

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN FISHER RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Denton, Manchester

LEA area: Tameside

Unique reference number: 106255

Headteacher: Mr R M Ganley

Lead inspector: Mr D Speakman

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th June 2004

Inspection number: 257699

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;	146
School address:	Manor Road Haughton Green Denton Manchester
Postcode:	M34 7SW
Telephone number:	0161 336 5308
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Ellis
Date of previous inspection:	18 th – 21 st May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This smaller than average sized voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school serves the local area, which socio-economically is average. Fewer than average pupils join or leave during the school year. Almost all pupils are classed as White–British. None speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average and one pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Special educational needs include specific learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural problems and other unspecified special needs. The attainment on entry to the nursery is average. The school achieved the Activemark Gold Award, FA Charter Mark for Schools and the Eco Schools Silver Award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20086	Mr D Speakman	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Special educational needs
31718	Mrs D Shields	Lay inspector	
20326	Mr P Clark	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Physical education Personal, social and health education & citizenship
30935	Mrs K McArthur	Team inspector	Foundation Stage ¹ Science Geography History Music

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¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school that provides a good quality of education and gives good value for money. Pupils' attainment on entry is average and because of good teaching, very high levels of inclusion, a very good ethos and good leadership and management, pupils achieve well and attain well above average standards

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The quality of teaching is good at all stages of the school and pupils achieve well, attaining well above average standards in English, mathematics and science, and above average standards in ICT.
- The good leadership of the head teacher is central to the school's drive to improve. He is supported effectively by other staff with leadership responsibility. The governors make a good contribution to the school's development.
- Although the school's self-evaluation is very good, monitoring of teaching lacks focus.
- Roles and responsibilities within the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are unclear and there is too little joint planning between the nursery and reception class staff.
- Pupils' personal development is good and as a result they behave very well and have very good attitudes to school and learning.
- Assessment procedures are good and are used well for tracking pupils' achievement and identifying areas for improvement. Pupils are aware of their own learning targets but not sufficiently involved in the assessment of their work or in the setting of targets.
- The curriculum is of a good quality and benefits from good levels of enrichment and very good extra-curricular activities.
- The school looks after its pupils very well and this reflects its very caring ethos. High levels of inclusion are evident in the work of the school and provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Links with parents are very good, and with the community and other schools are good.

The level of improvement since the previous inspection is good. Since its last inspection in 1998, standards in English, mathematics and science have improved. The quality of assessment procedures and their use is better. The curriculum is improved and the quality of care is much better. The leadership of the governing body is much improved and management systems are good. The school has responded well to issues raised in the previous inspection and these have been met well.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Achievement is **good** overall. Children start in the Foundation Stage with average attainment, achieve well and meet the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception in all areas of learning, and exceed them in their personal, social and emotional development. In Years 1 to 6, all pupils achieve well and attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and well above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Standards in ICT are above those nationally expected by the end of Year 6.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall, with their spiritual and moral development being very good. Pupils' attitudes towards school and learning and their behaviour are very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** at all stages of the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it well to plan challenging and interesting activities based on good day-to-day assessment. As a result, teaching meets all pupils' needs and encourages good levels of confidence in their own ability to tackle the work. Learning activities are accurately based on pupils' individual targets for learning. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and they very effectively encourage pupils to succeed, especially the younger ones. Lessons move at a brisk pace and teaching methods promote effective learning. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teaching assistants provide valuable support and are effective. Teachers ensure that all pupils have very good opportunities to be fully included in all learning activities.

The curriculum is good. The school provides a broad, balanced and rich curriculum. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly those of a sporting nature. The level of teachers is good and teaching and learning resources are satisfactory. The school shows very good levels of care for its pupils and the relationship between the school and its parents is very good and supportive.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The leadership of the head teacher is good. He has a very clear vision of the needs of the school, which is securely rooted in very effective school self-evaluation. He is effectively supported in this work by other staff with leadership responsibility. The governors provide good levels of challenge and support and contribute well to the work of the school. Statutory requirements are fully met. Although the monitoring of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some strong features; it lacks sufficient focus.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with the school and its work. They like the caring nature of the school and feel that the staff work hard to help their children achieve well. They feel that the school responds positively to their concerns and they appreciate being able to approach staff informally at the start and end of the school day. The inspection team agrees with them. Pupils have high opinions of the school and they are very happy to be there.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- clarify the roles and responsibilities in the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage and ensure that staff plan together to ensure continuity between the nursery and reception class;
- improve the focus points in the monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure greater impact;
- raise pupils' involvement in assessing their own work and in setting their own targets for learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6. Achievement is good at all stages of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are well above average at the end of Year 6.
- Achievement of children in the nursery and reception is good.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above those expected nationally for pupils of their age.
- Standards have improved since the previous inspection, mainly due to more focused teaching.
- Standards in core skills of language and literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology are good in other subjects.

Commentary

1. By the end of reception, children in the Foundation Stage meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning and exceed them in the personal, social and emotional development. Their achievement in all areas of areas of learning is good. Although children enter the nursery with overall levels of attainment expected for children of this age and meet the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception, their skills, knowledge and understanding are much more secure by the time they enter Year 1, and have developed well during their time in the Foundation Stage.
2. In the last three years, pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 have kept pace with the national trend of improvement and remained above the national average. The picture is similar when compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to claim a free school meal. However, results in the writing tests in 2003 showed well below average attainment that year. This was a one-off and justifiable reasons were found why standards were lower that year. The school has addressed the difficulties and anticipates improvement this year. Inspection evidence, including teacher assessments, lesson observations and analysis of pupils' work confirms this. Current attainment in English and mathematics is judged to be above average at the end of Year 2. This represents a good level of achievement, since pupils enter Year 1 with average attainment in literacy and numeracy. The rate of improvement since the previous inspection has been good, when standards in English and mathematics were judged to be average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.9 (17.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.4 (15.4)	14.6 (14.4)

mathematics	16.5 (18.2)	16.3 (16.5)
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There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- In 2003, results in tests at the end of Year 6 were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. This has been improved upon this year and teacher assessment predicts well above average results in English, mathematics and science. Improvement in results is similar to the national trend of improvement for schools nationally and for similar schools. When results for 2003 are compared with those for the same pupils when they were in Year 2, achievement in English is better than for similar schools and average in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence confirms the improving trend, with well above average attainment in English and mathematics and above average in science and ICT. This is an improvement on the previous inspection findings, when standards were judged to be average in English, mathematics and science. The current Year 6 class is small, with only 14 pupils and the teacher is able to provide intensive and highly focused teaching to groups and individuals. This is also as a result of the school's decision to maintain single age classes, although numbers are small in some year groups.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.6 (27.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.0 (27.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.8 (28.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- In Years 1 to 6, all groups of pupils, including higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, achieve well and attain high standards when compared to their prior attainment.
- In work seen during the inspection, pupils achieve well in developing their independent reading and study skills and standards in reading are well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils at all ages and all levels of attainment read with very good levels of understanding across a wide range of literature, ranging from Classical Greek stories to poetry, including some from William Shakespeare's plays. They write very well in different and appropriate styles on a good range of subjects. Writing is accurate and well structured into both simple and complex paragraphs and punctuated very well. They spell complex words accurately. Even younger pupils in Year 1 use imaginative vocabulary vividly and to good effect. There are many planned opportunities to develop very good speaking and listening skills in both English and a good range of subjects. As a result, pupils listen carefully to others, respecting their views. Pupils invariably use their good vocabulary to express their thoughts accurately and clearly.
- Standards in mathematics are well above average by Year 6 and achievement is good. Pupils have very good knowledge and understanding of number and of mathematics generally. The school makes a deliberate effort to provide good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills to real life situations and to develop a range of strategies to answer problems, such as comparing admission prices to a theme park at different times. This helps supports the achievement of above average standards.

