planned to ensure that pupils make consistent and systematic progress in their knowledge and scientific skills as they go through the school. Throughout the school, learning objectives are made clear at the start of lessons and pupils usefully evaluate their achievement at the end of each lesson. Teachers establish very good relationships and expect high standards of behaviour. Activities are interesting and suitably challenging. As a result, pupils have good attitudes and behave and co-operate well. Resources are well organised to enable pupils to settle quickly to their tasks. This ensures that no time is wasted and has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported so that they are fully included in lessons and achieve well. Where teaching is very good, the teacher has a very good knowledge of the subject and transmits her own enthusiasm to the pupils, so they respond very well. This was the case when Year 6 pupils investigated helium-filled balloons to understand that movement is caused when forces become unbalanced. The lesson was very well planned to meet individual needs; more able pupils were continually challenged to use their previous knowledge about forces and to think and express themselves scientifically. Assessment procedures are well linked to National Curriculum levels. However, assessment is not always used well to plan work to meet individual needs. For example, in some lessons, pupils are given the same tasks, regardless of their individual abilities. This limits the development of skills and understanding, particularly for more capable pupils.
71. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. The subject leader analyses test results, pupils' work and teachers' planning and because of this, has a firm understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She has not yet had the opportunity to monitor the quality of

teaching. There is insufficient use of information and communication technology to support learning in the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There have been recent improvements in resources and staff expertise.
- Standards are below national expectations at Year 2 and Year 6.
- Information and communication technology is not used consistently to support learning in other subjects.
- Some staff are insecure in their knowledge of the subject.

### **Commentary**

72. Standards are currently below expectations because areas of weakness highlighted at the previous inspection have not been addressed until very recently, due to a large extent to logistical problems beyond the school's control. The school was not well placed to sustain its level of achievement and standards deteriorated. Since the beginning of the current term, with the opening of a new information and communication technology suite, and connection to the Internet, provision has improved considerably and pupils are currently making satisfactory progress in their learning.
73. Most pupils, particularly those who have computers at home, demonstrate satisfactory word-processing skills. For example, in Year 2, pupils can produce writing on the computer and paint a picture. They explain how they save, print and retrieve their own work. Year 6 pupils are beginning to combine writing and pictures electronically as they prepare a PowerPoint presentation. In conversation, pupils confirm they regularly use CD-ROMs to research information. Skills of handling information, controlling a sequence of actions and presenting data are underdeveloped. The school has only very recently connected to the Internet, so pupils have not had the opportunity to communicate ideas or exchange information by using e-mail.
74. Two lessons were observed during the inspection. In both lessons, teaching and learning were satisfactory. The interesting, suitably challenging tasks, the firm, pleasant way in which pupils were managed and the constant use of praise and encouragement quickly established a good climate for learning. Pupils became receptive, understood what they were required to do and were keen to learn. Pupils behaved well. In one of the lessons, the teachers' subject knowledge was insecure but she was effectively supported by other teachers present, who extended pupils' learning effectively as they checked pupils' understanding and clarified their ideas.
75. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The school has been well aware of previous weaknesses in provision for information and communication technology and the governing body, headteacher and subject leader have been actively involved in working towards improvement. Longstanding difficulties with setting up the information and communication technology suite and connecting to the Internet have been successfully resolved; all staff receive regular training and support to increase their knowledge in the subject. Commercially-produced schemes of work have been adapted to more closely meet the needs of pupils. There are good assessment procedures, although they have not been in place long enough to have had any impact on learning. The school is now in a good position to move forward and to begin to effect an improvement in pupils' attainment and achievement.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. During the inspection, little use was seen of information and communication technology outside of specialist lessons. Pupils report that they use their classroom computers to complete programs that consolidate their numeracy skills in mathematics, for writing tasks in English, to record their investigations in science and to access information for history and geography. However, scrutiny of pupils' books indicates that this is not yet a regular and consistent feature of teaching.

## HUMANITIES

### Geography and history

Due to timetable constraints no lessons were seen in geography. Provision and standards of achievement in history are **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in history are good.
- Good use is made of visits to museums and residential visits.
- There is good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils have too few opportunities for doing extended pieces of writing.
- There is a relative lack of consistent use of pupils' information and communication technology skills to promote learning.