7. In science, pupils conduct a wide range of experiments effectively and extend their knowledge and understanding in a good number of areas, such as growth, electrical circuits, changes in materials and the effects of exercise on their heart rate. They record predictions clearly, enter results and evaluate outcomes. Pupils have a good understanding of fair testing and their results are valid, meaningful and interpreted well to extend their knowledge.
8. From a very early age, pupils are taught basic computer skills and become familiar with the keyboard, using the mouse and a good range of programs in different subjects. This secure start enables pupils to achieve well and attain above average standards in ICT.
9. Standards of language and literacy, numeracy and ICT seen in other subjects are also above average. Development of speaking and listening and writing skills has a high profile in the school and there are a good number of planned opportunities to discuss and write in subjects, such as history and geography. ICT is used well by teachers and pupils to enrich work across the curriculum in a good range of subjects, including English, science and work in topics, such as the current focus on Greece. Planned opportunities for using mathematics to support work in other subjects is an area for development.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **very good** attitudes to school and to their learning. Behaviour is **very good**, and pupils' relationships with each other and with the staff are very good. The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good attitudes are shown in pupils' interest and enjoyment of all activities, and in the way they are polite, helpful and friendly to each other and to visitors.
- The school sets high standards and pupils respond very positively by behaving very well and forming very good relationships with each other and adults.
- Pupils' spiritual and moral development is very good.
- The Eco Club helps prepare pupils for the responsibilities of adult life.
- Attendance is monitored very closely.

Commentary

10. Pupils have very good attitudes towards school and learning and enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and secure in the school's caring, family atmosphere and respond very well by working hard and concentrating well in lessons. This has a very positive impact on their learning. They co-operate willingly with each other, for example, when planning a group report on a science investigation. Relationships between pupils, and between staff and pupils, are very good. Staff provide very positive role models. Pupils know they are valued and feel that staff care about their welfare and progress. They are considerate of the feelings of others, and in the playground, older pupils organise games for the younger ones.
11. Standards of behaviour in class, in the playground and around the school are very good. Pupils show great respect for adults and for each other, and greet visitors well with polite friendliness. Pupils and their parents are happy that the school deals well with any

problems, and do not think bullying is an issue at the school. There were no incidents of bullying during the inspection. Pupils know what to do should any problems arise, and are confident their concerns would be listened to by adults. Rules and sanctions are regarded as fair and exist for the benefit of all. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations set by staff in terms of relationships, behaviour and mutual respect. This has a very positive effect on the quality of life within the school. There were no exclusions in the year before this inspection.

12. Pupils' spiritual development is very good and is promoted in all activities and assemblies. Worship areas in class celebrate the Catholic faith of the school, and pupils learn about other major world religions. They are often excited by their learning, and nursery children were enthralled as they held the wriggling worms found in the garden. Older pupils reflected quietly as they listened to Celtic music during an assembly. Pupils often spontaneously applaud each other, but sometimes teachers miss opportunities to celebrate pupils' success through displays of their work. Moral development is also promoted very well. Pupils demonstrate a very good awareness of the difference between right and wrong. Assemblies and circle time discussions enable them to consider making sensible, informed choices. In the Eco Club, they learn to be responsible for protecting the environment by recycling paper and cans. Charity collections are well supported because pupils want to help those less fortunate than themselves. Social development is good and pupils willingly undertake duties, but opportunities are somewhat limited. They may be class energy monitors and older pupils organise some lunchtime games for younger ones. A large number of pupils attend the successful after-school sports clubs. The Olympic Games provided a good focus for cultural development. Pupils listened to Greek music, sampled a Greek salad and studied Greek history. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have French lessons and those in Year 6 organise a French café. Pupils learn about the traditions of the locality, using maps to see how the area has developed over time. They study art and music from different times and cultures, and show respect for other faiths and lifestyles.

13. Although attendance was below average during the last academic year, it has significantly improved this year and rates are now above those found in most schools. This is a result of the school's increased focus on promoting the need for regular attendance by discouraging the amount of holiday taken during term time. All of the issues raised at the time of the previous inspection in relation to the recording of absence have been addressed.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.1	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **good**. Teaching is consistently **good** with some very good features. The assessment of pupils' achievement is **good** and assessment information is used effectively to ensure good achievement and high standards. The curriculum is **good** and

benefits from **good** opportunities for enrichment. The school provides **very good** levels of care, and **good** guidance and support for its pupils. It has **very good** links with parents. Links with the community and other schools are **good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** at all stages of the school. Assessment procedures and its use in planning lessons are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High expectations and the very good level of encouragement for pupils mean that they develop very positive attitudes to learning.
- Teachers manage their pupils very well and, as a result, pupils develop good learning skills.
- Teaching methods and planned activities match the pupils' learning needs well. All groups of pupils are fully included in all learning opportunities and learn equally effectively.
- Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good, and teaching assistants provide valuable support and are effective in what they do.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, use effective methods and resources to encourage good learning, and ensure good overall achievement.
- Assessment procedures are good but the information is not always used effectively to ensure pupils are aware of how they can improve.

Commentary

14. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and in all subjects and areas of learning in which sufficient observations were made in order to make a reliable judgement. It is effective in enabling all pupils to achieve well overall. This is an improvement on judgements made at the time of the previous inspection. The impact of improved teaching and learning is reflected in pupils' good achievement and in higher attainment in English, mathematics and science.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	5 (16%)	17 (53%)	8 (25%)	1 (3%)	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.

15. Teaching and learning are good in the nursery and reception. All children experience good quality learning opportunities and staff monitor each child carefully to ensure they are progressing well and experiencing all of the areas of learning sufficiently. Support staff contribute very effectively and children are very well cared for. This makes them feel safe and secure and confident learners who progress well in their personal, social and emotional development. As yet, the nursery and reception staff do not plan many shared activities that would ensure close working links as a unit. This limits progression and hence achievement.
16. In Years 1 to 6, teachers use their good subject knowledge and effective planning to give clear explanations and provide good guidance, so pupils at all levels of attainment feel confident in their learning. This has a positive impact on attainment and pupils'

achievement. All teachers are fully trained in teaching the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and the quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is good overall. Staff knowledge and understanding in ICT are good. This enables them to explain clearly, support pupils in small groups and secure good progress in lessons.

17. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils receive effective help from teachers and teaching assistants, who are well directed and know what they are expected to teach. Teaching in groups is focused well on pupils' needs and the targets in their individual education plans are clear and realistic. Support staff and teachers explain to pupils in their groups what they have to do, and often support them through the small steps of learning these pupils require. Consequently, their learning is good. The impact of good teaching is evident in the interest that the pupils show in their work and in their good behaviour.
18. Teaching methods match pupils' learning styles well and support their learning successfully. Teachers use discussion very effectively to make sure that pupils at all levels of attainment are given good opportunities to contribute. This is as a result of the school's planned approach to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils are encouraged to use and apply what they have learned and teachers often use practical methods to support the good quality of learning. Computers are used well to support and often extend learning, and to make it more interesting for pupils.
19. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Their management of pupils is good and teachers consistently apply the school's agreed approach to behaviour management, so pupils become aware of what is expected of them. Teachers recognise and comment on those pupils who are co-operating, and others soon follow the example and quickly settle, at the change of activity, for example. This establishes very good attitudes and behaviour in lessons so teachers are able to take an expressive approach to teaching, as seen in literacy lessons in Years 1 and 6, in the confidence that pupils will respond positively and not take advantage of a lively presentation. This further adds to the quality of learning through raising pupils' enjoyment in lessons.
20. The school strongly promotes educational and social inclusion. It is evident in the way planning gives due recognition to all pupils within classes in all year groups, and in the well-matched activities to meet pupils' needs. A very good example was observed in a Years 6 literacy lesson, where the pupils enthusiastically worked on writing in the style of classical Greek literature and each had questions to ask a 'hot seated' Odysseus. The teacher led the discussion well and all pupils were fully included through the drawing of names from a container. Furthermore, questions are well targeted to pupils' prior attainment and accurately directed, so pupils at all levels of ability progress equally well.
21. The quality of assessment of pupils work is good and the information gained is used well to plan the next steps in learning. Regular assessments are made and detailed records are kept to check that all pupils are achieving as well as they can, and the pace matches success. The information is used effectively to provide challenging activities for all pupils and to identify those who need extra support. Teachers usually mark pupils' work to a high standard and address learning issues sensitively, acknowledging pupils' effort. However, the school's assessment information is not consistently used because teachers do not always involve pupils in assessing attainment or in setting academic targets to help them understand how they can improve their learning.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum throughout the school is **good**. Opportunities for enrichment are **good**. Overall the accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school offers a broad range of interesting learning opportunities which enable pupils at all levels of understanding to achieve well.
- The curriculum is very inclusive; equality of access and opportunity is good for boys and girls and for pupils of different ability, enabling most pupils to achieve well.
- There is a good range of extra curricular activities, especially sporting activities where they are very good. These enhance pupils' achievements at a high level.
- There is too little joint planning between the nursery and reception class.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- Extensive grounds for sporting activities are a strong contributory factor in the school's excellent record in physical and sporting endeavour.

Commentary

22. The school is socially inclusive and provides a good quality and range of learning opportunities to which pupils have very good access. A comprehensive, well-documented plan has been introduced for the development, monitoring and reviewing of all areas of the curriculum. The head teacher, who is responsible for the delivery of the curriculum within the school, scrutinises teachers' planning intentions in a very systematic manner, ensuring that all subjects are taught, including ICT which is an integral subject supporting skills in all other subjects. There is a strong awareness of the needs of pupils at different levels of understanding, ranging from pupils who find learning difficult to those who are moving at an accelerated rate. The school also positively recognises pupils who are gifted and talented, for example, in music and sporting activities, and additional coaching is successfully promoted with very positive outcomes. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented across the school and are having a positive impact on raising standards. However, the school is aware of the need for the nursery and reception class to consistently plan activities together, thus ensuring continuity and progress as children move upwards through the Foundation Stage. Planned opportunities for using mathematics across the curriculum are not yet sufficiently developed and remain an area for continued development.
23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school tries to ensure that pupils' special educational needs are identified as soon as possible so that lessons can be modified to provide for everyone's needs. All pupils on the special educational needs list have individual education plans highlighting their individual needs and supporting teachers in their planning of work. These are regularly reviewed to ensure that targets reflect the progress made. All pupils with special educational needs have access to the same curriculum as other pupils. This is one of the features that make the school so inclusive.
24. Curriculum enrichment through a range of well organised visits and visitors to school gives an extra dimension to the work of the school. All pupils are offered the opportunity to play the recorder as part of the music curriculum and the teaching of French to pupils is also an added bonus. However, the many sporting activities offered to pupils via a range

of in house and external agencies really put the icing on the cake in terms of achievement. The entrance hall and hall areas reflect the school's promotion and success across a wide range of sporting disciplines, bedecked with trophies and certificates from both individual and team efforts. The high attendance rate by pupils at one or more of these activities is very good. Pupils benefit considerably from these experiences in terms of self-esteem, confidence and teamwork. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. There are carefully planned and organised courses for sex and relationships education, healthy eating and the dangers and misuse of drugs and smoking. These involve members of the local community, such as the school nurse, visiting the school.

25. The school accommodation, which has seen the inclusion of an ICT suite since the previous inspection, is satisfactory overall. Some classrooms are small and there is limited access to outdoor areas for reception children. However, the spacious grounds that include a nature conservation area clearly have a direct impact on the school's many sporting achievements. Recent grants have been spent to promote a range of sporting activities in the form of playground and wall marking targets to enhance pupils' kicking and throwing skills. These facilities are used responsibly by younger adult members of the community after school hours and at weekends, successfully promoting the school at the centre of the sporting community.

Care, guidance and support

The schools arrangements for pupils' care, health and safety are **very good**. Pupils receive **good** support, advice and guidance. There are **good** opportunities for pupils to be involved in and influence the school's work through questionnaires and the Eco council. .

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between adults and pupils are very good throughout the school.
- The school's systems and procedures ensure that pupils of all ages are safe and well cared for.
- All pupils think very highly of the school and their opinions are valued.

Commentary

26. The school provides a very caring and happy atmosphere in which pupils say they feel safe and secure. This enables them to enjoy school life and their lessons and, as a consequence, this has a positive influence on their achievement. Pupils say that everyone in the school is friendly and that name calling or bullying is very rare. The school's records confirm this. One of the oldest pupils comments, "We look after each other." As part of the school's daily routines, all adults take time to talk and listen to pupils if they are seen to be unhappy. Everyone within the school community shows care and compassion. Staff regularly share information about pupils and this ensures a very good level of guidance is available on a day-to-day basis. Pupils confirm there is an adult they could go to if they are worried at school.
27. The school teaching and support staff, occasionally supported by a range of external agencies, provides a high degree of welfare support to individual pupils as exemplified by the good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

28. Academic guidance is good. Pupils state confidently that they can ask their teachers for help during lessons. Teachers are aware of when pupils are having particular difficulties with their work and where they can take action to put matters right. This good support sometimes leads to identifying pupils with special educational needs, and the co-ordinator then ensures that pupils have the guidance they need to improve. This enables them to achieve as well as their friends.
29. Staff follow the agreed policies and clear practices relating to health, safety and child protection very well. These procedures permeate all aspects of school life and are very clearly understood by all concerned that work or help in school. The governing body keeps a suitable oversight of these aspects. Welfare arrangements are good, for example, when dealing with any illness or accident that occurs during the school day. However, whilst there are many examples of good practice, the school does not make suitable arrangements to cater for older girls' hygiene needs and this is unsatisfactory.
30. Parents believe that the all adults encourage pupils to become mature and independent. Pupils say that teachers listen to and value what they have to say in lessons. Their views are regularly sought by means of questionnaires. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 are enthusiastic about the Eco Council, which meets regularly to talk about environmental issues. However, there is no school council, so that pupils' views, on wider issues, cannot be taken into account, where appropriate, when agreeing priorities for improvement.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **very good** partnership with parents. Links and liaison with the community and schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school successfully involves parents in school life and their children's education.
- Information for parents informs them well, but lacks some focus.
- Links with schools and the community improve the quality of pupils' education.