### Commentary

77. Pupils make satisfactory progress and reach expected standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily and those with special educational needs make good progress.
78. The residential visit to Devon and other visits outside school effectively promote historical understanding, for example the visit to Hampton Court improved pupils' knowledge well. Visitors to the school provide good learning experiences for the children. In Year 2, pupils were taught well about the life of Florence Nightingale, and this was further improved by an outside speaker who talked to pupils and also encouraged them to ask questions. Pupils were well prepared to do the task of comparing hospitals and nurses of long ago, to those of today. Whilst the teacher used pictures and charts to support learning in the lesson, there were insufficient opportunities to research from books and extend the understanding of more able pupils' through historical enquiry.
79. Teaching in history is good. Common planning in year groups ensures that good ideas for activities and resources are shared and used well. A lesson in Year 2 supported the pupils with special educational needs very effectively because extra support was available. Pupils new to English were equally well supported. However, tasks are not well modified to take account of pupils' different learning needs, and this often affects pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. All pupils tended to have the same task.
80. A good lesson in Year 6 focused well on the Ancient Greeks and two pupils were suitably encouraged to research on the Internet. The good planning and, most importantly, the teacher's own knowledge and expertise led to pupils gaining a good insight into the history of the Olympics of the time. Most teachers have not yet developed the use of information and communication technology skills in history.
81. Good use is made of pupils' speaking and listening skills in most lessons. One such lesson in Year 4 provided pupils with opportunities for hot-seating, thus developing their questioning

about history of the local area. This lesson was very well linked to the use of map skills and understanding of land-use in geography. Opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy skills and write own extended accounts are too limited.

82. There is adequate coverage of the expected areas for study in both history and geography. Planning in both history and geography is guided by a suitable commercial scheme, the contents of which are in line with national guidance. The recently-appointed subject leader in geography has received insufficient support to enable effective co-ordination of the subject. The subject leader for history is well experienced and active. The subject leader has made suitable attempts to monitor standards and what is provided by looking at samples of pupils' work and teachers' planning. She has a good understanding of areas for development, for example, the need to broaden the resources and to establish the consistent use of assessment procedures.

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

### **Art and design**

Provision for art and design is **satisfactory** overall.

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

- There is real vibrancy of the work which is done in Years 1 and 2.
- Insufficient attention is given to the systematic improvement of pupils' art and design skills.

#### **Commentary**

83. Art and design was sampled during the inspection week. Due to the timetabling of the subject there was little art and design taking place. The work which pupils have done shows that the full range of art activities are followed with the emphasis on drawing, painting and three-dimensional work. Pupils in Year 1 have made a good start, making some clear polystyrene-relief prints and dough models. They are also introduced to artists such as Andy Warhol and shown his repeat colour prints. In Year 2 there are some vibrant, energetic drawings of different views of a bus, linked to work in design and technology. These were neatly labelled demonstrating a real-life use of writing to explain or to clarify. As pupils get older, it is evident that there has not been a sustained effort to build on the skills which pupils learn at the outset. This means that the examples of artwork tend to be very similar to each other, indeed Year 6's relief prints are little advance on the quality of work seen in Year 1. There are some examples of competent line drawing on display from Year 5.
84. The subject leader is capable and is clear about the next steps which need to be taken to develop art and design in the school. A priority for her is to ensure that all staff, including those who are new to art and design, are fully confident to teach it to a greater depth. She also links planning for art and design with other curriculum topics like the work on the Greeks which is done by Year 6. There are sufficient resources and suitable accommodation in school to support a more intensive and vibrant art and design programme.

### **Music**

Provision for music is **satisfactory** overall.

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

- Pupils enjoy singing and reach satisfactory standards in music by Year 6.
- The scheme of work is disjointed and assessment is inconsistent.
- Teachers in the Year 5 and 6 classes gain from the use of a commercial scheme.

- Older pupils benefit from participation in the choir.

### **Commentary**

85. Pupils make sound progress in developing musical skills and critical appreciation. Pupils enjoy singing, and also enjoy composing and playing a range of tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments. In Year 6, pupils sing simple two part songs and canons with enthusiasm. Effective use is made of a commercial scheme to enable non-specialist teachers in the upper part of the school to teach music with confidence. The scheme is not used throughout the school, which results in discontinuity of teaching and learning across the year groups. Assessment arrangements are insufficiently developed.
86. Some pupils take up the opportunity to learn an instrument through lessons provided by the peripatetic music service. The school choir is open to all Year 5 and 6 pupils and takes part in a number of local festivals and musical events. These features contribute to pupils' social and cultural development. Teachers take good account of more advanced skills which some pupils have, to explore the structure of music and notation. New musical vocabulary is explained clearly. No evidence was seen of the use of composing programs on the computer, although good use is made of taped compositions made by pupils in lessons in Year 6.
87. The headteacher co-ordinates music in school, in addition to her other duties. Her strong subject knowledge is evident. However, teaching and learning are of inconsistent quality across the school, and there are insufficient staff training opportunities and monitoring.