Commentary

31. The contribution that parents make both to the school and their children's education is very much valued. Parents are encouraged to come in to school or telephone if there are issues to discuss. The home-school diary is used well as a means of communication. This means that almost all parents fully support homework activities and this has a positive impact on the achievement of their children. Discussions with parents both before and during the inspection indicate they hold the school in high regard. They find the school welcoming and are content that their children flourish in a happy atmosphere. Parents play a significant part in supporting the school, not just through the very active Parent Teacher Association but also by providing an extra pair of hands in the classroom and helping with swimming. Their views are regularly sought, both formally and informally, and these are taken into account when the governors are planning school improvement.
32. Overall, good quality information is provided. End-of-year progress reports now include targets, but these often lack a clear focus that will help to move pupils learning forward. Information about what pupils will learn during the year is provided in September, but no additional information is given as the year progresses. The school brochure now contains

all the statutory information it should, but it is a very formal document that lacks both practical and helpful detail that would be of benefit to prospective parents. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their child's progress by the teacher with responsibility for special educational needs. Parents are encouraged to support their child's learning and strategies to do so are shared with them.

33. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the educational visits they have taken part in, such as to Llandudno in North Wales. The school uses the wider community well and pupils take part in a good range of activities. In addition, there are a range of visitors to the school, including theatre companies and artists. These opportunities make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and cultural experiences, and improve standards of achievement. Through the school's Eco initiative, good links have been forged both with members of the immediate community and with local business, for instance, to recycle aluminium cans. There are very close links with the church, and masses are regularly held in the school. Pupils also visit the church to take part in the celebration of Holy days. Pupils regularly take part in sports competitions with other schools and there are well-established links with schools abroad. Pupils' transfer to their next stage of education at the end of Year 6 is made easier because of the good liaison with the secondary school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is **good**. The head teacher leads the school **well** and is supported **effectively** by other staff with management responsibilities. Management is **good** at all levels and governance, now **good**, is much improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher has a very clear vision for the future development of the school.
- Subject leaders, including the special educational needs co-ordinator, provide good levels of leadership and management and have a positive impact on standards.
- School self-evaluation is very good, although the monitoring of teaching and learning needs more precise targets.
- Governors complete their work well and they have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Finances are well administered and the school makes good use of educational grants to improve provision.
- Roles and responsibilities within the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are not clearly defined and this results in limited joint planning between nursery and reception.

Commentary

34. The school benefits from the strong and principled leadership of the head teacher who is deeply committed to the school and its community. He clearly has high expectations for the work and behaviour of pupils that are securely reflected in the very clear sense of educational purpose and direction of the school's work. This in turn has a very beneficial effect on pupils' behaviour and their very good attitudes to work. A strong work ethic is established at an early stage, reflected in the good standards of teaching and learning, and has a significant impact on the high standards the school achieves. The strong Christian ethos, in which the unique nature of each individual is emphasised, underpins the value of good mutual respect and very good relationships that pervade in the school.

All those who lead and manage the school are strongly committed to very good levels of pupil inclusion and equal opportunities for most pupils. The head teacher has firm ideas about the sort of school he wants and he is given good support from other senior key staff. Together, they work extremely hard to ensure that the school priorities are brought to fruition via well-constructed systems and procedures.

35. All subject leaders work hard and have a good collective impact on raising standards and improving the quality of education. This improvement since the previous inspection has been good overall and good school effectiveness is evident. Core subject leaders have generally had more opportunities than other colleagues to monitor and evaluate the work in their subjects in all classes, although some lacks sufficient focus. Because the work has been of good quality, they have been influential in ensuring that provision is of good quality. Other leaders have not yet had the chance, but they are ready and willing to undertake such work, thus ensuring that good practice is shared throughout the school. Roles and responsibilities within the management and leadership of the Foundation Stage are not clearly defined. The head teacher takes overall responsibility and the quality is satisfactory but fails to reflect the good management systems in place elsewhere in the school. As a result, limited joint planning takes place between the nursery and reception class with many missed opportunities to share topic themes, resources and teaching expertise.
36. Leadership and management of special educational needs are good. Together with other staff, the co-ordinator monitors the progress of pupils with special educational needs from the reception upwards. She ensures that individual educational plans include clear and detailed targeting of activities to meet pupils' individual learning needs. She has worked hard to establish good links with parents and outside agencies to ensure effective support for pupils with very specific needs.
37. The governing body gives good support to the school and it is ably led by the chair. This clearly reflects a good improvement in the governing body's strategic involvement since the previous inspection. The governors work well with the head-teacher and an appropriate range of committees is in place. The committees carry out their responsibilities efficiently and meetings are well attended. Individual governors use their experience very well for the benefit of the school, for example, building maintenance and risk assessment reviews. Some governors are able to visit school during session time, for example, the governors linked to literacy, numeracy and special educational needs, and give good encouragement to staff. Governors' recent training, related to looking at associated data, enhances their role as 'critical friend', enabling them to be rigorous in checking the work of the school. The principles of best value are creatively applied in regard to planning contracts and purchasing goods and good use is made of bench marking data to compare costs with other schools.
38. Financial control and management is good. Office staff undertake their duties in relation to everyday management of finances in a cheerful, effective way. The head teacher is aware of the need to delegate more financial matters and administration to the newly appointed secretary. The school budget is managed prudently and funds are carefully matched to priorities identified in the school development plan. The 6 per cent carry forward has been carefully planned to maintain current staffing levels in the face of a slight drop in pupil numbers. The good quality level of financial transactions positively influences the school's good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	456,748
Total expenditure	481,141
Expenditure per pupil	3,007

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	50,120
Balance carried forward to the next	25,727

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

39. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with some very good teaching being observed during the inspection. Different areas of learning are linked together well through topics, for example mini-beasts, but there is insufficient joint planning to provide continuity across both nursery and reception classes. Children's attainment when they enter the nursery is broadly average. By the end of the reception year, they exceed the expected goals (the Early Learning Goals) for personal, social and emotional development. This good achievement is due to the strong emphasis placed on this area of learning. The children achieve well most other areas of learning, effectively building their skills, knowledge and understanding so that they confidently meet the learning goals by the end of reception. Support for children with special educational needs is good; they are fully included in the wide range of activities and achieve well. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.
40. Good quality teaching and learning experiences are offered to all children. The progress of each child is very carefully monitored to ensure they are progressing well and experience the full range of experiences. Support staff contribute very effectively to the well-planned learning activities. The children have very good attitudes and behave very well because they enjoy school. They are very well cared for and this makes them feel safe and secure. The warm, calm atmosphere in school ensures children and parents feel welcome and valued. Very good links with parents and good procedures make transition smooth and easy for the children when they start nursery and when they move to the next stage of education. Roles and responsibilities for the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are unclear, with the head teacher assuming overall responsibility. As yet, the nursery and reception class do not plan many shared activities that would ensure close working links as a unit.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are helped to become independent and develop a good sense of responsibility.
- Warm, friendly relationships make the children feel secure and valued, and their attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- Children show care and consideration for each other, develop good social skills and understand the difference between right and wrong.

Commentary

41. Good achievement means the children exceed the Early Learning Goal in this area by the end of reception. Personal and social development is good, due to good teaching and learning in this area. Teachers provide a wide variety of activities, such as picnic snack times and role play, which children enjoy and develop good social skills. Simple routines

and procedures provide a secure framework for the children to develop their self confidence well and through which they show an increasing sense of personal responsibility and independence. They get ready for physical education lessons efficiently. Nursery children take turns to give out the daily snacks. Reception children use a picture timetable independently to find their daily tasks, and show a sense of fairness as they carefully check the number of children using different activities. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure the children know they are valued and cared for and this is reflected in their considerate behaviour towards each other. They are helpful, saying, 'I'm tidying up the books?' and happily share books, politely saying, 'Would you like to share??' Prayers or circle time start the day calmly and quietly and prepare children well for learning and concentrate well on their learning. Staff make good use of these quiet times such as prayer and circle time, to talk with the children about issues of right and wrong, providing a secure base for their very good behaviour and attitudes.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children listen well and speak confidently and clearly.
- Reading skills are good and children have good knowledge of letters and their sounds.
- Children are not given many opportunities to write independently.
- Planned learning activities do not sufficiently meet the learning needs of all pupils.

Commentary

42. Good teaching provides a varied range of meaningful activities, which enable children to learn effectively. They speak confidently and clearly, using a good vocabulary. Teachers often make 'deliberate mistakes' to encourage children to listen well, and ensure they understand their tasks. Nursery children soon learn to recognise their name card, and reception children enjoy writing in the 'office'. They write clearly, know that each sentence begins with a capital letter and many recognise question marks. The use of worksheets limits children's opportunities to write independently.
43. Attractive books and stories capture the children's interest in reading. They happily share books with adults and friends, particularly the 'pop-up' book about the Olympic Games. Good emphasis on learning letter sounds helps children when they meet new words. They have learnt several strategies when reading, and carefully 'sound out' and blend letter sounds into words. Parents willingly support their children with reading practice at home. The more able children are not always challenged to extend their skills, and work is not always provided to meet the needs of children of different abilities. The great majority of children achieve well and meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave reception.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good resources encourage children to investigate mathematical concepts.
- ICT is used well to extend the children's knowledge of shapes and number.

Commentary

44. Children achieve well and securely meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of their time in reception. Good teaching enables good learning with a strong emphasis on practical activities, providing children with a wide variety of opportunities to investigate mathematical ideas and concepts. Both classes are well resourced with equipment for counting, matching, sorting and recognising numbers and shapes, which is used effectively to support teaching and learning. Children build secure ideas of capacity through investigating how much different containers hold and are able to talk confidently about quantities that are *larger* or *less than*. This helps reception class children compare the size of different numbers. They are making a satisfactory start to using their understanding of number to calculate mentally. Correcting the teacher's deliberate mistakes when putting numbers 1 to 20 in order promotes children's concept of order well. Teachers use a wide range of opportunities to develop mathematical ideas. Nursery children discuss shapes as they prepare vegetables for a Greek salad, recognising that the onion and cucumber slices were circles. They regularly use simple mathematical programs on the computer to copy patterns and recognise numbers, whilst reception class children use the interactive whiteboard independently. A shopping game helped less able children recognise 1p, 2p and 5p coins, but they are not yet sure that two 1p coins have the same value as one 2p coin. More able children happily make up 20p with different coins.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A varied range of interesting activities makes learning exciting.
- The outside area provides some good opportunities for outdoor learning for nursery children.
- The children have good opportunities to use ICT to extend their learning.

Commentary

45. Good teaching provides exciting and worthwhile activities to broaden children's knowledge of the world and learning supports effective learning. Children achieve well and meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of their time in reception. They use the computer competently through regular lessons in the ICT suite, using the mouse to 'point' 'click' and 'drag'. Reception children are not yet encouraged to make full use of the keyboard, but all children love using the interactive whiteboard independently. Although children in the reception class do not have direct access to the outdoor area, the nursery children use it daily. They look for mini-beast habitats, and collect lots of specimens. This makes a good contribution to their spiritual and moral development and they examine the worms and spiders with great care, marvelling at the way the worms twist and wriggle. A study of Greece and the Olympic Games helped children develop their knowledge and understanding in history and geography. They prepare and sample Greek foods, such as a salad. Good interaction with adults helps them to talk about the texture, smell and taste, and they enjoy trying out the Greek names of the vegetables. Both classes have a small area celebrating their Catholic faith, and the children know that people may worship in different ways.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of interesting and challenging activities are planned to ensure children's physical development.
- Reception children have limited access to the outdoor play facilities.

Commentary

46. Teaching and learning are good because teachers plan a wide range of activities which interest and motivate pupils. Their achievement is good and the children meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception. Their very good attitudes and behaviour ensure they use all equipment confidently and safely. The outdoor area provides limited opportunities for the children to gain experience of physically challenging activities, so lessons are taken in the school hall. Teachers enable children to use this large space effectively in their physical education lessons. For example, nursery children went on an exciting 'Bear Hunt' and used the large mats, ropes and benches imaginatively and confidently to develop their controlled movements well. Reception children use a good range of movements, and run, skip, hop and balance competently, with appropriate co-ordination. Nursery children use the outdoor play area every day, but reception children have limited access. This means that achievement, although still satisfactory, slows in the reception class. Children show satisfactory small motor skills when using scissors, pencils, small apparatus and tools in their practical tasks across a range of areas of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching provides well-planned activities that encourage creative expression, imaginative activities and language development.
- Children are encouraged to express their imaginative ideas by using a wide variety of materials.

Commentary

47. Good teaching and learning ensure that all children achieve well and meet the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Role-play areas are well resourced with costumes and equipment. The teacher acts in role, for example, as a travel agent, as reception children look through brochures to choose their summer holidays. There is good language development as children discuss their destination and pack their suitcases ready for the journey. Musical instruments are always available, and children enjoy exploring sounds and singing favourite songs. They have good opportunities to express their imaginative ideas, using a wide range of paint and collage, pencil and pastel. Nursery children carefully observe and draw their mini-beasts.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and effective tracking and target setting procedures support pupils' good achievement and high standards.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and set them work that is interesting and challenging.
- Good subject leadership has enabled the accurate identification of weak areas and effective action to address these has led to improved standards.
- The curriculum effectively promotes the good development of all literacy skills.
- English makes a good contribution to pupils' enjoyment of literature and to their cultural development.