### **Design and technology**

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils learn about the purposes of design, how to follow a plan and make calculated improvements to their finished product where needed.
- Effective links are made with other subjects.
- Tasks and work produced by pupils are often too similar to each other.

### **Commentary**

88. All aspects of design and technology, including food technology, are taught throughout the school. Pupils undertake a reasonable number of assignments over the year. Pupils effectively evaluate their own work. In a good Year 2 lesson on designing and making a wishing well, pupils reached average standards. In this lesson, they not only designed their own wishing wells, but labelled their designs, chose what they needed from a range of materials, talked about the difficulties they faced and how to improve their models. Yet, pupils' designs and models turn out to be quite similar, showing that there is room for pupils to develop more independence in planning and designing.
89. The school uses the national scheme of work. The school has a design and technology room, but it is not timetabled for regular use and is mainly used as a general group work area, which constitutes unsatisfactory use of a useful resource. The current arrangements for assessing pupils' work in design and technology are insufficiently developed.
90. In the lessons seen, two were satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory. Teachers plan their lessons in year groups. This enables them to share ideas and expertise, making sure that pupils of the same age experience the same curriculum. Careful planning takes pupils through the process of designing, reviewing, making and evaluating. In a good Year 1 lesson, effective planning and high expectations by the teacher resulted in pupils attaining a good standard in

the lesson. In the unsatisfactory lesson, pupils were not clearly taught the design sequence of planning, reviewing, making and evaluating. Pupils enjoy opportunities for creative and practical work in design and technology projects. Project-work is well linked to science, for example, where pupils observe change in materials when cooking, and use skills of measuring and shaping in mathematics. Links are also made with literacy and information and communication technology. Pupils making wishing wells had prepared instructions as part of a literacy lesson. Year 5 pupils made Christmas cards and combined their text with pictures on the computers. They used mathematical nets and assembled these to make gift boxes. When making breads, Year 6 pupils researched into the product and prepared their designs well to suit the purpose.

91. The subject leader is clear about the developments needed in the subject.

### **Physical education**

Provision for physical education is at least **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities for older pupils in the school.
- There are good field and playground areas for outdoor games.
- There are insufficient opportunities for monitoring teaching.
- Assessment is insufficiently developed.

### **Commentary**

92. Pupils in the upper part of the school make satisfactory progress in developing physical skills across all areas. The large field and outdoor area accommodation is good. A number of pupils achieve above average skills due to participation in additional training through the good range of extra-curricular provision for older pupils in the school. This includes girls' and boys' football training, unihoc and tennis coaching. The school has good links with the local football club and the Lawn Tennis Association.

93. No overall judgement is made on Key Stage 1 as no lessons were seen, apart from a Year 1 dance lesson. Teaching is at least satisfactory in the upper part of the school, and it is sometimes good. It is good, for example, when outdoor games sessions are well organised, proceed at a lively pace and develop skills in progressively challenging steps. Pupils enjoy outdoor physical education lessons and dance sessions. These are enlivened through the use of taped material. It was not possible to see any indoor apparatus being used and no judgement can be made in this area.

94. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader is enthusiastic and keen to develop the subject across the school. Staff have benefited from recent additional training. There are too few opportunities for the subject leader to check teaching across the school and assessment is insufficiently developed.

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

Provision in personal, social and health education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a satisfactory structure for teaching and learning about personal, social and health education in the school.

### **Commentary**

95. Most of the school's provision for personal, social and health education is taught through a specific programme which is offered in religious education lessons. This is an externally-produced programme which is followed by many Roman Catholic schools, which requires similar topics to be taught across the whole school at the same time. Coincidentally, the topic at the time of the inspection was 'Visitors' and it was uplifting to see how pupils had considered their role in relation to visitors and their treatment. Aspects of personal, social and health education are taught through science and form part of pupils' high standards of science knowledge and application. The school's context, being part of a close faith community, also enhances pupils' day-to-day development as moral, social, and spiritual young people growing up in an increasingly diverse community. Leadership of the subject is sound and there are suitable resources to support the subject.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

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

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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