Commentary

48. Standards are now higher than at the time of the previous inspection. The 2003 national test results in Year 2 were well below the average attained nationally in writing, but above average in reading. Results at the end of Year 6 were above average and have remained above or well above average since 2001. Because results in writing at Year 2 have normally been well above average, the school recognised that some attention was necessary. Careful analysis identified where the weaknesses lay and effective action was taken. This has resulted in significant improvement in pupils' writing, and results this year are back on track with well above average standards in reading, and average standards in writing. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment by the end of Year 2 is above average in both reading and writing. Because of the attention given to improving writing, speaking and listening throughout the school, standards have been raised for pupils in Year 6, who are now reaching levels well above the national average.
49. Pupils achieve well because of the good quality teaching and learning throughout the school. Teachers focus well on vocabulary, use targeted questioning to ensure the inclusion of all pupils and conduct lessons at a good pace, which maintains pupils' interest. Teachers plan their lessons well to take account of the different abilities of their pupils and offer the right level of challenge to all. Planning also ensures that, in all lessons, pupils are given good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills, by carefully planned activities. As a result, by Year 2 all pupils have experienced a good range of writing styles and average and higher-attaining pupils are writing well, using good sentence structure and punctuation.

Example of outstanding practice

In an exemplary Year 1 literacy lesson, high expectations and outstanding presentation of a difficult idea resulted in excellent learning and very high standards

The lesson opened with the teacher talking to the pupils about the works of William Shakespeare and showing the leather bound books containing his works. Pupils gasped with excitement and their interest was immediately captured. This provided an excellent starting point and the teacher talked animatedly about the three witches from *Macbeth*. She immediately switched into role and gave a vivid performance of parts of the witches' speech.

This captivated pupils and a variety of emotions, ranging from awe to amusement, were evident, but all showed extremely high levels of interest and pleasure. She quickly moved onto involving the pupils and they were bursting with enthusiasm and their imaginations were working overtime. They provided the ingredients for their spell, such as bats' wings and frogs' feet, automatically moving into using figures of speech, such as alliteration. The pace of the lesson was rapid and they quickly moved onto writing their own rhyming spell poems and then reading them to the rest of the class at the end of the lesson. In this highly enjoyable session, the teacher's enthusiasm was transferred to the pupils and all pupils produced work of a high quality.

50. By Year 6, pupils are given numerous opportunities for writing at length and they plan and draft their stories to a very good standard, either by hand or using a computer. Handwriting and presentation are also of a high standard, because teachers insist that work is presented well. During the inspection, pupils were composing their own classical stories, based on their reading of *The Odyssey*. Story lines, characters and beasts were as fantastic as in the original and this represents their very good ability to use their imaginations and be creative in their writing. Scrutiny of work shows the wide range of writing experiences provided for pupils of all ages. By the time they reach the end of Year 6, pupils have written biography, letters, instructional writing, descriptive and analytical writing, all of a very good quality.
51. Pupils make good progress in their reading as they move through the school and almost all attain the standards expected for their age, with a significant number attaining higher levels. Teachers set very good examples for reading, as was shown in a Year 2 literacy lesson when the teacher read different versions of stories from Greek mythology as part of the whole school cross-curricular topic on the Olympic Games. This encouraged pupils to emulate her when they read aloud. These pupils also had a good understanding and were able to spot even minor differences between the two versions. Pupils enjoy reading and enthusiastic older pupils are able to give their preferences. Year 6 pupils said they preferred *The Odyssey* to *Tom's Midnight Garden* and gave very good reasons why.
52. There are good, planned opportunities for pupils to further their speaking and listening skills. In a very good Year 6 literacy lesson pupils were 'hot seated' in the role of Odysseus and answered other pupils' questions about the time he spent away from home. Questions asked by the pupils were searching and the answers clear. Year 5 pupils talked convincingly about persuasive language in debate. Opportunities are not confined to literacy lessons but planned across the curriculum as part of the school's move to drive up standards in literacy. In a very good Year 1 geography lesson, pupils discussed life in Greece with the mother of a child in the class who had lived there for some time. As a result, standards in speaking and listening are above average.
53. The impact of teaching assistants is good as they work with special educational needs pupils, ensuring their full inclusion as they support them working within groups of other pupils. This was seen in a number of literacy lessons. Teaching assistants are briefed well and are able to keep pupils on task through much focused questioning.
54. Good leadership and management of the subject has helped produce well above average standards. This is because the subject leader carefully analyses strengths and weaknesses shown in tests, in pupils' work and in the lessons she observes. As a result, the action plan she has produced for the subject is well thought through and thorough and

has led to an improvement in provision since the previous inspection. She has clearly thought out plans to further develop language and literacy, through further development of linking writing into other subjects and to use speaking and listening skills to improve other English skills.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. The development of literacy skills in other subjects is good and pupils use their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills well. Teachers encourage pupils to give oral feedback on work they have been doing. Pupils do this clearly, giving well-reasoned explanations which help to improve their speaking skills. Pupils are also given opportunities to speak before the whole school in assembly and to take part in performances. They learn to listen to others before expressing their own opinions during discussions in 'circle time'. Opportunities for reading are evident in other subjects and pupils write in a range of different styles appropriate to each subject.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in Year 6.
- Enthusiastic teaching and high expectations encourage pupils to learn well.
- Recent improvements in assessment procedures and performance data analysis have given the school a more accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses.
- There is good use of ICT to support pupils' skills in mathematics.
- Pupils are not clear about what they need to do to reach higher standards.
- Good leadership and management are positively driving standards upwards. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning needs greater focus.

Commentary

56. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were broadly average in the 2003 national tests. However, there are clear indications from scrutiny of pupils' work, lesson observations and discussions with pupils that present standards being achieved are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. This represents good achievement throughout the school. The present cohort of Year 6 pupils is smaller in number than previous years, with few pupils requiring additional support with their work. Smaller class sizes have resulted in greater individual support of a more challenging nature. Assessment information indicates that the present Year 6 pupils attained broadly average standards at the end of Year 2, thus reflecting at least good achievement over time. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in the majority of lessons by teachers and additional adults, therefore achieving as well as their peers. Boys and girls are achieving similarly.
57. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. In recent years, the subject manager has analysed national test results in great depth, clearly indicating the subject's strengths and areas for development. Lesson observations have gone some way towards identifying the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, but do not always focus on standards achieved or the rate of progress of pupils of differing abilities. Since the previous inspection, the introduction of national strategies to develop pupils' skills

systematically has helped plan work for consistency. The use of computers to practise and consolidate pupils' numeracy skills in their classroom and the use of the ICT suite is an integral part of most mathematics lessons.

58. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers transmit an enthusiasm for the subject and well-planned opportunities, matched to all pupils' levels of learning, capture their interest and obvious enjoyment as reflected in a recent pupil poll of subjects enjoyed. Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and they very effectively encourage pupils of all abilities to succeed. In the majority of lessons, clear explanations ensure that all pupils understand how to complete tasks successfully, supported by clear learning targets. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were highly motivated by the use of subject matter related to a visit to a theme park. Pupils successfully calculated and compared admission prices at peak and off-peak times, using a range of strategies. The confident use of ICT by the teacher enabled learning to be both enjoyable and meaningful. The final review section of the lesson successfully revisited the lesson's learning intentions and an atmosphere of success was duly celebrated. However, in some lessons, time constraints mean that the final part is rushed and the opportunity to check pupils' understanding of new learning is not fully exploited.
59. An enthusiastic subject co-ordinator provides effective leadership and management and is successfully moving the subject forward, armed with an impressive range of data related to pupils' achievements over time. This reflects a good improvement since the previous inspection. Using the information to support the setting of targets for pupils as a next step to greater achievement, the future looks bright. Greater precision in the analysis of test results and better evaluation of strengths and areas for development have started to impact positively. Marking is consistent in its regularity and positive nature. However, it often fails to indicate how pupils can improve. Lesson observations by the subject co-ordinator have gone some way towards identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching, but do not focus on standards achieved or the rate of progress of different ability groups.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that standards in numeracy are good across the curriculum and that pupils often use mathematics effectively as part of their work in other subjects, thus developing an appreciation of the practical uses of these skills. For example, graphs and tables are used in geography to compare the likes and dislikes of visiting Llandudno. However, opportunities tend to be incidental rather than planned as part of an ongoing mathematics topic. As such opportunities are not yet sufficiently developed across the curriculum, this remains an area for continued development.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school and standards are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good, and teachers have good knowledge of the subject.
- Although there is a good emphasis on learning through investigation, pupils do not yet use their knowledge to draw conclusions about what they have learned.

- Pupils behave very well and show very good attitudes in lessons.
- Assessment information and marking is not used sufficiently to set targets or help pupils understand how to improve their work.

Commentary

61. The results of the 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 6 were similar to the average for all schools. Results were also average when compared with similar schools. Predictions for the Year 6 tests in 2004 suggest that more pupils will attain the expected level, and a significant percentage will the higher level. The great majority of pupils currently in Year 2 have been assessed at the expected level in all areas of science, similar to the previous year. Few are assessed as reaching the higher level. The work seen in pupils' books is currently of above average standard in both Year 2 and Year 6. Overall, standards are well above average by the end of Year 6.
62. Pupils achieve well throughout the school, and the achievement of pupils whilst in Year 6 is very good. Pupils with special needs also achieve well, because they are well supported. Strong emphasis on learning through practical investigations provides many good opportunities for pupils to use and extend their scientific knowledge. They show secure knowledge and understanding of important scientific ideas, such as growth, electrical circuits, changes in materials and the effects of exercise on their heart rate. Good practical investigative work enables pupils to carry out a test and make sure it is fair, but there are few opportunities for pupils to devise their own tests. They are taught to pose questions and make predictions, and then check their results. This was evident when pupils in Year 6 reported on their tests to discover the changes in materials that can and cannot be reversed. They collaborated well, willingly shared information with their group and used correct scientific vocabulary that showed good understanding of chemical changes. By Year 2, pupils demonstrate good knowledge of how to make their tests fair, and used this to investigate how the speed of a car is affected by the angle of a ramp. Pupils are less sure how to infer and draw conclusions from their results and the school has rightly identified this as an area for improvement.
63. Pupils behave very well and show very good attitudes to science because they enjoy their lessons. All pupils are fully included in every activity, and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Science makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and moral development because they are excited by their discoveries, treat creatures and the environment with care and respect and co-operate well together.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers use their good knowledge of the subject to plan a varied range of meaningful activities that capture their pupils' interest. They ensure pupils use correct scientific vocabulary, and pupils confidently referred to 'chemical changes' 'habitats' and 'artery'. They are encouraged to describe their investigations clearly, and one pupil described the ribcage as 'a shield to protect the heart'. Good quality books and resources, including the school grounds, are used well. Year 5 pupils exercised outside then checked how their pulse rate increased, and Year 6 pupils went outside to observe the explosive results of mixing bi-carbonate of soda with vinegar. Pupils are encouraged to use their mathematical skills, for example, to calculate the median pulse rate or produce graphs. They used ICT to devise a system to record light, sound and temperature investigations, and access the Internet for information. Work is marked regularly, but does not often show pupils how they could improve or develop their work. Thorough assessments are made at the end of each topic. The information

gained is used to monitor progress, rather than to help individual pupils know what to aim for.

65. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator acts as a good role model for colleagues, provides knowledgeable support and has a clear vision for improvement. She has introduced a scheme of work that provides a suitable framework for teachers' lesson planning and ensures all areas of the science curriculum are covered well. There has been good improvement in science since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities to use computers in a wide range of subjects and achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- The good leadership and management of the subject have enabled continued improvement.
- Assessment of pupils' progress and achievement is good.

Commentary

66. The achievement of all pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, is good and standards by the end of Year 2 are average, and are above average by the end of Year 6. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Although standards are still judged to be above average, similar to those at the time of the previous inspection, they are now set against more rigorous National Curriculum demands. The school has managed to keep pace with higher expectations and maintain standards. Resource provision has been effectively improved and is now good.
67. The pace of learning is good, with teachers skilfully ensuring that pupils have the opportunity to explore within programs as well as developing their skills of controlling equipment. As pupils progress through the school, teachers ensure that a secure skills base is established for all pupils. The curriculum is well designed so that knowledge and understanding are developed in a progressive way. By Year 2, pupils already have good routine skills in manipulating computers. They readily access programs from a desktop menu. They use a mouse and the keyboard efficiently. The portfolio of completed work shows pupils use databases to produce graphs, use a programmable robot efficiently, use a good range of reference media and edit text successfully. Standards at Year 2 border between the expected levels and above, with equal samples of each level evident. Attainment is average overall by the end Year 2.
68. Pupils continue to achieve well and, by the end of Year 6, attainment is firmly above average. Pupils prepare multimedia presenting themselves to others. They blend sound and pictures, effectively linked by graphics and text. Pupils make their own choices on content and evaluate their own work to good effect and critically edit their presentations. All pupils work confidently at levels beyond those that are reasonably expected for their age. Pupils show above average standards consistently across a wide range of other work in ICT. They competently use spreadsheets with calculating formulae, word processing across a range of subjects and showing good editing and drafting skills, Internet research, working with simulations, emailing, using sensing equipment and working with control using Logo. Pupils evidently know the resources well and are able to quickly and confidently locate a wide range of programs.
69. Teaching and learning are good from Years 1 to 6. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and give them the opportunity to use computers in a wide range of situations. Pupils respond to high expectations with high levels of confidence and seek improvement in their work. Tasks are challenging and interesting and promote positive attitudes and very good behaviour. Lessons are well planned to ensure that explanations are clear and

brief and give pupils confidence, yet leave a good period of time in which pupils can practise and develop their skills.

70. The good leadership and management given by the curriculum leader have been particularly effective in raising the confidence of teachers and pupils alike. A well skilled and knowledgeable teacher, she has managed events well to ensure that the school has kept pace with higher expectations. She has ensured that all teachers have had training in using new software. She has made sure that equipment is up to date and maintained well through technical support. Computers in classrooms are networked with the suite. This enables pupils to continue work started in the suite, allowing them especially to practise and develop their research skills at other times of the week. She has worked hard to ensure that resources available are matched to the scheme of work. Assessment procedures are good and ensure that efficient records of pupils' achievement are kept.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Information and communication technology is used as an effective tool to support learning across the curriculum. Pupils use their skills well to support learning in other subjects, such as mathematics, English, history and science. During the inspection, pupils saw clear images of Ancient Greece lifted from the Internet to gain information to support their work in English. They use word processing skills to draft and edit their work. Older pupils consolidate their knowledge and understanding of graphs and how to record the results of scientific investigations when handling data using the computers.

HUMANITIES

72. Two history lessons were observed, but no geography lessons were timetabled during the inspection. Subsequently, there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on provision, especially teaching and learning. In addition to the few lessons observed, inspectors looked at pupils' work and teachers' planning and talked to pupils. Religious education is subject to a Section 23 Inspection.
73. In **geography**, Year 2 pupils learn mapping skills which they used to trace the longest river on a remote island and to compare their experiences with life there. They look at holiday destinations and traditions and discover how these have changed over time. The geography curriculum is enriched by field trips, including residential visits, which provide good first-hand experiences. A visit to Llandudno gives older pupils first hand experience of using their mapping skills. Research on the Internet provides opportunities to map their route to the town. They record the physical features of the area and use their drawing skills to sketch the landscape. When they interviewed local people about the effects of tourism, they discovered that increased traffic had the greatest impact on the town. Local studies give pupils knowledge of their own area. They learn how occupations, buildings and the roads have developed in response to the increasing population and impact of humans on their environment.
74. The 2004 Olympic Games in Greece has provided a good basis for a whole-school **history** study. Both lessons were well taught and effectively enabled pupils to develop satisfactory research and study skills. Pupils in Year 3 researched the history of the Olympic Games, selecting key features of the games today and how they developed. In the Year 4/5 lesson, pupils had good research skills and they used tables of information effectively to answer specific questions about the Gods and how the Ancient Greeks viewed them in their lives. This enlightened pupils' knowledge about the ancient civilisation and some of the myths and legends associated with the Gods at that time. Whilst these pupils researched information, others studied Greek art and made realistic clay pots.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. None of these subjects was a focus for the inspection, subsequently there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on provision, especially teaching and learning. As well as the few lessons observed, inspectors looked at pupils' work and teachers' planning and talked to pupils in Year 6. Over the course of the year, pupils are taught all elements of these subjects.
76. In **art and design**, pupils are given well-planned opportunities to use their sketchbooks to try out ideas before beginning the final phase of work. Pupils' work from most classes shows that the average standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. A feature of art work in the school is the good attention paid to basic drawing skills. Pupils are given sound opportunities to use a range of resources in paintings, collage, montage and drawings in the style of famous painters whose work has been studied. Recent studies are contributing well to pupils' cultural development. All pupils in Years 3 - 6 have visited a local art gallery. This has ensured a high level of interest, appreciation and enjoyment amongst most pupils. In the Year 4/5 lesson observed, involving the manufacture of clay pots in the style of a Greek vase, pupils achieved well in relation to prior levels of learning. In this lesson, standards were at least satisfactory for all pupils. Pupils worked using good observational skills to study a range of different Greek pots before transforming the main features into their own creations. A good balance of guidance from the teacher and allowing pupils to work independently engendered high levels of pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment. Pupils' speaking and listening skills were very well developed as they evaluated their own and others' work at the end of the lesson that enhanced the links between history and art and design well.
77. Pupils' skills seen during the inspection in making products in **design and technology** are satisfactory. Photographic evidence shows pupils selecting materials to manufacture a range of models in the style of Tudor houses. The newly appointed subject co-ordinator has written a detailed subject action plan which clearly identifies priorities for improvement, including the evaluation of the design process. However, there has been limited time to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and check that what has been agreed is taking place in all lessons, including the progression of basic skills.
78. Two **music** lessons were observed and pupils were heard singing in assemblies. All aspects of the music curriculum are fully covered. In the lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory. Pupils in Year 2 were eager to use small percussion instruments and developed their ability to control the pulse and rhythm. They worked hard and persisted when building a sequence of sounds, but found the task challenging. In Year 6, the pupils developed their ability to create a 'sound picture' using percussion instruments and carefully following the conductor. When conducting, they used their skills well to direct the players, composing, evaluating and refining different sound patterns. Singing skills are satisfactory, as was heard in assemblies. The school gives pupils opportunities to learn the recorder or the guitar. Music supports pupils' cultural and spiritual development well, such as when music from the Celtic tradition created a quiet, reflective mood in the school assembly.
79. Only two **physical education** lessons were observed. These lessons involved games and dance activities. From viewing the planning and discussions with teachers and pupils, it is evident that all the strands of the subject, including outdoor and adventurous activities, are regularly taught. Pupils benefit from weekly swimming sessions and

records indicate that most are on track to meet the requirements to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. In the outside games lesson observed, pupils enjoyed a range of appropriate activities linked to an Ancient Greek theme. The management of behaviour and the use of time and supporting adults are very positive aspects of teaching, and learning was good for pupils of all capabilities and good progress was made.

80. The quality and range of sporting extra-curricular activities are very good. Subsequently, pupils' achievement in these is very high. Pupils throughout the school have many well-planned opportunities to be coached regularly during extra-curricular games sessions. Very good use is made of the spacious playing field and hard playing surfaces, which benefit all pupils. In the extra-curricular activities observed, the majority of pupils made good progress in their basic football skills. The clearly planned and very well attended activities provide good opportunities to practise and consolidate skills.
81. The school has rightly identified the need to improve teachers' subject knowledge through further training, especially with a focus on improving pupils' gymnastics and dance movement skills. Sporting activities provided by the school contribute very well to pupils' personal, social and moral development because much of the emphasis on taking part and being part of a team pervades much of the work of the school. Physical education is well led and managed by a team of staff responsible for individual disciplines. Enthusiastic leadership by the deputy head teacher, supported by two fellow staff has provided good opportunities for competitive sports with local schools. However, an overview of whole school strengths and areas for development is limited by a lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a happy and well-ordered community in which all pupils are valued, encouraged to feel special and helped to become sociable young people.
- Pupils and families are well known to teachers and support staff and the needs of each child are well catered for.
- The behaviour code is very successful in promoting and rewarding positive attitudes and effort.
- A good broad curriculum provides well for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- Citizenship needs to be planned into the whole curriculum in a more formal manner.

Commentary

82. The personal development of most pupils is promoted well through a cross-curricular approach that is based on consistent messages and very good role models. Classroom discussions, religious education and more formal lessons in personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHE) are supplemented by a programme of visits and visitors, including the local community warden. Daily assemblies focus on the more thought-provoking intangible elements of human nature and are used well, particularly for understanding about the expression of feelings. For example, during the inspection, pupils were encouraged to reflect on the life of John Fisher, patron saint of the school,

and to realise the impact of one person's life in relation to British history throughout Tudor times and the part played by religion.

83. Very good trusting relationships between pupils and all adults who work in the school underpin the caring support and advice, which promotes pupils' personal and social development. The behaviour code is designed to promote and reward positive attitudes and efforts, and is very successful. It is clearly based on good manners and consideration for others. Staff are very consistent in their approach and this is a very positive feature. Appropriate attention is given to drugs and sex and relationships education at a suitable level. Good opportunities are planned for pupils to discuss environmental matters through the school Eco Council, for example, collecting recycled material and the need to switch off electric lights when not in use. There is a planned extension of these discussions to talk about whole school matters by elected pupil representatives from each class forming a school council, thus enhancing the place of citizenship within the school and giving pupils a role in the running of the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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